

Middle Georgia State University
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The OTA admission process is separate from the university admission process and is handled through the Occupational Therapy Assistant Department. Students must apply to both the university and to the OTA program. Admission is competitive, not all applicants will be accepted. The OTA program has a maximum enrollment of 30 students. Applications and transcripts must be received by May 15th of the calendar year for which the student is applying. Specific OTA admission requirements include:

- 1) Confirmed acceptance to Middle Georgia State University
- 2) Completion of any required college placement tests and learning support courses
- 3) Completion of BIOL 1114K (Anatomy and Physiology I) and 8 additional credit hours of core courses required for the OTA program with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75. Students with Academic Renewal granted by Middle Georgia State University must complete at least 12 semester hours before the AR-GPA is considered.
- 4) Essential Competencies Policy: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensures the qualified applicant with a disability has the opportunity to pursue program admission at public institutions. To determine whether an individual is a qualified applicant for programs or services, the ADA states that applicants must meet essential competency requirements. Essential competencies include: critical thinking, communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, visual, hearing, and tactile abilities. The ability to observe, collect data and treat a patient independently, while ensuring patient safety at all times is an expectation of the OTA Program at Middle Georgia State University. All students will be held to the same standards and must be able to perform the essential competencies of their program with or without reasonable accommodation. The OTA program at MGA is unable to make accommodations that impose an undue burden, present a threat to the health or safety of the individual or others, or fundamentally alter the nature of the curriculum including didactic component, laboratory sessions, and clinical affiliations. Questions about the accommodation process may be directed to the Coordinator of Disability Services at (478) 934-3023
- 5) A student who has had two unsuccessful attempts in any health science program will be ineligible for admission to the OTA program
- 6) All applicants not selected must reapply to be considered for future classes.
- 7) Once accepted to the OTA program, the student must meet, and keep current, the following requirements:
 - a) Certification in CPR, either American Heart Association Healthcare Providers CPR for the Professional.
 - b) Professional student liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$1M single/\$3M aggregate provided through Middle Georgia State University.
 - c) Health Insurance is required for all OTA students and is available for purchase through the university.
 - d) Annual health evaluation, including immunizations, Hepatitis series, yearly TB test, and a flu shot as specified by the program and /or fieldwork sites
 - e) Criminal background check

- f) Fieldwork sites may require additional tests, for example: drug screens. It is the student's responsibility to comply with these requirements and pay any additional fees. Student's refused admittance to a fieldwork site due to the results of a criminal background check or drug screen will result in dismissal from the OTA program. OTA faculty will not be involved in the criminal background/drug screen process.
- 8) Travel to clinical/fieldwork and fieldtrip sites may be extensive. OTA fieldwork sites are in Middle Georgia and throughout the State of Georgia. Travel expenses, including living arrangements at distance sites are the responsibility of the student.

OTA ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES

A student must have essential abilities and skills of the varieties listed to participate in the occupational therapy assistant program. Reasonable accommodations may be made; however, the student is expected to perform in a reasonably independent manner without compromising patient safety. The student must notify the ADA officer if a disability is present and what accommodations may be necessary. Other abilities not listed here may be required in certain occupational therapy settings.

- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment; including processing information; assessment, problem solving, and prioritizing multiple tasks on a daily basis. This includes the ability to take initiative and work independently, yet recognize self limitations. Examples: identifying cause-effect relationships, evaluating situations including patient responses to report to supervising occupational therapist.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Communication abilities sufficient for interactions with others in verbal, nonverbal and written form with grammatical correctness, such as client/family teaching; communicating with patient and health team; reporting patient condition; using electronic communication devices; documentation; using equipment, reading material not in standard form; understanding and interpreting written and oral orders, policies, procedures; writing instructions, forms, reports; communicating with occupational therapist educators. Examples: summarizing medical records information, explaining occupational therapy procedures, documenting intervention sessions, assessment results and patient responses and progress.
- **INTERPERSONAL:** Interpersonal abilities and emotional stability sufficient to interact with individuals, families, groups from variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds in a caring manner, such as sensitivity to

individual differences, recognition of individual dignity and worth, providing emotional support, adapting to changing and stressful environments. This would also include the ability to accept guidance and supervision from supervisors, teachers and clinical educators. Examples: controlling emotions when dealing with the unexpected, responding to an emergency, demonstrating caring and concern for the individual experiencing health problems, accepting supervision from an occupational therapist.

