

GROSSMONT COLLEGE

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

FACILITY HANDBOOK

Spring 2026



**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY:
FUNCTION FOR LIFE®**

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS:

OTA Program Director	Holly Reed	Holly.Reed@gcccd.edu	(619) 644-7304
OTA Fieldwork Coordinator	Joyce Fries	Joyce.fries@gcccd.edu	(619) 644-7307
OTA Health Professions Specialist	Darla Ryther	grossmont.ota@gcccd.edu	(619) 644-7304

[OTA Website](#)

Grossmont College
8800 Grossmont College Drive
El Cajon, CA 92020-1799
Ph: (619) 644-7000

**Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Table of Contents**

Guidelines for Fieldwork Success.....	5
Fieldwork Educator	5
Roles Within Fieldwork	7
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator	7
Student	8
Expectations for Fieldwork I and II.....	10
Attendance	10
Level II Fieldwork.....	11
Clinical Failure: Failing Grade for Level IIA and Level IIB Fieldwork	11
Illness/Extended Illness/Post Surgery/Pregnancy	13
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:	14
SECTION 504:	14
Level I Fieldwork Outcomes	17
Level II Fieldwork Outcomes	17
Developing Professional Behaviors Through Fieldwork	18
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Philosophy & Curriculum	20
OTA Program Philosophy.....	20
The Mission of Grossmont College:.....	20
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Philosophy.....	20
Department of Occupational Therapy Vision	20
Department of Occupational Therapy Mission.....	20
OTA – Preparation for Practice.....	20
Approach To Learning/Instruction	21
Program Objectives	22
Curriculum Design and Sequence	23
Curricular Threads and Program Learning Outcomes.....	23
Academic Policies of Grossmont College	27
Clinical Facilities/Affiliations/Clinical Flexibility	27
Gift Policy	27
Non-Discrimination Policy	27
OTA Office	27
Student Conduct	28
Professional Behavior:	28
Fieldwork Site Process and Information	30
Site Information Process	30
Site Selection Process for Fieldwork Sites.....	30
Site Selection Process for Students.....	31
Level I Fieldwork.....	31

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS, OUR PROGRAM AND OUR PROFESSION
You serve a vital link between the classroom and the clinic!
We appreciate ALL you do!

Level II Fieldwork	31
Level II Fieldwork.....	32
Site Supervision for Sites Where No OT Exists	32

Guidelines for Fieldwork Success

Fieldwork Educator

Each individual responsible for student training in the fieldwork placement is considered a fieldwork educator. Fieldwork educators may also be known as clinical educators, fieldwork supervisors, clinical instructors or student educators.

The direct day-to-day supervisory responsibilities of the fieldwork educator include, but are not limited to the following:

- Provide an adequate orientation to the facility and to specific departmental policies and procedures
- Supervise the provision of occupational therapy services, documentation, and oral reporting of the student
- Assess the skill and knowledge level of the student
- Meet with the student regularly to review performance and provide guidance ensuring that regular student supervision is occurring
- Assign patients and clients to the student
- Notify, in writing, the student, fieldwork educators, and academic fieldwork coordinator in the event of any problems with students that might require a remediation plan or extension, including safety concerns or injury.
- Identify the mission, vision, and curriculum of the OTA Program using the Curriculum Design Worksheet to be collected by the academic fieldwork coordinator
- Collaborate with the academic fieldwork coordinator and student to schedule site visits
- Evaluate the student at the midterm and final of the fieldwork experience using the fieldwork evaluation form
- A copy of the signed evaluation form shall be emailed to the OTA student
- Ensure students are meeting the organizational/facility requirements for health, immunization, safety, injury and confidentiality paperwork.
- Collaborate with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to create and share site specific objectives that support the curricular model of the OTA Program

When To Reach Out to The OTA Program: (some examples but better to contact us early if you have a concern)

1. Early warning signs are important – the earlier we are alerted to an issue, the earlier we can provide support and alternatives to students and sites.
2. Safety – Anything that leads to a safety issue is important to document and notify the OTA Program as soon as possible.
3. Timeliness – As soon as a timeliness issue, whether it is tardy, leaving early, or being late for scheduled activities, or poor management of time, please notify the OTA Program.

4. Preparedness – If a student is not prepared for the day or a treatment session because they did not prepare, note that and please notify the OTA Program.

How To Reach Out to The OTA Program:

1. If urgent - Email – best way to reach – joyce.fries@gcccd.edu or Mobile Phone: 619-792-3500
2. Least efficient – as this is the office phone - Telephone call – Joyce Fries – 619-644-7307
3. If not urgent but needs to be noted - Progress Review Form – student to upload online every other week. E-mail if issues arise between progress reviews.

Documentation:

1. Please document the training provided.
2. Please document progress every other week with the [Progress Review Form](#) for the student to submit.
3. Please document any additional meetings with specific issues discussed, expectations, resources provided, and a deadline.

Site Selection Process for Fieldwork Sites

The Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program maintains a clearly defined and documented process for the selection of fieldwork sites and for ensuring that valid written agreements are executed and maintained prior to and throughout all Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Fieldwork site selection occurs through multiple established pathways to ensure a diverse and high-quality network of clinical partners. Sites may be selected based on existing contractual relationships from previous fieldwork cycles, faculty-identified needs aligned with clinical expertise or curricular goals, direct requests from clinical sites seeking to host students as part of recruitment efforts, or targeted outreach by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC), including recruitment through the program's alumni network.

Prior to placement of any student, a formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is established between the sponsoring institution and the fieldwork site. The contract initiation process is submitted through the division and includes required documentation such as site demographic information, designated contact personnel authorized to manage and sign the agreement, and a W-9 form in compliance with State of California requirements.

Following submission, the contract is processed through the College's procurement and business offices. This process includes multi-level institutional review and authorization, ensuring that all legal, regulatory, and institutional requirements are met. The responsibilities of both the sponsoring institution and the fieldwork site are explicitly outlined within the written agreement. Electronic agreements and signatures are utilized and accepted as part of this process.

Once fully executed, the AFWC receives and maintains a copy of the finalized agreement. Contract expiration dates are systematically tracked by the AFWC and the Allied Health and Nursing Division Admin, with

reminders set approximately six months prior to expiration to initiate timely renewal. This ensures that all agreements remain active and in effect prior to the start of and throughout the duration of all Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Through this structured and monitored process, the program ensures that all fieldwork placements occur only at sites with valid, current agreements that clearly define roles and responsibilities

Site Selection Process for Students

The Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is committed to providing meaningful and supportive fieldwork experiences that promote student learning, professional development, and successful transition to entry-level practice.

Level I Fieldwork

Level I fieldwork experiences are assigned by the program to ensure that all students are exposed to a variety of practice settings and populations. While sites are assigned, students are provided with the opportunity to select from available scheduling options and indicate preferred dates for attendance. This approach supports flexibility while maintaining equitable access to quality learning experiences.

