



UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY
College of Health Professions - School of Rehabilitation Sciences
Occupational Therapy Program

Occupational Therapy Program Handbook

2027-2028

SECTION 1: WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome Message

Welcome, and congratulations on joining the University of Detroit Mercy Occupational Therapy Program. We are glad you are here.

At UDM, we are guided by a conviction that is both simple and profound: occupation is everything. The meaningful, purposeful activities through which people build identity, meet needs, and sustain health are not just what we study; they are the center of every course we teach, every experience we design, and every practitioner we form.

Rooted in Detroit and shaped by the Jesuit and Mercy traditions, our occupational therapy program prepares graduates who don't just know what to do, they understand deeply why occupation matters, and they can bring that understanding to life on behalf of the people and communities they serve.

You will graduate with the clinical skill, critical thinking, and advocacy orientation to create real change wherever your career takes you. This handbook is your guide to the policies, expectations, and resources that will support you throughout that journey. Please read it carefully, keep it as a reference, and do not hesitate to reach out to faculty or staff with any questions.

We are proud of what we are building here, and we are proud to build it with you. Your journey in occupational therapy starts here.

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OT Program Chair

Melissa Todd, MOT, OTRL, HWC
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

Ariana Gonzalez, OTD, OTRL, CTP, RYT
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Program Contact Information

Occupational Therapy Program

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1.2 Our Commitment to Students

In choosing this program, you are trusting us with a significant investment of time, effort, and hope for your professional future. In return, the OT Program commits to you:

Transparency: clear expectations, communicated early, and applied consistently

Support before sanction: early identification of struggle and a genuine opportunity to grow, before any disciplinary or academic consequence is considered

Belonging: a learning community where you are seen, respected, and valued as a whole person, not only as a student meeting requirements

Sustainable formation: a curriculum and a faculty that hold you to high standards while helping you build a durable, sustainable relationship with this profession, one you can carry for a career, not just survive while you are here.

1.3 Handbook Purpose & Scope

This OT Program Handbook is the primary reference for policies, procedures, and expectations applicable to all students enrolled in the MSOT and OTD programs at the University of Detroit Mercy. Students are expected to review the handbook at the start of each academic year. Unless they conflict with the policies stated in this document (in which case this document supersedes all others), students are expected to adhere to policies in the:

- University of Detroit Mercy Student Code of Conduct and Policies
- Current Graduate Catalog
- College of Health Professions Honor Code
- AOTA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- University of Detroit Mercy Social Media Policy

1.4 Policy Disclaimer

The Program reserves the right to make policy changes as the needs of its administration, faculty, students, and affiliated institutions change. These changes may occur without prior notification. This Handbook is updated annually and published in May. To ensure you have the most current information, please contact the Program offices.

1.5 Diversity & Inclusion Statement

The University of Detroit Mercy OT program is committed to promoting and supporting diversity among our student body. Our mission compels us to ensure that no one is denied access to a University of Detroit Mercy education on the basis of gender, race, religion, national origin, or economic status. Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion creates an inclusive campus climate for all individuals.

A diverse student body enriches OT education by increasing diverse perspectives that enhance new knowledge and promote opportunities to learn from others with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. The OT Program is committed to recruiting students of diverse backgrounds through recruitment, admissions, and support programs.

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Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the University's mission by behaving professionally and respectfully in all in-person and virtual settings. Violations, including posting harassing, threatening, or offensive comments, or selecting offensive virtual backgrounds, will be subject to disciplinary action.

1.6 Learning Climate & Psychological Safety Statement

The OT Program is committed to a learning climate in which students can ask questions, acknowledge uncertainty, and make and learn from mistakes without fear of humiliation or judgment. This commitment reflects the program's Belonging thread, which holds that every member of the learning community deserves to be seen and supported, and its Doing thread, which understands professional formation as an iterative process of acting, reflecting, and improving.

Psychological safety does not mean lowered expectations. Students are still held to the academic, clinical, and professional standards described throughout this handbook; psychological safety is what allows students to meet those standards honestly, through visible struggle and correction, rather than through concealment. Faculty are expected to deliver feedback directly and respectfully, to treat errors in skill-building and simulation as expected parts of learning rather than as failures, and to foster classroom, lab, and clinical dialogue in which students can respectfully disagree with faculty, peers, and course material.

Conduct that demeans, intimidates, or excludes a student or colleague is inconsistent with this climate and, where it rises to harassment or discrimination, is addressed under the University's Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination policy.

1.7 Student Well-Being & Sustainable Learning Statement

The OT Program is committed to student well-being as a condition of professional formation, not a competing priority to it. Consistent with the program's Growth thread, students should leave this program more fully themselves (as thinkers, practitioners, and people) not merely more credentialed. Faculty share responsibility for this commitment by modeling sustainable professional practice themselves: demonstrating reasonable boundaries, honest acknowledgment of their own limits, and the same self-care and self-regulation that occupational therapy asks its practitioners to bring to the populations they serve. A program that teaches occupation-based self-care while modeling unsustainable overwork teaches the wrong lesson. The specific policies and mechanisms through which this commitment is carried out are described in 8.4.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Mission & Vision

Mission

The University of Detroit Mercy Occupational Therapy program infused by the Jesuit and Mercy traditions educates compassionate, skilled, and advocacy-oriented practitioners through a curriculum rooted in doing. Through experiential learning, meaningful community partnerships, and a deliberate bridge between academic preparation and clinical practice, we develop occupational therapists who are ready to meet the evolving needs of people, communities, and systems.

Vision

Grounded in Detroit and shaped by our commitment to educating the whole person, our graduates lead with purpose, adapt with resourcefulness, and practice with the conviction that occupational therapy, done well, transforms lives.

2.2 Program Philosophy

The University of Detroit Mercy Occupational Therapy Program is grounded in the belief that engagement in meaningful occupation is fundamental to health, participation, and quality of life across the lifespan. Consistent with the American Occupational Therapy Association's Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy (2025), we recognize that all people have an innate need and right to engage in occupations that bring meaning and purpose to their lives, and that participation in occupation is itself a driver of health and adaptation. We further affirm that occupational therapy practitioners have a vital responsibility to promote occupational justice, ensuring equitable access to participation for individuals, families, communities, and populations. Through collaborative, ethical, and evidence-informed practice, graduates of this program bring meaningful value to every team and community they serve and create meaningful ripple effects across the profession and beyond.

Consistent with this Philosophical Base, the program conceptualizes occupation as both a means and an end in therapy: valuable as a therapeutic tool, and the goal of intervention (AOTA, 2025). Through partnerships with clinicians, communities, and interprofessional collaborators, students learn to translate knowledge into action and respond thoughtfully to the realities of contemporary practice.

2.3 Educational Framework

The University of Detroit Mercy Occupational Therapy program integrates the broad perspective and critical-thinking skills cultivated through a liberal arts education with advanced graduate-level professional formation. Grounded in the Jesuit and Mercy

traditions, the program embraces a humanistic approach that recognizes and honors individual learning needs while preparing graduates to lead with purpose and practice with conviction.

To ensure that the program's philosophy shapes not only its values but also its curriculum structure, the program uses the Subject-Centered Integrative Learning Model for Occupational Therapy (SCIL-OT; Hooper, Molineux, & Wood, 2020) as its curriculum design anchor. The SCIL-OT Model establishes that every profession is concentrated around a core subject defining focus of its inquiry, service, and education. For occupational therapy, that core subject is occupation: activities that bring meaning to the daily lives of individuals, families, and communities and enable them to participate in society.

The program's approach to student development draws on three complementary frameworks that build across the curriculum: Transformative Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and Human-Centered Design. Students first examine and reconstruct their own assumptions about disability, health, and access; then build competence and professional confidence through guided practice, simulation, and feedback; and finally learn to apply those skills at a systems level, identifying barriers to occupational participation and co-creating solutions with the people affected by them. Together, this arc prepares graduates to transform internally, perform competently, and lead systemically.

The curriculum is intentionally designed with students at the center. Courses are offered through immersive intensive blocks and longitudinal experiences, allowing students to engage deeply with focused content, apply knowledge in real time through practice immersions, and demonstrate readiness through competency assessments. Longitudinal seminars support the development of sustainable professional practice and equip students with strategies to sustain their well-being throughout their careers. Integrated field experiences ensure that application, reflection, and mentoring are woven into every semester of the program.

Students are educated not only as skilled clinicians but as practitioners who understand why occupation matters and can articulate how the activities clients engage in daily are the very mechanisms through which they meet survival needs, sustain psychological wellbeing, maintain connections to community, and build or restore health. Distinctive curriculum threads serve as a bridge, preparing graduates to design, evaluate, and scale solutions that address societal health inequities and shape the future of the profession.

2.4 Alignment with University Mission

The Program aligns with the University of Detroit Mercy's mission: a Catholic university in the Jesuit and Mercy traditions that exists to provide excellent student-centered undergraduate and graduate education in an urban context. A Detroit Mercy education

seeks to integrate students' intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social development. The OT Program's mission aligns with the College of Health Professions' [mission and values](#).

2.5 Program Overview

The University of Detroit Mercy occupational therapy program prepares graduates with the clinical expertise, occupational reasoning, and leadership capacity to transform lives across a wide range of settings.

Students enter a single professional curriculum and, with guidance from faculty advisors, select their degree path after the third semester:

- Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) — 60 credits, 5 semesters. Prepares graduates for the NBCOT examination and entry-level generalist practice.
- Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) — 90 credits, 8 semesters. Doctoral-level depth in implementation science, human-centered innovation, policy and advocacy, and electives for specialization culminating in a 14-week capstone experience.

