

Mercer University
College of Health Professions
Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program
Technical Standards

The abilities and skills which candidates and students must possess to successfully complete the training associated with occupational therapy education are referred to as the “Technical Standards.” The five categorical areas listed below represent the essential qualities that are considered necessary for candidates and students to achieve the knowledge, skills, and levels of competency stipulated for graduation by the faculty and expected by the occupational therapy profession. Prior to matriculation, all candidates must attest that they meet all Technical Standards as established by the Occupational Therapy Program. Additionally, these standards must be maintained throughout the student’s progress while enrolled in the Occupational Therapy Program. Students found to be in violation of the Technical Standards are at risk of dismissal from the Program.

Candidates and students for the Occupational Therapy Program must possess the following abilities and skills:

I. Observation

- A. Accurately and in entirety observe clients both at a distance and nearby, (for example, changes in mood, movement, or posture). This ability requires functional vision, hearing and somatic sensation.
- B. Ability to visually observe materials presented in the classroom and laboratory environment including audiovisual presentations, clinical rotations, written documents, tissues and gross organs, and diagnostic images.

II. Communication

- A. Effectively speak, hear, and observe clients to elicit information, perceive nonverbal communication, and describe changes in mood, activity, and posture.
- B. Communicate effectively and sensitively with clients and their families through oral and written language. Communicate accurately and efficiently in oral, written, and electronic form with members of the healthcare team.
- C. Gather, comprehend, use, and disseminate information in an effective manner.

III. Psychomotor

- A. Elicit information from clients by palpation, auscultation, and percussion, and clinical diagnostic testing.
- B. Execute movements required for client examination, evaluation, and interventions. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
- C. Safely lift and transfer clients.
- D. Possess physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study, which may include prolonged periods of sitting and/or standing, twisting, bending, reaching, lifting, and continuous use of hands with firm grasp and manual dexterity.
- E. Demonstrate sufficient motor abilities, including physical strength and coordination to operate equipment as well as physically move and support clients of various weights to and from different surface heights.

IV. Cognitive

- A. Demonstrate the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize information.
- B. Demonstrate the ability to acquire, retain, and apply new and learned information.
- C. Demonstrate appropriate critical thinking in client examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, interventions, and outcomes including planning, time management and use of resources to effectively solve problems in fieldwork and capstone settings.
- D. Comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures.

- E. Reflect on, assess, and report on performance of self and others.
- F. Understand abstract ideas, including theoretical knowledge and research.

V. Behavioral and Social Attributes

- A. Possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of clients.
- B. Demonstrate mature, receptive, and effective relationships with faculty, clients, fellow students, and members of the health care team.
- C. Possess qualities of flexibility and the adaptability in functioning in an environment of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many clients.
- D. Demonstrate the capacity to tolerate taxing workloads and function effectively under stress.
- E. Display the personal qualities of compassion, integrity, commitment, motivation, and genuine concern for others that are intrinsic to the medical profession and will be assessed during the admissions and educational process.
- F. Ability to work collaboratively in a respectful matter.
- G. Ability to accept critique and constructive feedback.

VI. Professionalism and Ethics

- A. Adherence to the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics and all other applicable legal and ethical standards.
- B. Maintain professional conduct in the classroom, laboratory, clinical, and community environments.

Concluding Comments

Candidates for admission to the Occupational Therapy Program will be asked to verify that they understand and meet these technical standards with a signature in the Policies and Procedures Manual. Admission decisions are made on the supposition that each candidate believes that he or she meets the technical standards with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Candidates are encouraged to ask questions about the Program's technical standards for clarification and to determine if they meet the standards with or without reasonable accommodation. The Occupational Therapy Program acknowledges Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and asserts that the ability to meet certain essential technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation must be present in the prospective candidate. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary; however, admitted students who wish to request accommodations should contact:

Access and Accommodation Office – Atlanta
Office is located at Atlanta Campus, Duvall Suite 102
Email: access@mercer.edu
(678) 547-6478 office
(478) 301-2127 fax

During enrollment, the Occupational Therapy Program's faculty and staff will monitor students for continuing compliance with the technical standards. The faculty of the Occupational Therapy Program recognize and embrace the responsibility of presenting candidates for graduation who have the education and skills to function in a wide variety of fieldwork and capstone situations and/or settings to provide competent client-centered care to a diverse population of clients.