

LaGuardia Community College
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Orientation Handbook

Spring 2023



Welcome to the LaGuardia Community College (LAGCC) Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program and the beginning of your journey toward becoming an occupational therapy assistant. Acceptance of your seat in the LAGCC OTA Program carries academic, co-curricular, and professional behavior responsibilities.

This handbook contains essential information about the LAGCC OTA Program. You are required to review the handbook carefully after orientation. You must adhere to the all of the principles stated in this Handbook and to the tenets of the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and the OTA Program Professional Behavior Competency Form.

A clear understanding of the LAGCC Mission and the OTA Program Mission, Philosophy, and Outcomes will provide you with a foundation for your educational and professional development goals as you move through the curriculum.

The OTA Program Clinical Progression Standards and the Criteria for Successful Completion of the OTA Clinical Program are provided for you to understand the academic rigor of the clinical phase of the OTA Program. You must maintain these standards in order to move forward from your first semester in the clinical phase of the program to graduation.

The OTA Program Course Progression clearly provides all of the courses required for the AAS degree for the OTA major. It includes both the pre-clinical phase courses and the clinical phase courses by semester. Clinical phase requirements include both academic coursework and the clinical fieldwork experiences. All clinical phase courses must be taken in accordance with the OTA Program Course Progression.

Clinical fieldwork experiences occur in the middle and final phases of the OTA Program. There are two levels of fieldwork required. The Level I, or part-time experience, occurs in the 12-week session of the middle phase (2nd semester) and final phase (3rd semester) of the OTA Program while classes are being taken.

The Level I experience requires you to engage in 40 hours of clinical experiences involving a blend of live and online simulations, standardized patients, and clinical site visits. The Level II, the full-time clinical placement experience, occurs in the 6-week session of the middle phase (2nd semester) and final phase (3rd semester) of the OTA Program. The Level II experience requires you to engage in a clinical experience full time (5 days per week according to the daytime schedule of the clinical site) for a minimum of 8 weeks at the site. Each level of fieldwork requires you to attend at a concurrent seminar class.

Successful completion of the OTA Program requires your active engagement, a commitment to lifelong learning, and careful planning. The OTA Program faculty and staff are here to welcome and support your journey toward becoming an occupational therapy assistant.

We look forward to working with you and supporting your journey to becoming an occupational therapy assistant.

Professor Regina M Lehman MS, OT/L, OTA Program Director and the faculty of the OTA Program.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

LaGuardia Community College's mission is to educate and graduate one of the most diverse student populations in the country to become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens who help to shape a rapidly evolving society.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Inquiry and Problem Solving** asks students to seek and use disciplinary and cross-disciplinary content knowledge to address challenging issues, weighing evidence and drawing conclusions through a process of synthesis and evaluation.
- **Global Learning** asks students to approach the world's challenges and opportunities from multiple perspectives and engage with issues of diversity, identity, democracy, power, privilege, sustainability and ethical action.
- **Integrative learning** asks students to make connections between ideas and apply them to new contexts, within and beyond campus and over time.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMUNICATION ABILITES

- **Written** is the ability to combine vocabulary with grammatical proficiency, fluency and cogent organization.
- **Oral** is the ability to speak clearly to different audiences.
- **Digital** is the ability to combine images, text, video or other media in effective digital presentation.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The LaGuardia Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is committed to educating a diverse student body of critical thinkers who are actively engaged in life-long learning and well prepared to enter the evolving healthcare services environment and workforce as occupational therapy assistants in traditional and emerging practice areas.

The program is committed to the fulfillment of the college mission. It is responsive to the needs of a diverse and inclusive student body and people, groups, and populations in local and global communities. The program promotes the development, education, and graduation of socially responsible citizens who recognize and respect diverse perspectives. Upon graduation, students are prepared to collaborate with other members of the healthcare team and clients to achieve health, well-being, and participation in life situations through engagement in meaningful occupations throughout the lifespan.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The LaGuardia Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program prepares students to become occupational therapy assistants who are competent to address the health and well-being needs of local and global communities.

