Master of Occupational Therapy Program

Technical Standards and Progression in the Program

Successful participation in the Carroll University Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Program requires that a student in the MOT program must independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet and maintain the technical standards for progression throughout the program. Students unable to meet these technical standards will not be able to complete the program.

If a student has a change in health status while enrolled in the MOT program, the student is required to inform the Program Director, their program advisor and update the technical standards form. Where applicable, the MOT program may require submission of supporting documentation from appropriate providers qualified to judge the student’s ability to meet or exceed the requirements of the MOT program. Significant health status changes may include surgery, missing more than two days, or decreased ability to perform critical functional demands associated with courses including clinical education.

Technical Standards for Carroll University Occupational Therapy Students

In preparation for professional roles occupational therapy students are expected to demonstrate the ability to meet the demands encountered in an occupational therapy career. Certain functional abilities are essential for the delivery of safe and effective care. An applicant to the MOT program must independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet and maintain the following technical standards for progression throughout the program.

General Ability

The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, and smell so that data received by the senses is integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. The student is expected to possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, and movement to effectively evaluate patients. A student must be able to respond promptly to urgent situations.

Observational Ability

The student must have the ability to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of clinical/laboratory activities and patient care experiences. The student must be able to document these observations accurately.

Communication Ability

The student must communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally to obtain information and explain that information to others. Each student must have the ability to comprehend, write, hear, and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, family members, and other members of the health care team. The student must be able to document and maintain accurate records, present information in a professional manner, and provide patient instruction to effectively care for patients and their families.

Psychomotor Ability

The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination to provide complete, safe, and effective care for patients. The student is expected to have psychomotor skills necessary to safely perform examination procedures and treatment interventions, including CPR if necessary. Examples of examination procedures include, but are not limited to, cognitive assessment, range of motion, manual muscle testing, sensation, balance, functional abilities, pain, cardiopulmonary status, percussion, palpation, and anthropometrics. Treatment interventions include, but are not limited to, patient and caregiver education, manual therapy, functional training (transfers, bed mobility, activity of daily living training, etc.), splinting, work hardening, task and environmental modification and adaptation, application of therapeutic physical agents such as electrotherapy, radiation, heat, and cold, and wound care.

The student must have sufficient levels of neuromuscular control and hand-to-eye coordination as well as possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for safe patient care. Students must be able to bend, squat, reach, kneel, or balance. The MOT curriculum may require students to carry and lift loads from the floor, from 12 inches from the floor to shoulder height and overhead. The student must be able to occasionally lift 50 pounds, frequently lift 25 pounds and constantly lift 10 pounds. The student is expected to be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium and have the physical strength and stamina to perform satisfactorily in clinical settings.

Intellectual/Cognitive Ability

The student must have the ability to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential to professional occupational therapy practice. Problem solving skills include the ability to measure, calculate reason, analyze, synthesize, judge objective and subjective data, and make decisions in a timely manner that reflects thoughtful deliberation and sound clinical judgment. The student must demonstrate application of these skills and possess the ability to comprehend, retain, retrieve, and incorporate prior knowledge with new information from multiple sources including, but not limited to self, peers, instructors, and related literature to formulate sound judgment for competent patient/client management, practice management, and functions required for clinical scholarship.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

The student is expected to have the emotional stability required to exercise sound judgment, complete assessment, and intervention activities. Compassion, integrity, motivation, and concern for others are personal attributes required of those in the MOT program. The student must fully utilize intellectual capacities that facilitate prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical settings. The development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other members of the healthcare team are imperative.

The student must have the ability to establish rapport and maintain respectful interpersonal relationships with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. Each student must be able to adapt to changing environments by displaying flexibility, accepting, and integrating constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical settings, and effectively collaborate with others. Students must continuously self-assess to improve as a professional.

The student must be able to adapt to and function effectively in relation to stressful situations encountered in both the classroom and clinical settings, including emergency situations. Students will encounter multiple stressors while in the MOT program and must effectively manage these stressors throughout workdays.

Evaluation

An applicant/candidate with a handicap shall not, on the basis of his or her handicap, except those which would preclude the essential skills outlined above, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, nor be subjected to discrimination in the program. Carroll University may require that the applicant/student undergo a physical examination and/or an occupational skills evaluation.

All MOT students must be able to perform the essential functions of a student occupational therapist. Reasonable accommodations will be afforded to students with disabilities as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and applicable state laws. A student who can no longer perform the essential functions of a student occupational therapist must report this to his or her program advisor. If reasonable accommodations cannot be made, the student will not be able to remain in the MOT program.