Level II Fieldwork

For Level II fieldwork, students participate in a more individualized placement process. Students submit information regarding their areas of interest, preferred practice settings, geographic location within the county, and any special preferences or needs. This information is used to guide placement decisions.

Fieldwork site requests are coordinated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) through the DISA (formerly ADB/Complio) system or through direct communication with clinical site representatives. Once enough placements have been confirmed, OTA faculty collaboratively review each student's strengths, areas for growth, and stated preferences.

Faculty work together to determine the best possible match between the student, fieldwork site, and fieldwork educator. Every effort is made to create placements that support student success, foster professional growth, and provide a well-rounded clinical experience.

The program is fortunate to maintain strong relationships with clinical partners, including many alumni who serve as fieldwork educators, further enriching the student learning experience.

[Web-Based Resources for Fieldwork Education](#)

Roles Within Fieldwork

Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

The academic fieldwork coordinator is the faculty member at the educational institution who is responsible for securing and monitoring fieldwork experiences. They are also responsible for ensuring fieldwork educators are properly trained to provide fieldwork education.

The responsibilities of the academic fieldwork coordinator include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assign eligible students to fieldwork experience and confirming the assignment in writing to each fieldwork educator
- Ensure that all written contracts or letters of agreement between the educational institution and fieldwork placement are signed and periodically reviewed
- Make regular contacts with each fieldwork placement where students are located.
- Maintain a current information file on each fieldwork placement where students are located; file should include fieldwork data form, overall statement of philosophy of treatment and site-specific fieldwork objectives related to items on the *Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant* (FWPE-OTA)
- Identify new sites for fieldwork placement
- Orient students to the general purposes of fieldwork experience and providing them necessary forms
- Reassign students who do not complete original fieldwork assignments in accordance with the educational institution's policies
- Manage midterm and final Fieldwork Performance Evaluations (FWPE) completed by students and fieldwork educators in a web portal. Save final versions in each student's school file
- Participate in SD Nursing & Allied Health Consortium
- Develop fieldwork experience programs that provide the best opportunity for the implementation of theoretical concepts offered as part of the didactic curriculum
- Maintain a collaborative relationship with fieldwork educators and site education coordinators
- Send the necessary information and forms for each student and the fieldwork educator as stated in the ACOTE Standards. These may include the review of Fieldwork Agreement Form and agreement for FW II objectives. Fieldwork educators may also be known as clinical educators, or student educators.

Student

The student is the learner who is enrolled in a course of study at an educational institution leading to a degree or certificate in occupational therapy. The student is expected to collaborate with the fieldwork educator and the academic fieldwork coordinator throughout the fieldwork experience.

The student is responsible for the following:

- Complete a student profile in Complio/DISA with all necessary vaccinations, training, and other requirements for admission into the OTA program.
- Comply with all policies and procedures of the fieldwork placement site and the student handbook.
- Fulfill all duties and assignments made by the fieldwork educator and academic fieldwork coordinator, unless exempted, within the time limit specified
- Notify the fieldwork placement and educational program of current address and telephone.

- Complete and the student's evaluation of the fieldwork experience (SEFWE) at the conclusion of the rotation and email a copy to the fieldwork educator if requested
- Access forms via Canvas and share as needed with fieldwork educator
- Be an active participant in the supervisory process.
- In the event of any problem related to fieldwork evaluation, students will follow chain command at fieldwork placement, i.e. discuss problems with fieldwork educators and/or academic fieldwork coordinator and if not satisfied with resolution, contact academic program director.
- Demonstrate appropriate professional behavior during all fieldwork activities. This includes not fraternizing with fieldwork educator, employees of the facility, patients/clients or family members during work or after work hours.
- The student must collaborate with the Fieldwork Coordinator and the Fieldwork Supervisor.
- At least 1 contact with the Fieldwork Coordinator is mandatory during each fieldwork rotation. If the student is placed in a non-traditional site where there is no Occupational Therapist available, the program director, fieldwork coordinator, or adjunct faculty member will provide weekly onsite supervision.
- The student must adhere to the work schedule set forth by the facility, fieldwork educator, and OTA Program.
- The student must fulfill all the duties and assignments set by the Fieldwork Coordinator and the Fieldwork Supervisor within the specified time frames.
- The student must be an active participant in the learning process by demonstrating changes based on feedback.
- The student must call (not text or email) the AFC and the program secretary prior to the beginning of the shift in which she/he will be absent. Two or more absences will require a doctor's note and will be made up at the discretion of the fieldwork educator and/or fieldwork coordinator.

Finally, the student must be prepared to make mistakes! The supportive environment of the fieldwork site is meant to allow the student to take some risks. Mistakes allow students to reexamine and refine their learning and move to a higher level of understanding.

GROSSMONT COLLEGE
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

**Expectations for Fieldwork I and II
Attendance**

- Students are expected to attend all scheduled Fieldwork I and II dates—whether on campus, in clinical settings, or virtual—so that learning experiences can build consistently and safely.
- Arriving on time helps support clients, staff, and your own learning. If challenges with timeliness arise, please communicate as early as possible so we can partner with you in finding solutions.
Because tardiness can disrupt patient care and supervision, late arrivals generally cannot be accommodated during fieldwork.
- We understand that emergencies and unexpected situations may occur. If you experience a documented emergency that interferes with attendance, and appropriate make-up opportunities will be provided as available
- Please notify both your onsite fieldwork educator and the academic fieldwork coordinator you are aware that you may be absent or late.
- If you begin to experience symptoms of illness or become aware of an emergency that may affect your attendance, contact your fieldwork educator and academic fieldwork coordinator right away using the correct communication method so we can support your safety and continuity of learning.
- Absences must be related to documented emergencies, and while we will do our best to assist with make-up opportunities, make-up hours cannot always be guaranteed.
- Absences due to medical reasons will require a physician's release before returning to fieldwork, in alignment with the OTA Health and Safety Policies.
- Students are expected to follow the OTA Dress Code and wear the OTA Program uniform unless the fieldwork site requests an alternative.
- Because consistent participation is essential for meeting clinical objectives, multiple or prolonged absences may impact your ability to successfully complete fieldwork, which could affect progression in the OTA Program. If you are concerned about your attendance, please reach out early so we can work together to explore options.
- Important reminder for health and safety: Students should not attend fieldwork while ill. Fieldwork educators have a responsibility to ensure safety for clients and staff and may ask a student to return home if symptoms are present. Make-up hours will be explored collaboratively with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, although availability cannot be guaranteed.

Level II Fieldwork

For OTA 241 and OTA 251 experiences the student will complete a self-evaluation and share with the fieldwork educator. Then the student will receive a midterm evaluation from the clinical instructor. The purpose of the midterm is for feedback only and is not considered part of the final grade. The grades on OTA 240 and OTA 241 rotations will be on a credit/noncredit basis. In order to receive credit, the student needs to achieve a minimum of 91 points or more on the AOTA Fieldwork Evaluation, complete all assignments from clinical educator and fieldwork coordinator, complete all online assignments in Canvas and have no professional behavior or safety complaints noted by the FWE, FWC and PD. The final grade decision remains with the OTA 240/241 instructor who is the instructor of record.

