



# MARIA

COLLEGE

## **Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Associate in Applied Science**



OTA STUDENT MANUAL  
2024-2025

MARIA COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY  
ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT MANUAL  
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .....	2
Mission and Values of Maria College.....	3
Mission of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program .....	3
Definition of Occupational Therapy .....	3
Faculty.....	4
Introduction.....	5
OTA Program Philosophy.....	6
OTA Program Curriculum Design.....	7
OTA Program Curricular Design by Course Sequence, First Year.....	8
OTA Program Curricular Design by Course Sequence, Second Year.....	9
OTA Program Content Threads.....	10
OTA Program Goals.....	11
Student Learning Outcomes .....	12
Fieldwork.....	13
Statement of Confidentiality.....	15
Scheduling of Courses.....	15
Student Responsibilities.....	16
Professional Behaviors.....	17
Criteria for Written Work.....	17
Grading.....	18
Grievance Procedures.....	18
Probation.....	19
Student OT Association.....	19
AOTA Assembly of Student Delegates.....	19
OTA Program Additional Fees.....	20
Membership.....	20
Credentialing.....	21
Appendix A - Weekend Sequential Course of Study.....	22
Appendix B - Student Professional Behaviors Assessment.....	23
Appendix C - Student Pledge of Professionalism.....	24

*Maria's Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA)\* along with the New York State Department of Education.*

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**MARIA**  
COLLEGE  
**Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

*Dear OTA Student,*

***WELCOME** to the Maria College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. This Student Manual presents the philosophical basis of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, provides departmental policies and procedures, and outlines our overall expectations for OTA student learning. This Manual should be used in conjunction with the Maria College Academic Catalog to help you identify and achieve your academic goals and initial professional responsibilities. We recognize that you are investing your time, interest, attention, energy, and financial resources in your future. We encourage and expect that you will be an **active participant in this formal learning process** that serves as the beginning of lifelong and continuous learning related to your chosen profession.*

*Please keep this Manual for reference throughout your Occupational Therapy Assistant education; you will be notified of policy changes when they occur. You are responsible for the information, policies, and procedures it contains. We encourage you to read this Manual and to express any concerns as they arise.*

*The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Faculty*

## **OTA Student Manual Disclaimer**

Each student at Maria College is responsible for reviewing, understanding, and abiding by the College's regulations, procedures, requirements, and deadlines as described in the College Academic Catalog and the OTA Student Manual.

Notwithstanding anything contained in this OTA Student Manual, **MARIA COLLEGE** expressly reserves the right, wherever it deems advisable, (1) to change or modify its schedule of tuition and fees, (2) to withdraw, cancel, reschedule or modify any course, program of study, degree or any requirement in connection with the foregoing, and (3) to change or modify any policy. Please be advised that, due to printing deadlines, information in this OTA Student Manual may be outdated. It is the responsibility of each student to ascertain current information that pertains to the individual's program, particularly regarding satisfaction of degree requirements, by consultation with the student's academic advisor, the office of the Academic Dean, and other appropriate offices such as the Registrar or Financial Aid. In preparing this Manual, efforts are made to provide pertinent and accurate information; however, **MARIA COLLEGE** assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions.

### **Student Responsibility**

The student is responsible for being aware of the information provided in this Manual. Specific student responsibilities are outlined on pages 16 -19.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Maria College is a non-profit, independent, co-educational institution which does not discriminate in its enrollment or employment practices for any reason including race, sex, gender, color, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability. Information about the services, activities and facilities accessible to students with disabilities may be obtained in the Office of Student Success, Mercy Hall.

## The Maria College Mission

Maria is a Catholic college sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and animated by the Mercy charism. It provides career-relevant, opportunity education in the context of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition to all who can benefit from it. Maria is committed to outstanding and holistic student support services, financial sustainability and the purposive use of evidence to drive institutional renewal and student success. Maria seeks to foster graduates who recognize and respect the dignity of every human person and who will transform their knowledge and skill into caring and compassionate service to others.

## Maria College Values



## Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Mission

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is to help each student fulfill their educational and career goals by providing quality academic and clinical education. This will prepare the graduate to provide holistic and caring service to individuals of all ages and abilities from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

The Program is based on the altruistic and compassionate values shared by the Occupational Therapy profession, Maria College, and the Sisters of Mercy which acknowledge the significance of human differences and promote respect for the dignity of the individual.

The curriculum builds upon an interdisciplinary foundation of knowledge from the sciences and liberal arts to graduate entry-level practitioners who embody the health-promoting properties of engaging in occupations, consistent with the philosophy of the profession.

### DEFINITION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational therapy is a science-driven, evidence-based profession that enables people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health and prevent, or live better with illness, injury or disability.

**American Occupational Therapy Association**



**MARIA**  
COLLEGE  
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**MARIA**  
COLLEGE  
**Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**  
**Student Manual**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program at Maria College was founded by Bearldean B. Burke, OTR/L, FAOTA, in 1975 and graduated 12 students in 1977. Following Bearldean's retirement in 1988, the program expanded the flexibility of the course offerings with the weekend program beginning in Fall 1995. Maria College has since graduated over 1200 OTAs who are employed throughout the country. Many of the graduates have continued their education, completing bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in occupational therapy and related fields.

The OTA Weekend Program is designed to take three years part-time (8 semesters\*) with summers included up through the final full-time clinical semester. The first year of part-time courses are liberal arts requirement courses completed prior to the start of the OTA core curriculum. If the student would like to complete the liberal arts courses simultaneously with the OTA core courses, the program can then be completed in two years (5 semesters) including one part-time summer term.

The OTA core curriculum semesters incorporate clinical assignments, field trips, and laboratory experiences to help the student develop an appreciation for the many facets of occupational therapy as well as an understanding of the skills needed to work as an occupational therapy assistant. Concurrent clinical experiences help the student integrate academic learning with practical applications. During the final semester, the student participates in Level II Fieldwork, consisting of two full-time clinical experiences equaling a *minimum* of 16 weeks which spans a period of four to five months. Level II Fieldwork is typically completed just before commencement and must be finished within 18 months of coursework.

The sequential course of study for the OTA Program is outlined in Appendix A. Students may choose to take day, evening, online, or weekend sections for required Arts and Sciences courses; however, all OTA courses are offered on weekends and are offered **in person only**. Refer to each semester's Course Schedule (available on MyMaria or in the Registrar's Office, Main Building – room 108) to determine offerings and availability. Please note that **all Fieldwork II assignments (OCT 216-217) must be completed during weekday hours**.

Upon completion of the program, the graduate will have met the entry-level learning objectives based on the **2018 Educational Standards** set forth by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)\*\* and those of the New York State Department of Education. Maria College OTA graduates are eligible to apply for the required legal and professional credentials to practice as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. Additional information about state licensure and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination can be found on page 21 of this Manual.

\* - This timeframe does not include any additional prerequisite coursework that may be required as determined by the Admissions Office as part of the application/acceptance process to Maria College.

