

## Occupational Therapy Assistant Technical Standards for OTA Students

### Technical Standards and Essential Functions

Raritan Valley Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program has established technical standards and essential functions to ensure that students have the abilities required to participate and potentially be successful in all aspects of the program. Students are required to meet technical standards and essential functions for the OTA program as indicated below.

The following outline reasonable expectations of a student in the OTA Program for the performance of common safe therapeutic functions. The OTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a variety of classroom, lab and clinical situations while providing the essential competencies of occupational therapy intervention. These requirements apply for the purpose of admission and continuation in the program.

Prospective students may also visit O\*NET Online for more details about Occupational Therapy Assistant job description: <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/31-2011.00>

### Students must demonstrate the following abilities:

#### A. MOTOR/PHYSICAL

*Sufficient strength and gross and fine motor ability and coordination to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective therapeutic intervention and emergency treatment as necessary.*

- Demonstrate stability, mobility, balance, strength and agility to assist and safeguard clients during transfers and daily, relevant, meaningful activities (bed, chair, wheelchair, mat, toilet, tub, car, etc.).
- Safely support, turn and position clients, control a fall by slowly lowering client to the floor, engage in mat activities with clients, manipulate, maneuver, and adjust equipment and devices (e.g. wheelchairs, hospital beds, swings, ball, splint pans, tub seats, portable commodes).
- Provide emergency treatment and follow emergency protocol both in academic and clinical settings when necessary.
- Stand or sit for sufficient periods of time to actively engage in academic, lab, and clinical activities (may be up to 8 to 10 hours per day).
- Demonstrate manual dexterity and coordination necessary to manipulate equipment and perform therapeutic procedures in such therapeutic interventions as splinting, wheelchair adjustment, feeding, or orthotics and prosthetics.
- Tolerate physical contact with others; tolerate manipulation of own body by peers or instructors for instructional purposes.

## B. COGNITION/INTELLECTUAL

*Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, retain, and apply facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of health care. This may require comprehension of three-dimensional relationships and an understanding of the spatial relationships of structures. Students must have the cognitive capacity to appropriately utilize technology in the classroom and in clinical or community settings. Sound judgment, ethical reasoning, and clinical reasoning are essential.*

- Report client data verbally and in writing to members of the treatment team.
- Read, comprehend, and retain relevant information in textbooks, class presentations, medical records and professional literature.
- Demonstrate problem-solving skills and judgment necessary to modify treatment methods when necessary and address the specific needs of individuals (behavioral, cultural, etc.) in order to maximize client performance.
- Identify and select goal directed occupations to motivate and challenge clients.

## C. SENSORY/OBSERVATION

*Students must be able to perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources including oral presentations, printed materials, visual media, and hands-on demonstrations. Students must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile, auditory, and other sensory and perceptual modalities to enable such observations and information acquisition necessary for academic and clinical performance. Students must be able to perceive and appropriately interpret nonverbal communications.*

- Sufficient visual acuity, such as observation necessary for administering patient care and reading/recording equipment gauges, measurements and settings used in treatments.
- Detect changes in skin color or condition (pale, ashen, grey, sweat, swelling, inflammation, atrophy, etc.)
- Detect and hear soft voices, masked voices, alarms generated by mechanical systems such as those that monitor vital signs, fire alarms, etc.
- Palpate a pulse and detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin, muscle tone, and temperature.
- Palpate and manipulate bony landmarks of upper and lower extremities in preparation for activity engagement.
- To detect odors related to patient assessment
- To feel where individual body segments are located and to know when/how they are moving even if they cannot be seen.

#### D. COMMUNICATION

*Ability to communicate effectively.*

- Effective interpersonal skills necessary for productive classroom discussion and respectful interaction with classmates, faculty, fieldwork educators and clients. These skills include, but are not limited to: expressing ideas and feelings clearly, being able to exchange information effectively and communicating with others in a respectful confident manner and accepting criticism or feedback.
- To work collaboratively; interact professionally; to establish rapport with patients, colleagues and classmates; to resolve conflicts with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions.

#### Reasonable Accommodations

Raritan Valley Community College is committed to creating and promoting an accessible learning environment for all students. "Reasonable accommodation" refers to ways in which the College addresses any barriers to full participation in the academic and co-curricular experience. While reasonable accommodation does not mean that students will be exempt from required tasks, it does mean that the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program desires student success and is committed to working with all students giving every opportunity for success.

RVCC does not discriminate in its educational programs or activities regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, veteran status, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, disability or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state and local laws. For inquiries regarding Title IX or Section 504, contact Nancy Moore, Vice President for Human Resources & Labor Relations at 908-526-1200 x8345.

Raritan Valley Community College is committed to providing equal and integrated access for individuals with disabilities to all courses, programs, and activities it offers. Our commitment is consistent with legal requirements, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.