

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER, NEW ORLEANS  
*School of Allied Health Professions*  
DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

The school is committed to enabling student with disabilities to complete the course of study of our program by means of reasonable accommodations consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These technical standards articulate the expectations and requisite abilities considered essential for occupational therapy students to become primary providers of occupational therapy services. All students admitted into this program should be able to demonstrate these abilities at the time of admission and at all times during matriculation. If accommodations are needed by a student to perform the technical standards, he or she must notify the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at (504)568-4244 after being accepted into the program.

The major function of an Occupational Therapist (OTR) with registered certification is to provide occupational therapy services including evaluation, intervention planning, implementation, and review; discharge planning; outcomes assessment; and related documentation and communication.

The following technical standards describe the essential eligibility requirements for participation and progression in the occupational therapy curriculum. Standards cover observation skills, behavioral and social skills, communication, psychomotor skills, and cognitive skills. It is the expectation of the Department of Occupational Therapy that students engage at all times in client-centered, occupation-based services in a safe, professional and compassionate manner. These skills are necessary for successful transition into the clinical world of the occupational therapist.

### Observation Skills

1. Students must be able to achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting from a variety of educational experiences in both basic arts and sciences and clinical settings.
2. Individuals must accurately observe human performance, discriminating between a safe and an unsafe environment and between therapeutic and non-therapeutic behavior and contexts.
3. Individuals must perceive, assimilate, and integrate information.
4. Individuals must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile, auditory, and other sensory and perceptual modalities to enable such observations and information acquisition.

### Communication Skills

1. Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, fellow graduate students, coworkers, clients, and their significant others in the student's various roles of learner, colleague, consultant, and leader.

2. Individuals must be able to gather, comprehend, utilize, and disseminate information effectively, efficiently, and according to professional standards.
3. Communication should be comprehensible by patients, professionals, and laypersons.
4. Individuals must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport and communicate with others.
5. Individuals must demonstrate the ability to observe, recognize and understand non-verbal behavior.
6. Individuals must participate in group and face-to-face discussions/presentations in a clear, organized, and professional manner.

#### Intellectual/Conceptual Skills

1. Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem-solve creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in academic, clinical and fieldwork settings.
2. Individuals must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, apply and retain facts, concepts, and data.
3. Individuals must develop and exhibit a sense of Professional ethics, and also recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards.
4. Individuals must be able to combine separate pieces of information or specific answers to problems to come up with logical explanations for why seemingly unrelated events occur or are utilized together.
5. Individuals must use ingenuity and imagination in solving novel, ill-defined problems in complex, real-world settings.

#### PsychoMotor

1. Students must possess the motor functions needed to manipulate tools or handle clients in a variety of settings, under a variety of conditions.
2. Individuals must demonstrate the physical strength and coordination to safely handle and move clients; perform medical procedures, or direct clients in various practice settings according to the needs of their discipline.
3. Individuals must perform physical activities that require considerable use of arms and legs and moving one's whole body, such as climbing, lifting, getting up and down from the floor, balancing, walking, bending, stooping and handling of material and people. Standing

and sitting for long periods of time are also necessary. This includes being able to apply physical restraints, and to lift, push and pull at least 50 pounds for routine transfers from varying surfaces, and be able to manually adjust equipment found in the occupational therapy clinical setting.

4. Individuals must possess adequate fine motor skills to be able to manipulate small objects, manage scissors, fabricate splints, and utilize tools /activities.
5. Individuals must tolerate being in close physical proximity and in physical contact with others.

### Behavioral & Social Skills

1. Students must demonstrate emotional stability and acceptable communication skills, and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students, health care workers, clients and their significant others that inspire trust and respect and exceptional therapeutic use of self.
2. Individuals must be able to tolerate the physical, mental, and emotional academic and clinical workloads and to function effectively under stress.
3. Individuals will be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical and academic setting.
4. Individuals must demonstrate the ability to self-reflect and understand why they respond/think/feel in the way that they do and then self-correct, if necessary. Openness and responsive to feedback is considered essential for success.
5. Individuals will safely perceive and navigate varied environments and communities.
6. Individuals must exhibit the ability and commitment to work collaboratively and professionally with individuals and groups in an intense setting to meet the needs of people of diverse cultures, age groups, socioeconomic groups and challenges without bias and in a harmonious manner.
7. Individuals must support and promote the activities of peers and health care professionals by sharing knowledge, eliciting input, and acting with empathy toward others.
8. Individuals must demonstrate compassion; integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills; interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are critical.

### Professional Responsibilities

1. Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any academic, medical or clinical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems.

2. Students have the responsibility to attend and be able to travel to and from classes and clinical assignments on time, and possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames.
3. Individuals must have the ability to perform problem-solving tasks in a timely manner and prioritize and organize multiple workload needs, completing required work within the specified due dates.
4. Students will take initiative to direct their own learning as evidenced by the ability to prepare in advance, utilize resources before asking for help and independently explore additional information. Students must be able to take responsibility for their actions and outcomes.
5. Students need to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of other students and their own abilities and reasoning skills via giving and receiving feedback, as well as looking for ways to improve.
6. Students must adhere to policies of the university, their program, and clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior, to attending to their program's academic schedule.
7. Students must demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the code of ethics of their profession and behavior that reflects a sense of right and wrong in the helping environment.