\*\* - The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

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## OTA PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

*I hear, and I forget; I see, and I remember; I do, and I understand.  
Confucius (551-479 BC)*

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Maria College recognizes that the OT Assistant is an integral part of a growing profession that works in many practice arenas and with individuals and populations of all ages from all cultures and backgrounds. The student is best educated in a program encompassing a wide spectrum of contributions from the liberal arts, biological and behavioral sciences, and humanities, combined with the theories and skills that support the premise that engagement in human occupation promotes health, wellness, and the ability to adapt to one's changing circumstances. The educational process to become an Occupational Therapy Assistant requires the acquisition of a specific body of knowledge and practical skills that can be heard, seen, and touched in order to achieve learning and understanding. Knowledge of the basic theoretical concepts about human movement, growth and development, adaptation, and various medical, developmental, and psychosocial conditions with resulting dysfunction combined with knowledge of occupation, ethics, professional issues, skills, and activity analysis allows the future occupational therapy assistant to apply the science of clinical reasoning to the art of practice.

Integral to the Maria College OTA Program's philosophy of learning is the belief that learning should have meaning to the student and that "learning by doing" through participation in purposeful activities is essential to the student's ability to adapt and to accommodate new learning into existing schemas of knowledge. This is accomplished in a supportive environment that allows the student to rely on his/her intrinsic motivation and to build on existing knowledge and skills. The student gains professional knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to become an evidence-based occupational therapy practitioner with an understanding of their personal and professional values, a responsibility to provide service to others, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

The philosophical rationale for curriculum is grounded in the combined theories of the occupational therapy profession and the educational theorists Piaget, Dewey, and Vygotsky. Occupational therapy values the individual's pursuit of independence through the use of occupation in the context of the environment and as related to life roles. Piaget's developmental, cognitive, and constructive-based theories state that environment and opportunities for multisensory repetition enhance the ability to learn. Dewey, grounded in pragmatic views of ethics, aesthetics, and religion, provides a theoretical basis for "learning-by-doing" which leads to the ability to problem solve real-life situations and is congruent with the Maria College Mission. Vygotsky provides the social cognitive theories related to the belief that learning takes place in a social context through problem-solving experiences shared with others. All three of these educational theorists believe that the learner constructs their own meaning from new learning opportunities and experiences in order to build upon existing schemas in a spiraling manner.

### References:

Maria College OTA Program Self-Studies, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2010, 2020.

Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education, AOTA, The Commission of Education, 2018.

The Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy, AOTA, 2017.

## OTA PROGRAM CURRICULUM DESIGN

The curriculum design of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is indebted to the Sisters of Mercy, the founders and sponsors of Maria College. The curriculum encompasses the humanitarian values and beliefs that the Sisters of Mercy have bestowed upon Maria College as well as the core values and philosophy of the occupational therapy profession. Students arrive at Maria College aspiring to begin a new career path, and the OTA Program recognizes that each individual brings qualities into the classroom that will strengthen the fabric of the curriculum. Important to the basis of education is knowledge, especially in the areas of health and illness, communication and natural sciences, which each student brings to the classroom. This foundation provides a wealth of resources for a stable, yet dynamic, curriculum that reflects the changing needs in the community.

Through rigorous academic preparation, the Maria College OTA student progressively accumulates a body of new information which culminates in the level II fieldwork experience. Here the student is expected to assimilate this knowledge as it applies to the practice of Occupational Therapy. Maria's OTA Program has a broad base originating with the curriculum threads found in the required liberal arts, biological, and behavioral science courses that form the foundation of the Occupational Therapy coursework. The OTA curriculum grows from these foundational threads with subsequent courses building on previous learning. A primary thread in the OTA core curriculum is **Occupation**, which is identified as integral to the profession and therefore to OTA education. The concept of occupation, with its philosophy, attributes, personal meaning, and health benefits derived through purposeful engagement are interwoven into all of the OTA courses.

The OT profession's use of occupation forms the foundation of the Maria College OTA Program's curricular threads. These threads give future practitioners vital information and skills necessary to apply and adapt occupations for improved function and quality of life for individuals who benefit from occupational therapy services. The following threaded themes are repeated and reinforced throughout the curriculum to provide both depth and continuity:

- ▣ **Occupation**
- ▣ **Values and Ethics**
- ▣ **Health and Illness**
- ▣ **Therapeutic Skills, Analysis and Application**
- ▣ **Professional Identity**

Each thread is given definition and character through the specific strands of information presented in each course to enhance the development of clinical reasoning skills in preparation for Level II Fieldwork and entry level practice. The descriptions and diagram on the following pages illustrate how these threads weave throughout the OTA Program. Ongoing feedback, provided by the community of OT practitioners via clinical site visits, fieldwork evaluations, OTA Advisory Board meetings and employer surveys, is used to confirm, augment and modify the knowledge and skill content that enhances and strengthens the OTA program. This helps ensure that the Maria College OTA graduate's knowledge base is consistent with the demands of entry-level practice. The curricular threads and related course content are congruent with best practice and the needs of the community.

Ultimately, the educational threads of the OTA program lead to graduation. The arched 'A' motif reflected in the Maria College logo represents a symbolic arched doorway through which the OTA student passes into the community. Upon commencement, the graduate leaves the College to pursue employment as an entry-level OTA, advance previous work roles, or continue further education. The passage through this symbolic doorway indicates that the graduate has achieved the knowledge and skills necessary to provide caring service to others and has become an OTA practitioner. The door remains open for OTA alumni to return to Maria College as they accept new responsibilities for educating, mentoring, and supervising future OTA fieldwork students, thus connecting and reconnecting Maria College with local and distant communities. In this way, the base of support for the Maria College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is constantly renewed and expanded.



## OTA PROGRAM CURRICULAR DESIGN BY COURSE SEQUENCE

**OT Skills and Application I (OCT 112)** is a first semester course that introduces the student to the concepts in the curriculum threads of *occupation* and *therapeutic skills, analysis and application*. It lays the foundation for subsequent courses and develops the skills necessary to the role of the OTA practitioner. This course engages the students in a variety of occupations and purposeful activity using hands-on experience with occupations and skills such as crafts, cooking and assistive technology.

**Foundations of OT I (OCT 114)** is offered in the first semester, provides the foundation for the OTA curriculum, and is critical to the curriculum design in that it introduces the student to all of the program's curricular threads, making the initial links to the subsequent subjects which are expanded upon in the second and third semesters of the program. This course allows students to engage in treatment and assessment methods in areas of ADL and body function with individuals with cognitive and physical illnesses and disabilities. The course provides students with application skills that will be required and reinforced on FW I and used as a foundation in subsequent OT courses including OT in Physical Dysfunction Practice (OCT 214), OT in Developmental Disabilities (OCT 213), and OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction (OCT 215).

**OT Skills and Application II (OCT 116)** is taught in the second semester and reinforces the concepts of the curricular threads of *occupation, professional identity* and *therapeutic skills, analysis and application* introduced in OT Skills and Application I (OCT 112) and Foundations of OT I (OCT 114). This course provides instruction and experience in group dynamics and group process with an emphasis on choosing and modifying age-appropriate and culturally relevant play/leisure activities. These skills will be utilized and further enhanced in fieldwork and OT courses (OCT 213 and OCT 215).

**Introduction to Fieldwork (OCT 117)** is an overview and preparation for fieldwork that allows the student to integrate and accommodate *all the concepts of the curricular threads* presented during the first academic year. Students can build on previous knowledge and newly learned skills to broaden their views of the occupational therapy profession. Assignments provide the students with opportunities to help make meaningful connections with their academic learning to see OT's role within their local community.