Both degrees align with their respective ACOTE standards for occupational therapy education.

SECTION 3: HISTORY & ACCREDITATION

3.1 University History

The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) founded the University of Detroit in 1877. The Sisters of Mercy, Province of Detroit, founded Mercy College of Detroit in 1941. Together, these religious congregations established the University of Detroit Mercy in 1990. Each congregation brings its spirit, commitment to quality education, the service of faith, promotion of justice, and compassionate service to the university's mission.

3.2 Program History

University of Detroit Mercy has received approval from the Higher Learning Commission for our MSOT, OTD, and ppOTD programs. We are in the process of securing accreditation with the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) for the MSOT and the entry-level OTD.

Since Fall 2025, the core curriculum has been developed, and stakeholders have been engaged to refine and strengthen it. Refinement occurred through stakeholder engagement activities, including surveys and focus groups with community partners, clinical educators, and other stakeholders. Feedback collected during this stage will inform final adjustments prior to submission of accreditation materials to ACOTE in August 2026. This structured process ensures that the curriculum reflects both the profession's standards and the University's commitment to community engagement and health equity. The University of Detroit Mercy OT program anticipates receiving candidacy status in December of 2026 and beginning to accept applications in January 2027 for our inaugural cohort to start in May 2027.

3.3 Accreditation

The entry-level occupational therapy master's degree and doctoral degree programs have applied for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA, and its web address is acoteonline.org.

Pending approval, the inaugural cohort would start in May 2027. The program must be granted Candidacy Status, undergo a preaccreditation review, complete an on-site evaluation, and be granted Accreditation Status before its graduates are eligible to sit for the NBCOT certification examination. After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR).

Note: All states require licensure to practice; state licenses are typically based on results from the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT examination or attain state licensure.

The Occupational Therapy Program is currently pending approval by the Higher Learning Commission.

3.4 Non-Discrimination

The OT Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, creed, gender, sexual orientation, color, national origin, marital status, religion, disability, or any other factor prohibited by law or defined by ACOTE. This applies to all aspects of program operations, including admissions, academic evaluation, and clinical education.

SECTION 4: PROGRAM OUTCOMES & FACULTY

4.1 Program Outcomes

The Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) provides comprehensive, entry-level preparation for generalist occupational therapy practice. Graduates are qualified to deliver client-centered, evidence-based care across diverse settings. They are eligible to sit for the NBCOT examination upon completion of academic coursework and Level II fieldwork. The MSOT offers a timely on-ramp to licensure and professional practice, while maintaining a seamless pathway for students who wish to pursue additional doctoral-level study through the entry-level OTD. Upon successful completion of academic and fieldwork requirements, graduates of both paths are eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination.

By the completion of the program, MSOT graduates will:

1. Demonstrate entry-level competence in client-centered, evidence-based, and occupation-based OT practice with individuals, groups, and populations.
2. Embody professionalism, integrity, and ethical reasoning, assuming responsibility as leaders and collaborators.
3. Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and advocate for equity and occupational justice.
4. Apply and contribute to quantitative and qualitative research to inform evidence-based practice and innovation.
5. Collaborate ethically and effectively across disciplines, partnering with local and global communities to advance health and well-being

The entry-level Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) prepares graduates as both generalist clinicians and change leaders equipped to translate evidence into action. In addition to meeting all MSOT competencies, OTD students complete advanced coursework in implementation science, human-centered design, and can further individualize their learning through doctoral-level electives that support specialization attainment in emerging areas such as advocacy for systems change and trauma-informed care. These specializations provide formal recognition of advanced skills that align with workforce and societal needs. The program culminates in a 14-week doctoral capstone, where students integrate and apply these competencies to develop sustainable, systems-level solutions in collaboration with organizations and communities. The OTD represents an intentional expansion of knowledge and rigor, developing practitioners who not only use evidence in practice but also create the systems and innovations that enable evidence-based care to flourish.

By the completion of the program, entry-level OTD graduates will:

1. Demonstrate entry-level competence in client-centered, evidence-based, and occupation-based OT practice with individuals, groups, and populations.
2. Embody professionalism, integrity, and ethical reasoning, assuming responsibility as leaders and collaborators.

3. Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and advocate for equity and occupational justice.
4. Apply and contribute to quantitative and qualitative research to inform evidence-based practice and innovation.
5. Collaborate ethically and effectively across disciplines, partnering with local and global communities to advance health and well-being.
6. Graduates will design, implement, and evaluate practical solutions that close the gap between what is known from research and what works in clinical practice, improving outcomes for individuals, organizations, and communities.
7. Graduates will use creative, person-focused approaches to develop new programs, services, or systems that enhance participation, well-being, and quality of life.
8. Graduates will demonstrate advanced leadership by developing, communicating, and sustaining initiatives that expand the reach and impact of occupational therapy.

4.2 Curriculum Design

The UDM OT program was designed from the learner's perspective. Rather than beginning with content coverage, we mapped the student journey, engaging students, clinicians, and community partners to understand the transitions, challenges, and developmental needs that shape the path from novice learner to entry-level practitioner. This process revealed a persistent gap between how curricula are designed and how students actually experience them and informed the design of a curriculum that intentionally supports students across key developmental stages while maintaining a strong connection to contemporary practice. The result is a curriculum that meets students where they are, builds progressively through reflective learning and applied practice, and remains tightly connected to the realities of contemporary OT. Our aim is not only to produce competent practitioners, but thoughtful changemakers prepared to contribute to the advancement of occupational therapy and the health of the communities they serve.

4.3 Curricular Threads

UDM's BRIDGE threads (Belonging, Readiness, Innovation, Doing, Growth, and Engagement) provide the longitudinal architecture of the OTD curriculum, tracing distinct dimensions of professional formation across all parts of the program.

Belonging - Belonging is the recognition that every person is inherently worthy of occupational participation, dignity, and inclusion. Students develop professional identity as members of an inclusive OT knowledge community, learning to advocate for belonging in every setting they serve.

Readiness - Readiness is the belief that our graduates don't just know occupational therapy, they are prepared to practice it in real settings with real people from the moment

they enter professional practice. Students develop occupation-centered knowledge, clinical judgment, and professional habits to meet people where they are.

Innovation - Innovation is the conviction that occupational therapists don't just work within systems; they challenge them, redesign them, and build something better for the people those systems have failed. Students develop the capacity to identify barriers to occupational therapy delivery models to promote access to quality care.

Doing - Doing is built on the foundational truth that you cannot think your way to becoming an occupational therapist; you must live it. Students develop competence, confidence, and sustainable professional habits by learning through doing.

Growth - Growth is the commitment that every student who enters the program leaves more fully themselves, as a thinker, a practitioner, and a person. Students develop critical thinking, reflective capacity, and professional identity that deepens across the curriculum.

Engagement - Engagement is what is required to thrive as a student, become a responsive practitioner, and to contribute meaningfully to the profession and people it serves. Students co-construct their learning, taking active ownership of the practitioners they are becoming.

4.4 Program Faculty

Amy Lamb, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA, NBC-HWC — Chair & Associate Professor

Ariana Gonzalez, OTD, OTRL, CPT, RYT — Doctoral Capstone Coordinator & Assistant Professor

Melissa Todd, MOT, OTRL, HWC — Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

SECTION 5: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Admission Policies

The University of Detroit Mercy Occupational Therapy program utilizes a holistic admissions process that considers academic preparation, professional potential, and alignment with the program's mission and values. In addition to meeting minimum academic requirements, applicants are evaluated across multiple dimensions, including:

- Academic achievement, including cumulative and prerequisite grade point average
- Volunteer, work, or service experiences, particularly those related to healthcare or community engagement
- Evidence of leadership, teamwork, and collaboration
- Experiences with diverse populations and demonstrated commitment to service

This holistic review process supports the program's institutional mission and its commitment to recruiting and admitting a diverse student population, as it allows applicants to demonstrate readiness and potential through multiple forms of evidence rather than academic metrics alone.

Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B average).

These admission policies are published on the program website and in the program's student handbook, ensuring they are readily accessible to prospective students and the public. Policies are applied consistently and equitably to all applicants.

Prerequisite Coursework

Applicants must complete the following prerequisite courses prior to matriculation:

- Human Anatomy (with laboratory)
- Human Physiology (with laboratory)
- Developmental Psychology
- Statistics
- Sociology
- Medical Terminology

Application While Prerequisites Are in Progress: Applicants may apply to the program while still completing prerequisite coursework. However, all prerequisite courses must be fully completed, with an official transcript reflecting a final passing grade, prior to the start of the program. No prerequisite coursework may be in progress or outstanding at the time of matriculation.

Prerequisite Course Recency Requirements:

- Prerequisite science and math courses (Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, and Statistics) must be completed within 7 years of the application date.

- All other prerequisite courses must be completed within 10 years of the application date.

Advanced Placement (AP) Credit for Prerequisite Coursework

The program accepts Advanced Placement (AP) credit toward satisfaction of prerequisite course requirements only when supported by an official undergraduate transcript that lists the specific course(s) and credit granted based on the AP exam. An AP exam score alone, without corresponding credit posted on an official undergraduate transcript, is not sufficient to satisfy a prerequisite requirement.

