

Essential Functions for MS Occupational Therapy Students

The information below outlines the performance expectations for essential functions for students in the Occupational Therapy MS Program. This information is provided so that you may:

- Be knowledgeable about areas of performance that are expected during coursework and fieldwork,
- Assess whether you will need reasonable accommodations due to a documented disability and,
- If admitted, contact the UIC Disability Resource Center for additional information and assistance while maintaining personal confidentiality.

Each student is expected to meet the essential functions as described, with or without reasonable accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to instructional methods and/or a course, program, service, activity or facility that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to their learning experiences. An equal opportunity means access to attain the same level of performance or to have equal benefits and privileges as are available to a student without a disability. The UIC community is committed to supporting a student with a reasonable accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student with a disability.

To request a reasonable accommodation or other disability-related services after being accepted into the MS program, students should contact the UIC Disability Resource Center (DRC) and make an intake appointment. Information about the DRC including an application for services may be found at the following website: <http://drc.uic.edu/>. If accommodations are requested for coursework and/or fieldwork, the UIC DRC may require additional documentation and full information regarding the process of requesting a reasonable accommodation may be obtained from that office.

Occupational therapy students work with people in a variety of medical and non-medical settings. The use of the term "therapy recipient" encompasses patients, clients, children, adults or older adults. The following information describes expectations for performance in the classroom and during fieldwork experiences:

1. **Observation:** The student must be able to actively observe demonstrations in the classroom, in laboratory settings, or while present at clinical affiliation settings. The student must be able to gather information through observation of individuals and the environment, to include facial expression, non-verbal communication, quality of movement, and performance of required tasks.
2. **Communication:** The student must be able to elicit information through interviewing patients, and be able to describe movement, posture, mood, performance and behavior. The student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with therapy recipients and their family members and/or care providers on an individual and/or group basis. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with all members of the health care or educational team using alternative communication formats if needed. Required communication may be verbal, non-verbal, and/or written.
3. **Motor:** The student must be able to elicit information from therapy recipients by palpation (feeling bony prominences, joint articulations, muscles, and tendons), movement of limbs, manipulation of testing equipment, and other assessment procedures. The student must be able to provide direct occupational therapy treatment and emergency treatment to any identified individuals. Examples of direct occupational therapy treatment include assisting patients in activities of daily living

(bathing, dressing, toileting, food preparation), supporting safe patient mobility and ability to assist in completing transfers, facilitating group activities, fabricating splints and/or handling tools and materials associated with a variety of activities. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of occupational therapists are cardiopulmonary resuscitation and application of pressure to stop bleeding. A student must be able to ensure the safety of self and others in emergency situations such as a fire.

4. **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** These intellectual abilities are required for problem solving and clinical reasoning, a critical skill of occupational therapists. The student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data concerning patients, and develop and execute an appropriate occupational therapy treatment plan.
5. **Behavioral and Interpersonal Attributes:** The student is expected to behave in a professional manner conducive to patient-therapist settings required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities required for the delivery of occupational therapy services, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with therapy recipients, family members and staff. Students must be able to learn to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, to take initiative, to be resourceful, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many therapy recipients and in complex environments inherent to both medical and non-medical settings.
6. **Academic Performance:** The student must obtain information from lectures, labs, audiovisual materials and written materials. The student must take essay and/or multiple choice tests, complete papers in a timely manner, deliver presentations, and perform required lab practices. Students will participate in assignments and course activities in both individual and group settings.