The program views human beings as continuously capable of learning across the lifespan within diverse contexts through direct, individualized participation in meaningful occupation.

Students are actively engaged in a collaborative teaching and learning process with educators and peers in classroom, laboratory, asynchronous, and fieldwork environments building on prior knowledge and experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Didactic, experiential and technology based pedagogies promote critical thinking, professional identity, clinical and professional reasoning, and global learning.

Values, ethics, and clinical skills central to occupational therapy are supported through self-exploration and reflective practice. Through the curricular sequence, students develop a strong professional identity as occupational therapy practitioners, advocates, and agents of change who are client-focused and capable of implementing occupational therapy services that are inclusive, address health and well-being, and support participation in meaningful and relevant occupations to meet society's occupational needs.

Faculty and graduates act as role models for clinical practice and professionalism beyond the classroom. The importance of leadership, advocacy, professional development, reflective practice, connection with professional associations, and life-long learning is established and reinforced with the students throughout the educational process.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM COMPETENCIES/OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the program, the graduate will be able to:

- Demonstrate progressively across the curriculum, the ability to integrate academic coursework and clinical experiences to achieve the professional identity of the entry-level occupational therapy assistant (*Integrative Learning**)
- Identify the role of engagement in diverse meaningful occupations in the promotion of health and well-being across the lifespan within the global community (*Global Learning**)

- Use critical thinking, observation, and clinical reasoning in reflective cycles to identify, select, and perform client-centered, evidence-based interventions in a variety of practice settings (*Inquiry and Problem Solving**)
- Communicate effectively in oral, written, and digital media using professional vocabulary appropriate for diverse audiences (*Oral, Written, & Digital Communication**)
- Use reflection and self-assessment to develop a sense of self as a learner to support the development of leadership qualities to impact policy, environments, and systems and to function as an agent of change within diverse and inclusive contemporary healthcare practice (*Integrative Learning**)

* *LAGCC Core Competencies and Communication Abilities for College-wide assessment of student learning*

OTA PROGRAM – CLINICAL PROGRAM PROGRESSION STANDARDS

The requirements for progression in the clinical phase of the program are as follows:

1. A student must complete each OTA clinical program course with a minimum grade of C (70%) per the grading criteria stated in each course syllabus.
2. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 must be maintained throughout the clinical phase of the program.
3. Failure of either the clinical or theoretical component of any course requires that the entire course be repeated.
4. A student will be allowed to re-register for only one OTA course in the OTA clinical program.
5. Permission to repeat a course is at the discretion of the Program Director and on a space available basis.
6. Students who do not successfully complete an OTA course for any of the following reasons must achieve a passing grade on the second registration attempt of that course.
 - a. Failure earned in the course
 - b. Withdrawal from the course
 - c. Medical Leave of Absence (MLA)
 - d. Stop Out
7. The second registration must be made within one year of the date originally attempted.
7. Students who earn a failure in one occupational therapy course may not continue to progress in the program until the course within which the failure

- was earned is successfully completed or permission to progress is approved by the OTA Program Director.
8. Dismissal from the clinical program: Students who earn failures in two occupational therapy courses may no longer continue in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
 9. Students who take a Medical Leave of Absence for more than one year must request special permission to reenter the program.
 10. Professional behavior is expected at all times in both the classroom and the clinical setting. The Program Director and the faculty will address any demonstration of unprofessional behavior. Professional behavior includes but is not limited to attending classes; arriving to class on time; being attentive and prepared to learn; active participation in class and laboratories; timeliness and completeness of assignments; wearing appropriate attire to class and clinical fieldwork sites; maintaining an appropriate appearance and hygiene; respectful communication with peers, faculty, and clinical site supervisors and staff; working cooperatively in groups; providing and receiving constructive feedback appropriately; modifying performance in response to meaningful feedback; and adherence to AOTA Code of Ethics and LAGCC policies. See the OTA Program Professional Behavior Competency Form for the specific expectations.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE OTA CLINICAL PROGRAM

Students must successfully complete all pre-clinical and clinical coursework and all clinical clerkships (Level I) and fieldwork (Level II) experiences per the OTA Program Course Progression Standards (noted above) and meet the LaGuardia Community College graduation requirements (stated in the LAGCC catalog) in order to be eligible to graduate with the AAS degree in the occupational therapy assistant major.