Transfer of Credit and Advanced Placement into the OT Program

Due to the sequential and integrated design of the professional curriculum, the program does not accept transfer of academic credit from other occupational therapy programs, and advanced placement into the professional curriculum is not available. Specifically:

- Didactic and clinical course credits earned at other institutions, including other OT programs, are not accepted for transfer.
- Advanced placement into any point in the curriculum is not available under any circumstance.
- All students, regardless of prior education, background, or professional experience, must complete the entire didactic and clinical OT curriculum at the University of Detroit Mercy.

This policy is applied consistently and equitably to all applicants and is necessary due to the tightly sequenced, integrated nature of the curriculum, in which each course builds directly on content and competencies established in preceding coursework.

Alignment with Institutional Mission, Vision, and Diversity

The Occupational Therapy program's admission policies are designed to reflect and advance the mission and vision of the University of Detroit Mercy. As a Catholic university in the Jesuit and Mercy traditions, Detroit Mercy exists to provide excellent, student-centered education that integrates the intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social development of its students. The University's vision calls for graduates who lead and serve their communities as a hallmark of a Detroit Mercy education.

The program's holistic admissions process operationalizes this mission by evaluating applicants not solely on academic metrics, but on evidence of service orientation, leadership, collaboration, and experience with diverse populations. Consistent, equitable application of admission policies ensures that all applicants are evaluated fairly against the same standards, while the holistic review process preserves space for applicants to demonstrate readiness through life experience, community engagement, and non-traditional academic paths. To this end, the admissions committee's review process begins with the applicant's personal statement and resume, prioritizing the applicant's personal

narrative, motivations, and lived experience before academic metrics such as GPA are considered.

For purposes of this policy, the program defines student diversity broadly to include, but not be limited to: race, ethnicity, and national origin; gender identity and sexual orientation; age and generational background; socioeconomic status and first-generation college status; prior career or life experience (including career-changers and non-traditional students); geographic origin, including rural and urban backgrounds; disability status; and religious and cultural background. This definition reflects the program's recognition that a diverse student body. This is foundational to building a diverse occupational therapy workforce essential to meeting the needs of the varied client populations served by the profession.

5.2 Technical Standards

Candidates for admission and enrolled students must possess the abilities and skills necessary to complete the program and to practice as an occupational therapist. These standards apply to all aspects of the program, including classroom, laboratory, and fieldwork settings. Candidates must meet the CHP technical standards in five categories: observation, communication, motor, intellectual, and behavioral/social. Reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities (temporary or permanent) will be considered on an individual basis. Candidates must be able to perform independently, with or without accommodation. For more information, please refer to the [College of Health Professions Technical Standards](#)

5.3 Health, Background, and Drug Screening Requirements

All students are required to complete a [criminal background check](#) and [health screening](#) as a condition of enrollment. A [drug screen](#) may also be required prior to beginning fieldwork placements. Students must be vaccinated in accordance with requirements specified by the College of Health Professions and by each fieldwork site.

5.4 Student Complaint Policy

University of Detroit Mercy, consistent with its mission, welcomes student feedback on its policies, programs, and services to promote an optimal learning environment. Please see the [University Student Complaint Policy](#) for further information

5.5 Graduation Requirements — MSOT

Students must successfully complete 60 required credits for the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy. The MSOT program is designed to be completed in 5 consecutive full-time semesters, approximately 20 months, from initial matriculation to completion of all degree requirements. Students must complete all Level II fieldwork within 24 months following the completion of the didactic portion of the program.

- Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Successful completion of all required coursework (B- or higher)

- Successful completion of Level I Fieldwork (all rotations)
- Successful completion of Level II Fieldwork (minimum 24 weeks per ACOTE standard)

All requirements for the MSOT degree, including didactic coursework and fieldwork, must be completed within 42 months from starting the MSOT program. Students must meet both timelines: the 24-month timeframe following completion of the didactic portion of the program to complete Level II fieldwork, and the 42-month maximum time to degree completion.

5.6 Graduation Requirements — OTD

Students must successfully complete 90 required credits for the entry-level OTD in Occupational Therapy. The OTD program is designed to be completed in 8 consecutive full-time semesters, approximately 32 months, from initial matriculation to complete all degree requirements. Students must complete all Level II fieldwork and the doctoral capstone within 24 months following the completion of the didactic portion of the program.

- All MSOT graduation requirements (if entry-level OTD pathway)
- Successful completion of all required coursework (B- or higher)
- Successful completion of all elective concentration coursework (B- or higher)
- Successful completion of Doctoral Experiential Component (minimum 14 weeks per ACOTE)
- Completion of Doctoral Capstone Project
- Dissemination of capstone project outcomes as articulated in the Doctoral Capstone Handbook

All requirements for the OTD degree, including didactic coursework, fieldwork, the doctoral capstone experience and dissemination, must be completed within 54 months from starting the OTD program. Students must meet both timelines: the 24-month timeframe following completion of the didactic portion of the program to complete Level II fieldwork, and the 54-month maximum time to degree completion.

SECTION 6: ACADEMIC POLICIES

6.1 Registration

Prior to the beginning of each semester, students are required to register in accordance with Detroit Mercy procedures. Registration must be completed before the student may attend classes. Students will receive a tuition billing statement from the University. Registration is completed through the student portal at my.udmercy.edu. For important dates, please review the Academic Calendar published by the Registrar.

Verification of Student Identity: Consistent with University policy and applicable federal requirements for distance education, the OT Program verifies that the student registered for a course is the same student who participates in and completes that course, including its assessments. For courses or course components delivered online, the program uses methods that may include a secure individual login and password, and remote proctoring technology for designated examinations. Students are not charged an additional fee for these verification methods. Any additional cost associated with proctoring technology will be disclosed to students in advance through the course syllabus. Information collected for identity verification purposes is handled consistent with FERPA and the program's student records policy.

Student Privacy

The OT Program is committed to protecting the privacy of student information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and University policy. Student educational records, including registration, academic, and identity verification data, are maintained securely and are accessible only to University personnel with a legitimate educational interest in that information. Personally identifiable information collected for purposes of identity verification, remote proctoring, or other academic technologies is used solely for the purpose for which it was collected and is not shared with third parties except as permitted by FERPA or required by law. Students may review their educational records and request amendment of inaccurate information in accordance with the University's Student Records Policy, available through the Office of the Registrar.

6.2 Attendance, Punctuality and Professional Engagement

Students in the OT program are graduate-level adult learners balancing significant academic, clinical, and personal responsibilities. The program's expectation is not perfect attendance but professional accountability: showing up prepared and on time, and communicating proactively and directly with faculty, clinical sites and peers when a conflict arises. This mirrors the standards of practice that OT practitioners are held to throughout their careers.

Program-Level Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply across all OT Program courses and clinical experiences:

Excused absence: An absence resulting from personal illness or injury, a family or personal emergency (including bereavement), a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of program hours, a required legal obligation, a University-sanctioned activity, or a religious observance. Excused absences require timely notification to the course instructor and, where applicable, the clinical site (documentation may be required). Students who anticipate a conflict between a religious or cultural observance and required program activity, assessment, or deadline should notify the course instructor as early as possible so that reasonable alternative arrangements can be made.

Unexcused absence: Any absence that does not meet the criteria above, or for which the student failed to provide timely notification. Absences for which notification is provided after the fact without adequate explanation may also be classified as unexcused at the discretion of the course instructor or Program Chair.

Tardiness: Arriving after the scheduled start time of any required program activity, or leaving before its scheduled conclusion without prior approval. Repeated tardiness is treated as a professionalism concern regardless of whether individual instances are formally excused.

Professional Presence: Students are expected to engage meaningfully with all required program activities in ways that support their own learning and that of their peers. Professional presence is demonstrated through observable behaviors tied to course objectives such as contributing to discussion, responding to questions, collaborating on shared tasks, and following through on assigned roles rather than through any single required style of engagement. Professional presence can look different across students: it may be verbal or written, may involve traditional discussion or alternative modes of contribution, and does not require a particular communication style. The program recognizes that neurodivergent students and students with communication differences may demonstrate engagement in ways that differ from a normative standard, and evaluation of professional presence will account for that range. A student whose engagement is not producing the expected outcomes of a course or activity may be addressed through the same review process as other attendance and professionalism concerns; the concern in every case is the observable impact on learning, not conformity to a single presentation of engagement.

Faculty Responsibilities

Course instructors are responsible for the following:

- Providing students with a course syllabus within the first or second class meeting that specifies course-specific attendance requirements, project deadlines, and the process for reporting absences.

- Communicating any changes to the syllabus schedule or unanticipated class cancellations to students and the Program Chair as promptly as possible.
- Applying attendance standards consistently and in accordance with both the course syllabus and this program-wide policy.
- Notifying the Program Chair if a student's pattern of absence or tardiness raises concern for academic progression or professional conduct, regardless of whether individual absences are excused.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for the following:

- Arranging all non-emergent personal obligations and appointments to avoid conflicts with required program activities.
- Notifying the course instructor (and the clinical site supervisor, if applicable) of any unanticipated absence as early as possible and no later than one hour before the scheduled start of the activity. In fieldwork and clinical settings, notification must occur before the scheduled start of the clinical day in accordance with site expectations.
- Providing written substantiation (e.g., documentation from a healthcare provider, court notice, or other appropriate source) for any absence exceeding three consecutive program days, or at the request of the course instructor or Program Chair, for absences of any duration.
- Discuss any anticipated absence with the course instructor as soon as it is known, and submit a written request to the Program Chair for any anticipated absence from a required program obligation. Approval is not guaranteed and will be evaluated based on the nature of the absence, the academic context, and the student's standing in the program.
- Completing all work missed during any absence, excused or unexcused, including assignments, examinations, demonstrations, and clinical responsibilities. An excused absence does not waive the requirement to complete missed work; it provides the student an opportunity to do so without academic penalty, subject to the terms established in the course syllabus.
- Students are also responsible for reviewing the course syllabi to understand the grading criteria for engagement and participation. Where participation is a graded component of a course, the course syllabus governs the specific assessment criteria; program-level engagement expectations apply in all courses regardless of whether participation is formally graded.

