

Technical Standards for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

Students in the Northern Virginia Community College's Allied Health and Nursing Programs must meet both the academic and technical standards of the programs, with or without reasonable accommodations.

The NOVA Occupational Therapy Assistant Program technical standards have been reviewed by the NOVA OTA curriculum advisory committee and revisited annually as necessary. These technical standards are to be used for the development, evaluation, and self-analysis of NOVA's Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.

Technical Standard I: Observation

- Visual ability sufficient to observe clients greater and less than 20 feet away, read medical records on paper and on the computer screen, and view videos and graphics.

Technical Standard II: Communication

- Communicate effectively and sensitively in English with patients, family and other health care professionals, from different social and cultural backgrounds, in a variety of patient settings.
- Ability to clearly interact with others in English, both verbally and in writing.
- Develop effective professional rapport with patients and co-workers.
- Record examination and diagnostics results clearly, accurately and efficiently.
- Understand non-verbal behaviors and the impact the behavior can have on communication.
- Auditory ability sufficient for interaction in conversation and/or on the telephone with clients, families, and professionals.
- Ability to respond to alarms, emergency announcements of signals, and calls for help from clients, families, and professionals.

Technical Standard III: Motor Function

- Perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers.
- Respond to emergency situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care.
- Sensory function and motor coordination sufficient to fulfill minimum competency objectives for inspection, palpation, percussion and auscultation necessary to perform a physical examination.
- Tactile ability sufficient to perform a physical assessment (palpation, denoting temperatures, and assessment of tone, grade changes, and surface characteristics).
- Postural control, neuromuscular control and eye-to-hand coordination sufficient to utilize standard medical/therapeutic instruments to participate in the inpatient and outpatient settings and other clinical activities.
- Strength and balance sufficient to move and assist clients in functional mobility and self-care tasks without injury to the client or self.
- Hand dexterity sufficient to manipulate equipment and objects in the classroom and treatment environments.

- Ability to perform frequent and repeated bending, stooping, kneeling, sitting, standing, walking, pulling, pushing, and reaching overhead.
- Endurance sufficient to maintain the rigor of a full-time, 40-hour (consecutive day) week during clinical affiliations.
- Ability to lift 40 pounds at multiple levels to facilitate transfers.
- Ability to perform CPR.

Technical Standard IV: Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports; and computer technology.
- Assimilate and learn a large amount of complex, technical and detailed information in order to formulate diagnostic and therapeutic plans.
- Demonstrate skills of reading comprehension, active learning, deductive and inductive reasoning, adaptability, flexibility, attention to detail, self-control, and collaborative capabilities.
- Employ organizational and time management skills needed to meet classroom and fieldwork deadlines.
- Use sound judgment and apply safety precautions consistently.
- Use problem-solving skills and clinical reasoning skills needed to make mature, sensitive and appropriate decisions.
- Demonstrate an appropriate level of initiative, engagement, sustained and divided attention needed to actively participate in classroom and fieldwork environments.

Technical Standard V: Behavioral and Social Attributes

- Ability to function effectively under stress and adapt to environments that may change rapidly, without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways.
- Accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.
- Understand the legal and ethical standards of the medical profession.
- Work effectively, respectfully and professionally as part of the healthcare team, interacting with patients, their families, and health care personnel in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner.
- Contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes.
- Work with and interact with individuals without regard to the nature of their illness or disability, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or age group.
- Exhibit professional behaviors and attitudes in the classroom and clinical settings. This includes, but is not inclusive to, appropriate language, adaptability, professionalism, and taking responsibility for one's conduct.
- Ability to employ effectively appropriate judgment.
- Ability to critically self-evaluate performance, accept constructive criticism, and respond appropriately.

Technical Standard VI: Ethical and Legal Standards

- Understand the basis and content of both general and medical ethics.
- Possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility, and tolerance.

- Recognize limitations in their knowledge, skills and abilities and seek appropriate assistance.
- Students whose performance is impaired by abuse of alcohol or other substances are not suitable candidates for admission, promotion, or graduation.
- Should the student be convicted of any felony offense while in the Allied Health & Nursing Programs, they agree to notify the program as to the nature of the conviction or offense. Failure to disclose prior or new offenses can lead to disciplinary action that may include dismissal.

Approved by the NOVA OTA Program Curriculum Advisory Committee in October 2017.