Clinical Failure: Failing Grade for Level IIA and Level IIB Fieldwork

Background: The Grossmont College OTA Program and OTA clinical instructors have an academic, legal and ethical responsibility to protect the members of the public and the health care community from unsafe or unprofessional occupational therapy practices. Within this context, a student in the OTA Program may be dismissed from the program for practices that in the judgment of the faculty warrant such action.

A student is subject to a course failure in OTA 111, OTA 141, OTA 221, OTA 240, or 241 despite grades achieved at midterm or final.

Grounds for failure of fieldwork may include, but are not limited to, the following circumstances when performance concerns persist despite feedback, reasonable support, and/or required remediation, and when such concerns impact client safety, professional practice, or successful achievement of fieldwork learning outcomes consistent with ACOTE 2023 standards:

1. **Safety and Well-Being**
Difficulty consistently demonstrating behaviors necessary to support one's own well-being and the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of clients, peers, faculty, or staff within the fieldwork environment, as required by ACOTE standards related to safe and effective practice.
2. **Ethical, Legal, and Professional Responsibilities**
Failure to uphold professional, legal, or ethical standards of occupational therapy practice, including honesty, confidentiality, academic integrity, and compliance with institutional, site, and regulatory requirements, consistent with ACOTE expectations for ethical conduct.
3. **Supervision and Scope of Practice**
Engaging in clinical activities without appropriate orientation, preparation, or required supervision, or outside the OTA role, contrary to ACOTE standards addressing supervision, role delineation, and safe service delivery.
4. **Client Safety Risks**
Actions or omissions that place a client or others at actual or potential risk of harm, reflecting an

inability to meet ACOTE standards related to client-centered, safe, and responsible occupational therapy practice.

5. **Clinical Readiness and Skill Performance**
Inadequate preparation for participation in clinical activities, including difficulty demonstrating the communication, cognitive, or psychomotor skills necessary to carry out occupational therapy interventions safely and effectively, despite guidance and opportunities for skill development, as required by ACOTE competency standards.
6. **Professional Behaviors**
Behaviors that do not align with professional expectations outlined in the Developing Professional Behavior Through Fieldwork section and the Professional Behavior Evaluation Guide, consistent with ACOTE standards emphasizing professional conduct, communication, and collaboration.
7. **Timely Completion of Academic Responsibilities (Campus-Based)**
Failure to submit required clinical documentation and/or campus-based assignments by established deadlines, impacting the program's ability to assess student progress in accordance with ACOTE evaluation requirements.
8. **Timely Completion of Fieldwork Site Responsibilities**
Failure to submit required site-based assignments or documentation by established deadlines, as required for successful completion of fieldwork objectives and ACOTE documentation standards.
9. **Communication with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator**
Failure to complete and submit required assignments or documentation (online or paper) to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in a timely manner, limiting oversight and support as required by ACOTE fieldwork administration standards.
10. **Injury Reporting**
Failure to report an injury to the college and fieldwork site supervisor in a timely manner, which may compromise student safety and compliance with institutional and ACOTE safety expectations.
11. **Adherence to Program and Site Policies**
Difficulty adhering to attendance, punctuality, dress code, and other program or site expectations outlined in the OTA Student Handbook, which are necessary for professional readiness and compliance with ACOTE standards.
12. **Remediation Engagement**
Failure to participate in or complete a required remediation plan developed to support student success and progression in fieldwork, consistent with ACOTE standards emphasizing formative feedback, remediation, and competency-based outcomes.

Any student who decides to terminate a fieldwork placement on his/her own after notifying and/or meeting with the program coordinator or AFWC will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program and will be terminated from the program. No program re-entry will be granted.

Any student who refuses placement in a planned fieldwork experience will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program and will be terminated from the program. No program re-entry will be granted. No further fieldwork placement activities will be offered, and the student will not graduate.

Illness/Extended Illness/Post Surgery/Pregnancy

Pregnancy Policy – The pregnant student may remain active in the OTA Program and is not required to disclose pregnancy if not requiring accommodations. The student must meet all the course and program objectives. If a student decides to not disclose pregnancy and/or accommodation requirements, **it is** advised that the students educate themselves on the strategies to protect pregnant healthcare workers through research and online resources.

Post-Surgery/Extended Illness Policy – Including Flu-Like Symptoms

1. The student must submit a written physician's or primary care provider's clearance to the OTA Program Director and a copy to the clinical instructor if applicable.
2. The student must be able to meet the classroom, lab and fieldwork objectives to remain in good standing in the OTA Program. The OTA Program Director and teaching team, with student input, will determine whether imposed medical restrictions allow accomplishment of classroom, lab and fieldwork objectives.
3. The Attendance policy of the program will apply unless judged inappropriate to the individual case by OTA Program Director and teaching team for review.

All students are required to provide permission to return from the physician prior to returning to the OTA program if they are under a physician's care.

****Clinical fieldwork sites make the final decision regarding all fieldwork placements and re-entry after injury, illness and matters related to pregnancy if disclosed****

Students Injured at the Fieldwork Site Use the form linked here:

[Report of Accident/Injury/Illness/Incident Form](#)

****Please indicate clinical student instead of employee****

Students must immediately report any and all injuries to their clinical instructor and follow up with OTA Program Director Holly.Reed@gcccd.edu

A copy of all forms must be submitted to the OTA Program office within 48 hours of injury/illness/exposure with originals being submitted to the Benefits Office within 48 hours.

After assessing the student's needs, you, the student, and the facility can determine if it is an emergency and should be treated at the hospital site immediately or can be sent to a participating Anthem facility for treatment. [ANTHEM provider list](#) - Also available on the OTA web page under student forms. In all cases, provide the student with the *HIPAA Individual Authorization* form.

- Student completes;
 - Top portion with student information on both sides of the form
 - Last box of part B, if applicable

- Signatures at the bottom of both sides of the form

If the site requests the student to be treated where the incident occurred and the student agrees, the student should complete the *HIPAA Individual Authorization* form when able to do so and then contact the toll-free number for Anthem at 1-866-811-7946 (reference the SAIN Program). The representative will be able to help them with any further steps for insurance purposes. Faculty can also complete the top student information portion if the student is unable to do so and fax it to Anthem so that our insurance company is aware of the situation and can help them further.

If the student is not seen at the hospital where they are currently in their clinical rotation, they will go to one of the participating Anthem facilities with the *HIPAA Individual Authorization* form and submit it to the facility upon arrival.