- **MOBILITY:** Physical abilities include fine and gross motor abilities, functional mobility and stamina sufficient to provide safe and effective care to clients with common, recurring health problems, in a variety of health care settings. These abilities would include skills such as kneeling, crawling, sitting on floor, bending, reaching, climbing, moving quickly, performing coordinated and repetitive movements, manipulating equipment, standing and walking for prolonged periods, lifting and carrying weights including people, equipment and supplies. Examples: transferring and lifting clients, moving quickly in response to an emergency, assisting with OT assessment and activities of daily living for clients, carrying out infection control measures, using equipment, providing treatments.
- **VISUAL:** Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in providing care, such as physical assessment, inspection, detecting physical and behavioral changes and safety hazards, reading written client care materials, performing OT intervention. Examples: reading charts, performing treatments, assessing visible body conditions and changes, performing OT observation and assessment.
- **HEARING:** Auditory ability sufficient to assess and monitor health needs and interact verbally with patient, family and health team, such as carrying on verbal communication, responding to verbal requests and auditory stimuli, assessing faint body sounds, responding to alarms. Examples: receiving and interpreting verbal messages, responding to fire, monitor and patient alarms, receiving reports, using telephone.
- **TACTILE:** Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and hands on care, such as assessing client condition and response to treatment through palpation and performing procedures requiring an intact sense of touch. Examples: assessing functional muscle tone, finding landmarks, setting equipment parameters, providing hands-on OT intervention procedures.

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A. CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment; including processing information; assessment, problem solving, and prioritizing multiple tasks on a daily basis. This includes the ability to take initiative and work independently, yet recognize self limitations.

Examples: identifying cause-effect relationships, evaluating situations including patient responses to report to supervising occupational therapist

B. COMMUNICATION

Communication abilities sufficient for interactions with others in verbal, nonverbal and written form with grammatical correctness, such as client/family teaching; communicating with patient and health team; reporting patient condition; using electronic communication devices; documentation; using equipment, reading material not in standard form; understanding and interpreting written and oral orders, policies, procedures; writing instructions, forms, reports; communicating with occupational therapist educators.

Examples: summarizing medical records information, explaining occupational therapy procedures, documenting intervention sessions, assessment results and patient responses and progress.

C. INTERPERSONAL

Interpersonal abilities and emotional stability sufficient to interact with individuals, families, groups from variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds in a caring manner, such as sensitivity to individual differences, recognition of individual dignity and worth, providing emotional support, adapting to changing and stressful environments. This would also include the ability to accept guidance and supervision from supervisors, teachers and clinical educators.

Examples: controlling emotions when dealing with the unexpected, responding to an emergency, demonstrating caring and concern for the individual experiencing health problems, accepting supervision from an occupational therapist.

D. MOBILITY

Physical abilities include fine and gross motor abilities, functional mobility and stamina sufficient to provide safe and effective care to clients with common, recurring health problems, in a variety of health care settings. These abilities would include skills such as kneeling, crawling, sitting on floor, bending, reaching, climbing, moving quickly, performing coordinated and repetitive movements, manipulating equipment, standing and walking for prolonged periods, lifting and carrying weights including people, equipment and supplies.

Examples: transferring and lifting clients, moving quickly in response to an emergency, assisting with OT assessment and activities of daily living for clients, carrying out infection control measures, using equipment, providing treatments

E. VISUAL

Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in providing care, such as physical assessment, inspection, detecting physical and behavioral changes and safety hazards, reading written client care materials, performing OT intervention.

Examples: reading charts, performing treatments, assessing visible body conditions and changes, performing OT observation and assessment

F. HEARING

Auditory ability sufficient to assess and monitor health needs and interact verbally with patient, family and health team, such as carrying on verbal communication, responding to verbal requests and auditory stimuli, assessing faint body sounds, responding to alarms.

Examples: receiving and interpreting verbal messages, responding to fire, monitor and patient alarms, receiving reports, using telephone

G. TACTILE

Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and hands on care, such as assessing client condition and response to treatment through palpation and performing procedures requiring an intact sense of touch.

Examples: assessing functional muscle tone, finding landmarks, setting equipment parameters, providing hands-on OT intervention procedures

The Health Sciences Programs at Middle Georgia State University are unable to make accommodations that impose an undue burden, present a threat to the health or safety of the individual or others, or fundamentally alter the nature of the curriculum including didactic component, laboratory sessions, and clinical affiliations. Questions about the accommodation process may be directed to Disability Services at (478) 934-3023.