COSTS AND FEES

The following information will help students entering the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program to calculate the cost of attending and completing the program. Generally, a student budget consists of the direct educational costs of tuition, fees, books, transportation, meals and supplies.

Students must also budget for the following:

- **Membership dues** in the American Occupational Therapy Association and in the New York State Occupational Therapy Association is required in the first semester of the OTA Program. Membership must be renewed in the final semester of the OTA Program. Proof of membership must be submitted to the OTA Program Director.

- **Testing fees** for the Occupational Therapy Knowledge examination (OTKE) and NBCOT Practice examinations. These examinations are taken in the final semester of the OTA Program. All students must pass the NBCOT Practice Examination in order to graduate from the program.
- The OTA student is required to complete two full time unpaid internships and two part time fieldwork experiences. Costs may include but are not limited to:
 - Annual comprehensive physical examination, PPD, and bloodwork
 - Transportation to and from clinical fieldwork sites.
 - Fingerprinting and background check per facility requirements
- At the completion of the OTA Program, additional costs will include:
 - Cost of sitting for the National Board for Certification in Occupational therapy (NBCOT) Examination,
 - NYS licensure fees
 - Registration fees with the NYS Office of the Professions.

ACOTE ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

The LaGuardia Community College occupational therapy assistant program is fully accredited by the **Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education** (ACOTE) of the **American Occupational Therapy Association** (AOTA), located at 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-6611 and its Web address is www.acoteonline.org.

NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapy assistant administered by the **National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy** (NBCOT) located at One Bank Street, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. NBCOT's telephone number is (301) 990-7979 and its Web address is www.nbcot.org.

After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). In addition, all states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Program results from the National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) can be found at <https://secure.nbcot.org/data/schoolstats.aspx>.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

COURSE PROGRESSION

Pre-Clinical Phase: 28 credits

English: 6 credits

ENG101 English Composition*	3
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ENG102 Writing Through Literature	3
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Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning: 3 credits- Select ONE course from the following:

MAT115 or MAT117 College Algebra and Trigonometry*	3
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MAT120 or MAT119 Elementary Statistics*	3
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Health Science: 2 credits

SCN195 Community Health	2
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Life and Physical Sciences: 17 credits

SCB203 Human Anatomy and Physiology I*	4
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SCB204 Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
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SSY101 General Psychology*	3
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SSY230 Abnormal Psychology	3
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SSY240 Developmental Psychology I	3
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Clinical Phase: 35 credits

Fall I or Spring I:

SCO101 Introduction to Occupational Therapy	3
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SCO110 Legal and Ethical Issues in Occupational Therapy	2
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Fall II or Spring II:

SCO200 Physical Aspects of Human Growth and Development	2
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SCO230 Functional Pathology	3
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Fall I or Spring I:

SCO114 Documentation in Occupational Therapy	2
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SCO204 Occupational Therapy Process: Psychosocial Dysfunction & Geriatric Conditions	4
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SCO214 Occupational Therapy Skills and Functional Activities I	3
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SCO284 Occupational Therapy Clerkship for Psychosocial Dysfunction & Geriatric Conditions	1.5
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Fall II or Spring II:

SCO294 Occupational Therapy Fieldwork in Psychosocial Dysfunction & Geriatric Conditions 2

Fall I or Spring I:

SCO175 Clinical Reasoning in Occupational Therapy 2

SCO205 Occupational Therapy Process: Physical & Developmental Disabilities 4

SCO215 Occupational Therapy Skills and Functional Activities II 3

SCO285 Occupational Therapy Clerkship for Physical & Developmental Disabilities 1.5

Fall II or Spring II:

SCO295 Occupational Therapy Fieldwork in Physical & Developmental Disabilities 2

** Denotes Key Course for candidacy*