Please note that student insurance is a *secondary insurance* to their own. They will be required to provide proof of personal insurance in all cases and may opt to receive care within their personal insurance network. Even if personal insurance is used, a claim form should still be submitted as it may cover costs that their personal insurance does not cover. If the student does not have personal insurance, then this plan would cover them for this incident with a \$50 deductible.

Any accident, injury, or illness must also be reported to the Program Fieldwork Coordinator as soon as possible. Please contact Joyce Fries at 619-644-7307 and e-mail. If the program fieldwork coordinator cannot be reached, please contact the health professions specialist at 619-644-7149, Administrative Assistant in the Dean's office or your lead clinical course instructor.

Submit the following form in person to the Health Professions Office in Bldg 34, office #256 or email to: grossmont.ota@gcccd.edu and cc program director holly.reed@gcccd.edu within 2 business days. If you have any questions, please call 619-644-7149 or your Program Coordinator.

HIPAA individual authorization - anthem – found on the OTA web page under student forms

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Grossmont College is committed to establishing and maintaining a learning environment that is supportive of diverse perspectives as a foundation in the education of all students. The OTA Program challenges diverse students to develop sound clinical judgment and reasoning skills in a trusting and caring learning environment that fosters personal growth. To this extent, students with disabilities are encouraged to make an appointment with the counselors at the Accessibility Resources Center (ARC) and to take advantage of all resources on campus to help them be successful.

SECTION 504:

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of

her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (US Department of Education).

- Students with documented accommodations from Grossmont College ARC offices will be provided reasonable accommodations as deemed necessary to assist the students in their learning.
- Any student who has been assessed by ARC and received recommendations for accommodations related to their academic or clinical performance requirements should contact the faculty of record to discuss any concerns and plans for reasonable accommodations.
- The AFC is prohibited by law ([FERPA](#)) from informing fieldwork educators about students receiving accommodations
- Students should not expect to receive any form of accommodation without documented recommendations for accommodation from Grossmont College ARC offices.
- Students who have been assessed by ARC and given recommendations for accommodations to record lectures in the academic setting, will be asked to sign a waiver by the counselor in ARC. After verification of students' signatures is obtained, students will be permitted to record the lecture class.
- In some classes, faculty may opt to use voice over PowerPoint, or pre-recorded lectures which will be used in lieu of the student recording the class.
- All mandates of the waiver will be followed, and if any one of the mandates of the waiver are violated, this may be cause for dismissal from the program

Students are expected to meet all of the clinical objectives and requirements of the program. Students wishing accommodations in clinical sites will be required to provide written authorization to release accommodation requirements to the clinical site for consideration. If a clinical site refuses a student due to waivers, legal issues or physical examination issues, the OTA Program will make one additional attempt to secure an alternate placement for the student based on site availability. Sites are secured well in advance of the semester they are held. Clinical experiences are necessary to graduate. The clinical site has the final word on all clinical placements.

The student must realize that an academic accommodation may not be the same as a workplace accommodation. Workplace accommodation information can be found at: <http://askjan.org/> and the [Department of Rehabilitation](#).

Contact NBCOT at the following website for [accommodation options for the national examination](#):

All persons with disabilities are covered under the ADA/ Federal Civil Rights Laws in all settings.

To receive accommodations the student must first either disclose the need for accommodations and then be advised by you to begin the process with Grossmont College OTA Program Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

and then the student must decide to disclose and request the accommodations required in order to receive them from the clinical site. OR

If the student already has accommodation recommendations, they must choose to disclose and request the accommodations required for consideration from the clinical site.

Students can choose to not disclose needs or request accommodations. Students can also choose to disclose and/or request at any time.

All settings are required to make reasonable accommodations for all persons who go through the accommodation process and submit a formal request for accommodations. The accommodations must not be fundamental alterations to the nature of the services provided.

Level I And II Fieldwork Descriptions

OTA 111, 141 & 221: Experience enriches classroom and laboratory learning through directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process. A variety of clinical occupational therapy settings are introduced through experiential learning, including onsite visits for structured observation. Settings are equipped to provide application of principles learned in the academic program and appropriate to the learning needs of the student. These experiences mirror the specific practice areas being taught in the classroom during that semester. Papers and projects are assigned in the classroom during this fieldwork. Evaluation of student performance is included. Documentation of clinical observations and verbal reporting to peers is emphasized. Qualified personnel for supervised Level I Fieldwork include, but are not limited to; OT practitioners, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, nurses, and physical therapists. Level I fieldwork experiences are each required to be completed with a passing grade and do not count toward fieldwork II experiences.

OTA 241 and 251 consists of two 10-week full-time fieldwork experiences. Fieldwork Level II Experience under the direct supervision of a credentialed occupational therapist or a credentialed occupational therapy assistant with the student assisting in all phases of practice. Level II fieldwork must be successfully completed for the student to be eligible to sit for the national OTA certification examination. Level II fieldwork is scheduled during the Spring Semester of the second year and involves full-time on-the-job training. All OTA and GE courses must be successfully completed before a student can begin the Level II experience. Level I fieldwork experience hours will not be counted toward any part of level II fieldwork. Areas of practice available for fieldwork placement include: physical dysfunction, mental health, pediatrics, geriatrics, rehabilitation, community based programming and developmental disabilities. Settings for placement might include traditional and/or emerging practice areas. The Fieldwork Level II placement is a collaborative process between student and fieldwork coordinator. The process of fieldwork placement begins before or during the Fall Semester when students discuss initial plans and placement goals with the Fieldwork Coordinator. All fieldwork must be completed within 18 months of the academic preparation (core OTA courses).

Level I Fieldwork Outcomes

Each Level I fieldwork experience builds on prior didactic and fieldwork experiences.

The first Level I experience provides the opportunity for exploration through observation, reflection and participation. Each succeeding experience provides opportunities to develop additional competencies.

Level II Fieldwork Outcomes

Achievement in level II fieldwork experiences builds on the foundation competencies attained in level I. Clinical competencies are expanded as new skills are learned and applied. There is an emphasis on clinical reasoning and decision making within a team-oriented environment.

The student will:

- Demonstrate proficiency in conducting assessments under supervision, including standardized evaluations and observational assessments.
- Implement treatment plans effectively, demonstrating understanding of therapeutic modalities and techniques appropriate to client needs.
- Develop effective communication skills with clients, families, and interdisciplinary team members.
- Practice client-centered care principles by actively involving clients in goal setting and treatment planning processes.
- Complete accurate and timely documentation of client interactions, progress notes, and treatment plans according to facility protocols and legal standards.
- Adhere to professional behavior and ethical guidelines in all interactions with clients, colleagues, and supervisors.
- Demonstrate understanding of confidentiality and privacy regulations in healthcare settings.
- Comply with legal responsibilities, professional ethics, school policies, rules and regulations that affect clinical fieldwork performance.
- State administrative and practical requirements for practice in the occupational therapy treatment setting.
- Differentiate between physical, psychosocial, cultural, and environmental factors influencing patient/family compliance with treatment plan and recommend modifications to improve compliance.
- Develop time management skills to meet the facility's productivity guidelines for an entry-level practitioner.
- Identify client-centered problems and formulate appropriate intervention strategies based on assessment findings and treatment goals.
- Evaluate effectiveness of interventions and modify treatment plans as needed under supervision.
- Collaborate effectively with occupational therapists, other healthcare professionals, and support staff to promote comprehensive client care.
- Participate actively in team meetings, contributing insights and suggestions for client progress and treatment planning.
- Engage in reflective practice to identify personal learning needs and areas for improvement.

