

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Grossmont College prepares the student for an Associate in Science Degree. In addition to the core curriculum, the major requires selected general education courses from the biological, social and behavioral sciences.

The scope and content of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Grossmont College reflect the program's view of humanity and the teaching/learning process, based on concepts defined by Keilhofner (Conceptual Foundations of Occupational Therapy, 1992) and Reilly (Play as Exploratory Learning, 1976):

- Human beings, as complex systems, function on many different levels and experience and change when growth occurs.
- Human beings are intrinsically motivated to interact with their environments through purposeful activity to positively affect their health.
- Human/environmental interaction is a continuous process of adaptation that promotes not only survival but also curiosity through exploration, competence and achievement.
- Human beings, as open systems in a dynamic evolving interaction with the environment, process information through: input, throughput, output, and feedback.
- Human beings have an occupational nature, experience occupational dysfunction and use occupation as a therapeutic agent.
- Occupational behaviors include purposeful activities that occur on a developmental continuum in the context of play behaviors as a child and leisure/work behaviors as an adult.

APPROACH TO LEARNING/INSTRUCTION

The primary goal of the occupational therapy assistant educational process is to produce competent **general practitioners with a broad exposure to current, emerging, and nontraditional practice settings**. Competency is acquired through active exploration of the environment as behaviors are practiced to form skills. Learning is an active, interactive and cooperative process as the individual builds skills related to objects, people and environment. Cooperative learning provides a method to structure the educational environment and facilitate interaction with others for skill development.

Diversity is critical for the occupational therapy assistant practicing in today's global environment. Diversity is a source of opportunity and knowledge. The appreciation for differences in potential, unique practice areas and in human beings will enrich the profession of occupational therapy and develop diverse and culturally competent graduates. Through cooperative learning, culturally diverse students and faculty help to create an environment where strategies can be learned through teaching others and collaborating with others to achieve mutual goals, thereby facilitating attainment of cultural competence and diversity. Appreciation of the rich mosaic of differences within the community will fuel growth in the profession.

Experiencing community service through the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is a life changing event. The opportunity to explore feelings and emotions that are inherent in the practice of occupational therapy is experienced. The sense of giving through your own hands without expecting anything in return is integrated into the curriculum.

A multimedia approach to education is utilized when possible in order to accommodate variations in learning styles, and to provide an environment, which stimulates, supports, and challenges the student. Emphasis is placed on self-assessment, evaluation, and motivation throughout the student's progress through the program. It is expected that students assume responsibility for their learning and contact the appropriate faculty to access the academic resources designed to promote student success