

**MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM CURRICULUM  
GUIDE & STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027**



**MADISON**  

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**AREA | TECHNICAL**  

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**COLLEGE**

# WELCOME

A personal journey has brought you to the profession of Occupational Therapy at this time in your life. The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program Faculty welcomes you, and the unique ideas, abilities, and experiences you bring to the program. You are entering a period in your life that will be both challenging and rewarding. We, the OTA Faculty, are dedicated to presenting you with the knowledge and skills to become a fully prepared and competent OTA. Throughout the program, you will participate in three unique learning environments: the classroom, performance labs, and Level I and Level II Fieldwork experiences. Academic success in each of these environments is crucial to your professional development and your academic success as an OTA student.

Throughout your involvement in the Madison College OTA program, you will be immersed in the philosophy of occupational therapy. As stated by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), "Occupations are activities that bring meaning to the daily lives of individuals, families, and communities and enable them to participate in society. All individuals have an innate need and right to engage in meaningful occupations throughout their life".

The OTA program curriculum has been designed to reflect progression in course content from foundational to more complex. Throughout our program, we will emphasize problem solving and independent thinking on your part. Classroom, online learning, laboratory, and fieldwork experiences will develop increased knowledge and skills while fostering self-responsibility and professional behaviors. We invite you to become an active participant and practitioner in the lifelong learning process of occupational therapy.

The OTA Program Student Handbook and Curriculum Guide is designed to provide you with information about Madison Area Technical College (Madison College) and the OTA program, including specific policies and procedures and your responsibilities as a student. It is used in combination with the current Student Rights and Responsibilities section on the Madison College website. It is imperative that you become familiar with the content of these resources.

Once again, congratulations on your career choice. We encourage you to communicate with us if you have any questions, concerns, or difficulties that are interfering with your academic performance in the program. We will also be soliciting your feedback as we continually work to develop and improve the program.

The OTA Faculty

Madison College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

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## OTA Program Information

### Accreditation

The Madison College OTA program is accredited by the [Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education](#) (ACOTE) of the AOTA, 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD, 20852-4929; Telephone: (301) 652-6611. For program data on pass rates for our grads, visit the [National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy](#) website

### Program Summary

The OTA program at Madison College is a full-time, two-year program involving four 16-week semesters. Graduates will receive an Associate's Degree in Applied Arts in Occupational Therapy Assistant. The curriculum includes courses in general education and OTA courses. You will be enrolled in two, full-time, 8-week Level II Fieldwork experiences during the last semester of the program. There is a part-time, 3-year plan of study available in extenuating circumstances. Please consult with the OTA Program Director if you have questions about completing the program on a part-time basis.

NOTE: You will need to complete all Level II Fieldwork within 18 months following the completion of the didactic portion of the program.

### Statement of Nondiscrimination

The College does not permit any form of discrimination or harassment on any basis as prohibited by law.

It is the policy of Madison College to maintain a workplace and educational environment free from harassment and discrimination. If you feel that you have been subject to discrimination in any way including restriction from or involvement in activities or in any form of harassment, contact any faculty member or the Dean of Health Sciences, Marissa Tokarczyk at [mtokarczyk@madisoncollege.edu](mailto:mtokarczyk@madisoncollege.edu).

Violations of this policy are subject to resolution using the College's Title IX / Sexual Harassment Grievance Process or the Harassment / Discrimination Grievance Process.

### Statement of Equity and Inclusion

The four pillars of equity and inclusion:

- Madison College will eliminate racist policies, practices and procedures to achieve more equitable outcomes.
- Students of color and traditionally underrepresented populations will persist and succeed at greater rates in order to achieve more equitable outcomes.
- Employee demographics will mirror student demographics.
- Every employee, student, and guest will experience a welcoming and inclusive Madison College.

## **Madison College Mission, Vision and Values:**

### ***Mission:***

Madison College provides our diverse communities open access to quality higher education that fosters student lifelong learning and success.

### ***Vision:***

To be the leader in accessible, affordable education that is responsive to the evolving needs of our diverse communities.

### ***Values***

- **Excellence**
- **Respect**
- **Belonging**
- **Integrity**

## **Madison College OTA Program Mission and Vision Statements:**

### ***Mission:***

Foster an inclusive learning community where students, faculty and program stakeholders are collaboratively engaged in innovative occupational therapy education that promotes authentic, evidence-informed, and culturally responsive practice.

### ***Vision:***

The vision of the Madison College OTA program is innovative occupational therapy education that is responsive to and reflective of our diverse students, stakeholders, and communities

## **Madison College Core Workforce Skills**

Local employers have consistently reported needing certain “core” skills when hiring Madison College graduates. The OTA program strives to provide opportunities to strengthen these skills.

- **SELF MANAGEMENT** (manage time and stress, practice workplace etiquette, self-assess)
- **CRITICAL THINKING** (evaluate, solve problems, make decisions)
- **TEAMWORK** (respond to feedback, respect diversity, work effectively in a team)
- **COMMUNICATION** (listen, speak, read, write)
- **ETHICS** (demonstrate acceptable behavior and judgment)
- **CULTURAL AWARENESS** recognize, understand and acknowledge differences between self and others

## **Faculty Beliefs about Learning**

The OTA Faculty have several core beliefs about the process of teaching and learning. Consistent with AOTA's position on the value of OTA education (AOTA, 2019), we welcome diversity in the classroom as found in our community. We endeavor to be inclusive in all aspects of our programming. We provide rigorous and varied experiences based on the domain and practice of occupational therapy with an emphasis on equity and inclusion, collaborative learning, and evidence-informed learning. Active engagement, self-directedness and creative learning activities are utilized to develop empower student success.

We believe that learning is a developmental process. We utilize an instructional scaffolding model to support student learning and to introduce and build concepts and skills. The curriculum supports collaborative occupational therapy practice both intra- and inter- professionally. We believe that introducing evidence-based-practice early and often provides the foundation for using evidence in practice.

We believe that personal meaning comes from constructing and reconstructing learning experiences. This meaning is enhanced through experiences in diverse and relevant environments followed by personal reflections on the new learning and the learning yet to come.