**Occupational Performance Across the Lifespan (OCT 120)** builds on the concepts of *health and illness* acquired in the anatomy & physiology courses (BIO 209 and 210), General Psychology (PSY 100), and first semester OT courses (OCT 112 and 114). This course reinforces the curricular thread of *occupation* as seen throughout the life span and is a foundation for second year OTA courses including OT in Developmental Disabilities (OCT 213), OT in Physical Dysfunction (OCT 214) and OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction (OCT 215). It meshes with the concurrent OT Skills and Application II (OCT 116) class to help students choose age appropriate and culturally relevant play and leisure occupations.

**Foundations of OT II (OCT 121)** is offered in the second semester as a direct continuation of Foundations of OT I (OCT 114), building on the Program's conceptual threads of *health and illness, occupation, professional identity and therapeutic skills, analysis and application*. This course allows students to engage in treatment and assessment methods that were first introduced during OCT 114. Areas of human performance are addressed regarding evaluation, modification and application with individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities. This course prepares students for the rigor of their second-year courses, OT in Physical Dysfunction Practice (OCT 214), OT in Developmental Disabilities (OCT 213), and OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction (OCT 215) and ultimately Fieldwork II (OCT 216 – 217).

**Additional required courses** that support the curricular threads include Anatomy and Physiology I (BIO209), Anatomy and Physiology II (BIO210), Introductory Kinesiology (BIO119), English Composition (ENG 111), Critical Inquiry and Writing (ENG 211), General Psychology (PSY 100) and a PSY elective, Medical Terminology and Conditions (SCI 100), and Foundations of Social Justice (RES 201). This Liberal Arts coursework integrates the Values and Mission of Maria College into the Associate of Applied Science in OTA degree.

## OTA PROGRAM CURRICULAR DESIGN BY COURSE SEQUENCE

**Fieldwork I - Psychosocial (OCT 210)** provides opportunities for students to apply concepts of the curricular threads developed in Introduction to Fieldwork (OCT 117), OT Skills and Application (OCT 112 and 116), and Foundations of OT (OCT 114 and 121). This course allows students to collaborate in groups and assume leadership roles planning and providing occupation-based activities for vulnerable older adult populations in community settings. These opportunities provide students the ability to expand their repertoire of *therapeutic skills, analysis and application*, and enhance their *professional identity*.

**Preparing for Practice (OCT 211)** is taught in the third semester concurrent with the major OT theory courses. It expands on the information introduced in Foundations of OT I and II (OCT 114 and 121) in the areas of professional ethics, supervision, roles and responsibilities. New information about clinical reasoning, quality assurance and understanding health systems regulatory agencies is presented. Students are given the opportunity to expand their *professional identity* by becoming more active in professional organizations, promotion of the profession and exploration of life-long learning. The role of the student and Fieldwork Educator are discussed, and class activities prepare students for Level II Fieldwork and entry-level practice professional, ethical and management issues. Opportunities to promote the profession, develop a professional development plan and be actively involved in professional activities are reinforced.

**OT in Developmental Disabilities (OCT 213)** is taught in the third semester and provides opportunities to enhance students' understanding of the program's curricular threads established in previous coursework. Students develop a better understanding of the *professional identity* of the OTA and the *values and ethics* that guide practice in developmental and school-based settings first introduced in Foundations of OT I and II (OCT 114 and 121). This course builds on *health and illness* concepts to provide further information about normal and abnormal growth and development, related diagnoses and signs and symptoms. The labs emphasize the *application of therapeutic skills* needed to promote educational and play occupations previously introduced in OT Skills and Application II (OCT 116). Therapeutic techniques and a variety of assessment tools used to determine age level functioning, perceptual-motor and sensory-motor skills are introduced as preparation for Level II Fieldwork and entry-level practice in a wide variety of developmental settings.

**OT in Physical Dysfunction Practice (OCT 214)** is taught in the third semester and provides opportunities to enhance students' understanding of the program's curricular threads established from all previous coursework. This course builds on *health and illness* concepts introduced in first year courses. *Therapeutic skills* including adaptive techniques, transfers, goniometry, manual muscle testing, and orthotics, introduced in Foundations of OT I and II (OCT 114 and 121) are further developed and strengthened through hands-on opportunities to work with individuals with specific disabilities. The understanding of the mechanics of the human body learned in Anatomy and Physiology I and II (BIO 209 and 210) and Introductory Kinesiology (BIO 119) provides students with the ability to compare data gathered from measuring joint range of motion and muscle strength to expected norms. This allows students to plan treatment goals and implement *occupation-* based treatments. This course provides information on concepts and practical skills in preparation for Level II Fieldwork and entry level practice in rehabilitation settings, long-term care facilities, outpatient clinics, and acute care hospital programs.

**OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction Practice (OCT 215)** is taught in the third semester and provides opportunities to enhance students' understanding of the program's curricular threads established from all previous coursework. Students utilize knowledge of human behavior and interpersonal skills from psychology electives to engage clients in the therapeutic process and effectively develop working and therapeutic relationships. Using knowledge of *therapeutic skills, and analysis* from OT Skills and Application I and II courses (OCT 112 and 116), students apply group dynamics to plan, organize and lead skill and *occupation* based groups in class and during prior experiences and concurrently-run community based assignments in Fieldwork I – Psychosocial (OCT 210). Written and oral communication skills are applied as the student interviews clients and health professionals to gather information and to promote the profession both in the community and on campus. The course prepares the students to address psychosocial issues across the lifespan during Level II Fieldwork assignments and entry-level practice in inpatient hospital, outpatient clinic, educational and community-based settings.



# MARIA COLLEGE

## OTA Program Content Threads

### Sequence of Threads in OTA Courses

<u>Thread</u>	<u>First OTA Year</u>	<u>Second OTA Year</u>
<b>Occupation</b>	OT Skills and Application I OT Skills and Application II Foundations of OT I Foundations of OT II Introduction to Fieldwork	Fieldwork I – Psychosocial OT in Developmental Disabilities OT in Physical Dysfunction OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction
<b>Values and Ethics</b>	Foundations of OT I Foundations of OT II Psychology coursework	Preparing for Practice OT in Developmental Disabilities OT in Physical Dysfunction OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction Foundations in Social Justice
<b>Health and Illness</b>	Foundations of OT I Foundations of OT II OP Across the Lifespan Anatomy and Physiology I and II Introductory Kinesiology Medical Terminology Psychology coursework	Fieldwork I – Psychosocial Preparing for Practice OT in Developmental Disabilities OT in Physical Dysfunction OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction Psychology coursework
<b>Therapeutic Skills, Analysis and Application</b>	OT Skills and Application I OT Skills and Application II Foundations of OT I Foundations of OT II Introduction to Fieldwork	Fieldwork I – Psychosocial OT in Developmental Disabilities OT in Physical Dysfunction OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction
<b>Professional Identity</b>	Foundations of OT I and II Introduction to Fieldwork English coursework	Fieldwork I – Psychosocial Preparing for Practice English coursework

**All Threads converge for the Level II Fieldwork experiences in the final semester**

## **MARIA COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

### **Program Goals**

To earn an Associate in Applied Science degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant the Maria College graduates will demonstrate knowledge and skill competencies consistent with entry-level practice, professional standards, legal requirements, and local fieldwork and employment opportunities. To achieve this, the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program will:

