



SHENANDOAH[®]
U N I V E R S I T Y

2026 Level I Syllabus

School of Health Professions, Division of Occupational Therapy

OTD Program

OT 711: Group Dynamics

OT 721: Community

OT 741: Assessments

OT 801: Specialization

OT 811: Mental Health

OT 821: Pediatrics

OT 831: Adults

Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. If applicable, design and choose appropriate evaluation and treatment methods based on the client or patient population.
2. Demonstrate sound observation and clinical reasoning skills through appropriate documentation.
3. If applicable, demonstrate specialization skills utilized with specific client or patient population(s).
4. Demonstrate competence in ethical practice and professionalism.

“The goal of Level I fieldwork is to introduce students to fieldwork, apply knowledge to practice, and develop understanding of the needs of clients” (ACOTE, 2023). “Fieldwork education is a crucial part of professional preparation and is best integrated as a component of the curriculum design. The fieldwork experience is designed to promote professional reasoning and reflective practice, transmit the values and beliefs that enable ethical practice, and develop professionalism and competence in career responsibilities” (ACOTE, 2023).

By the end of the Fieldwork I assignment, the student will meet the following objectives (C.1.3):

Fundamentals of Practice

Adheres to ethics:

- Adheres consistently to the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics and site's policies and procedures including when relevant, those related to human subject research.
 - Maintains strict patient confidentiality
 - Interacts professionally and respectfully with patients, families, and staff
 - Establishes and maintains a therapeutic relationship with the patient
 - Maintains quality patient care and patient satisfaction as guidelines for professional behavior

Adheres to safety regulations:

- Anticipates potentially hazardous situations and takes steps to prevent accidents.
 - Utilizes infection control precautions and procedures
 - Maintains clear and orderly work area by returning equipment and supplies
 - Follows facility policies in response to emergency code or drill situations

- Uses judgment in safety: Uses sound judgment in regard to safety of self and others during all fieldwork-related activities.
 - Provides safe supervision of patients during high-risk activities
 - Refrains from use of equipment or procedures unless trained
 - Seeks and is receptive to supervision to ensure patient safety
 - Demonstrates willingness to function within constraints of center policies and procedures

Professional Behaviors

- Demonstrate ability to implement professional behaviors such as time management, punctuality, courtesy, respect for others, and appropriate dress.
- Demonstrates consistent work behaviors including initiative, preparedness, dependability, and work site maintenance.
- Accomplishes organizational goals by establishing priorities, developing strategies, and meeting deadlines.
 - Arrives promptly to scheduled meetings and treatment sessions.
 - Completes assignments by scheduled deadlines
 - Utilizes unscheduled time to increase learning
 - Prepares in advance for meetings and treatments
 - Notifies supervisor and OT educator when problems arise
- Articulates a clear and logical rationale for the OT process.
- Collaborates with supervisor(s) to maximize the learning experience in terms of communication and observation skills.
 - Asks questions when uncertain
 - Notifies supervisor of unusual occurrences or circumstances
 - Identifies, communicates, and uses own optimal learning methods and styles
 - Recognizes communication styles of self and supervisor; adjusts style as needed to promote optimal communication with supervisor
 - Uses discretion in wording and timing of questions asked of supervisor
- Demonstrates receptiveness to feedback and input from supervisors
 - Actively seeks feedback on performance
 - Clearly and effectively communicates verbally and nonverbally with clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public.
 - All written communication is legible, using proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
 - Uses language appropriate to the recipient of the information, including, but not limited to funding agencies and regulatory agencies.
- Demonstrates positive interpersonal skills including but not limited to cooperation, flexibility, tact, and empathy.
- Demonstrates respect for diversity factors of others including but not limited to socio-cultural, socioeconomic, spiritual, and lifestyle choices.
- Clearly and confidently articulates the values and beliefs of the occupational therapy profession to clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public.
 - Explains the role of OT within the practice setting, in terms and language that are clearly understood by the recipient

Psychosocial (C.1.7)

- Demonstrate effective therapeutic use of self and trauma informed consent, including the awareness of the effects of one's attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills during interactions with clients and families across the lifespan including those who suffer from mental illnesses.
- Effectively interact with clients, families, and professionals emphasizing trust and safety in a therapeutic relationship to improve occupational performance in all contexts.