The OTA program exemplifies the college's core values of Excellence and Respect. We strive for excellence through constructivist methods, hands-on learning, experiences in diverse community settings and content that reflects emerging and contemporary practice. We are committed to respecting our students, their unique qualities and experiences, and allowing them to develop as individuals within the profession of occupational therapy. Personal and professional integrity is interwoven in all interactions with students and program stakeholders. Through these commitments we uphold the college's core values of commitment to students, diverse communities and creating a program that is welcoming to all.

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2019). [Value of occupational therapy assistant education to the profession](#). American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 73(Suppl. 2), 7312410007.

### **Madison College OTA Program Goals:**

- Educate and graduate OTAs who are competent to provide occupation-based interventions with a person-centered approach in a variety of traditional and emerging contexts.
- Promote the value of community and partnerships through collaboration, teamwork, learning activities and reflection.
- Encourage the values of professional service and life-long learning.
- Provide opportunities for assessment, feedback and reflection in a manner that supports self-direction in the professional development process.
- Promote the value of serving as a professional resource regarding issues related to occupational therapy education and practice.

### **Curriculum Threads:**

The threads reflect the essential concepts of the profession's philosophy of OT

- Equity and Inclusion
- Self-Directed and Collaborative learning
- Evidence-Informed learning

### **Curriculum Design**

Partnerships between internal and external stakeholders, the faculty and you, make up the integrated learning community of Madison College's OTA program. Through these partnerships, the curriculum provides meaningful experiences in many settings. Active engagement in the community and among consumers is designed to provide experiences that are progressively more complex. These varied opportunities allow you to expand professional behaviors and skills in both assessment and intervention with individuals and groups that are reflective of all members of the community.

The curriculum design content threads of equity and inclusion, evidence-informed learning, self-directed and collaborative learning are most clearly illustrated in the sequencing of courses. The curriculum design content threads and our beliefs about learning demonstrate the rationale for courses offered, the sequencing of courses, and evaluation (both formative and summative) strategies.

During the first semester of the program, students are enrolled in courses that contain content that is aligned with the philosophical base of Occupational Therapy. This includes ethics, the scope of occupational therapy practice, person-centered practice, therapeutic use of self and cultural humility. The language of healthcare is embraced through exposure to basic medical and psychosocial conditions, activity analysis, evidence-informed practice and the American Occupational Therapy's Practice Framework (OTPF) (AOTA, 2020). The OTFP describes "the central concepts that ground occupational therapy practice and builds a common understanding of the basic tenets and vision of the profession." (p. 5). In addition to varied occupation-based learning experiences, students are introduced to the professional development process that is ultimately woven throughout the program. Students are assessed both formally and informally on foundational communication skills, professionalism, general medical knowledge, and basic group leadership and membership skills.

The curriculum design in second semester builds on previous learning, examining the theoretical foundations that guide practice. Several relevant models of practice and frames of reference are introduced and are foundational for class activities. Through self-directed learning experiences and practical demonstration of knowledge, students build occupational therapy assessment and intervention skills. Students become proficient in using assessment tools within the distinct role of the OTA as defined by different practice contexts.

Skills are developed for assessing and enhancing group dynamics and ongoing opportunities are provided for improving leadership skills. Faculty-led community-based activities allow students to apply knowledge to different contexts and populations. Assessment of students' performance is based on self-reflection, feedback from faculty, community partners, consumers, and peers. The kawa model has been used to provide a culturally sensitive tool for self-reflection and assessment

of personal growth. The Kawa model specifically aims to embrace diverse cultures and belief systems (Iwama, 2006a).

During third semester, the courses examine the OT process of assessments and interventions within the practice areas of physical rehabilitation, pediatrics, and community-based settings with continued integration of the psychosocial aspects of OT practice. Students are exposed to technologies that support the delivery of OT services and develop proficiency in environmental modifications. Students have opportunities to analyze and apply knowledge during faculty-led community-based fieldwork experiences. These Level I experiences require students to demonstrate enhanced skills in communication, professionalism, observation and intervention. They are engaged in self-reflection of their own performance and professionalism as it relates to course work, fieldwork, and their future career as an OTA. Assessment of student performance is based on the integration of evidence-informed learning as well as demonstration of skills consistent with the scope of OTA practice.

The fourth semester of the OTA curriculum provides an immersion in occupational therapy practice settings. The completion of two eight-week fieldwork experiences, in different practice settings, requires students to refine skills required for entry-level OTA practice. Throughout the semester students apply practice and management concepts to fieldwork contexts and share learning and insights with faculty and classmates through online discussions. Assessment of performance is based on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) for the OTA completed by the Fieldwork Educator. Self-reflection remains an important assessment tool throughout the final semester. Weekly conferences with the fieldwork educator provide student feedback and promote reflection and opportunities for self-directed professional growth. Students are given the opportunity to provide direct feedback to the site and the program about the fieldwork experience through the Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Experience at the completion of each fieldwork.

The OTA curriculum at Madison College is designed to provide progressively more complex experiences where students learn and apply theoretical knowledge, evidence-informed practice, activity analysis, creativity, person-centered practice and group leadership skills through both classroom and community-based learning. With feedback from faculty, Fieldwork Educators, community partners, and self-reflections, students are provided opportunities to demonstrate continual growth in leadership skills and professionalism.

Iwama, M. K. (2006). *The Kawa model: the power of culturally responsive occupational therapy*. Churchill Livingstone.

### **OTA Program Learning Outcomes**

The curriculum design includes learning activities and experiences during each semester to fulfill learning outcomes set by the Wisconsin Technical College System. These outcomes are as follows:

- Practice within the distinct role and responsibility of the occupational therapy assistant.
- Apply occupational therapy principles and intervention tools to achieve expected outcomes.
- Serve a diverse population in a variety of systems that are consistent with entry level

practice.

- Seek out learning opportunities to keep current with best practice
- Advocate for the profession, services, and consumers
- Demonstrate professional behaviors, ethical standards, values, and attitudes of the occupational therapy profession.

### **OTA Program Learning Outcome Indicators**

The following resources have primarily influenced the content and form of the OTA program

- Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) for the OTA Student (AOTA, 2020)
- The 2023 Accreditation Standards for OTA Programs (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education)
- Wisconsin Statewide Curriculum Initiative
- Madison College Core Abilities
- OTA Program Curricular Threads
  - Equity and Inclusion
  - Self-Directed and Collaborative Learning
  - Evidence-Informed Learning



## STUDENT HANDBOOK

Policies and procedures are reviewed annually by the OTA Faculty and when needed, discussed with the OTA Advisory Committee. They are enhanced through input from varied communities of interest. Suggestions should be communicated to the OTA Program Director. OTA Faculty will follow these policies and procedures to promote smooth operation of the program and assure fairness to all students. All policies will be enforced with respect and confidentiality.