1. Provide a curriculum reflective of Occupational Therapy educational requirements to ensure graduates are prepared to meet current and emerging practice requirements based on the needs of society, especially those of our local community.
2. Prepare graduates for entry-level employment as an Occupational Therapy Assistant in traditional and emerging areas of practice and/or to pursue higher education.
3. Prepare graduates to successfully pass the NBCOT examination consistent with or above the national pass rate.
4. Provide opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills necessary to respond to routine and novel learning situations and issues encountered in the classroom and practice settings.
5. Utilize Occupational Therapy faculty and fieldwork educators who are knowledgeable in their field and support engagement in learning activities for continuing competency pertinent to each one's area of expertise.
6. Create a supportive learning environment that fosters assimilation into the culture of the profession; that encourages development of relationships with student peers, faculty and the greater Occupational Therapy community; and that encourages an attitude of lifelong learning.
7. Maximize teaching and learning opportunities by developing associations with Occupational Therapy practitioners and interdisciplinary professionals from the community who can contribute dynamic learning opportunities at all levels of the program.
8. Forge ongoing relationships with alumni as they become the community's experts on the current practice environment and the knowledge and skills for evidence-based practice.
9. Increase the community's awareness of the OTA Program by promoting the profession of Occupational Therapy, the role of the OTA, and the unique qualities of Maria College.
10. Continuously improve its management practices, support its faculty and staff, and efficiently utilize its resources to fully support Maria College's Mission and institutional priorities.

## MARIA COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

### Student Learning Outcomes

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program provides a dynamic educational experience using multisensory and hands-on learning that includes interactive lectures and labs, guest speakers, field trips, community-based assignments, distance learning, and fieldwork.

The educational threads of *occupation, health and illness, values and ethics, therapeutic skills, analysis and application, and professional identity* are woven throughout the curriculum.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program aims to graduate students who:

1. Value occupation as the therapeutic agent integral to the profession which drives human engagement in context giving meaning, focus, and purpose to one's life.
2. Exhibit behaviors reflective of the profession's philosophy, ethical principles, knowledge base, and practice guidelines to safeguard clients' health and privacy, document services accurately, and adhere to laws regulating the delivery of Occupational Therapy services.
3. View health and illness as a continuum that fluctuates from a sense of total well-being to a state of physical, social, and/or mental disability, and recognize how therapeutic occupation is used to promote health and wellness and provide opportunities to adapt to one's circumstances.
4. Utilize clinical reasoning to demonstrate competency in the analysis and application of skills appropriate for client-centered and occupation-based therapeutic interventions with individuals, groups and populations in a variety of settings and contexts.
5. Communicate and collaborate effectively and professionally with peers, supervisors, members of related disciplines, clients and their families.
6. Demonstrate the necessary skills to function effectively in the modern workplace including the use of clinical reasoning, the use of technology for client interventions and documentation of services, and the ability to utilize scholarly research to engage in evidence-based best practice.
7. Engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation to determine current strengths, needs, and interests to facilitate preparation of a professional development plan that addresses continuing competency and cultivates new interests consistent with an appreciation for lifelong learning.



## FIELDWORK

The practice of occupational therapy requires active participation of its practitioners with clients. Therefore, the OTA program incorporates active participation in selected activities in the learning process. An integral part of the program accomplishes this beyond the classroom setting through a variety of clinical assignments. Fieldwork (Level I and II) experiences provide the student opportunities to observe functional and dysfunctional behavior in order to enhance their learning in both traditional and non-traditional settings. The Maria College OTA Program's Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) is responsible for overseeing all components of fieldwork education.

### Minimum Requirements to participate in clinical experiences:

- A physical examination within the past year
- PPD -Tuberculin test (initially the 2-step testing is required; must be updated annually).
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap/Td) booster within the past 10 years.
- Vaccination or waiver for Hepatitis B and Meningitis.
- Proof of immunization for measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR).
- Varicella vaccine or titer.

### Please note that some facilities may also require the following:

- COVID vaccine.
- Health insurance.
- HIPAA training.
- Compliance training.
- Volunteer application.
- Resume and references.
- Fingerprinting and background check.
- Influenza vaccine.
- Drug testing.
- CPR certification.
- First aid course.
- Interview.
- Additional trainings specific to the site.
- Additional proof that the student is in good health and of good moral character.

Students completing clinical assignments at a facility with additional requirements assume the responsibility for completing stated requirements in the time frame established by the agency and *the student is responsible for any added expenses involved.*

Students will be required to create and upload mandatory medical records to their profile in a fieldwork management software program called Core Elms. Students will be invited to create their own profile using a link sent to their Maria College email accounts. Students will use this fieldwork management software as a means to house all required medical records. Required medical records may be site specific however it is the student's responsibility to ensure all requirements have been satisfied for each fieldwork experience. The student is then responsible for submitting their personal medical records to an appointed personnel at the facility site.

**Please note:** (1) the physical and PPD must be updated for each year of the program; (2) some facilities may require that the results of the PPD testing be within 3 months of beginning the fieldwork experience; (3) fingerprinting and background checks are processed by agencies working on behalf of the fieldwork facility, and decisions regarding the results of such checks are up to the facility. (4) Please be aware that *additional time* outside of all required fieldwork hours will be needed to complete assignments. (5) Students may be asked to provide their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while completing fieldwork.

### Introduction to Fieldwork

OCT 117 serves as an introduction to the role of fieldwork in OTA education. Students will gain an awareness of

occupational therapy service delivery and processes across practice areas, enhance their knowledge of interdisciplinary roles, further develop their professional identity, and have opportunities to promote the occupational therapy profession. Community site visits, guest lecturers, case-based learning, group discussions, and assignments will expose students to OT across a variety of settings.

### Fieldwork I - Psychosocial

OCT210 is a fieldwork learning experience that allows students to apply previous and concurrent learning, especially concepts related to psychological and social components necessary for a healthy, functional life. Utilizing interview, occupational profile, task analysis, group process and group dynamics, the students will engage individuals, groups and/or populations in selected play, leisure and social occupations. While these occupation-based activities may reinforce a participant's motor, cognitive and sensory skills, the primary focus of group activities will be on psychosocial skills necessary to enhance one's quality of life. Students will have opportunities to plan and lead occupational group activities based on identified interests of the participants. These group activities will be provided in community settings such as assistive living facilities, adult day programs, preschools or group homes

It is expected that the OTA student will gain a better appreciation of the complexities of human health and wellness, the role of occupation in a person's life, understand the need to consider safety precautions, and see how therapeutic interventions are modified to reflect the changing needs of the client. It is also expected that the student will have opportunities to use the teaching-learning process, therapeutic use of self, and group skills to enhance their learning. Students are introduced to a variety of community and social aspects of health care in non-traditional settings and community agencies to allow for exploration and discussion of potential emerging OT practice areas.