Screening & Evaluation

- If applicable, practice interview techniques and the use of standardized and non-standardized tools to assess occupational status.
- If applicable, participate in evaluations of client factors such as strength, range of motion and balance that may be affecting participation.
- If applicable, generate sample treatment goals and activities for a selected client or group.

Intervention

- If applicable, create a sample progress note on a selected client.
- If applicable, provide supervised treatment using therapeutic activities and/or occupation to address a specific limitation.
- Learn new skills and if applicable, practice skills on new client populations

ACOTE Primary Standards

- **C.1.1** Ensure that the fieldwork experience reflects the sequence and scope of content in the curriculum design, in collaboration with faculty, so that fieldwork strengthens the ties between didactic and fieldwork education.
- **C.1.2** Document a process that ensures all students have access to site information and requirements, objectives, and performance expectations prior to the start of the fieldwork experience.
- **C.1.3** Document that academic and fieldwork educators agree on fieldwork objectives prior to the start of the fieldwork experience. Document that all fieldwork experiences include an objective with a focus on the occupational therapy practitioner's role in addressing the psychosocial aspects of the client's engagement in occupation.
- **C.1.4** Ensure that fieldwork written agreements are sufficient in number and provide varied practice experiences to allow completion of graduation requirements in a timely manner, in accordance with the policy adopted by the program as required by Standard A.3.3.
- **C.1.5** Responsibilities of the sponsoring institution(s) and each fieldwork site must be clearly documented in the written agreement (electronic agreements and signatures are acceptable). Document the process and criteria for: Selecting fieldwork sites; Ensuring valid written agreements are signed by both parties and in effect prior to the onset and through the duration of Level I (e.g., field trip, observation, service-learning activities) and Level II fieldwork experience for all entities outside of the academic program.
- **C.1.6.** Ensure at least one fieldwork experience (either Level I or Level II) has a primary focus on the role of occupational therapy practitioners addressing mental health, behavioral health, or psychosocial aspects of client performance to support their engagement in occupations.
- **C.1.7** Ensure that the ratio of fieldwork educators to students enables proper supervision and provides protection of consumers, opportunities for appropriate role modeling of occupational therapy practice, and the ability to conduct frequent assessment of student progress in achieving stated fieldwork objectives.
- **C.1.8** Document a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of supervision (Level I and Level II fieldwork). Demonstrate support for enhancing supervision (e.g., materials on supervisory skills, continuing education opportunities, student well-being, cultural humility, and articles on theory and practice).
- **C.1.9** Document a process for communication with the student and fieldwork educator throughout the fieldwork experience. Ensure all aspects of the student's progress and performance are addressed and the fieldwork educator is aware of resources that support student well-being.
- **C.1.10** Ensure that fieldwork educators who supervise Level I fieldwork are informed of the curriculum and fieldwork program design and affirm their ability to support the fieldwork

experience. This must occur prior to the onset of the Level I fieldwork. Examples include, but are not limited to, currently licensed or otherwise regulated occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, physicians, speech-language pathologists, nurses, and physical therapists.

- **C.1.11** Demonstrate that Level I fieldwork is provided to students and is not substituted for any part of the Level II fieldwork. Document mechanisms for formal evaluation of student performance. Level I fieldwork may be met through one or more of the following instructional methods: Virtual environments, Simulated environments, Standardized patients, Faculty practice, Faculty-led site visits, Supervision by a fieldwork educator in a practice environment. Document that all students have similar Level I fieldwork experiences (e.g., learning activities, objectives, assignments, and outcome measures).

Curricular Units (C.1.1)

The Threads across the Units: The hybrid curriculum design reflects the spiral of learning through the following curricular threads, guided by our accreditation standards. Bloom's taxonomy is used as a framework for course objectives and rationale, adding a developmental framework to the educational philosophy that builds from simple to complex and concrete to abstract.