Demonstrating Professional Presence

Active engagement in class discussions, activities, and collaborative learning is essential to professional formation as an occupational therapist. Consistent with the definition above, students demonstrate engagement in varied ways, and evaluation focuses on whether course objectives requiring collaboration, discussion, or applied participation are being met rather than on a specific style of participating. Examples of observable engagement include asking questions, contributing ideas in whatever

format the activity calls for, completing assigned roles in group work, and responding to instructor or peer input in a way that advances the discussion or task.

Engagement expectations apply across all instructional formats. In synchronous online or hybrid sessions, students are expected to meet the same course objectives as in-person instruction; course syllabi will specify how engagement can be demonstrated in that format. Students who need an alternative means of demonstrating engagement, whether due to disability, communication style, or another reason, should raise this with the course instructor or Student Accessibility Services as early as possible.

Device use during class sessions should support the learning task at hand. Where device use appears unrelated to the current activity, instructors will address this directly with the student before treating it as a professionalism concern.

Consequences for Unexcused Absence, Repeated Absence, and Tardiness

Attendance concerns are addressed progressively, in proportion to frequency and context:

- A single unexcused absence or pattern of tardiness will typically result in a documented conversation between the student and the course instructor, with a record placed in the student's file.
- A second unexcused absence or a pattern of repeated excused absences within a single course may result in a written warning from the course instructor and notification to the Program Chair.
- Continued or escalating attendance concerns will be referred to the Program Chair. Attendance and punctuality are considered elements of professional behavior and will be reflected in promotion reviews.
- In fieldwork and clinical settings, a single unexcused absence may have immediate consequences for the student's fieldwork placement, including removal from the site. See the applicable Level I and Level II Fieldwork Handbook for additional details.
- Patterns of disengagement, consistent distraction, or conduct that disrupts others' learning environment will be treated as a professionalism concern, documented, and addressed through the same progressive review process as other attendance and professionalism issues. A single conversation with the instructor is typically the first step; repeated or escalating concerns will be referred to the Program Chair and may be reflected in promotion reviews.

Nothing in this policy relieves students of the responsibility to complete all missed work. The program fully expects that students will fulfill all academic and clinical obligations regardless of the circumstances of any absence.

Fieldwork Attendance

Fieldwork attendance is governed by both this policy and the requirements set forth in the UDM OT Level I and Level II Fieldwork Handbooks. Because Level I and Level II Fieldwork

require completion of a minimum number of hours, attendance at all scheduled fieldwork days is mandatory, and absences cannot simply be excused. Communication with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) and the clinical site is expected.

Students must notify both the fieldwork site supervisor and the AFWC of any absence from fieldwork before the scheduled start of the clinical day. Specific make-up procedures, consequences for missed fieldwork hours, and site-specific attendance requirements are detailed in the applicable Fieldwork Handbook and the student's fieldwork agreement. Students are responsible for reviewing and complying with those requirements in addition to this policy.

Requests for Anticipated Absence

Students who anticipate a conflict with a required program activity must:

1. Notify the course instructor as soon as the conflict is known.
2. Submit a written request to the Program Chair describing the nature and expected duration of the absence and the activity to be missed.
3. Await written approval before assuming the absence is authorized. Submitting a request does not constitute approval.

Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered include the nature of the absence, the academic or clinical context, the student's academic standing and attendance history, and the feasibility of making up missed work or experiences.

6.3 Grading Scale

Individual course instructors will communicate grading scales in the course syllabus. The following program-wide grading scale is used unless otherwise specified:

Grade	Percentage Range
A	93.0 – 100
A-	90.0 – 92.9
B+	87.0 – 89.9
B	83.0 – 86.9
B-	80.0 – 82.9
C+	77.0 – 79.9
C	73.0 – 76.9
D	70.0 – 72.9
F	< 70.0

Note: The minimum passing grade for program continuation requires students to earn a B- or better in all OT professional courses, including electives for the OTD degree path.

6.4 Repeating Courses

Except as otherwise determined by the Program Chair, students may be permitted to repeat a course only once. A second unsatisfactory performance in the same course may result in dismissal from the program. Both grades will appear on the transcript; the higher grade will be used in calculating GPA.

6.5 Academic Misconduct

As members of an academic community engaged in the pursuit of truth, University of Detroit Mercy students must conform to the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. Among the most serious academic offenses is plagiarism, the submission of ideas or work from another source without acknowledgment or documentation.

Students are expected to understand and follow the University of Detroit Mercy Academic Integrity Policy in full. Violations may result in failure of an assignment or course, and/or referral for dismissal from the program.

6.6 Use of Artificial Intelligence

The OT Program recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly present in academic, clinical, and professional environments. Occupational therapy practice demands independent clinical reasoning, sound professional judgment, and ethical decision-making, all of which must be developed through individual effort and reflection. The following policy governs student use of AI tools in all OT Program coursework and is grounded in those professional values and the program's commitment to academic integrity.

Limited Use: Unless explicitly indicated otherwise by the course instructor, students are not permitted to use AI tools for assignments, projects, assessments, or any other course-related activities. This restriction supports fair and accurate assessment of each student's individual knowledge, critical thinking, and clinical reasoning.

Selective and Instructor-Authorized Use: For designated assignments in which the course instructor explicitly authorizes AI use, students may use AI tools as a supportive resource. AI should augment the student's own thinking and effort. It may not substitute for original analysis, clinical reasoning, or individual understanding. Authorization to use AI on one assignment does not extend to other assignments in the same course unless explicitly stated.

Use in Research and Scholarly Work: AI and AI-assisted tools may be used in support of formal research design, literature synthesis, or data analysis only when consistent with the methodology standards of the relevant assignment or publication venue. When AI tools are used in any component of a scholarly or research submission, students must describe the specific tools used and the nature of their application in the methodology section of the

work. Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of all submitted work, regardless of whether AI tools were used in its preparation.

Declaration Requirement: When AI tools are used with instructor authorization, students must include a completed AI Declaration at the end of the submission, positioned above the references. The required declaration format is provided below. Submissions that use AI without a completed declaration, or that use AI in contexts where it has not been authorized, will be treated as a violation of the program's Academic Misconduct Policy and may result in failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or referral for further disciplinary review.

AI Declaration Template

During the preparation of this assignment, I utilized [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] to perform [SPECIFIC TASK/REASON].

After leveraging this tool/service, I conducted a thorough review and made necessary edits.

I hereby assume complete responsibility for the content presented in this submission.

6.7 CHP Honor Code

Students in the College of Health Professions are expected to demonstrate academic, professional, and personal integrity. They are committed to the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy and the Society of Jesus that emphasize values, respect for others, and academic excellence. A student's acceptance into the OT Program is conditional upon signing an affirmation of the CHP Honor Code.

6.8 Examinations

Examination policies, including scheduling, format, make-up procedures, and grading, are specified in each course syllabus. The following general policies apply program-wide:

- Students must arrive on time for all scheduled examinations. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late may not be permitted to take the exam. This is subject to instructor approval.
- Make-up exams are permitted only with prior instructor approval, and solely in cases of documented illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances.
- Electronic devices are prohibited during examinations unless authorized by the instructor or as an approved accommodation.

6.9 Faculty and Student Responsibilities

The OT Program is built on a foundation of mutual respect, shared accountability, and commitment to the ethical standards of both the academic community and the

occupational therapy profession. The responsibilities outlined below reflect the program's expectation that faculty and students alike conduct themselves in accordance with the AOTA Code of Ethics, the College of Health Professions Honor Code, and the University of Detroit Mercy's commitment to dignity, equity, and excellence in education. These responsibilities apply across all program contexts: classroom, laboratory, clinical, and virtual.

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members are expected to conduct themselves in a fair and conscientious manner consistent with the ethical standards of the academic community and the occupational therapy profession. Except in cases of illness or other compelling circumstances, faculty members are expected to:

1. Meet all scheduled classes and appointments, and notify students and the Program office promptly of any unanticipated cancellation or change.
2. Be available at reasonable times for student appointments and respond to student communications in a timely manner (specified in syllabi). Faculty are encouraged to maintain reasonable after-hours communication, consistent with the program's commitment to sustainable practice.
3. Serve as an academic advisor to assigned students, meeting with them to review academic progress, discuss curricular and professional development planning, and address concerns in a timely manner.
4. Make appropriate preparation for classes, laboratories, and other program meetings.
5. Provide students with a written course syllabus at or before the first class meeting that describes course content and objectives, methods and standards of evaluation, and the relative weight assigned to each graded component.
6. Consult the program's shared calendar before finalizing course syllabi and coordinate major examinations and high-stakes assignment deadlines with concurrently taught courses to avoid unreasonable clustering of academic demands in a single week.
7. Notify the Program Chair when a course's workload or pacing may create unsustainable cumulative demand across the semester and participate in the end of semester workload review conducted by the curriculum committee.
8. Base all academic evaluation on good-faith professional judgment, without consideration of factors such as race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, political or cultural affiliation, or activities and behavior outside the classroom unrelated to academic and professional achievement.

