

## Fairleigh Dickinson University OT Student Essential Functions

**Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to clarify the occupational therapy student's personal physical, emotional, sensory, and cognitive essential functions that are necessary for successful completion of the didactic and fieldwork components of the Occupational Therapy Program at Fairleigh Dickinson University. All occupational therapy students are required to meet these essential functions. Essential functions can be successfully met by students who have documented disabilities, have requested reasonable accommodations, and are receiving reasonable accommodations. Approved accommodations in a classroom setting are not guaranteed and may not translate to the practice setting.

**Procedure:**

1. Following admission to the Occupational Therapy Program at Fairleigh Dickinson University but prior to beginning academic coursework, all students must sign a form acknowledging that they have read and understand the essential functions.
2. Students who may have concerns about meeting these expectations are advised to meet with both their program director and their academic advisor.
3. If a student feels that he/she requires reasonable accommodation for didactic and/or fieldwork components of the program, he/she must contact the *Program Director* to before any accommodations can be made.
4. Due to the time it takes to properly evaluate a student's needs and to implement reasonable accommodations, it is recommended that students request accommodations as early as possible, *preferably at least 30 days before* the start of a course or fieldwork education experience.

**Essential Functions: The OT student/therapist must be able to perform the following**

**1. Motor Skills:**

- a) Position and move clients or equipment. This includes bending, stooping, kneeling, reaching, and squatting while pushing and pulling loads up to 200 pounds while preventing injury to client and self.
- b) Lift up to 50 pounds independently or up to 200 pounds with assistance and, while preventing injury to client and self.
- c) Safely and effectively facilitate movement of the client's body during transfers, functional mobility training, positioning, examinations, and therapeutic interventions. The OT student/therapist must be able to assume standing, sitting, kneeling, or squatting positions. Clients may be totally dependent for physical assistance.
- d) Ability to be mobile for 3-to-4-hour intervals while safely assisting clients during functional mobility actions with or without equipment such as ambulation and transfers while preventing prevent injury to client and self.
- e) Safely manipulate objects/equipment of various sizes, shapes, temperatures, smells, and textures (e.g.: dials, knobs, testing instruments, therapy balls, scissors, clamps, kitchen equipment, bathroom equipment, raw food, etc).
- f) Provide support and resistance to clients as needed through complex activities and movements while preventing injury to client and self.
- g) Perform CPR on client with client lying on floor, plinth, or mat.

- h) Perform examination techniques and provide intervention to acutely ill clients without disturbing sensitive monitoring instruments and lines.
  - i) Maintain balance while performing intervention and examination techniques on clients who have compromised balance.
2. **Sensory Skills:** Sensory components are based on the ability to see, hear, smell, or feel as needed to fulfill the duties of an occupational therapist. Accommodations may be granted to assist students in achieving the necessary baseline to fulfill these components, but a student will be responsible for demonstrating appropriate competence. Activities that require sensory competence include (but are not limited to):
- a) Examination techniques postural control assessment, pulse assessment, muscle integrity/tension, wound description, and personal hygiene and continence assessment.
  - b) Gathering of information from equipment such as (but not limited to) biofeedback, electrocardiograph, visual perceptual testing equipment, driver testing equipment, kitchen cooking devices, pulse oximeters, auscultation and blood pressure devices.
  - c) Safe application of gradient pressures during examination and intervention including manual muscle testing and joint mobilization.

**3. Emotional Abilities:**

- a) Possess the emotional health to manage a full client case load and a rapidly changing practice environment. A full client case load may vary from 7 to 10 sessions per day occasionally with 2 or more clients at one time to 14 to 18 clients per day in an outpatient clinical environment.
- b) Possess the emotional health to interact effectively and positively with clients who have challenging interpersonal and communication skills.
- c) Recognize and respond appropriately and in a timely manner to potentially hazardous situations, including those that are life-threatening.
- d) Possess the emotional health to use one's intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and always display professional behavior.
- e) Possess the ability and emotional health to accept responsibility for one's own actions and decisions.
- f) Possess the emotional health and sensitivity to interact with clients with various abilities and cultural differences.
- g) Possess the ability to accept feedback in a manner that reflects the ability to learn from and integrate feedback.
- h) Possess the ability to work collaboratively with others in groups and one on one; this includes working with those from other professional disciplines.

**4. Ethical and Professional Comportment:**

- a) Demonstrate and articulate an ethical approach to engagement.

- b) Will be familiar with and abide by the AOTA Code of Ethics.
- c) Will be familiar with and abides by the Core Values and Attitudes of OT Practice including altruism, equality, freedom, justice, dignity, truth, and prudence (see attached).
- d) Will demonstrate cultural competence and the ability to work with and serve persons with diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds and diverse viewpoints.

**5. Cognitive Skills:**

- a) Solve problems in a timely manner consistent with the demands of the situation.
- b) Recall and retain information effectively in order to meet the minimal requirements of safely and effectively caring for clients.
- c) Integrate and analyze information including information from client records, examination, and diagnostic tests to develop appropriate plans of action, as well as to provide a safe environment for the client and self.
- d) Exercise good judgment and clinical reasoning in all aspects of client care.
- e) Acknowledge limitations of knowledge and/or performance to obtain the appropriate supports to provide optimal client care.
- f) Ability to effectively integrate new information with current knowledge and practice to provide optimal client care.
- g) Ability to effectively communicate with clients who have a wide range of impairments.

I certify that I have read and understand the above "*Fairleigh Dickinson University OT Student Essential Functions*" document and that I meet each of them, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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