### **Madison College Student Resources**

A variety of general services are available to help you as a student at Madison College. A listing of services can be found on the current [Madison College Students website](#).

### **Madison College Navigate**

Navigate is an app that allows you to communicate with your success team, including your Madison College Advisor, a success coach and the faculty for your current courses.

### **Madison College Advising Services**

Your care team includes individuals who have been assigned to support you in your academic and personal journey. Your team includes an academic advisor and a student success coach. Contact information for your care team is listed in Navigate. During the first weeks of the program, you will also be assigned an OTA Faculty Advisor. This will be a faculty member currently teaching in the OTA program. Below is a brief description of the role of each member of your care team.

#### ***OTA Academic Advisor:***

[Jill Hadfield](#): 608-243-4505 x 4505

- Getting through declaration process & into the program
- Exploring which classes to take (pre-program)
- Planning a transfer to a four-year school

#### ***OTA Faculty Advisors:***

You will be assigned an advisor from the OTA Faculty. Your OTA Faculty Advisor will meet with you periodically throughout the program to ensure that you are on track with your progress. You are always welcome to schedule meetings with your program advisor for program-related questions.

- Questions about your program
- Taking classes in the right order to stay on track for graduation
- Passing current courses
- Enrolling in next semester courses
- Referring you to other resources within the college

### ***Student Success Coach:***

The success coach is available to help you become an active and confident learner.

- Developing a Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- Strengthening your study skills
- Learning about campus resources and programming

### ***Retention Initiatives and Student Engagement (RISE):***

Some students participate in the RISE program. If you have questions about being part of this program, visit the [RISE](#) website.

- Focuses on high-promise student populations
  - students of color
  - first-generation students
  - military-connected students
  - undocumented students
  - first-year students

### **Madison College Counseling Services**

If you need assistance with academic and career issues, personal concerns, interpersonal issues, conflict management and crisis intervention, Counseling Services offers a wide range of services. These services are free and available to all current and prospective students. To schedule an appointment, call 608-246-6076.

### **Madison College Libraries**

Here you will find:

- Assistance from librarians on conducting research and locating reliable information.
- Borrowing privileges for thousands of books, magazines, videos, and other resources.
- 24/7 electronic access to thousands of e-books and millions of articles through the library databases.
- Support for your computer questions and problems.
- Academic instruction and special services in the form of Basic Skills Education, English Language Learner (ELL) and more offered by the Learning Center faculty.

### ***Research Guides:***

The Madison College Libraries offer on-line resources for specific programs of study at the college including Occupational Therapy.

### **Student Achievement Center:**

The Student Achievement Center in collaboration with the Madison College Libraries provides opportunities for individuals to review or improve their basic skills in most academic subject areas including: academic reading, academic writing, math, science and social studies. You can also get help with study skills, basic computer literacy skills, job seeking skills and program-related assistance. Individualized, group and computer-assisted instruction are available at learning centers and in classrooms. Scheduling is flexible to fit most schedules. Supplemental Instruction (SI) is also available, which is a series of weekly group study sessions for students taking difficult classes. More information can be found on the [Madison College](#) website or by calling 608-246-6125.

### **Computer Access**

Computers and printers are available in multiple labs, the library, and throughout the Truax campus. There is a computer lab with a printer dedicated for the OTA program in room 118 of the Health Sciences Building.

Drop-in computer assistance is available in-person in the Madison College Libraries. On the Truax campus the Library is located in room A3000 in the main building, 1701 Wright St., Madison, WI. [Appointments for in-person or online assistance](#) are available through the Madison College Libraries webpage or call 608-243-4444, toll free 866-277-4445.

Throughout the OTA program you will need personal access to a computer and internet as most courses have online requirements. If you need a laptop or hotspot, the college will provide equipment through the Student Technology Hub: Tech Home page of the Madison College Libraries webpage. Under the [Equipment and Multimedia](#) section you can fill out a request for needed items.

### **Disability Resource Services**

Madison Area Technical College is governed by the following federal statutes that prohibit discrimination against individuals on the basis of disability. Reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals must be provided according to the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#).

#### ***Rehabilitation Act of 1973***

Section 504(a) No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 7(20), 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 or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency ....

Section 508. In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Inaccessible technology interferes with an individual's ability to obtain and use information quickly and easily. Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities, and to encourage development of

technologies that will help achieve these goals. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology.

[Madison College Disability Resource Services \(DRS\)](#) creates conditions that empower and support individuals with disabilities to reach their chosen learning goals. DRS works in partnership with faculty, staff and wider communities on behalf of students with disabilities. Our mission is to ensure equal access to all programs at Madison College. We also support students through a variety of other non-mandated services that encourage successful completion of their education. Visit the website or call 608-246-6716.

### **Financial Aid**

The Madison College Financial Aid Office administers a comprehensive program of financial assistance from federal, state, and private funds in the form of grants, loans or work study. Contact the Madison College Financial Aid Office, located in the main building on the Truax Campus in room A1000. The phone number is 608-246-6170. In-person and virtual appointments are available.

### **Scholarships**

Scholarships are funds awarded to applicants that do not have to be repaid. The Madison College Foundation is the official source for supporting scholarships at Madison College. Many scholarships are available, and some are only available to Madison College OTA students.

The Truax Campus Foundation Office is located in room 203A at 3591 Anderson St., Madison, WI, or call 608-246-6441

### **Health and Wellness**

A variety of services are available to you through Madison College Health and Wellness.

#### ***Madison College Student Health Clinic***

With a valid [OneCard](#) and your enrollment in the OTA program, you may utilize many services with no out-of-pocket cost while additional services are available at a discounted rate.

**Location:** Madison College GHC Clinic is located in the Health Sciences Building 1701 Hoffman St. (GHC entrance on Hoffman St.), Madison, WI 53704

**How to get started:** Students with a GHC Number can schedule an appointment by calling [608.441.3220](tel:608.441.3220). Students without a GHC number should call [608.251.4138](tel:608.251.4138) to enroll

The GHC Nurse Connect Line is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days per week (24/7) at 608-661-7350.