- Seek and integrate feedback from supervisors and peers to enhance clinical skills and professional growth.
- Engage in reflective practice to identify personal learning needs and areas for improvement.
- Seek and integrate feedback from supervisors and peers to enhance clinical skills and professional growth.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and diverse factors influencing client care and treatment outcomes.
- Adapt interventions and communication styles to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of clients and families.
- Follow facility protocols for infection control and safety measures during client interactions and therapeutic activities.
- Demonstrate awareness of environmental hazards and implement appropriate safety precautions.
- Advocate for clients' rights and access to occupational therapy services within the healthcare system

Developing Professional Behaviors Through Fieldwork

The purpose of fieldwork is to allow students the opportunity to integrate the knowledge acquired through their academic preparation with the practice of clinical skills, progressing through the levels of responsibility. As a result of academic preparation, OTA students have the knowledge and skills for entry-level practice. The last stage in preparing for a career as a clinician is the practice of skills in a structured, supportive setting to develop appropriate professional behaviors. The structure of the fieldwork experiences varies by facility. The student may be the only student on site, or may be paired with another student, or part of a student group. The supervision provided may be with one or more OTs or OTAs, or other professionals in a related field.

Level I experience is acquired in conjunction with specific OTA courses. Its objectives are to apply observation skills, data gathering methods, task analysis skills, and “hands on” techniques as appropriate. The student will learn and practice written and verbal communication and professional behaviors and have individual and group participation with patients/clients.

The emphasis of level II fieldwork, which is initiated upon the completion of all academic coursework, is on the application of knowledge and the provision of Occupational Therapy service. There is an opportunity to expand clinical competencies, develop clinical reasoning, and model professionalism.

At both levels of fieldwork, the student should maximize the opportunity to grow as a professional, practicing the variety of skills that this requires.

Developing good communication skills, both oral and written, includes sharing information, offering and receiving feedback, and practicing interpersonal skills with patient/clients and staff.

- The student must learn to be accountable knowing when and how to ask for help, developing time management skills, and taking responsibility for actions and decisions.
- Due to the nature of healthcare environments, students must be adaptable.
- They must understand their role and how it fits with the rest of the healthcare team.
- An understanding of Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics must be achieved and put into practice.
- Students should be preparing themselves to be lifelong learners, identifying community resources, and taking advantage of local associations.
- Students should be mentored towards advocating for the profession.
- Students are also introduced to clinical research, learning to evaluate clinical practice to show the validity of Occupational Therapy services.
- The ability to refine the practice and quantify the outcomes to show the effectiveness of Occupational Therapy is critical for the future of the profession.

When to Contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC)

Level II Fieldwork is often the **final step in a long educational journey**, and students may experience **both excitement and anxiety** during this time. Early communication helps provide appropriate support.

- When a student demonstrates **unsafe practice** or is **not meeting weekly fieldwork objectives**.
- **Email is the preferred method of contact.** Joyce.fries@gcccd.edu or **Mobile 619-792-3500**
- Include **specific concerns and concrete examples** of observed behaviors or performance issues.
- After contact, the **student, fieldwork educator, and AFWC will meet** to discuss the concerns.
- If needed, the **AFWC will develop a Learning Contract** following the meeting.
- The contract will include **clear learning goals and a timeline**, which will be **reviewed and agreed upon by all parties**.
- The **AFWC will check in regularly** with the student and fieldwork educator to:
 - monitor progress toward goals
 - provide resources for the student
 - support the fieldwork educator
- **Most students successfully meet the Learning Contract goals.**
- In rare cases, a **continuation or extension of the contract** may be considered if additional time is needed and available.

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Philosophy & Curriculum

OTA Program Philosophy

All aspects of the program, including an electronic copy of this handbook, can be found on the [OTA website](#) through the [Grossmont College](#) webpage.

The Mission of Grossmont College:

Grossmont College serves the diverse population of our surrounding community and beyond by creating clear and accessible pathways to degrees and jobs leading to social and economic mobility for our students. We work collaboratively to cultivate an equitable student-centered learning environment, and we hold ourselves accountable for improving student outcomes through ongoing assessment, evaluation, and data-informed decision making. Grossmont College offers associate degrees; transfer preparation, including associate degrees for Transfer (ADTs); certificate programs; career education and workforce development.

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Philosophy

Department of Occupational Therapy Vision

At Grossmont College, we envision an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program that cultivates compassionate, skilled, and dedicated professionals who are equipped to empower individuals to lead fulfilling lives. Our program fosters a dynamic learning environment that integrates evidence-based practices, hands-on experiences, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Through rigorous academics, clinical training, and community engagement, we aim to develop competent and empathetic OTAs who are committed to promoting health, independence, and inclusion for people of all ages and abilities. By instilling a passion for lifelong learning and advocacy, our graduates will positively impact individuals, families, and communities, advancing the field of occupational therapy and enhancing quality of life for all.

Department of Occupational Therapy Mission

Our mission is to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and compassion necessary to become strong and well-rounded Occupational Therapy Assistants. Through comprehensive education, practical experience, and professional advocacy, we aim to cultivate competent professionals who enhance the quality of life for individuals across diverse populations and in all areas of practice.

OTA – Preparation for Practice

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Grossmont College prepares the student for an Associate of Science (AS) 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 reflects the program's view of humanity and the teaching/learning process, based on concepts defined by Gary

Keilhofner (Conceptual Foundations of Occupational Therapy, 1992) and Mary Reilly (Play as Exploratory Learning, 1976):

- Human beings, as complex systems, function on many distinct levels and experience 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 including 3D Technology, Low Vision Services, and a focus on homeless services. Competency is acquired through active exploration of the environment as behaviors are practiced acquiring 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 humility and diversity. Appreciation of the rich mosaic of differences within the community fuels growth in the profession.

A multimedia approach to education is utilized, when possible, 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.

