



Technical Standards

1. Preamble

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation. In adhering to this policy, the University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Minnesota Human Rights Act and other applicable statutes and regulations relating to equality of opportunity. The University's mission is to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities. Students are responsible for seeking assistance at the University and making their needs known. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) serves as a central resource for students, faculty and staff to collaboratively address barriers on campus. This office guides the University to follow federal and state civil rights laws for equal access for people with disabilities. For more information, visit the University of Minnesota [Office of Disability Resources](https://diversity.umn.edu/disability) website (<https://diversity.umn.edu/disability>).

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC at drc@umn.edu or 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.

The Program in Occupational Therapy requires students to engage in diverse, complex and specific experiences essential to the function of an occupational therapist assuring best practices to protect patient safety. The student must be able to participate in these experiences safely and within an acceptable amount of time. Unique combinations of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical, and social abilities are required to satisfactorily perform these functions throughout the curriculum including all clinical rotations.

Candidates for the Program in Occupational Therapy must meet the technical standards necessary to acquire or demonstrate competence in occupational therapy as outlined in this document with or without reasonable accommodation.

Motor skill requirements

General: The candidate's motor functions must, with reasonable accommodations, be sufficient for safely executing all actions required to provide general care and treatment to clients in all practice settings.

Specific:

- The candidate must possess the motor skills or adapted/assisted motor skills necessary for safely executing all standard assessment and interventions in different positions and settings.
- Such actions require coordinating gross and fine movements with balance and with uses of all senses that are necessary for providing treatment (e.g., fabricating custom orthotics; ADL training).
- The candidate must be able to meet the physical demands of performing basic life support (including CPR), positioning and re-positioning her/himself in order to position and transfer clients in different settings and situations.
- The candidate must possess adequate strength, agility, reaction time, speed and other neuromuscular characteristics necessary for ensuring the safety of the range of clients who may be encountered.

Sensory/Observational requirements

General: The candidate must be able to acquire the defined level of information presented through demonstration and experience in the rehabilitative sciences.

Specific:

- Candidate must be able to observe the client accurately, both close and at a distance, to perceive and appreciate all levels of interpersonal and/or clinically relevant information when performing assessment and intervention
- Candidate must have the sensory capacities for learning to discriminate subtle changes and variations in color, shape, sound, touch and general appearance while performing visual, auditory and tactile examinations and interventions. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in clients' facial expressions, their injury, disease and/or disability manifestations; purposeful and involuntary voice quality, speech, and language; palpation of muscle groups, muscle tone, spasticity, and range of motion.
- Candidate must also possess the visual acuity, with or without correction, to be able to read or view various forms of documentation including records, charts, printed and handwritten notation.
- Candidate must be able to tolerate sensations and experiences that are required to ensure client safety. This includes, but is not limited to, being able to join clients on elevated and/or moving surfaces when required as well as tolerating the appearance of bodily products and injury

Communication requirements

General: The candidate must have the ability to communicate effectively, sensitively and respectfully with other students, faculty, staff, clients, family and other professionals.

Specific:

- The candidate must be able to understand, convey and/or exchange information at a level allowing development and recording of a client's health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solutions, and give directions during intervention and post- intervention.
- The candidate must be able to understand, convey and/or exchange information at an appropriate level with family members and other stakeholders, not only about a client's health, well-being and development, but also about privacy and confidentiality concerns, the functions and roles of OTs in practice, and other professionally relevant issues
- Candidate must be able to process and communicate information on client's status accurately and in a timely manner to members of the health care team, including when to seek consultation and supervision
- Candidate must be able to communicate verbally and in writing and express ideas and feelings clearly, respectfully and in a timely manner, be willing and able to receive and give helpful feedback, and communicate/collaborate constructively with students, staff, professional colleagues and supervisors
- The candidate must be able to find information in the literature, computerized databases and lectures, process it and incorporate it into practice understanding and decision-making and to communicate effectively in English in oral, written and electronic forms to individuals, small and large groups

Cognitive requirements

General: The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, integrate, synthesize and reason about information at a level commensurate with a Masters level education.

Specific:

- Due to the nature of a hybrid curriculum, the candidate must be proficient in basic computer skills and standard applications and be able to learn new technology embedded within the course learning platform and at clinical sites associated with the program.
- For working in a hybrid curriculum, the candidate must be able to self-organize her/his time, independently prioritize and efficiently manage multiple related and/or competing tasks and schedules. This includes effective problem-solving in an online context.
- The candidate must be able to read and quickly comprehend extensive written materials. S/he must also be able to incorporate and expand on this knowledge in clinical situations and professional exchanges

- Candidate must also be able to evaluate and apply information and think critically in the classroom, lab and clinical setting, all in a timely manner. This includes interpreting, understanding and incorporating assessment information into therapeutic planning and rapid execution.
- Candidate must also understand where particular items of information or situations fit into the larger healthcare, emotional and/or social/economic circumstance

Social/Emotional/self-care requirements

General: The candidate must possess the emotional health required for the utilization of her/his intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the care of clients and families as well as self-care

Specific:

I Empathy and ethics

- The candidate must be able to experience empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and effectively communicate that empathy regardless of age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, and disability status, religious or cultural background.
- Candidate must know that her/his own values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect perceptions and relationships with others. S/he should interact responsibly with others showing tolerance, compassion, and empathy as well as altruism, integrity, and honesty, regardless of personal perspective.
- The candidate must possess the ability to reason morally and practice in an ethical manner in accord with professional, legal and cultural standards of practice
- The candidate must be able to balance individual learning needs with the professional standard of protecting the well-being & safety of patients in all practice delivery environments.

II Social interaction

- The candidate must be able to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships, and respect personal boundaries, with clients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals under all circumstances, including highly stressful situations.
- The candidate must be able to receive constructive feedback in a non-defensive manner and be able to take personal responsibility for acting on the feedback. The candidate should understand that accidents and mistakes happen and that one should learn from them.

III Stress management and self-care

- Candidate must have the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to environments that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways. Stressors may include uncooperative, hostile and aggressive clients whose behavior must be managed calmly and patiently to maximize therapeutic benefit and minimize risks of harm to the clients and self. Emotional responses to challenging situations are normal and expected, but the candidate should be able to exert sufficient control over these reactions to respond flexibly, safely and effectively to the challenge.

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