- **Foundational Science & Knowledge:** Understanding occupation, through analysis of various systems is a primary focus in the first-year courses. Students learn anatomy, neuroanatomy, human development, health conditions and the nature of occupation. Through a variety of teaching approaches including lecture, lab activities, and discussion, students learn how foundational science and knowledge supports occupational performance.
- **Self-Reflection & The Occupational Therapy Process:** Promotes the knowledge and skills required to provide client-centered, culturally appropriate, and contextually responsive occupational therapy services for individuals, communities, and populations. Alignment with theory fosters a professional identity that promotes clinical reasoning, therapeutic use of self, and evidence-based practice. Application of research enhances the occupational therapy process in use of best practices and occupational-based outcome measures. Knowledge and skills acquired in this thread will promote recovery, health, and well-being in the screening, evaluation, intervention planning, intervention implementation, and documentation throughout the OT process. Research skills, scholarly writing skills, and procedural skills are applied throughout this curriculum.
 - Best practices in experiential learning require the use of self-reflection in order to close the loop on the OT Process. This process requires students to critically think and clinically reasoning on both current, past, and future decision-making skills.
- **Critical Thinking & Leadership:** Involves the development of professional and ethical behaviors required to practice in various systems of care. Intrapersonal skills, interpersonal communication, and emotional intelligence is fostered through participation in lectures, labs, and experiential learning platforms. Knowledge of healthcare systems, profit and non-profit administration and management, and governmental agencies will be provided in order to develop effective leadership skills. Enriching these skills will promote students' abilities to advocate for service delivery that meets society occupational needs.
- **Lifelong Learning & Evidence-Based Practice/Research:** Students will gain the knowledge and skills needed to become lifelong learners who pursue evidence-based practice through the sequence of research and capstone courses in the curriculum. These courses begin in the first year of the program and continue through each semester. Skills such as self-directed learning, effective communication, collaboration, and critical thinking, as well as strategies for evidence search, retrieval and analysis will be addressed throughout the course sequence by means of participation in the research process and development and implementation of a capstone project. Traits for successful lifetime learning such as curiosity, perseverance, and flexible thinking will

also be fostered through these experiences.

Content from the following five threads is woven across the units in deliberate incremental stages.

- **The Scholarship of Discovery** is the thread that describes the student's journey in discovering new knowledge. This includes new knowledge about themselves as demonstrated by reflection as well as new knowledge that emerges because of the critically analyzing information from a variety of sources.
- **The Scholarship of Integration** is the thread that describes the process in which the students make connections within and across disciplines, perspectives, and bodies of knowledge, enabling them to interpret and bring new insight to original research and assist students with seeing knowledge in new ways.
- **The Scholarship of Application** is the thread where students explore new ways that newly acquired knowledge can be utilized to solve real-world problems for individuals, groups, and populations.
- **The Scholarship of Transmission** is the thread where students comprehend and synthesize the information they have acquired, allowing them to transmit, transform, and extend knowledge to their peers or clients.
- **The Scholarship of Research** ties all Boyers threads of discovery, integration, application, and transmission within and throughout the students educational and professional journey. The elimination of one or more of these components diminishes the strength of scholarship and research.

While these five threads appear to be separate and distinct, in our OTD curriculum, they are integrated and overlap. Each unit of study and each course have elements of multiple threads even though one may be more emphasized than others. Each unit also incorporates multiple hands-on experiences to allow the student the opportunity to engage in the learning process and not be simply a passive learner.

Assessment Standards, Outcomes & Criteria

Grading Criteria:	
93-100% = A	73-76% = C
90-92% = A-	70-72% = C-
87-89% = B+	67-69% = D+
83-86% = B	60-66% = D
80-82% = B-	<60% = F
77-79% = C+	

This course includes the following instructional methods and learning activities (Carefully planned activities used by faculty as a means to promote the acquisition, organization, and integration of new knowledge per ACOTE standard 5.5):

- Office hours (virtual and/or live)
- Discussion (online and/or live, large and/or small group)
- Engagement with community partners and/or simulation performers

This course includes the following learning assessment measures:

- **Assignment:** A task or activity completed by students, often outside of class, to apply course content, demonstrate understanding, and build skills. Examples include written reflections, worksheets, or case study analyses.

- **Demonstration:** A performance-based evaluation in which students must show proficiency in a specific skill or process. This may involve role-playing, use of equipment, or executing intervention strategies relevant to occupational therapy practice.

Assignment	% of Total Grade	Due Week/Date
Evaluations (Demonstration)	40%	Week 11
Assignments	40%	Weeks 5 & 15
Reflections (Assignment)	20%	Week 15