9. Communicate with any student who has earned a failing grade prior to submitting that grade to the Registrar. The purpose of this communication is to confirm that the grade was arrived at accurately and to ensure the student is aware of the outcome before it is officially recorded. This conversation does not constitute an informal appeals process; students wishing to formally contest a grade should follow the grievance and appeals procedures outlined by the College of Health Professions.
10. Perform grading duties in a timely manner, returning feedback to students within a reasonable timeframe as specified in the course syllabus.
11. Make reasonable arrangements when timely notice of a religious or cultural observance is provided.
12. When a student's academic progress falls below expected standards, initiate a timely conversation with the student and document the interaction.
13. When a student presents with a personal issue that may affect their progress in the program, make themselves available for timely referral to appropriate student services. If the faculty advisor is unavailable, the student should be directed to the Program Chair.
14. Respect the confidentiality of student information contained in University academic records in accordance with FERPA and the program's student records policy. Faculty may share student information in connection with legitimate intra-University business, including communication with clinical fieldwork educators and affiliate faculty as necessary for educational purposes, without student consent. Any disclosure beyond these contexts requires student consent or legal authorization.
15. Give appropriate recognition to student contributions in research, publication, service, or other scholarly and professional activities.
16. Refrain from exploiting professional relationships with students for private advantage, and from soliciting student assistance for private purposes in any manner that infringes upon students' freedom of choice.
17. Refrain from any activity that involves risk to the health or safety of a student, except with the student's informed consent and, where applicable, in accordance with University policy governing the use of human subjects in research and experimentation.
18. Respect the dignity of each student individually and all students collectively in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings; in all communications, whether in person, written, or electronic; and in all other academic and professional contexts.

Faculty as Healthcare Providers for Students

Faculty members shall not serve as healthcare providers for any student currently enrolled in the OT Program. This boundary exists to protect the integrity of the faculty-student

relationship and to ensure that students receive objective, unbiased evaluation throughout the program. Students requiring healthcare services should access the University Wellness Center or their personal healthcare provider. This prohibition applies regardless of the faculty member's clinical credentials or licensure.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a fair and conscientious manner consistent with the College of Health Professions Honor Code, the ethical standards of the academic community, and the professional standards of the occupational therapy profession as defined by the AOTA Code of Ethics. Occupational therapy is a profession grounded in respect for human dignity, cultural humility, and client-centered practice. These values are not reserved for clinical settings; they are expected in every interaction throughout the program. Except in cases of illness or other compelling circumstances, students are expected to:

1. Attend all scheduled classes, laboratories, fieldwork experiences, and program appointments. Attendance expectations are governed by the Attendance and Punctuality Policy in this handbook.
2. Arrive prepared for all classes and program meetings, having completed assigned readings, preparatory work, and any pre-class requirements specified in the course syllabus.
3. Submit all assignments on time and in accordance with the standards described in each course syllabus.
4. When a course's progress falls below expected graduate standards, proactively meet with the course instructor to discuss academic standing and identify strategies for improvement.
5. When a personal issue arises that may affect progress in the program, contact the faculty advisor promptly for guidance and referral to appropriate student services. If the advisor is unavailable, students should contact the Program Chair.
6. Engage with all peers, faculty, staff, fieldwork educators, and patients, real or simulated, without discrimination or bias on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law or University policy. This expectation applies in all program contexts, including classroom, laboratory, clinical, and online settings.
7. Refrain from exploiting professional relationships with peers, faculty, or staff for private advantage, and from soliciting the assistance of others in any manner that infringes upon individual freedom of choice or violates academic integrity standards.

8. Refrain from any activity that involves risk to the health or safety of a peer, faculty member, staff member, or patient, except with informed consent and in accordance with applicable University policy governing human subjects in research and experimentation.
9. Respect the dignity of every student, faculty member, staff member, fieldwork educator, and patient individually and collectively, in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings; in all communications, whether in person, written, electronic, or on social media; and in all other academic and professional contexts.
10. Demonstrate active professional engagement in all program activities consistent with the Professional Engagement expectations described in this handbook.

6.10 Academic Advising and Student Readiness Dashboard

Purpose

Every student is assigned a faculty advisor upon entering the program. To support consistent advising and early identification of support needs, the OT Program uses a Student Readiness Dashboard. The Student Readiness Dashboard is a shared tool that consolidates indicators across academic performance, professionalism, certification readiness, and wellbeing. Rather than relying on informal or variable advising practices, faculty advisors use a common set of indicators to identify emerging needs early and work with students to build individualized support plans.

Advising Assignments

All faculty advisors are full-time faculty members in the OT Program and are licensed occupational therapy practitioners. As each new cohort enters the program, the Program Chair assigns incoming students across available advisors to maintain equitable distribution, with newly hired faculty phased into the advising rotation as capacity allows.

Students will retain their advisor throughout the program, absent a change necessitated by faculty departure, leave, or workload rebalancing. The Program Chair reviews advising assignments annually and may reassign advisees as needed to maintain equitable distribution. Students will be notified in advance of any change in advisor assignment.

Frequency of Advising

Advisors meet with each advisee at least twice per semester for a structured advising meeting. Students entering the program can expect more frequent early contact, including an initial meeting with their advisor within the first few weeks of the program, to support the transition into the curriculum. Where dashboard indicators or other concerns suggest an emerging need, the advisor initiates additional meetings as warranted, rather than waiting

for the next scheduled touchpoint. Students may also request a meeting with their advisor at any time.

Dashboard Categories

- **Academic and Certification Readiness:** course grades and NBCOT-style practice exam performance (TrueLearn)
- **Professionalism:** attendance, punctuality, and NACE career-readiness competencies
- **Wellbeing and Belonging:** belonging assessments administered at matriculation, program midpoint, and prior to graduation

How the Dashboard Is Used

- Advisors meet with each advisee each semester to review dashboard trends and co-develop individualized support plans.
- Where dashboard indicators suggest an emerging concern, the advisor makes timely referrals to tutoring, mentoring, counseling, fieldwork preparation, or success coaching.
- Students may view their own dashboard data at any time and are active participants in developing their own support and readiness plans.

Data Governance and Boundaries

- Access to a student's dashboard is limited to that student, their assigned advisor, and the Program Chair.
- Wellbeing and belonging data are used solely to inform advising and referral to support resources. They are not used in professionalism or disciplinary review, and a student's dashboard record is not shared with fieldwork sites. This is consistent with the program's commitment that seeking or needing support is not treated as a concern
- Professionalism data displayed in the dashboard reflects the same definitions and processes described in 6.2; the dashboard is a shared view of that information for advising purposes.
- Dashboard data are retained and disposed of consistent with the program's student records policy and FERPA.

Level II Fieldwork Advising

During Level II Fieldwork, advising and support are coordinated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC), who maintains ongoing contact with students and fieldwork educators through structured checkpoints across the placement, including periodic check-ins, a

midterm site visit, and monthly required virtual cohort meetings covering shared experiences, programmatic updates, and professional development (e.g., NBCOT exam preparation, licensure, networking, and employment planning). Students complete weekly reflection logs and Learning Objectives, supported by Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) scoring tools, allowing students and the AFWC to self-monitor progress and identify concerns early. The AFWC proactively follows up with any student whose reflections suggest an emerging need. All fieldwork documentation and communication are housed in EXXAT. Full details on the Level II Fieldwork advising structure, communication timeline, and related procedures are outlined in the Fieldwork Manual.

Doctoral Capstone Advising

In addition to the faculty advisor who supports students through the didactic portion of the curriculum, all OTD students receive dedicated advising for the capstone experience through the Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (DCC). This advising runs in parallel with the student's faculty advisor relationship and spans the capstone project from introduction through dissemination.

The DCC leads coordination and verification of compliance for the capstone, maintains ongoing contact with students and their capstone team, monitors milestone progress, and serves as the primary point of contact for capstone-related questions or concerns. Capstone advising unfolds progressively across the program: the DCC introduces the capstone in semester one and offers optional Q&A workshops in semesters two and three; students attend a brainstorming sessions the following semester; preparatory coursework in semesters six and seven guides project identification, literature review, needs assessment, and site selection, and students build out their capstone team by adding a Content Expert and Faculty Mentor. During the capstone experience, students have a circle of advisors led by the DCC to support their project. For full details on the capstone advising process, milestones, and requirements by semester, refer to the Doctoral Capstone Handbook.

SECTION 7: PROFESSIONALISM & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

7.1 Professional Behavior Expectations

OT students are representatives of the program, the profession, and the University of Detroit Mercy. Students are expected to maintain professional conduct in all academic, clinical, and program-related contexts. The following expectations apply at all times:

- Demonstrate respect and dignity toward clients, peers, faculty, staff, and all members of the health care team.
- Communicate truthfully and professionally in all verbal, written, and electronic communications.
- Accept responsibility for one's actions and demonstrate accountability.
- Adhere to the AOTA Code of Ethics and Occupational Therapy Standards of Practice.
- Respond constructively to feedback and demonstrate a commitment to continuous learning and growth.

7.2 Dress Code

General Guidelines

Students shall maintain a professional appearance during all program-related activities. Business casual attire is expected whenever students are in non-classroom settings where interaction with professionals, clients, or administrators may occur, including:

- Off-campus classes, professional meetings, and program events
- Activities attended by outside guests or university administrators
- Fieldwork preparation and orientation sessions

The following are not appropriate as business casual attire: jeans (unless explicitly permitted), shorts, t-shirts without collars, athletic wear, crop tops, excessive or distracting jewelry, or attire with offensive graphics.