### Level II Fieldwork

During the final semester of the OTA curriculum, learning continues with supervised clinical experiences in two types of settings where occupational therapy is practiced. Each Level II Fieldwork (FW II) allows students to participate and gain competency in observation, assessment, treatment planning, treatment implementation and documentation as they apply previously learned occupational therapy principles, techniques and skills to meet client needs. FW II learning allows the student to transition from academic learner to OTA practitioner. Each clinical experience is typically full time for 8 weeks and is scheduled during the normal (day) hours during which the assigned occupational therapy department provides services. This allows the student to complete the minimum 16 weeks of full-time clinical experience as required by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) Educational Standards in 1 extended semester. FW II must be completed within 18 months following completion of academic preparation. Those needing to postpone FW II and who are unable to meet this timeline may be required to repeat selected academic courses before registering for OCT 216-217.

Final fieldwork grades (P/F) are based on Pass/No Pass criteria from the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) developed by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Students will be required to come to campus on scheduled weekends for "debriefing sessions" during fieldwork. These sessions are intended to provide students with additional support during fieldwork, to ensure that students are well prepared for the NBCOT exam and are a mandatory requirement for successful completion of the Fieldwork II courses.

Fieldwork II is generally completed in traditional settings to provide the student with direct supervision by an occupational therapy practitioner. This allows the student to expand his or her professional identity, develop competency in therapeutic skills, and assume the roles of a future practitioner. All students should plan on potentially commuting for up to one hour to fieldwork sites; however, it should be noted that out of area placements are sometimes required in order for the student to complete the fieldwork in the desired semester due to space availability issues at local facilities. Due to the potential for conflict of interest, students are not allowed to complete fieldwork in their place of employment.

Placements may be made in any area of the United States, provided that the desired facility agrees to enter into a fieldwork contract with Maria College's OTA Program. Students are welcome to locate potential sites for review by the AFWC, who will contact the facility on the student's behalf if it is an appropriate selection. All placements will require the student to finance their own living and travel expenses. Every effort is made to select a setting that offers maximum learning opportunities and accommodates the needs of the student. Fieldwork facilities delineate their own dress code; the student

is responsible for purchasing any required clothing, name tag, lab coat, parking pass, or other items as required by the fieldwork facility.

Students are encouraged to give input concerning potential future placements; however, in fairness to individual interests, needs, and abilities, the final placement decisions are the responsibility of the AFWC. Students desiring a placement out of area or in another state must be in good academic standing and must submit the request in writing to the AFWC no later than April of the first year of OTA course work. There are no guarantees that specific fieldwork requests can be fulfilled. Students must complete two diverse fieldworks in order to establish competency in at least two practice settings with clients of different ages and abilities. Fieldwork assignments are a contract between Maria College, the student, and the facility. Students cannot change a placement once a fieldwork is confirmed by the facility. **Please note that all placements are made based on site availability, and fieldwork placements may be delayed beyond semester schedules. Students cannot be guaranteed a fieldwork site of their choice.**

Additional information about fieldwork (policies and procedures, guidelines, assignments, evaluations and grading) is provided to the student upon registering for level II fieldwork courses.

### **TIMELY COMPLETION OF FIELDWORK**

**Level II fieldwork must be completed within eighteen (18) months of completing the academic requirements of the program. When fieldwork has not been completed within this time frame, the student may be required to repeat selected coursework before clinical assignments. If this becomes a personal concern, please discuss options and time frames with the faculty Academic Advisor, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and OTA Program Director to develop an alternate plan.**

### **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

All professionals, including students of the profession, have a responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of their service recipients (patients, consumers, students, and/or clients). OTA students will be interacting with clients in a variety of settings throughout the program and are required to report on their learning activities. Students are required to sign a *Pledge of Professional Behaviors* (see Appendix D). Failure to adhere to a policy of confidentiality will result in departmental probation and potential dismissal from the OTA Program.

Fieldwork facilities may also require the student to sign an oath of confidentiality demonstrating their understanding of the need to abide by the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* otherwise referred to as *HIPAA*. The HIPAA Privacy Rule establishes a federal requirement that most doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers obtain a patient's written consent before using or disclosing the patient's personal health information to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations.

### **SCHEDULING OF COURSES**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant courses are offered in a pre-determined sequence that begins in the fall of each academic year. Students must follow this curriculum sequence (unless otherwise indicated by the OTA Advisor) to ensure completion of all courses required for graduation in the planned time frame. (See Appendix A and refer to the Academic Plan on MyMaria to track academic progress). When more than one section of a course is offered, the student may select the time that is best for his or her schedule. All courses at Maria College use an online Student Learning Management System which houses course content as well as permitting submission and grading of student work. Additionally, some assignments may require access to the Maria College Library online and other electronic resources to be completed to course standards. For this reason, all students are expected to have consistent access to computer technology and internet access to complete coursework.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

An Occupational Therapy Assistant Student embarks on a course of study that is more than a sequence of courses; it is the beginning of socialization into the Occupational Therapy profession. Students are expected to demonstrate courteous, dependable, and caring behaviors. Communication with faculty and fellow students is critical. The following are detailed expectations to maximize the learning experience.

#### **The OTA Student is:**

A. Expected to be cognizant of the MISSION and VALUES of the College, (see page 2, Maria College

Academic Catalog), the Mission of the OTA Program (see page 3, OTA Student Manual) and the values of the OT profession (presented in OCT 114). Student conduct must reflect respect for these philosophies in behaviors and assignments on and off campus.

- B. Required to attend all classes and expected to be in class on time. It is the student's responsibility to arrange personal commitments to avoid conflict with scheduled class and clinical times.
  - o Class absences: email the instructor before the class meeting. Prolonged or numerous absences will impact the student's course grade, and/or require the student to withdraw from the course. In the case of illness, a medical re-certification may be required to resume the program.
  - o Fieldwork absences: the student must contact the fieldwork supervisor to report illness or other events that prevent attendance prior to missing their work if at all possible. Absences from a clinical may necessitate extending the experience to complete the required number of days. If for any reason a student is unable to finish the fieldwork assignment as scheduled, completing the program in the original time frame may not be possible.
- C. Expected to read the learning outcomes for each course at the beginning of the semester and periodically, as students share responsibility with the faculty to ensure that the material is covered. It is the student's right to question the instructor about unclear course objectives.
- D. Responsible for course material even if absent or late. Secure notes from a classmate and make an appointment with the instructor to clarify questions and assignments. Missed exams may or may not be rescheduled at the discretion of the course instructor.
- E. Expected to participate in group discussions and presentations as they are an essential part of the program (and OT practice). Therefore, students must be prepared to take an active part in all classes. In most OTA classes participation contributes to the overall course grade.
- F. Expected to submit assignments on or before the assigned due date. Late submissions do not earn full credit. Extensions for assignments may be granted if the student has notified the instructor prior to the due date; however, discretion remains with the instructor whether an extension will be permitted. Extensions will not be granted if a student waits until after an assignment due date has passed to ask for an extension.
- G. Required to participate in putting away tools and materials and in straightening lab and classroom areas. The use of labs for practice outside of class time is encouraged, materials and tools will again be put away after use.
- H. Responsible for their own transportation to and from all settings used for the required field trips and clinical experiences.
- I. Encouraged to make appointments with faculty during their posted office hours (check on syllabi and on office doors) to ensure that there is adequate time to meet the student's academic needs. Every effort will be made to see a student as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.
- J. Responsible for consulting with their Academic Advisor regarding problems interfering with or affecting academic performance and status in the program. Academic Advisors will refer students to Student Success when the concerns are beyond the realm of academic advisement. Professional and confidential counseling services are available and are free of charge to all students.
- K. Required to report any exposure to, signs and symptoms of, and/or diagnosis of communicable diseases to the OTA Program Director and expected to take all precautions to prevent further spread of the suspected disease. The student may be required to seek medical attention and obtain a medical release before being allowed to continue in classroom and clinical sites.
- L. Required to contact Student Success (Mercy Hall) to discuss any physical, psychological and/or medical condition or disability ***for which accommodations are requested***. Instructors are not permitted to extend accommodations without

prior notification from the Accessibility Office.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS

OTA students are expected to demonstrate professionalism throughout their college career, in the classroom and lab, as well as in the clinic. A Professional Behaviors Assessment (Appendix B) including ten essential elements of professionalism will be used to track student behaviors throughout their enrollment in the OTA program. Students are expected to comply with all of the elements at all times and failure to do so can result in dismissal from the OTA program. The OTA faculty will collaboratively complete the Professional Behaviors Assessment for each student based on behaviors observed in classes, laboratory sessions, and during interpersonal experience with faculty, peers, and clients. To ensure that students meet expected standards, a 'Satisfactory' or 'Unsatisfactory' grade for Professional Behaviors will be given at midterm and at the end of each semester to each student. The professionalism grade is generally not considered part of the overall numerical grade for any OTA courses, but students must achieve a 'Satisfactory' final grade to continue in the program. If, during the semester, a student is not achieving performance standards in the professionalism component, a meeting will be scheduled with appropriate OTA faculty. With guidance from the faculty, the student will be required to develop a corrective action plan to address the issue(s). Failure to complete and implement the corrective action plan will result in the student being **dismissed from the OTA program, regardless of the numerical grade achieved in courses.**

## CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN WORK

OTA students are required to complete many different types of written assignments. The following guidelines will help prepare assignments in an acceptable format *and should be used unless alternate instructions are provided by the Instructor for specific assignments.*

A. Most written assignments must be referenced. Please follow **APA formatting** for:

- the cover page
- page set up, including margins, spacing, and numbering
- the mechanics of quoting, paraphrasing, and crediting the source/author.
- the reference page

Failure to follow APA guidelines may result in plagiarizing an author's work. \*Plagiarism may result in a grade of zero for the assignment, being expelled from a class or from the College (see Maria College Student Handbook).

B. Assignments should be completed on the computer and printed on standard 8½" x 11" paper, unless otherwise requested by the instructor. Assignments should be double-spaced with one-inch margins and in a standard font of 11 or 12 pt. If assignments are to be submitted to Blackboard, they must use Maria College-approved formats (Microsoft Office products). Electronically submitted assignments will not be accepted by email.

C. Students are expected to submit assignments on or before expected due dates. Late submissions do not earn full credit. Extensions for assignments may be granted if the student has notified the instructor prior to the due date; however, discretion remains with the instructor whether an extension will be permitted. Extensions will not be granted if a student waits until after an assignment due date has passed to ask for an extension.

D. Written assignments must utilize correct grammar, sentence structure and spelling. Students are responsible for proof reading and editing written work. Points will be deducted for grammatical errors.

E. Assignments written in long-hand should be legible; use dark ink (black or blue) on designated forms or on wide lined 8 ½ x 11 paper. Assignments completed in pencil, light colored ink, or on unapproved paper (unless otherwise instructed) will be returned and be subject to late penalties.

For questions, concerns or assistance with technology, the Student Success staff can assist with almost every aspect of writing a paper. Students will have to do research to obtain the necessary information for content. The Library Staff can assist with learning how to find valid materials available through in-house journals, books and periodicals, inter-library loans, websites, and databases.



## GRADING

92.5 - 100	(93 - 100)	A	(4.0)	
89.5 - 92.4	(90 - 92)	A-	(3.7)	
86.5 - 89.4	(87 - 89)	B+	(3.3)	
82.5 - 86.4	(83 - 86)	B	(3.0)	
79.5 - 82.4	(80 - 82)	B-	(2.7)	
76.5 - 79.4	(77 - 79)	C+	(2.3)	
72.5 - 76.4	(73 - 76)	C	(2.0)	*- minimum grade for OCT prefix courses and some liberal arts
69.5 - 72.4	(70 - 72)	C-	(1.7)	
66.5 - 69.4	(67 - 69)	D+	(1.3)	
62.5 - 66.4	(63 - 66)	D	(1.0)	
62.4 and lower		F	(0.0)	

\*- The OTA Program performance standards are based on the expectation that a student must demonstrate at least a 73% competency of the knowledge and skill base in each OCT course. **A grade of “C” (73%) is considered to meet performance standards for all OTA courses (OCT prefix), all required Arts and Sciences (BIO, SCI, PSY, RES) courses, and ENG100.** Failure to reach the C standard will result in the student having to retake the course.

This scale will be used by all courses at Maria College. Please see the individual course syllabi for details on assignments and the weight given to each in determining a final grade for that course.

## Maria College Grade Definitions

### Numerical, Letter and Grade Point Systems

- A minimum grade of "C" is required for all OCT courses and “C” for all required Arts and Sciences courses (BIO, ENG, PSY, RES, SCI) listed in the OTA Program sequence.
- Students must maintain a **2.3** grade point average (GPA) each semester for all courses taken. GPAs below a 2.3 will result in the student being placed on departmental probation (see page 19: Probation).

Courses that do not meet minimum standards must be repeated. The student must repeat the course to earn the required minimum performance standard or higher, before being allowed to continue with the OTA course sequence. With permission of the OTA Program Director and the Dean of the College, the student may re-enter the OTA program when eligibility is restored. This will likely extend the length of time needed to complete the OTA program, thus delaying the anticipated date for graduation. Any deviations to the above policies will be at the discretion of the OTA Program Director and the Dean of the College.

## GRIEVANCES

**General:** See [Maria College Academic Catalog](#) for procedures related to student life on campus.

## FIELDWORK

See policy and procedures with the OTA Fieldwork materials, which will be given to students prior to the beginning of fieldwork.

## PROBATION

There are two forms of probation: academic probation as described in the Maria College catalog, and departmental probation. A student on academic probation is automatically on departmental probation. A student with grades of C, C-, D+, D or F (0 - 76.4% or 0.0 - 2.0 grade point average) for one or more OTA courses and/or whose conduct is judged undesirable based on Professional Behaviors (Appendix B) may be placed on departmental probation. When a student begins a new semester on departmental probation, improvement must be demonstrated by midterm. A student placed on departmental probation in the middle of a semester must show improvement by the end of the same semester. A student failing

to meet the criteria required for removal of probationary status may face dismissal from the program by the Academic Dean. The OTA Program Director, the student's Academic Advisor, and, if indicated, Student Success staff, will work with the student to develop individualized goals. These goals may continue into subsequent semesters or may result in dismissal of the student from the OTA Program if the terms are not met, at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

**A student may not begin Fieldwork Level I or Level II if on academic and/or departmental probation. Behaviors that result in probation during either Level II Fieldwork placement will postpone participation in a second or make-up Level II Fieldwork placement for at least one semester. This will delay completion of the program requirements and graduation.**

### **STUDENT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION**

The Student Occupational Therapy Association was designed at Maria College to facilitate the OTA student's involvement in the profession, to encourage cohesiveness and support within the OTA student body, and to provide a positive image of the profession and the College to the community. The Association sponsors fundraising efforts to financially assist the OTA student's participation in workshops and conferences and to provide volunteer or financial support to programs within the community as determined by the Association. The president, secretary, and treasurer are elected yearly from the first-year class. Generally, the previous year's president continues to hold office as the vice president to help with continuity from year to year.