Program Objectives

Upon completion of the program and in line with our curricular threads, the Grossmont College associate degree Occupational Therapy Assistant graduate will:

- 1a. Demonstrate proficiency in the foundational skills and knowledge of occupational therapy as a profession, including anatomy, physiology, the history of the profession, and the principles of therapeutic use of self to effectively engage clients in meaningful activities.
- 1b. Apply ethical reasoning and the principles of therapeutic use of self to ensure client-centered and evidence-based practice.
- 1c. Utilize evidence-based practice, clinical reasoning, and client-centered approaches to support participation in meaningful occupations across diverse practice settings.
- 2a. Integrate occupational therapy principles to design and implement interventions that address clients' unique needs, promoting engagement in meaningful and purposeful activities.
- 2b. Apply clinical reasoning and critical thinking skills to adapt interventions and utilize assistive technology, addressing the dynamic needs of clients across the lifespan.
- 2c. Advocate for the value of occupational therapy by collaborating with clients, families, and communities to enhance health, wellness, and quality of life through occupation-based approaches.
- 3a. Exhibit cultural humility and competence by respecting and integrating diverse cultural perspectives, values, and practices into therapeutic interactions and intervention planning.
- 3b. Maintain professionalism and develop a strong professional identity by upholding ethical responsibilities, demonstrating effective communication, engaging in life-long learning, and fostering inclusive environments within intra and inter-professional teams.
- 4a. Demonstrate competence in clinical skills, including observation, intervention planning, and documentation, to meet client goals and achieve successful outcomes in a variety of practice settings.
- 4b. Reflect on and integrate feedback from clinical experiences to continuously improve professional practice and client care delivery.

Curriculum Design and Sequence

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program curriculum design incorporates four themes woven into the curriculum and three levels of learning. The design reflects the college mission statement, OTA mission statement and the OTA philosophy. The curriculum design guides the placement of course content, sequence and the depth covered at each level. The content's location within the curiosity levels of learning and adaptation reinforces content that builds on itself. This gradual stacking of concepts from introduction to application to mastery promotes graduation of occupational therapy professionals who are competent practitioners who understand cultural humility and who are able to integrate theory and occupation into each moment of practice.

Curricular Threads and Program Learning Outcomes

Curricular Thread	Program Learning Outcomes
Therapeutic Grounding	1a. Demonstrate proficiency in the foundational skills and knowledge of occupational therapy as a profession, including anatomy, physiology, the history of the profession, and the principles of therapeutic use of self to effectively engage clients in meaningful activities. 1b. Apply ethical reasoning and the principles of therapeutic use of self to ensure client-centered and evidence-based practice. 1c. Utilize evidence-based practice, clinical reasoning, and client-centered approaches to support participation in meaningful occupations across diverse practice settings.
Occupation Centered Practice	2a. Integrate occupational therapy principles to design and implement interventions that address clients' unique needs, promoting engagement in meaningful and purposeful activities. 2b. Apply clinical reasoning and critical thinking skills to adapt interventions and utilize assistive technology, addressing the dynamic needs of clients across the lifespan. 2c. Advocate for the value of occupational therapy by collaborating with clients, families, and communities to enhance health, wellness, and quality of life through occupation-based approaches.
Culturally Aligned Professionalism	3a. Exhibit cultural humility and competence by respecting and integrating diverse cultural perspectives, values, and practices into therapeutic interactions and intervention planning. 3b. Maintain professionalism and develop a strong professional identity by upholding ethical responsibilities, demonstrating effective communication, engaging in life-long learning, and fostering inclusive environments within intra and inter-professional teams.

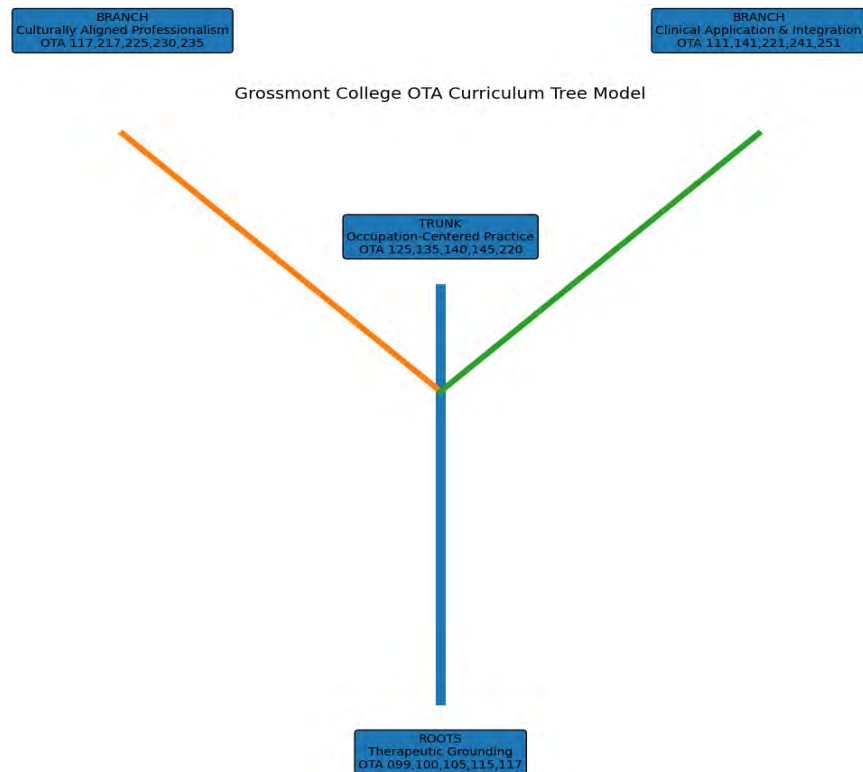
Clinical Application and Integration	4a. Demonstrate competence in clinical skills, including observation, intervention planning, and documentation, to meet client goals and achieve successful outcomes in a variety of practice settings. 4b. Reflect on and integrate feedback from clinical experiences to continuously improve professional practice and client care delivery.
---	---

Thread	Courses
Therapeutic Grounding	OTA 099, OTA 100, OTA 105, OTA 115, OTA 117
Occupation Centered Practice	OTA 125, OTA 135, OTA 140, OTA 220
Culturally Aligned Professionalism	OTA 117, OTA 217, OTA 230, OTA 235
Clinical Application and Integration	OTA 111, OTA 141, OTA 221, OTA 241, OTA 251

A tree was chosen as the symbol of the open system of our curriculum. It is strong, growing and long lasting. It can reach great heights if it is taken care of during its early stages of growth. Input of knowledge through the roots provides the nutrients for the student to anchor to the ground and begin the journey upward during the initial stages of exploration. The trunk of the tree is made up layers of exploratory learning that support the branches and begins shaping the crown. The curriculum content increases in depth requiring increased critical thinking and practice of skills creating the competency level. The branches reach out of the trunk and intertwine high up into the crown of the tree where achievement begins to take place. The application of the OTA curriculum content during the Level II Fieldwork experience gives the final shape to the crown and preparation for the OTA graduate to enter the profession at entry level competence.

The layers of the trunk run from the roots to the leaves carrying nutrients throughout the tree. The threads of our program run from the roots to the leaves giving the students nutrients throughout the program and reinforcing our mission.

The leaves give the tree color as the new students give the profession color releasing fresh oxygen into the world of occupational therapy. The program offers continuing education to assist with keeping the community renewed.