Fieldwork/Clinical Settings

Students must comply with the dress code of each fieldwork site. A program identification and/or name badge must be worn and clearly visible at all times on site. Students must identify themselves as an occupational therapy student in all interactions with clients and staff.

7.3 Social Media Policy

Students are expected to adhere to the Detroit Mercy Social Media Policy. Students must not post, share, or reference any protected health information (PHI), identifiable client information, or confidential fieldwork site information on any social media platform. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

7.4 Confidentiality and HIPAA

All student interactions with clients, including in academic settings, simulations, and fieldwork, require strict adherence to HIPAA and applicable state privacy laws. Students must not:

- Discuss client information outside of appropriate clinical contexts
- Photograph clients or identifiable clinical materials without explicit written consent
- Access records of individuals who are not directly involved in treating

Students will complete required HIPAA training as part of their program orientation and prior to each fieldwork placement.

7.5 Student Identification

Students must introduce themselves clearly as a occupational therapy student in all professional interactions with clients, families, and team members. Students should not allow themselves to be addressed by a credential they have not yet earned.

Example: 'Hi, my name is [Name]. I am an occupational therapy student at the University of Detroit Mercy, working under the supervision of [Supervisor Name].'

7.6 Practice and Professional Ethics

Professional Ethics

Ethics is a code of morality and a system of principles governing the appropriate conduct for a person or group. All social and health care professionals are required to understand and practice the ethics of care because they aim to serve the public, and members of the public entrust professionals with significant personal needs in their time of greatest vulnerability. Integrity, honesty, diligence, loyalty, respect, and commitment are all part of an ethical character, which, in turn, exemplifies professionalism. The AOTA Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2025) provides the profession with its guiding rules to ensure clients' best interests are protected and to safeguard the profession's position in the public mind.

Examples of professional ethics may include the following:

- Following the University Academic Integrity policy
- Reporting unethical, unsafe, or potentially harmful behavior observed in academic, laboratory, or fieldwork settings
- Ensuring client safety and wellbeing during fieldwork, including remaining within one's scope of practice as a student under supervision
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with clients, families, and fieldwork site staff
- Accurately and honestly completing all clinical and academic documentation

Professional Responsibility

This component requires that a professional displays morality and accountability for their actions, upholds the principles of the profession and federal/state stipulations, and demonstrates high standards of quality care. Professionals embody a strong sense of empathy, a desire to do good, a responsible attitude, and adherence to governing law. Additionally, professionals are responsible for a commitment to excellence and lifelong learning.

Examples of professional responsibility may include the following:

- Participating in student, state, and national level professional organizations
- Completing all required reading and research before class
- Having ownership of mistakes
- Complying with the occupational therapy practice act and regulations of any state in which coursework or fieldwork is completed
- Understanding that a pattern of professional or ethical misconduct may affect a graduate's eligibility to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or obtain state licensure

7.7 Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Professionalism

Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Professionalism

**Before initiating this process, faculty should determine whether the concerns reflect a violation of conduct (dishonesty, breach of confidentiality, disrespect, failure to communicate, unsafe practice) or a deficit in academic or clinical performance. Difficulties that are promptly and honestly disclosed, and do not involve dishonesty, safety risk or repeated failure to follow through on agreed corrective steps, are addressed through the academic and clinical progression policies in Section 10, not thorough professional discipline.*

Students who fail to meet the standards specified in program policies governing attendance, professional conduct, clinical behavior, or professional ethics are subject to disciplinary action. Sanctions range in severity depending on the nature, context, and history of the conduct at issue. Available sanctions include, but are not limited to, warning, reprimand, probation, and dismissal.

The OT Program faculty, acting collectively, serves as the determining authority for professionalism violations resulting in warning, reprimand, or probation. Matters involving dismissal for professional misconduct are adjudicated by the Office of the Dean of the College of Health Professions in consultation with the Program Chair.

Warning: A warning is a verbal or written notice issued to a student for misconduct that is isolated in nature, promptly correctable, and does not constitute a violation of Program policy, University policy, or applicable law. A warning may be issued by any faculty member or University representative.

Warnings are reported to the full OT faculty and the Program Chair for informational purposes. A temporary note is made in the student's record and becomes permanent if further disciplinary action is required. Warning documentation is removed upon successful completion of the program.

Reprimand: A reprimand is a formal written notice issued to a student for misconduct that is more serious than that addressed by a warning, but remains isolated in nature, is considered correctable, and does not constitute a violation of Program policy, University policy, or applicable law. A reprimand may be issued by any faculty member or administrator.

Reprimands are reported to the full OT faculty and the Dean of the College of Health Professions for informational purposes. A copy is placed permanently in the student's record.

Probation: Probation may be imposed in response to a serious breach of professional standards, a pattern of repeated concerns, or continuation of conduct previously addressed through a warning or reprimand. The decision to place a student on probation, and the specific terms and duration, are determined by the full OT faculty in consultation with the Program Chair, based on the individual circumstances of the case.

Probation is intended to support the student in meeting professional standards going forward. Terms are tailored to the concern at issue and may include a remediation plan, professional development activities, and structured check-ins with faculty. Where a documented health or safety consideration is directly relevant to the conduct at issue, the plan may include a recommendation to engage with appropriate health or wellness resources. Any such recommendation is offered as a support option in the first instance; a related consultation may be required only where it is directly necessary to establish a student's readiness to safely continue in academic or clinical work, and the program will rely on the least amount of documentation necessary for that purpose.

Students on probation may continue didactic coursework at the discretion of the faculty. Continuation in fieldwork or clinical placements during probation is determined by the faculty, in consultation with the Program Chair, based on the nature of the concern and any applicable safety considerations. Failure to meet the terms of a probation plan may result in dismissal, as described below.

Dismissal: A permanent separation from the OT Program and, where applicable, the University. Dismissal for professional misconduct is determined by the full OT faculty and mediated by the Office of the Dean of the College of Health Professions. Dismissal may be imposed with or without the right to reapply for admission to the University of Detroit Mercy at a later date, at the discretion of the Dean.

In cases of serious breach of professional conduct, a student may be dismissed immediately, regardless of academic standing. Students whose dismissal does not involve an immediate separation retain the right to respond to faculty findings before a final decision is made. Students wishing to appeal a dismissal decision should follow the grievance and appeals procedures outlined in the [CHP Appeals Policy](#).

SECTION 8: UNIVERSITY & PROGRAM POLICIES

8.1 Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, a federal law established in 1974, the confidentiality of student education records must be maintained.

At the University of Detroit Mercy, the Registrar coordinates the inspection and review procedures for student education records, which include admissions, personal, academic, and financial files as well as cooperative education and placement records.

No one outside the institution shall have access to information in a student's education records without the student's written consent. An exception will be granted in special circumstances to officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll, persons or organizations providing students with financial aid, accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, persons in compliance with a judicial order, and persons in an emergency in order to protect the health and safety of students or other persons.

Students may review their education records by making written requests to the Registrar.

Students may not inspect financial information submitted by their parents; confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment, or job placement, or honors to which they have waived their rights of inspection. Students may not have access to education records containing information about more than one student. The University is not required to permit students to inspect and review confidential letters and recommendations placed in their files prior to January 1, 1975.

A copy of detailed University policies and regulations related to the Privacy Act is available in the Registrar's Office.

Program faculty will request a signed student release to provide information or recommendations to scholarship-granting agencies or potential employers.

8.2 Release of Student Records

No one outside the institution may access a student's educational records without the student's written consent. Exceptions are described in the Graduate catalog. The university may disclose public or "directory information". Students may request that their directory information be withheld. See the Graduate catalog for full disclosure.

8.3 Scheduling & Time Commitment

Successful completion of the OT program requires a substantial time commitment. Students should expect approximately 30-40 hours per week during the didactic phase and 40-45 hours per week during fieldwork placements, including clinical hours, travel, study, and program assignments.

8.4 Student Well-Being & Sustainable Learning Policy

The OT Program is committed to supporting students in thriving across their professional formation, not merely surviving it, consistent with the program's Growth and Belonging

threads. This commitment is carried out through the program's existing academic and professional policies, including:

Communication-based attendance expectations (6.2) that hold students accountable as adult learners without treating help-seeking as a professionalism concern

Faculty workload coordination and advisement responsibilities (6.9), including coordination of assessment timing across concurrent courses and regular, documented advising that keeps students connected to relevant support resources

A progressive, support-first approach to academic and professional concerns (Section 10), in which remediation is the first response to a struggle, and disciplinary or dismissal action is reserved for cases where support and opportunity for improvement have not resolved the concern

A leave of absence and re-entry process (8.5) designed to support students through significant life circumstances without loss of standing

Students experiencing academic, personal, financial, or health-related stress are encouraged to contact their faculty advisor, the Wellness Center or Counseling Clinic (11.2), or Student Accessibility Services (11.1). Use of these resources, or disclosure of a personal or health-related difficulty to faculty, is not itself treated as adverse information in any academic or professional review.

8.5 Leaves of Absence

A student facing extended illness, personal emergency, or other extenuating circumstances may petition the Program Chair for a leave of absence. A leave of absence is a temporary, planned pause in the program, distinct from withdrawal or dismissal, and is intended to allow a student in good standing to step away and return without losing their place in the program.

Requesting a Leave: Students should request a leave of absence in writing to the Program Chair as early as circumstances allow, describing the reason for the request and the anticipated duration. Where the circumstances are sudden or urgent, a student or a designee may notify the Program Chair verbally in the first instance, with written confirmation to follow as soon as reasonably possible. A leave of absence is not automatically granted; approval, and any conditions attached to it, will be confirmed to the student in writing.