While voluntary, participation by all students will strengthen the Student OT Association and help meet goals. All students are encouraged to become involved to begin the professional socialization process.

### **ASSEMBLY OF STUDENT DELEGATES**

Maria College OTA students are encouraged to participate in the advocacy and policy processes of their state and national organizations. One such mechanism is the Assembly of Student Delegates (ASD), which is comprised of the student members of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA).

The ASD Delegate from each educational program in the United States represents the school at the ASD Meeting held in April as part of the National AOTA Conference. One Delegate and one Alternate from each college are selected to represent the student concerns and provide a voice at the national level. OTA students interested in becoming involved should speak with faculty about opportunities. In the event of multiple students wishing to be Delegate, a class vote will be held, and the runner-up will be the Alternate.

According to AOTA, "ASD provides a mechanism for the expression of student concerns and offers a means whereby students can have effective input into the affairs of AOTA. As a standing committee of the AOTA Board of Directors, the ASD Steering Committee represents the student point of view to the Board, the Representative Assembly, the Commission on Practice, the Commission on Education, and all other bodies of AOTA as needed." For more information, visit: <https://www.aota.org/community/get-involved/for-students/assembly-of-student-delegates>

### **OTA PROGRAM ADDITIONAL FEES**

In addition to the college tuition and comprehensive fees in the Maria College Academic Catalog, the OTA student has two required fees that are directly related to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Please refer to the current Academic Catalog for specific fee amounts. Fees are due with tuition payments.

#### **OTA Course Materials Fees:**

An OTA lab fee is assessed each semester to cover the cost of required laboratory materials associated with Occupational Therapy Skills I and II, Foundations of OT I and II labs, Developmental Disabilities lab, and Fieldwork I - Psychosocial and Physical Dysfunction labs. The activity fee does not cover the cost of lost tools and equipment. Should these losses be excessive, an additional fee may be assessed. When students are required to initiate and develop an individual project, they will assume the cost of the materials involved.

#### **OTA NBCOT Exam Review Seminar/Testing Fee:**

When registered for OCT 211 Preparing for Practice, students are enrolled in a full-day seminar for NBCOT Exam success. This seminar is provided by TherapyEd on campus or online ([www.therapyed.com](http://www.therapyed.com)), and the course fee includes access to online assistance, a comprehensive OTA review book and course manual. This one-time fee also includes the following resources to help students prepare for the NBCOT Exam:

One-year subscription to AOTA's NBCOT Exam Prep (<https://nbcotexamprep.aota.org>)

The NBCOT COTA Exam Study Pack (includes Study Guide, Practice Exams and interactive tools)

- NBCOT's 100-question Occupational Therapy Knowledge Exam (OTKE) that students can use to assess their readiness NBCOT Exam through a simulated computer-based test experience.

Students will take the OTKE practice exam and receive course credit for OCT214 during finals week of the fall semester during the second year of the program.

### **OTA Fieldwork Management Fee:**

When registered for OCT 216 and OCT217 Fieldwork II, students will incur a fee for fieldwork management.

### **OT PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND RELATED FEES:**

The *American Occupational Therapy Association* (AOTA) <http://www.aota.org/> is comprised of fifty state affiliate members of which the New York State Occupational Therapy Association (NYSOTA) is one. The national office staff is responsible for a variety of membership and community services, including the development of public relations materials, monitoring of healthcare legislation in Congress, facilitating communication among members, and promoting research to further the development of the profession.

There are three primary classifications of full membership; OT, OTA, and Student. AOTA membership benefits include receiving conference and workshop information, receiving national newsletters and the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *OT Practice*, and the right to serve on committees and to hold association offices. The previously mentioned publications combine to keep the members abreast of new developments within the field of Occupational Therapy as well as outside factors affecting the profession.

The *New York State Occupational Therapy Association* (NYSOTA) <http://www.nysota.org/> enables the members to be informed about issues of local importance. Communication among NYSOTA members is facilitated by newsletters, state conferences, workshops, meetings, and special interest group gatherings.

**Student Membership Fees:** OTA students will be required to become members of both AOTA and NYSOTA in order to access member only documents for guided reading and assignments for coursework.

**AOTA Membership:** AOTA offers a student membership at a reduced rate (\$78.00 annually), which includes an expanded benefits and privileges package; it is strongly recommended that students begin a personal professional library after joining AOTA and accessing articles. Journal articles are often required to complete class assignments and projects and help students identify with the profession.

**NYSOTA Membership:** NYSOTA student membership (\$25.00 annually) provides the student with access to newsletters, information on State conferences, workshops, and advocacy opportunities. Job listings are included in these publications. Out-of-state residents are strongly encouraged to join the OT organization in their home state.

### **CREDENTIALING**

*Credentialing* refers to the professional and legal qualifications and processes that must be completed in order to practice. In addition to earning the required college degree and completing fieldwork, an applicant must respond to questions regarding felony and misdemeanor convictions. **Applicants need to be aware that felony convictions may prohibit an individual from becoming certified and licensed.** The State Licensing Board (SLB) through the New York State Educational Department Office of the Professions (NYSED OP) and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) usually do not make an early determination of eligibility regarding professional credentials until the candidate is qualified to apply. For concerns about a past conviction, contact these agencies directly for additional clarification.

### **A. Professional Credentials: Certification by NBCOT: [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)**

Certification is awarded to a qualified candidate following the successful completion of the **Certification Examination** for the Occupational Therapy Assistant. The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) offers a standardized examination to all qualified individuals throughout the United States. Qualified individuals must have completed their OTA education at an accredited Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Successful passing of this examination qualifies the graduate to use the identifying initials “COTA” after their name.

A committee of OTRs and COTAs selected by NBCOT who have a diverse practice background prepare the examination questions. This 180-question computerized multiple-choice examination is administered *on-demand* by a testing service at established test sites throughout the country. This allows the candidate to schedule the exam at a convenient time once approved to sit for the exam.

Currently, the online application fee for the Certification Examination is **\$540**. This fee plus any related fees for reporting scores to state licensure boards (\$40 per additional state) is payable with a credit card when submitting the application. *All graduates are urged to take this examination as soon as possible following graduation since it is required to practice as an OTA.*

If a student is not successful in passing the certification examination on their first attempt, they must retake the exam. An online retake exam application cost is **\$430**.

The following waiting periods apply if a student needs to retake the exam:

- Second or third attempt: 30 days from date of last exam administration
- Fourth through sixth attempt: 60 days from date of last exam administration
- Seventh attempt or higher: six months from date of last exam administration

### **B. Licensure to Practice in New York State:**

<http://www.op.nysed.gov/>

Upon completion of the two-year A.A.S. degree program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant, the graduate is eligible for Licensure by the New York State Department of Education. All states have laws that also require legal licensure, certification, and/or registration to practice. During OCT211 Preparing for Practice, students will learn about where to locate the required information.