**Clinic hours:** Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

#### ***Student Health Insurance***

The OTA program requires you to have basic health/accident insurance for fieldwork (clinical) participation. Information on [Health and Nursing Programs Forms and Policies](#) can be found on the Current Students website. By checking yes on the Health History form, you are indicating that you agree to maintain coverage throughout the duration of your clinical experience(s) and that you understand that Madison College cannot assume any liability or financial obligation for your health care. Student accident insurance is available to you for \$15 per semester. Please

contact [Debbie Bebeau](#) for more information.

### Questions/Concerns/Complaints (Grievances)

As a student, if you have questions or problems with coursework, you are encouraged to ask for help as follows.

- Ask the instructor(s) of the course for assistance. This should be the first step in seeking course-related assistance.
- Your OTA Faculty Advisor may be able to help with course or program-related issues. They will be assigned at the start of the semester.
- If you still have concerns that are not being addressed, email the OTA Program Director, [Debbie Bebeau](#) or call at 608-258-2310.
- The Dean for the School of Health Sciences, [Marissa Winer](#) can be contacted via email or at 608-246-6685 x 6685.
- Finally, the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) provides support, guidance, prevention, intervention, and referral services to the college community. You and other members of your care team may involve the Dean of students for issues related to:
  - Concerns & Complaints
  - Conduct
  - Equal Opportunity, Harassment & Non-Discrimination
  - Title IX & Sexual Misconduct
  - Behavioral Intervention

Complaints outside of due process are handled in a variety of ways depending on the situation or complaint. The following is a basic guideline for the channels of directing complaints

| Source of Complaint | Example   | Person to manage complaint   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Employers           | An employer has a complaint about the OTA program, a student within the program, or a graduate of the OTA program   | OTA Program Director<br><a href="#">Debbie Bebeau</a>  |
| Fieldwork Education | A Clinical Fieldwork Site has a complaint about a student's performance or behaviors during or in a past clinical site rotation.  | OTA Academic Fieldwork Coordinator<br><a href="#">Debbie Bebeau</a>  |
| General Public      | A citizen of the Madison Area district has a complaint about the OTA program, faculty within the OTA program, a student in the OTA program, or a graduate of the OTA program. | Dean of the School of Health Sciences; if appropriate, Dean will contact the OTA Program Director<br><a href="#">Marissa Winer</a> |

## OTA PROGRAM SPECIFICS

### Locations and Modes of Instruction

The OTA program is in the School of Health Sciences at Madison College. Most in-person courses specific to the OTA program (prefixes 10-514) will be held in the School of Health Sciences building at the Truax campus, unless other arrangements have been communicated in the course syllabus and/or through announcements in Brightspace and email.

The format of each OTA course is listed on the Madison College website and in your downloaded schedule accessed through your student portal. The definitions are listed as:

- In-person – this indicates that you are to be physically present. Most classes will be held in the OTA classrooms, rooms 112-118 in the Health Sciences Building. For fieldtrips and fieldwork, the address of the off-site locations will be provided on the schedule, Brightspace and/or via Madison College email. You will be responsible for being aware of the scheduled outings, transportation to and from all in-person locations and for being on time. If transportation is a concern, please communicate this to the course instructor(s).
- Hybrid – this indicates that the course is being delivered in-person and asynchronously online. There are required days on-campus and online material to be completed asynchronously (during your available schedule) with deadlines every week.
- Online Live – this indicates that you will be attending class via a virtual platform at a scheduled time. Participation in online live classes includes being on time, turning your camera on when requested, unmuting yourself to contribute to discussions, using the chat features, etc. If full participation in an online live course is challenging, please talk with the course instructor(s).
- Asynchronous Online – this indicates that some or all of the content for the class is being delivered through Brightspace. You can access and work through the material during a time that is convenient but be aware of firm due dates for submitting evidence of accessing the content. This is NOT considered the homework of the course, instead it is a means of working through course content that is similar to being in class. Online content may include listening to video or audio lectures, reviewing and responding to discussion groups, uploading videos of yourself performing lab skills and other content-rich activities. Again, this is not considered homework, rather it is independent access to course content. Homework is assigned in addition to the online component of the course. Asynchronous online content allows more flexibility for you and reduces your hours on campus. It allows you to access and work with the course material during times that are convenient for you.

Due to inclement weather and/or illness, it is possible that an in-person course will be changed to online live or online. In this situation, every effort will be made to provide advance notice via Brightspace and email. If you are already on campus, you will be assisted in setting up a private or group space for participation.

Madison College uses the [Wolfpack Alert](#) as the first source of emergency information. The app will alert you to campus closures, potentially threatening incidents, weather emergencies and

other urgent information.

[Sign up for WolfPack Alerts](#) on your mobile device. Enter your mobile phone number to enroll.

Level I and Level II Fieldwork experiences are mostly in-person experiences that are generally conducted within the Madison College District unless prior arrangements have been made with other OTA Programs regarding fieldwork sites within their districts.

General education courses and electives can be completed through many colleges and in many formats. Review the OTA program website for specific course requirements. Questions regarding general education and electives can be directed to your Advisor, Jill Hadfield at [jhadfield@madisoncollege.edu](mailto:jhadfield@madisoncollege.edu).

### **Program Faculty/ Faculty Grievance Procedures**

All faculty offices are located at:

Madison Area Technical College  
School of Health Sciences  
1705 Hoffman St.  
Madison, WI 53704

### **Full Time Faculty**

- [Deborah Bebeau](#), Ed.D., OTR
  - OTA Program Director & Academic Fieldwork Coordinator
  - Office: 312
  - Office phone/voicemail: 608-258-2310
- [Sarah Clemons-Wagner](#), MBA, OTR

### **Part-Time Faculty**

- [Rachel Fischer](#), MS, OTR
- [Andrea Schraepfer](#), COTA
- [Kim Lechmaier](#)-Soat, OTR
- [Sarah Zurawski](#), OTD, OTR
- [Aimee Theo](#), COTA

## **Faculty GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Grievable Actions: An employee may file a formal grievance regarding discipline, termination, or workplace safety if unresolved through informal measures.

### Grievance Steps

Step 1: Formal Grievance to the Vice President of Human Resources and Immediate Manager if an issue is not resolved informally, an employee may file a written grievance within 15 business days of the issue/occurrence using the grievance form.