Duration: A leave of absence shall not extend beyond one calendar year. Before that period ends, the student and Program Chair will confirm a re-entry date or, if more time is needed, discuss whether withdrawal and future reapplication is the more appropriate path.

Cohort and Sequencing Considerations: Because the curriculum is delivered in a sequential, cohort-based format, a leave of absence will typically result in the student re-entering with a later cohort at the point in the curriculum where their leave began. The Program Chair will advise the student, at the time the leave is approved, on the anticipated re-entry point, any resulting change to expected graduation date, and any implications for fieldwork placement timing or financial aid.

Preparing for Re-Entry

No later than four weeks before the anticipated return to didactic coursework, or twelve weeks before a return that involves fieldwork placement, the student and Program Chair will meet to plan re-entry. This conversation will address:

- Any preparatory work, refresher activities, or skills review reasonably needed to resume the curriculum at the point of re-entry
- Referral to relevant student support resources where relevant to a successful return
- Any accommodations that should be arranged in advance of return
- Confirmation of the student's course, lab, and fieldwork schedule upon return

The purpose of this process is to support a successful return, not to impose additional barriers to re-entry. Any preparatory requirement will be tailored to the specific gap created by the leave and will be identified as early as possible, so the student has adequate time to complete it.

Determination of Readiness: Where a leave was taken for medical or mental health reasons, the Program Chair may request confirmation from the student's treating provider that the student is able to safely resume academic and clinical responsibilities. This confirmation will be limited to the information necessary to establish readiness to return and will not require disclosure of diagnosis or treatment details beyond that scope. A student who disagrees with a readiness determination may request reconsideration through the Program Chair and, if unresolved, the grievance procedures.

8.6 Pregnant and Parenting Students

Please refer to the University's current policy for pregnant and parenting students, available through the Office of the Registrar or the Dean of Students.

8.7 Military Absence

Students who are members of the United States Armed Services and are called to active duty or reserve obligations will be granted time for those purposes. Students must notify the Program Chair of their military status and anticipated obligations as early as possible.

8.8 Student Professional Activities

The OT Program encourages its students to participate in the professional activities of their new profession. The Program provides opportunities for students to attend professional meetings and workshops sponsored by local, state, and national OT organizations.

The Program will make every effort to accommodate reasonable schedule revisions needed for student representatives in these professional pursuits. All students attending professional meetings and workshops are expected to participate fully in the conference's educational and leadership components.

8.9 Financial Considerations

Occupational therapy education is an excellent investment in your professional future. Financial assistance for the OT student is available, but it remains the student's responsibility to find it and apply for it. Since student eligibility for financial aid is determined by individual circumstances, each student is urged to visit the Financial Aid office for assessment of financial status. Information on various grants, loans, and other assistance is also available. Many financial assistance programs require students to apply only through the financial aid office.

When applying for financial aid, the student must consider all educational expenses, including basic living costs. Be sure to include, in addition to tuition, medical insurance, room and board, books, medical equipment, personal expenses, professional dues, and transportation.

Students must apply for financial assistance annually, and eligibility may change from year to year. Remember, any significant changes in expenses or income should be brought to the attention of the financial aid office at the time it occurs, as they may affect your current financial aid status.

SECTION 9: FIELDWORK EDUCATION

Fieldwork education is a fundamental component of occupational therapy education. The OT Program provides a comprehensive fieldwork education program that is consistent with the ACOTE Standards and the AOTA Fieldwork Education Guidelines. All fieldwork placements are coordinated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

9.1 Level I Fieldwork

Level I Fieldwork provides students with opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in practice settings, develop professional behaviors, and explore the breadth of occupational therapy practice. Level I experiences are integrated throughout the didactic curriculum. Please refer to the UDM OT Level I Fieldwork Handbook for additional details.

9.2 Level II Fieldwork

Level II Fieldwork provides students with in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services. Students are required to complete a minimum of 24 weeks of full-time Level II Fieldwork per ACOTE standards, typically across two placements. Please refer to the UDM OT Level II Fieldwork Handbook for additional details.

9.3 Doctoral Experiential Component (OTD)

OTD students are required to complete a minimum of 14 weeks of doctoral experiential component activities in addition to Level II Fieldwork, per ACOTE standards. This experience is tailored to the student's doctoral capstone project focus. Please refer to the UDM OTD Doctoral Capstone Student Handbook for additional details.

9.4 Fieldwork Placement Process

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) is responsible for arranging all fieldwork placements in collaboration with affiliate sites. Students will have an opportunity to indicate preferences; however, the AFWC makes final placement decisions based on site availability, student learning needs, and program requirements. Students are expected to accept assigned placements. Please refer to the UDM OT Level I and II Fieldwork Handbooks for additional details.

9.5 Supervision of Students

Level I Fieldwork may be supervised by occupational therapists or other qualified professionals as permitted by ACOTE standards. Level II Fieldwork must be supervised by a currently licensed and credentialed occupational therapist with at least one year of practice experience following initial certification.

Students must at all times identify themselves as OT students and must not provide services without appropriate supervision. The degree of supervision should be commensurate with the student's level of experience and the complexity of the client's needs. Please refer to the UDM OT Level I and II Fieldwork Handbooks for additional details.

9.6 Fieldwork Attendance

Attendance at all scheduled fieldwork days is required. Students must notify both the fieldwork site supervisor and the AFWC of any absence as early as possible, and no later than [insert time] before the scheduled start of the shift. Unexcused or excessive absences may result in a failing grade for the fieldwork experience and may require the student to repeat the placement. Please refer to the UDM OT Level I and II Fieldwork Handbooks for additional details.

9.7 Fieldwork Site Expectations

Students must comply with all policies and procedures of each fieldwork site, including but not limited to infection control, HIPAA, documentation, dress code, and electronic device policies. Students who fail to meet site expectations may be removed from a placement and subject to academic review. Please refer to the UDM OT Level I and II Fieldwork Handbooks for additional details.

9.8 Clinical Performance Objectives

Student performance during Level II Fieldwork is evaluated using the American Occupational Therapy Association's Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE). Level I and doctoral experiential component evaluations are conducted using [insert tool].

Please refer to the UDM OT Level I and Level II Fieldwork Handbooks for additional details.

SECTION 10: ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

** Academic and clinical progression in the OT Program is grounded in early identification, transparent communication, and structured support. When a student's performance falls below expected standards, the program's first response is a remediation plan developed collaboratively with the student not an assumption of failure. At the same time, the program holds all students to the academic, clinical, and professional standards required for safe and competent entry-level practice. Where a student is unable to meet those standards despite appropriate support and opportunity for improvement, dismissal from the program may ultimately result, as described below.*

10.1 Good Academic Standing

To remain in good academic standing, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 across all program courses. Students must also achieve a grade of B- or higher in all professional OT courses. Students in the doctoral pathway must achieve a grade of B- or higher in concentration electives.

10.2 Academic Probation

Academic probation will be assigned when a student's term GPA falls below 3.0, or when a student receives a grade below B- in any professional OT course. Students on academic probation must meet with the Program Chair to develop a written remediation plan. Students on probation have one semester to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or above. A second-term GPA below 3.0 after probation may result in dismissal.

10.3 Clinical/Fieldwork Probation

Probationary status may be assigned when a student fails to demonstrate satisfactory progress toward fieldwork performance objectives. The following process applies:

1. The AFWC and/or supervising therapist will document specific areas of concern in writing.
2. A performance improvement plan (PIP) will be developed in collaboration with the student.
3. The student will be given a defined period (not to exceed [insert timeframe]) to demonstrate improvement.
4. At the end of the probationary period, the Academic Progression Committee will determine whether to lift probation or recommend a failing grade for the experience.

Probationary status can only be assigned once for any single fieldwork experience. A student who does not successfully complete probation will receive a failing grade and may be subject to dismissal.

10.4 Suspension

If, in the judgment of the faculty, a threat to client safety, student health or well-being, or professional conduct standards exists, a student may be suspended from program activities. A suspension may also be imposed pending an investigation. Days lost to suspension will not count against the student's time bank.

10.5 Dismissal

Dismissal from the program may result from academic, clinical/fieldwork, ethical, professional, or disciplinary reasons, including but not limited to:

- Receipt of a failing grade in any professional OT course (after applicable repeat opportunities)
- Failure to successfully complete Level II Fieldwork or the Doctoral Experiential Component
- Cumulative GPA below 3.0 following academic probation
- Violation of the CHP Honor Code or AOTA Code of Ethics
- Falsification of academic records, clinical records, or application materials
- Any act that places a client, student, or member of the public at risk of harm
- Violation of HIPAA or other patient/client confidentiality obligations
- Positive drug screen, failure to comply with drug screening requirements, or substance misuse in clinical settings

10.6 Notification of Dismissal

Dismissal will be recommended to the Program Chair by the Academic Progression Committee, accompanied by documentation of the reason(s). The final decision rests with the Program Chair. Upon dismissal, the student must return all program and site property. The Dean of the College of Health Professions, the Registrar, the Financial Aid Office, and relevant fieldwork sites will be notified.

10.7 Withdrawal

Students contemplating withdrawal must consult with the Program Chair prior to submitting a written resignation. Withdrawal after a dismissal recommendation has been issued is not permitted. Students who withdraw and wish to re-enroll must apply through the standard admissions process; re-enrollment is not guaranteed.