Introduction:

Introduction requires a safe environment for learning. It is stimulated when something is new or different and behavior is engaged in for its own sake to support the capacity for object interest. A highly pressured or anxiety provoking environment is an enemy to the process. Introduction reflects an autonomous capacity to be interested in the environment. Hope and trust are fostered as the imagination searches for rules of how people, objects and environments operate. The foundations of learning occur at this level. The first sequence of courses is designed to facilitate exploration in learning the basic rules around principles, activities, communication, documentation, and movement in the delivery of occupational therapy services.

- OTA 100 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy
- OTA 105 - Fundamentals of Activity/Therapeutic Media
- OTA 102 – Rehab Terminology, Diseases and Diagnoses
- OTA 111 – Fieldwork IA
- OTA 115 - Dynamics of Human Movement
- OTA 117 – Introduction to Personal and Professional Responsibilities

Application:

Application emerges from intrinsic motivation to deal with the environment, influence it actively and be influenced by it through feedback. To become competent one needs to practice, repeat, and learn behaviors to the point of the establishment of habits. Through practice, competence is accomplished. Fragmentation is a

natural part of this process that occurs when sequences of tasks are broken down and reordered during learning. Hope and trust are transformed to self-confidence and self-reliance at this level. The second sequence of courses provides an opportunity to practice, reorder, and apply previous knowledge to a wide range of ages, disabilities, and contexts.

- OTA 125 – Occupational Skills Development in Psychosocial Interventions
- OTA 135 – Occupational Skills Development in Physical Rehabilitation, Ortho/Med
- OTA 140 - Occupational Skills Development in Pediatric Roles
- OTA 141 – Fieldwork IB
- OTA 145 - Assistive Technology in Occupational Therapy
- OTA 220 – Occupational Skills Development in Physical Rehabilitation, Neuro/Med
- 221 – Fieldwork IC

Mastery:

Achievement builds on the previous two levels. Competition with self or others occurs focusing on a standard of excellence. There is an element of danger and risk taking involved at this level as the mind employs strategies to strive for success. The student applies and integrates previously learned knowledge through clinical fieldwork.

- OTA 205 – Evidence Based Practice
- OTA 217 – Advanced Personal and Professional Responsibilities
- OTA 225 – Occupational Justice
- OTA 230 - Management
- OTA 235 – Clinical Reasoning
- OTA 241 – Fieldwork IIA
- OTA 251 – Fieldwork IIB

General education requirements and course descriptions are listed on the [OTA program website](#). Course sequence is within a cohort model and will follow the structure described [here](#)

Academic Policies of Grossmont College

Clinical Facilities/Affiliations/Clinical Flexibility

Students in the OTA Program are expected to assume responsibility for and have some degree of flexibility in their schedules. Clinical experiences may require student availability other than what was originally scheduled due to caseload changes, emergency situations, staff changes et cetera. These clinical changes will be discussed as early as possible.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Grossmont College maintains clinical affiliations with San Diego area hospitals, clinics and community organizations. You will be expected to travel anywhere within the San Diego County Region to complete your fieldwork experience. Students are encouraged to plan ahead! Clinicals can be anywhere within San Diego County – be prepared to go as far north as Camp Pendleton, Fallbrook and Escondido areas, northeast to Julian, Borrego Springs, southeast to Boulevard, Campo and as far south as San Ysidro all the way west to Imperial Beach and San Onofre and anywhere in between. These sites take OTA students from Grossmont College on a voluntary basis. Careful consideration is given in placing OTA students in fieldwork sites that will meet the needs of the student including faculty input, student preferences and facility requirements. Students may not choose their own fieldwork placements. All fieldwork placements will be made by the OTA Program Director and the OTA Fieldwork Coordinator. It is inappropriate for a student to make contact with a fieldwork site or potential fieldwork site. If you know of a potential site for fieldwork, please give the name of the site to the OTA Program Director and she will pursue obtaining a contractual agreement with this site if it is appropriate. You will not be guaranteed placement at this site.

Gift Policy

Gifts from students are discouraged. Students may not accept gifts from patients, clients or clinical site personnel.

Non-Discrimination Policy

“No person shall be unlawfully subjected to discrimination or denied full and equal access to District programs or activities on the basis of ethnic group identification, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex or gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or on the basis of these perceived characteristics, or of these actual or perceived characteristics”.

OTA Office

The Occupational Therapy Assistant secretary is located in Building 34 Second Floor North Side. Phone: (619) 644-7304. The OTA Office, the Program Director and classrooms/laboratory are located in Building 34 Second Floor North Side. To reach the OTA Director dial (619) 644-7305 and the Fieldwork Coordinator at (619) 644-7307. To request an instructor's extension or voice mail number dial (619) 644-7000.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to always follow campus policies. These are listed on the [college website](#). Use of medical marijuana is still a federal crime. Clinical placement facilities will not accept a student unable to pass a drug screening. Students will be expected to complete a background check and drug screening as they enter the program and to keep this current throughout their time in the program.

Students who have prior convictions (other than for minor traffic infractions) are advised to seek out the National Board of Certification for Occupational Therapy ([NBCOT](#)) and the California Licensing Board for Occupational Therapy ([CBOT](#)) to determine whether they will be allowed to sit for their national board exams or to gain licensure prior to entering the program. Either organization is allowed to deny a student's ability to enter practice based on past convictions of a crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a practitioner. They will consider the nature of the crime/act, the length of time that has lapsed since it occurred, and evidence of rehabilitation.

Any behavior that impedes the process of instruction or distracts others such that learning is inhibited is not tolerated and will be considered a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and be addressed accordingly.

Professional Behavior:

Excellent Professional behavior is expected throughout the OTA program. The ways these are assessed are included in each course and are available to students in the LMS. Examples of excellent professional behaviors are as follows:

- **Ethical Interactions:** Adhere to the highest ethical standards in all interactions with educators, peers, clients, colleagues, and the community.
- **Professionalism:** Demonstrate professional demeanor, attire, and communication in all settings.
- **Respect:** Show respect for the dignity, privacy, and autonomy of clients, colleagues, and faculty.
- **Collaboration:** Collaborate effectively with interprofessional team members to provide holistic care to clients.
- **Communication:** Communicate clearly and effectively with clients, colleagues, and faculty, using appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication.
- **Cultural Humility:** Cultural humility is a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby individuals learn to recognize and challenge their own cultural assumptions, biases, and prejudices. It involves a willingness to engage in respectful dialogue with others, to understand their perspectives, and to adapt one's behavior and approach to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of diverse individuals and communities. Cultural humility emphasizes the importance of recognizing the inherent power dynamics in interactions and striving for mutual understanding and collaboration.
- **Engagement in your Education:** Engage in learning both in classroom and clinical settings. Continually assess what is needed to develop as a professional and to enhance knowledge and skills.
- **Adaptability:** Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in response to changing client needs and clinical environments.