Step 2: Appeal to an Impartial Hearing Officer (IHO) if the grievance is not resolved satisfactorily at Step 1, the decision may be appealed to an Impartial Hearing Officer (IHO).

Step 3: Appeal to the President to appeal the previous decision within five business days of the issuance of the decision or time when the decision was due.

Step 4: Final Appeal to the Board of Trustees if the grievance is not resolved satisfactorily at Step 3, the decision may be appealed to the Board of Trustees

## **OTA Program and Madison College Policies and Procedures**

The OTA program abides by the Madison College policies located on the [Madison College](#) public website.

Evacuation Procedures: Please see the [MATC Emergency Preparedness guide for evacuation and WolfPack Alert information](#).

For the Health and Safety of clients, students, and faculty equipment will be regularly cleaned and maintained for appropriate use including educational activities.

You are expected to have a working knowledge and understanding of the content of the Madison College OTA Handbook and Curriculum Guide, which is provided to you annually. After reviewing the student handbook, you will attest to the “Statement of Acknowledgement/ Agreement/ Understanding” at the end of this packet, confirming that you understand the content of the handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth during your tenure as an OTA student.

### **Admissions Requirements/Procedures:**

Occupational Therapy Assistant program admission requirements can be found on the [Madison College](#) website.

### **Health Forms & Physical Examinations**

The various clinical agencies that provide fieldwork opportunities require verification of compliance with specific health standards. You will be allowed to participate in Level I or Level II Fieldwork experiences after receiving approval from [CastleBranch](#) for your health requirements. You will find information on creating your CastleBranch account in the Brightspace OTA Orientation Course.

Each semester you will submit required health information updates to CastleBranch in preparation for fieldwork experiences. Participation in Level I and Level II Fieldwork experiences is contingent on adherence to the health requirements set forth by the School of Health Sciences.

## **Criminal Background Information**

Once admitted into the OTA program you are required to submit a Caregiver Background Check (CBC) through CastleBranch. You will find information on obtaining the CBC application and submitting it to CastleBranch in the Brightspace OTA Orientation Course.

The OTA Program Director will review your CBC in CastleBranch prior to your first semester of classes. The OTA Program Director will confidentially discuss any potential issues that may impact your participation in the program, fieldwork and/or certification by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). Depending on the results of the CBC, you may be required to complete the NBCOT Early Determination Process.

Legal issues can be a big obstacle for students and other community members. Madison College has partnered with Lawyers for Learners in offering free legal advice to students and our community members. For more information visit the [Legal Clinic](#) website.

## **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification**

You are required to be certified in American Red Cross: CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer and Health Care Provider OR American Heart Association: BLS Health Care Providers by the end of the second semester of the OTA program. This allows you to be current in your certification during Level II Fieldwork (4<sup>th</sup> semester). It is your responsibility to arrange for this training outside of the OTA program. Accepted certifications are:

- The American Heart Association BLS for Health Care Providers
- The American Red Cross – BLS for Health Care Providers

## **Articulation with Occupational Therapist (OT) Education**

If you plan to ultimately enter an OT program, you are encouraged to discuss your plans with the OTA Program Director as soon as possible.

The liberal studies courses at the associate degree level (courses with #100 prefix) meet the OTA program requirements but they are not designed for college transfer to a University OT program. When possible, you should take college-transfer liberal studies courses (courses with #200 prefix) which are more readily accepted at other colleges and universities.

For more information on bridge programs for OTAs to transition to OTs, visit the [AOTA](#).

## **Program Fees\* & Tuition Refunds**

You can be referred to the [Madison College](#) website for the most current information on fees.

Information that summarizes fees annually can be found on [the OTA program](#) website under "View Tuition and Fees".

Additional funds may be needed for fieldtrips, fieldwork travel, workshops, conference attendance or professional association memberships. Instructors will itemize any related costs at course orientations.

\*All fees are subject to change

## **Tuition Refund**

Refund eligibility depends on three dates: class start date, class end date, and the date you officially drop the class. Refund amounts and drop date requirements are as follows:

- 100% refund: Drop class at least one day before it starts
- 80% refund: Drop class before 11% of the class is completed
- 60% refund: Drop class after 11% but before 20% of the class is completed. Classes dropped during any refund period do not appear on your transcript.
- 0% refund: Drop class after 20% of the class is completed. Classes dropped after the 60% refund period remain on your transcript and receive a final grade of "W" (withdrawal).

*NOTE: You may withdraw before 90% of the course has occurred (week 13).*

*These percentages are based on the time between the class start and end dates, not by the number of class meetings that occur.*

### **Financial Aid/Veterans Benefits Recipients:**

Dropping classes may affect receipt of aid and require repayment of funds received.

*Nonattendance does not constitute a cancellation of registration. If you stopped attending and/or dropped a course you would be responsible for tuition and fees not paid, except in cases of cancellation or discontinuance of classes.*

### **Registering for Classes**

Once admitted into the program you will register for your courses online. During the first semester of the program, you will receive an OTA plan of study from your OTA Faculty Advisor with each semesters' courses listed. Any requests for taking OT courses part-time or out of sequence should be discussed initially with the OTA Faculty Advisor, who will confer with faculty and then communicate a decision to the School of Health Science's office to arrange for course permissions. If OTA courses are near full capacity with full-time students, part-time students who are closest to Level II Fieldwork will be given preference for entry into the courses.

### **Academic Accommodations**

As noted, Madison College is governed by federal statutes that prohibit discrimination against any individual on the basis of disability. These statutes require that the College and the OTA program provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals.

If you have a disability that requires accommodations, make arrangements to meet with the Madison College Disability Resource Services prior to the start of the semester. This will ensure that accommodations are in place as early as possible.

The [OTA Program Essential Functions Document](#) is provided in the Brightspace OTA orientation course where you are asked to confirm your abilities in the areas specified. This document can facilitate career advising. It is also used throughout the program during academic advising.

Any limitations that are relevant to academic performance and/or fieldwork should be discussed as early as possible to determine if the limitations would affect performance in ongoing courses or in fieldwork. When accommodations are needed for fieldwork, they should

be discussed with Fieldwork Educators prior to placement with the student's informed consent. Acceptance of students for fieldwork is the prerogative of independent agencies.