10.8 Grievance and Appeals

Students who wish to appeal an academic decision, probationary status, or dismissal should follow the CHP Grievance and Appeals Process. Students are expected to first seek resolution at the program level (course instructor, then Program Chair) before escalating to the college level. For non-academic grievances, students should refer to the [University of Detroit Mercy Student Code of Conduct and Policies](#).

10.9 Program Committees

Curriculum Committee

Charge: Oversees the integrity and continuous improvement of the OT program curriculum. Reviews and approves curricular changes; ensures ongoing alignment with ACOTE standards; uses program assessment data to evaluate curricular effectiveness and inform recommendations for programmatic improvement; reviews and updates program policies annually.

Membership: Assigned OT program faculty; up to two student representatives in an advisory, non-voting capacity. The Program Chair serves as committee chair.

Meets: Monthly during the academic year. A quorum of 75% voting members is required for formal curricular decisions.

Program Evaluation & Assessment Committee

Charge: Monitors and evaluates program effectiveness through systematic review of student performance data, program outcomes, and stakeholder feedback. Analyzes assessment findings in relation to program goals and the OT program's strategic priorities, and reports findings and recommendations to the Curriculum Committee for curricular and programmatic action. Ensures the program's continuous quality improvement cycle is documented and demonstrably closes the loop between assessment findings and program changes.

Membership: Program Chair, assigned OT program faculty, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC), and Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (DCC).

Meets: At the close of each academic term (minimum of three times per year) and, as program data or student performance issues warrant. The Program Chair provides the Dean of the College of Health Professions with an annual summary report of findings and actions.

Admissions Committee

Charge: Reviews applications, conducts applicant interviews, and evaluates candidates against established admissions criteria. Recommends a ranked list of candidates to the Program Chair for admission to the cohort. Final admissions decisions rest with the Program Chair, in consultation with the committee, in accordance with the College of Health Professions admissions policies.

Membership: All full-time OT program faculty. Student representatives may participate in an informational, non-evaluative capacity at the Program Chair's discretion.

Meetings: Convenes each admissions cycle according to the published application timeline.

OT Program Advisory Committee

Charge: Provides external perspective on program quality, curriculum relevance, and workforce alignment. Advises the Program Chair and Curriculum Committee on emerging

occupational therapy practice trends, regional workforce needs, and community health priorities. Supports the program's commitment to stakeholder engagement and its ongoing alignment with the needs of the populations and communities it serves. Advisory Committee input is formally documented and considered as part of the program's annual assessment and continuous quality improvement process.

Membership: Composed primarily of external stakeholders, including clinical fieldwork educators and site supervisors, regional healthcare employers and practice leaders, community partners, and program alumni (once available), a consumer or patient advocate representative. The chair convenes, and OT program faculty participate in an ex officio, non-voting capacity to preserve the external advisory function. Membership is reviewed annually; terms are 2 years long and renewable at the Chair's request.

Meetings: Twice per academic year — once in the fall semester to review program updates and workforce trends, and once in the spring semester to coincide with the program's annual assessment review. Meeting minutes and advisory recommendations are documented and shared with the Chair, OT Curriculum Committee, and the Dean of the College of Health Professions.

10.10 Structured Student Feedback Mechanisms

Consistent with the program's Innovation thread, which holds that identifying barriers and co-creating solutions with stakeholders is a core professional habit, the OT Program applies the same human-centered approach to its own curriculum. Structured student feedback is gathered through the following mechanisms and feeds directly into the review processes of the Curriculum Committee and Program Evaluation & Assessment Committee (10.9):

Mid-semester course feedback: Each course collects structured feedback partway through the term, in time for the instructor to make meaningful adjustments before the course concludes, rather than only through end-of-term evaluations.

Workload surveys: The program administers a workload survey each semester, gathering student input on cumulative academic and clinical demands across concurrently enrolled courses, to inform the workload coordination described in 6.9 and 8.4.

Student advisory participation: Student representatives serve in an advisory capacity on the Curriculum Committee (10.9), providing direct student perspective on curricular decisions under consideration.

Curriculum listening sessions: The program convenes at least one open listening session per academic year, facilitated by the Program Chair or a designee, in which students may raise curricular or program-level concerns directly with faculty outside the context of an individual course.

Findings from these mechanisms are documented and reported to the Program Evaluation & Assessment Committee as part of its ongoing review. Where feedback results in a curricular or policy change, the program will communicate that outcome back to students, so that the feedback process is visibly connected to program improvement.

SECTION 11: STUDENT RESOURCES & SUPPORT

11.1 Disability & Accessibility Support

Student Accessibility Services collaborates with students with disabilities to arrange effective accommodations. Students who require an accommodation due to a disability, pregnancy, emergency medical condition, or need special arrangements in case of a building evacuation should contact:

- Student Accessibility Services: sas@udmercy.edu | (313) 993-1938
- Student Success Center, Room 319, McNichols Campus Library 3rd floor | ssc@udmercy.edu | (313) 993-1143

Students must be registered with Disability & Accessibility Support Services each semester and ensure that faculty receive official notification before accommodations can be arranged.

11.2 Wellness & Mental Health

The University of Detroit Mercy is committed to student well-being. Students may contact the Wellness Center at (313) 993-1185 or wellnesscenter@udmercy.edu for support, counseling, or guidance. Personal counseling appointments may also be made through the Counseling Clinic, West Quad Room 104, at (313) 993-1459.

11.3 Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination

The University does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on sex, race, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics. Reports may be submitted to the Office of Equal Opportunity or the Title IX Coordinator at novellme@udmercy.edu or (313) 993-1802.

11.4 Technology Resources

University of Detroit Mercy Information Technology Services (ITS) posts current recommendations for student technology needs on their website. Blackboard is used as the primary course management system. Access to a personal computer with a camera, a microphone, and speakers, and off-campus internet access, is required. Minimum technology skills required include the use of Blackboard, Microsoft Office 365 applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), and video conferencing tools (Microsoft Teams or Zoom).

11.5 Library Resources

Students are encouraged to utilize the Detroit Mercy Library. A variety of texts, journals, and online databases are available through the Research Portal. All library materials must be returned prior to graduation. Students may also access library resources at their fieldwork host institutions.

11.6 Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available through several sources, including federal grants, loans, and scholarships. Please contact the Detroit Mercy Financial Aid Office directly at (313) 993-3350 for details.

11.7 Important Contact Information

Contact Information	
Program Chair	Amy Lamb lambaj@udmercy.edu
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator	Melissa Todd toddme@udmercy.edu (MSOT) Ariana Gonzalez gonzalav@udmercy.edu (OTD)
Student Accessibility Services	sas@udmercy.edu (313) 993-1938
Wellness Center	wellnesscenter@udmercy.edu (313) 993-1185
Financial Aid	(313) 993-3350
Registrar	(313) 993-3313
Library Reference	(313) 993-1071
Public Safety (Emergency)	(313) 993-1233 Dial 123 from campus phone
Title IX Coordinator	novellme@udmercy.edu (313) 993-1802

SECTION 12: Safety & Health

12.1 Infection Control

Students are required to follow standard infection control precautions in all classrooms, laboratory, and fieldwork settings to protect the health and safety of themselves, their peers, faculty, and clients. Students must:

- Complete all health screening and immunization requirements prior to participation in laboratory and fieldwork activities, as outlined in Section 5.3.
- Adhere to standard precautions (hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment, and safe handling of any bodily fluids or contaminated materials) in accordance with CDC and OSHA guidelines.
- Follow all site-specific infection control policies at fieldwork placements, which may exceed University requirements and may include additional vaccination, screening, or PPE protocols.
- Report any exposure incident (needlestick, bodily fluid exposure, communicable illness, etc.) immediately to the course instructor, fieldwork coordinator, or clinical site supervisor, and follow the University's exposure control and reporting procedures.
- Refrain from attending lab, class, or fieldwork while experiencing symptoms of a communicable illness, consistent with University and site-specific illness policies, and notify the appropriate instructor or supervisor of the absence.

Students who do not comply with infection control requirements may be restricted from participation in laboratory or fieldwork activities until compliance is documented.

12.2 Equipment Use

The OT program provides laboratory equipment, assistive technology, and simulation materials to support student learning. Students are expected to use all program equipment safely, responsibly, and in accordance with instructor guidance. Students must:

- Complete any required training or orientation prior to using specialized equipment (e.g., splinting materials, modalities of equipment, mobility and transfer equipment, sensory/simulation tools).
- Use equipment only for its intended educational purpose and only under faculty supervision when required.
- Inspect equipment prior to use and report any damaged, malfunctioning, or unsafe equipment to faculty immediately; damaged equipment must not be used.

- Clean and disinfect equipment after use in accordance with posted lab procedures, particularly equipment that contacts skin or bodily fluids.
- Return equipment to its designated storage location after each use to maintain lab readiness for other students.
- Reimburse the program for repair or replacement costs associated with equipment loss or damage resulting from misuse or negligence.

Failure to follow equipment use guidelines may result in restricted lab access or other corrective action at the discretion of program faculty.

SECTION 13: STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Student Acknowledgment Form

I, _____, have read and understand the contents of this handbook.

I agree to abide by all program policies and procedures outlined herein.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ UDM ID: _____

Return completed form to: [Insert office name, room number, and submission deadline]

AI Declaration Statement:

All content in this handbook was developed by the OT program faculty. Claude.ai was used to support a streamlining review, assess the clarity of policy communication, and assist with formatting. Faculty conducted a thorough review of all AI-assisted suggestions and made necessary edits. The OT program assumes full responsibility for the content presented in this handbook.