Students planning to work in other states will need to apply for licensure appropriate to that state. Information is available at <http://www.aota.org>. Select licensure and the desired state. Currently, the initial OTA online application licensure fee for New York State is **\$147**. A renewal application and fee will be required every three years for as long as one remains in practice.

In New York, OTA licensure requirements include graduating from an accredited OTA Program, being of good moral character, and passing the NBCOT exam. The majority of other states also require passing the examination prior to receiving a permanent license in order to practice. Most states, including New York, offer a temporary authorization which allows the individual to practice in the interim between graduation and the passing of the certification examination. New York charges an additional **\$70** for the temporary authorization and requires a licensed OTR or physician to be responsible for the OTA’s practice.

It is the graduate's responsibility to secure the proper credentials **prior** to practice. Students may need to contact the Department of Education or AOTA for further regulations of a given state. Additional information is incorporated into the assignments of OCT 211 Preparing for Practice.

**MARIA COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY  
ASSISTANT PROGRAM Weekend Sequential Course of  
Study**

<b><u>Pre-OTA Year</u></b> (General Studies)	Credit Hours
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
BIO 209- Anatomy & Physiology I	4
ENG 111 - Composition I	3
PSY 100 - General Psychology	<u>3</u>
	10
<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
BIO 210 - Anatomy & Physiology II	4
ENG211 - Critical Inquiry and Writing	<u>3</u>
	7
<b><u>Summer Semester</u></b>	
RES 201 - Foundations in Social Justice	3
PSY - Psychology Elective	<u>3</u>
	6
<b><u>First OTA Year</u></b>	
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
OCT 112 - OT Skills & Application I	1
OCT 114 - Foundations of OT I	3
BIO 119 - Introductory Kinesiology	1
SCI 100 - Medical Terminology and Conditions	<u>3</u>
	8
<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
OCT 116 - OT Skills & Application II	1
OCT 120 - Occupational Performance Across the Lifespan	3
OCT 121 - Foundations of OT II	<u>3</u>
	7
<b><u>Summer Semester</u></b>	
OCT 117 - Introduction to Fieldwork	1
OCT 210 - Fieldwork I - Psychosocial	1
OCT 215 - OT in Psychosocial Dysfunction	<u>4</u>
	6
<b><u>Second OTA Year</u></b>	
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
OCT 211 - Preparing for Practice	1
OCT 213 - OT in Developmental Disabilities	3
OCT 214 - OT in Physical Dysfunction	<u>3</u>
	7
<b><u>Spring Semester (day hours)</u></b>	
<b>*Exact FW hours vary, yet occur during a typical full time work week during the work days.</b>	
*OCT 216 - Fieldwork II – First Rotation	6
*OCT 217 - Fieldwork II – Second Rotation	<u>6</u>
	12

\* Two Fieldwork II courses required; full time day hours, eight weeks each



**MARIA COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY  
ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT PROFESSIONAL  
BEHAVIORS ASSESSMENT**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

**Satisfactory Performance: 25 – 40 points**

Unsatisfactory Performance: 0 – 24 points

**KEY:**

- 1. Unsatisfactory**
- 2. Needs Improvement**
- 3. Meets Standards**
- 4. Exceeds Standards**

	<b>Performance Statements:</b>	<b>Comments:</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1.	<u>Commitment to Learning</u> : Self-directed, identifies needs and sources of learning, and invites new knowledge and understanding.		
2.	<u>Interpersonal Skills</u> : Engages in effective and non-judgmental interactions with classmates and faculty and maintains focus in new situations.		
3.	<u>Communication Skills</u> : Exhibits acceptable written, verbal and non-verbal communication skills and is capable of modifying information to meet the needs of various audiences/purposes.		
4.	<u>Effective Use of Time and Resources</u> : Obtains good results through use of time and resources, shows flexibility and is capable of setting goals.		
5.	<u>Use of Constructive Feedback</u> : Accepts, identifies and integrates feedback from others, and provides appropriate feedback to others.		
6.	<u>Problem Solving</u> : Recognizes and defines problems, analyzes data, develops and implements solutions, and evaluates outcomes.		
7.	<u>Professionalism</u> : Exhibits professional conduct concerning ethics, regulations, policies and procedures, and represents the profession in a competent and positive manner.		
8.	<u>Responsibility</u> : Demonstrates an appropriate level of commitment, is dependable, punctual, aware of personal and professional limitations, and accepts responsibility for actions and outcomes		
9.	<u>Critical Thinking</u> : Readily identifies, articulates and analyzes problems, consistently and accurately distinguishes relevant from irrelevant, differentiates among facts, and generates ideas.		
10.	<u>Stress Management</u> : Accurately identifies sources of stress and problems in self and others, actively seeks assistance when appropriate, demonstrates effective use of coping mechanisms and successfully maintains balance of professional and personal life.		

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

OTA Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**MARIA COLLEGE  
OTA STUDENT PLEDGE OF PROFESSIONALISM**

**It is my understanding that as a member of the health field, which I became when I enrolled in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, I am in a position which exposes me to numerous choices which assume a moral and ethical sense of responsibility on my part. With this assumption, I make the following commitments:**

- A. I will conduct myself at all times in accordance with the standards set forth by the American Occupational Therapy Association, bearing in mind, that I am no longer free to act solely on the basis of my best interests, but that I must also take into consideration my responsibilities to consumers of occupational therapy services, clinicians, educators and students in occupational therapy and in other health careers, health care agencies and their employees, educational institutions providing training for occupational therapy personnel, and students, graduates, faculty and administration of the educational institution which I am attending. Therefore, I shall:
1. demonstrate a concern for the well-being and safety of the recipients of my services. *(Beneficence)*
  2. intentionally refrain from actions that cause harm. *(Nonmaleficence)*
  3. respect the right of the individual to self-determination. *(Autonomy)*
  4. provide services in a fair and equitable manner while complying with institutional rules, local, state, federal, and international laws and AOTA documents applicable to the profession of occupational therapy. *(Justice)*
  5. provide comprehensive, accurate, and objective information when representing the profession. *(Veracity)*
  6. treat colleagues and other professionals with respect, fairness, discretion, and integrity. *(Fidelity)*
- B. I will make every effort to ensure that I approach every clinical and fieldwork situation with the proper amount of knowledge, skill, and experience. If I find myself lacking in one of these I will:
1. make sure someone in authority is aware of the discrepancy and authorizes my participation, *or*
  2. decline from becoming involved until receiving further instruction and/or competency.
- C. I will comply with the expectations as presented in the Maria College Academic Catalog, the OTA Student Program Manual, and the OTA Fieldwork II manual. I will clarify the amount of responsibility I am to assume, as well as the amount of authority I will be given, to carry out student responsibilities.
- D. In making this commitment, I fully understand that any negligence on my part regarding any of these separate items is viewed as negligence of duty and may be grounds for immediate termination of my present status as a student with respect to the field of occupational therapy.
- E. *My signature* acknowledges that I agree with the information presented in this document.  
**In order to begin practicing professionalism, I will assume the responsibilities described above.**

\_\_\_\_\_, OTAS  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Full Name

**Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards (2020)**

*Qualities listed in parenthesis in section A refer to AOTA's 6 Ethical principles*