NOTE: A history of academic accommodation must be demonstrated for related accommodations on the NBCOT certification test.

### **OTA Program Advising**

Once you are admitted into the OTA program all advising will start with your Faculty OTA Advisor. Depending on the issue, you or your OTA Faculty Advisor may involve the OTA Program Director, individuals from Admissions, Advising and/or your success coach. Your care team and their contact information can be found in Navigate.

Your OTA Faculty Advisor will meet with you regularly to confirm the accuracy of your academic plan of study. Advising appointments will be scheduled in the first, second and third semesters of the program. You are welcome to schedule additional appointments with your OTA Faculty Advisor as needed.

For questions or concerns about course assignments, exams or other course-specific topics, your first stop should be the course instructor(s).

Advising related to Level II Fieldwork is the responsibility of the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC). In preparation for Level II Fieldwork, program you will meet with the AFWC during third semester to discuss fieldwork opportunities, site selection, fieldwork competencies and requirements. The AFWC or a faculty member will meet with you and fieldwork educators at least once during each Level II Fieldwork experience. In addition, OTA Faculty will communicate regularly with you and with fieldwork educators via phone and email.

### **Semester Orientations**

Semester orientations in the OTA program are held during the first week of first, second and third semesters. If you are unable to attend, contact the OTA Program Director to make alternative arrangements.

### **Social Networking Policy**

The Madison College School of Health Sciences has social media accounts in Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Social media is intended to promote the College's various health programs and highlight the success of students. The sites contain information about students' hands on experiences and successes.

- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

Within the OTA program, you are welcome to create a private social networking site with your cohort as a means of exchanging information. For these OTA class-related sites, please invite the faculty to participate.

With any social media, it is important to respect the privacy of individuals you encounter in the OTA program. Do not post comments or photos related to any OTA fieldwork or community experience on any social media site. Releasing confidential information violates privacy laws

and can result in severe consequences, including being dismissed from the OTA program. Although it is strongly recommended that OTA Faculty are included in all OTA class related social media accounts, we are not able to join your personal accounts until you graduate.

### **Electronic Devices in Classroom**

Out of respect for others, please silence your cell phone during class. Move to a private area if you need to make a personal telephone call. As possible, hold off on your text messaging and phone calls until breaks or lunch. During class, only use your phone or other devices for class-related activities. When at clinical sites, always observe the rules of the facility. This generally means using your phone during breaks and lunch. Also, although most phones have cameras, it is a violation of privacy laws to take photos of individuals without written permission.

### **Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)**

As an OTA student, you are eligible to be a member of the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA). Active SOTA involvement helps you develop the professional awareness, commitment and organizational skills needed to support consumer groups, community service organizations and professional associations. Active participation and leadership in SOTA can also be documented on your resume and professional portfolio.

You are further encouraged to be a member of the Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association (WOTA) and AOTA. The college provides some funding toward state and national OT conference attendance. To receive this funding, you will want to participate regularly in the SOTA service projects and fund-raisers and provide documentation of registration and attendance at the conference.

## **OTA PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICES & PROCEDURES**

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities:**

The OTA program abides by the Madison College policies. Madison College is a tax-supported institution, which serves a large student body, many community groups and many visitors. It is important for the college and its many constituents that students have knowledge of their rights and responsibilities reflective of the values of the college—excellence, respect and integrity. The following rights and responsibilities apply to all students of Madison College:

### **Student Rights**

As a student at Madison College, you have the right

- to experience a high-quality learning environment, free from disruptions and distractions.
- to be treated with respect and dignity, free from harassment and/or discrimination.
- to request reasonable and appropriate support and assistance from the other campus community members, including students, staff, and faculty in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning.
- to protection against improper academic evaluation.
- to a safe, tobacco-free, drug-free, weapons-free, and alcohol-free learning environment.

- to express your ideas in writing, in speech, or by use of other media, within the guarantees of the law.
- to participate in the formulation and application of college policy affecting student life and services through clearly defined means, to form clubs and organizations within the guidelines established by the Student Activities Board and to allocate appropriate student activity and incidental fees.
- to bring formal charges against other campus community members for violating the Student Code of Conduct or other college policies, procedures and/or practices.
- to due process if accused of violating the Madison Area Technical College Student Code of Conduct. This includes a right to be heard, a right to decision and review by impartial persons or bodies, and a right to adequate notice.
- to protection against identity theft and fraud and to have personally identifiable information from the college records not be disclosed by the college without each student's prior written consent; to request to withhold student record information; to inspect, review and challenge the contents of their educational records; and to request corrections to inaccurate or misleading data contained in their records.

### **Student Responsibilities**

As a student at Madison College, you are responsible

- to comply with all local, state, and federal policies, statutes, laws and ordinances.
- to comply with all college policies and procedures.
- to interact in ways that will not interfere with the educational process and/or any Madison College-sponsored activity. Class disruptions are considered an interference with the educational process. See [Classroom Disruptions](#) procedures.
- to treat others with respect and dignity.
- to take no action that improperly utilizes or is damaging or disabling to safety equipment or systems such as alarms, exit signs, fire extinguishers, window screens, sprinklers, elevators, or escalators.
- to make no threat, nor take any action, which could potentially cause physical harm to themselves or others including but not limited to physical or sexual assault, suicidal and/or homicidal ideation, self-mutilation, or conduct which intentionally or recklessly threatens the health or safety of themselves or any person.
- to take no action that improperly utilizes, alters, damages, or disables property, systems or equipment owned or leased by the college or other Madison College community members. This includes theft or unauthorized possession of another person's property.
- to refrain from unauthorized entry or use of Madison College property, facilities, or systems. This includes the unauthorized possession and/or use of keys and electronic access cards or codes or occupation of college facilities that are locked, closed to student activities, or otherwise restricted as to use.