- **Critical Thinking:** Apply critical thinking skills to analyze situations, solve problems, and make informed decisions.
- **Self-Reflection:** Engage in self-reflection and self-assessment to identify areas for personal and professional growth.
- **Safety:** Prioritize the safety and well-being of clients, colleagues, and oneself in all aspects of practice.
- **Advocacy:** Advocate for clients' rights, access to services, and occupational justice.
- **Documentation:** Maintain accurate and timely documentation of client care according to professional standards and regulatory requirements.
- **Professional Boundaries:** Maintain professional boundaries in all interactions with clients, colleagues, and faculty.
- **Leadership:** Demonstrate leadership skills in promoting the profession of occupational therapy and advocating for the needs of clients.

By embodying these professional behaviors, occupational therapy assistant students can contribute to the advancement of the profession and provide high-quality care to clients across the lifespan.

Fieldwork Site Process and Information

Site Information Process

The Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program ensures all students have access to site information, requirements, objectives, and performance expectations prior to fieldwork. All fieldwork materials are housed in a Canvas course shell, with student access granted after the first summer and prior to Level I fieldwork.

For new sites, the AFWC meets with the fieldwork educator to develop the fieldwork data form, site specific weekly objectives, and a list of student expectations. For students with immediate placement at the site, these documents are shared directly with the student when the placement is confirmed. These documents are then posted to the Canvas shell for future students to review.

Site Selection Process for Fieldwork Sites

The Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program maintains a clearly defined and documented process for the selection of fieldwork sites and for ensuring that valid written agreements are executed and maintained prior to and throughout all Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Fieldwork site selection occurs through multiple established pathways to ensure a diverse and high-quality network of clinical partners. Sites may be selected based on existing contractual relationships from previous fieldwork cycles, faculty-identified needs aligned with clinical expertise or curricular goals, direct requests from clinical sites seeking to host students as part of recruitment efforts, or targeted outreach by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC), including recruitment through the program's alumni network. Prior to placement of any student, a formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is established between the sponsoring institution and the fieldwork site. The contract initiation process is submitted through the division and includes required documentation such as site demographic information, designated contact personnel authorized to manage and sign the agreement, and a W-9 form in compliance with State of California requirements.

Following submission, the contract is processed through the College's procurement and business offices. This process includes multi-level institutional review and authorization, ensuring that all legal, regulatory, and institutional requirements are met. Responsibilities of both the sponsoring institution and the fieldwork site are explicitly outlined within the written agreement. Electronic agreements and signatures are utilized and accepted as part of this process.

Once fully executed, the AFWC receives and maintains a copy of the finalized agreement. Contract expiration dates are systematically tracked by the AFWC and the Allied Health and Nursing Division Admin, with reminders set approximately six months prior to expiration to initiate timely renewal. This ensures that all agreements remain active and in effect prior to the start of and throughout the duration of all Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Through this structured and monitored process, the program ensures that all fieldwork placements occur only at sites with valid, current agreements that clearly define roles and responsibilities

Site Selection Process for Students

The Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is committed to providing meaningful and supportive fieldwork experiences that promote student learning, professional development, and successful transition to entry-level practice.

Level I Fieldwork

Level I fieldwork experiences are assigned by the program to ensure that all students are exposed to a variety of practice settings and populations. While sites are assigned, students are provided the opportunity to select from available scheduling options and indicate preferred dates for attendance. This approach supports flexibility while maintaining equitable access to quality learning experiences.

Level I Fieldwork

OTA 111, 141 and 221: Level I fieldwork enriches classroom and laboratory learning through directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process. A variety of clinical occupational therapy settings are introduced through experiential learning. Settings are equipped to apply principles learned in the academic program and appropriate to the student's learning needs and may include clinical observation, community participation, and simulation. These experiences mirror the specific practice areas being taught in the classroom during that semester. Assignments related to each Level I experience must be submitted via the LMS. Evaluation of student performance is completed by the course instructor or site provider. Documentation of clinical observations and verbal reporting to peers is emphasized. Qualified personnel for supervised Level I Fieldwork include OT practitioners, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, nurses, and physical therapists. Students are required to pass all Level I fieldwork experiences.

Level II Fieldwork

For Level II fieldwork, students participate in a more individualized placement process. Students submit information regarding their areas of interest, preferred practice settings, geographic location within the county, and any special preferences or needs. This information is used to guide placement decisions.

Fieldwork site requests are coordinated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) through the DISA (formerly ADB/Complio) system or through direct communication with clinical site representatives. Once a sufficient number of placements have been confirmed, OTA faculty collaboratively review each student's strengths, areas for growth, and stated preferences.

Faculty work together to determine the best possible match between the student, fieldwork site, and fieldwork educator. Every effort is made to create placements that support student success, foster professional growth, and provide a well-rounded clinical experience.

The program is fortunate to maintain strong relationships with clinical partners, including many alumni who serve as fieldwork educators, further enriching the student learning experience.

Level II Fieldwork

OTA 241 and 251 consists of two, 10-week full time clinical rotations under the direct supervision of a credentialed occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant. Successful completion of Level II Fieldwork (241 & 251) is required for eligibility to sit for the national OTA certification exam. Level II fieldwork is scheduled during the Spring Semester of the second year. All OTA and GE courses must be successfully completed before a student can begin Level II fieldwork. Level I fieldwork experience hours will not be counted toward any part of level II fieldwork. Areas of practice available for fieldwork placement include physical dysfunction, mental health, pediatrics, geriatrics, rehabilitation, community-based programming, and emerging practice settings. Students may complete both fieldwork rotations at a single fieldwork site as long as each rotation is reflective of a different practice area. The process of fieldwork placement begins before or during the Fall Semester when students discuss initial plans and placement goals with the Fieldwork Coordinator. All fieldwork must be completed within 18 months (about 1 and a half years) of academic preparation (core OTA courses).

The rigorous schedule of level II fieldwork requires a full-time commitment up to 40 hours per week during spring semester. Students who work will need to plan early to accommodate the daytime level II fieldwork schedule. Part-time fieldwork is not offered. Please plan accordingly.

Site Supervision for Sites Where No OT Exists

Should a future Level II fieldwork placement occur in a setting where no occupational therapy services are currently established, the program has a documented plan to ensure compliance with ACOTE requirements. A currently licensed occupational therapist with a minimum of three years of full-time (or equivalent) professional experience will be assigned as the supervising practitioner. This supervisor will provide a minimum of eight hours of direct supervision per week and will be available to the student during all working hours through multiple modes of communication. An on-site supervisor from another profession will be designated to provide daily support when the occupational therapy supervisor is off site.

Additionally, the program has access to qualified part-time faculty who are available to provide supervision (minimum of 10 hours per week) as needed. The institution is committed to supporting this model by ensuring faculty are compensated for supervisory responsibilities.

Within this model students can receive supervision at non-traditional fieldwork sites which could open new avenues for OTA practice in the local area.