- to refrain from the unauthorized or illegal use, possession, or distribution of controlled substances, associated paraphernalia and/or alcohol on property owned or leased by Madison College or at a Madison College-sponsored activity. This includes presence under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- to refrain from the unauthorized use, possession or distribution of weapons, dangerous firearms (or their facsimiles), explosives and/or hazardous objects or substances on Madison College property or at Madison College-sponsored activities. Students that are licensed under Wisconsin law to carry concealed weapons may carry such weapons only in places not prohibited by the college.
- to be honest and furnish accurate information to all members of the Madison College community. Honesty includes the absence of all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as: any behavior which results in a student giving or receiving unauthorized assistance or receiving credit for work that is NOT his/her own. See [Academic Integrity](#). Honesty also includes the absence of all forms of forgery, fraud, alteration or misuse of any Madison College document, record, or instrument of identification.
- for the behavior of any guest they escort onto the Madison College campus or have accompanying them at a Madison College-sponsored activity.
- to ensure that gambling does not occur on Madison College property or at Madison College-sponsored activities.
- to comply with all reasonable verbal and written instructions and/or directives from authorized Madison College personnel.
- to take no action, which could be defined as discrimination. Discrimination is defined as: an unfairness or prejudice based on a person's age, race, creed/religion, color, disability, marital status, sex, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, conviction record, parental status or pregnancy or protected veteran status in its educational programs, admissions, activities or employment practices. See our [Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#).
- to take no action, which could be defined as harassment. Harassment is defined as: unwanted, deliberate, or repeated unsolicited comments, slurs, demeaning references, gestures, graphic materials, physical contacts, solicitation of favors, advances or other adverse treatment. See our [Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#).
- to conduct themselves within the charters, constitutions, and guidelines of organizations and of the Student Activities Board of formally recognized college clubs and organizations, which receive segregated funds through the Student Activities Board.
- to be appropriately clothed and to wear shoes/sandals and shirts in/on Madison College facilities for safety and health reasons.
- to ensure that smoking or the use of tobacco products or electronic tobacco product substitutes does not occur within any Madison College facility, or designated campus tobacco-free areas. Note all district facilities are designated as tobacco-free areas.

- to obtain a facility permit from the Department of Facilities if you wish to circulate petitions.
- to refrain from using bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, and hoverboards within Madison College facilities, or as posted on the grounds of district owned or leased property.
- to conduct themselves appropriately when utilizing college-owned computer equipment and to follow the Student Computer Systems Acceptable Use Guidelines.
- to comply with copyright law, which protects written works, recorded works, computer programs and other forms of expression. [Copyright law](#) generally prohibits the duplication of copyrighted works without the permission of the copyright owner, but there are important exceptions that permit copying for some educational purposes.
- to comply with additional standards such as completing all health requirements. Copies of these policies are available from instructors and from the dean/chairperson upon request. Students failing to recognize these standards may be withdrawn from one or more classes in the program at any time and/or be subject to other disciplinary action.

### **Attendance**

The best learning experience in the OTA program is to participate in all in-person classes and experiences. Our expectation is that you will attend all in-person classes unless you are ill.

Things do happen! At times you may need to miss class. **Please contact the class instructor(s) directly via email or telephone** as soon as you are able so that alternate plans can be made for the content for the day. If a message is received in time, it may be possible for the class to be broadcast or recorded. Texting or calling your classmates might help pass along the message to stream or record class, but it will be your responsibility to follow up with the instructor(s) for instructions on the day's content, homework and/or make up work.

If you know about a scheduled absence such as an appointment or out of town trip, send an email as early as possible. Written messages are easier to track than verbal messages mentioned during class.

Tardiness in getting to class or returning from breaks may be disruptive to the group dynamic. Occasional tardiness may be unavoidable, and in such situations communicate with the course instructor, just as you would on the job.

Regular class attendance and punctuality reflect work expectations. Absenteeism and lateness will influence your grades in OTA courses, just as it would for client care and co-worker morale in the workplace. A minimum of 5% of the grade for each OT course is dedicated to attendance/professional skills. The specific behaviors considered in this component of the grade will be discussed when faculty members introduce course expectations.

## **Assignments**

The majority of your assignments will be completed electronically and submitted into Brightspace. It is important for you to use Word Processing tools that can be opened by your instructors such as Microsoft Word or documents saved in .pdf format. Microsoft Office, including Word is available for download at no cost to you during the semesters you are a Madison College student. You can find directions for downloading Microsoft Office on the Madison College Libraries website.

All assignments are to be completed by designated date and time unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Because most assignments will be submitted electronically, absences are not an excuse for late submissions. If assignments that are intended to be submitted in person are due on a day you are absent, communicate with the instructor to find out an alternate mode of submission or an alternate due date.

You will have the opportunity for full points on assignments that are submitted on time. In the event that your submission will be late, contact the instructor to see if an extension on the assignment is possible. Partial points, up to 50% can be earned on work if submitted within one week after the due date. Work submitted more than one week after the due date may not result in any points.

Every assignment is designed to help you meet specific academic competencies. You will need to submit every required assignment to successfully complete each course. It is your responsibility to ensure that all required assignments have been completed and received by the instructor. As a prompt to complete missing assignments, the instructor may insert a 0 in the grade book after the due date has been missed. This grade may be adjusted after the work is submitted.

Assignments are to be your individual effort unless otherwise specified. The assignment guide or instructor will identify when you can collaborate on learning activities. If group work is allowed, be sure to include all collaborators names on the submitted work.

## **Cheating/Plagiarism**

You are responsible to be honest and furnish accurate information to all members of the Madison College community. Academic dishonesty is defined as: Any behavior which results in giving or receiving unauthorized assistance or receiving credit for work that is NOT your own. For more information, see Academic Misconduct Procedures on [Madisoncollege.edu](http://Madisoncollege.edu).

You are responsible to comply with copyright law, which protects written works, recorded works, computer programs and other forms of expression. Copyright law generally prohibits the duplication of copyrighted works without the permission of the copyright owner, but there are important exceptions that permit copying for some educational purposes. For more information about the rights and obligations of the Madison College community under copyright law, please refer to the Madison College Copyright Policy available on [Madisoncollege.edu](http://Madisoncollege.edu).

If an instructor in OTA program identifies evidence of cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, they will address this issue confidentially and discuss the consequence. At a minimum, the grade on the assignment may be reduced to a zero. Repeated incidences of cheating or plagiarism will result in more serious consequences as determined by the instructor.

If a test is in progress and cheating is observed or detected, the test will be stopped immediately, followed by an appointment to meet with the instructor to discuss the situation.

### **Exam Make-Up**

To reinforce acceptable work habits and promote equal treatment and timely feedback to all the following procedure is followed. If an absence occurs on the due date of a learning assessment, you will be expected to complete the test on the day you return to school, unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor. It is your responsibility to schedule time for the make-up exam on that day. Tests due during unreported absences or completed after the expected make-up date will be determined on a case by case basis by the designated course instructor(s).

### **Grade Standards**

Grading practices for each OTA course will be reviewed during course orientations by the designated instructor(s) and outlined in the course syllabi. Faculty use course status reports and advising appointments, in addition to ongoing assessment feedback to inform you of your status in courses throughout the semester. You can also independently track your academic performance via each course Brightspace site. Final course grades are due within five days of the last day of the class. You can view your grades in my Madison College under "Academic Record."

### **Incompletes**

Because OTA courses build on previous courses, incomplete grades can delay enrollment in subsequent semesters. According to Madison College policies and procedures, "a grade of incomplete may be given if a student has done passing work and because of illness or major cause beyond the student's control fails to complete the class requirements. Incompletes must be made up by the end of the next semester or the grade will be changed to an F." All course requirements must be completed satisfactorily for a student to pass a course or Level I or Level II Fieldwork experience, and all academic incompletes must be removed prior to Level II Fieldwork. All incompletes must be removed prior to graduation.

### **Course Withdrawals/ Failures/ Program Dismissal**

If you are considering withdrawing from an OTA course or fieldwork placement, discuss the various implications of this action with the instructor(s), your faculty advisor, the OTA Program Director, and/or Fieldwork Educator(s) and potentially the financial aid office. According to Madison College policies and procedures, "it is the responsibility of the student to officially notify the college of a withdrawal from a class... Nonattendance does not constitute an official withdrawal and students will be held responsible for tuition and fees not paid... A student must drop a class prior to the 90% point in order to receive a withdrawal (W) status". After this point, an earned grade will be assigned based on the grading analysis provided in the course syllabus. Withdrawals are not granted during scheduled final exam periods.

- The grading analysis described in each course syllabus explains that you need to receive a grade of more than a C (2.0) in each component of the course and/or in the course itself. If it becomes clear that this is not possible, you may choose to withdraw prior to completing 90% of the course. Withdrawal prior to the 90% course completion deadline

is not considered a course failure.

- Sometimes course failures happen. You are allowed to repeat one failed course in the OTA program one time. OTA courses are offered once per year. It may not be possible for you to continue with the next semester's courses until the failed course is re-taken the following year and passed with a grade of C or better.
- Dismissal:
  - Two failed program courses or two failed Level II fieldwork rotations result in permanent dismissal from the OTA program.
  - Breach of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics may result in dismissal from the program. Please visit the [AOTA](#) website for specifics.
- Level I Fieldwork experiences are embedded in some of the OTA program courses. If you pass all of the academic competencies related to a course; however, fail the fieldwork component, a grade of D (1.0) will be recorded. One opportunity will be provided to repeat the fieldwork component and if successful, a grade change for the course will be processed.
- If your first OTA program failure or withdrawal due to grades occurs during Level II Fieldwork, you **may/may not** be allowed to complete **one** additional Level II Fieldwork experience. The opportunity to complete an additional Level II Fieldwork will depend on the reason(s) for failure.

### **Program Withdrawals**

If you choose to voluntarily withdraw from the OTA program, you are encouraged to contact the OTA Program Director and your Academic Advisor. They will assist you in the process and explain possible consequences of the withdrawal with regard to your potential for re-entry, the impact on your official transcripts and direct you to resources within the college. If you are receiving financial aid, contact the financial aid office to learn about your options and the consequences of withdrawal.

If you withdraw from the program voluntarily or for academic reasons, you can request re-admission by contacting the OTA Program Director. A faculty interview will be scheduled to determine potential conditions for re-entry. If re-admission to the program is approved, a new plan of study will be developed.

### **Grade Appeal Procedure**

If you disagree with a final grade, you can follow the college policy outlined on the [Madison College](#) website for grade disputes.

If you believe that the final grade received in a course is inaccurate or unjustified, you can dispute the grade. Procedures used to dispute a grade must be initiated before the following dates or you forfeit the right to dispute the grade.

- For a grade received for the fall semester: February 15 (Exception: Dependent upon posting date)

- For a grade received for the spring semester: July 31

Final grades may only be disputed for the following reasons:

- The final grade was issued in error. This includes situations where there was a miscalculation of grade points that resulted in a lower grade. You must clearly demonstrate the miscalculation. It also includes situations such as missing records, mistaken grade entries, and the like.
- The final grade issued was arbitrary. This means that the grade lacked a reasonable basis. To prevail in a grade dispute based on arbitrariness, you must show that the grade was issued due to whim or impulse, and/or lacks a convincing rationale.
- You have documentation that you received a lower final grade than another student for the same academic work at the same level of competency.

#### **Conditions for OTA Program Re-entry**

After a course withdrawal or a course failure, there are procedures for returning to OTA classes.

- All college and program admission requirements must be met.
- A written request for re-entry into the program must be submitted to the OTA Program Director.
- The OTA Faculty, and potentially the Dean of the School of Health Sciences will determine the appropriateness for re-entry on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the reason(s) for program withdrawal, justification for re-entry, and adequacy of program space.
- Requests for re-entry more than 12 months after withdrawal may not be possible or may require students to re-enroll in previous courses for a thorough review of content.
- When program re-entry is requested, there will be an interview with the OTA Faculty to discuss the situation that led to program withdrawal and what has changed to increase the chances for academic success. After the interview, OTA Faculty will determine whether readmission into the program is possible. An email will be sent to all parties with the official decision.
- After re-admission into the OTA program, the current program policies and procedures must be followed.
- If the content of any course is different from the course taken prior to withdrawal from the program, the new course objectives will need to be met. This could include passing all skill checks, quizzes, and exams for the new information or re-enrolling in the course(s). OTA Faculty will develop appropriate materials to meet the new or revised objectives.
- Upon re-entry into the OTA program, a revised plan of study will be developed based on the information noted above. A learning plan may also be developed at this time.
- It will be important to independently review previous coursework to maintain knowledge from previous courses and satisfactorily perform all previously learned skills.

### **Graduation Requirements:**

An Associate of Applied Arts Degree with a major in Occupational Therapy Assistant will be issued after completion of the prescribed curriculum both in hours of attendance and in terms of achievement, having obtained a grade of “C” or 2.0 grade point average or better in major field subjects, have maintained an overall “C” or 2.0 grade point average in the program and successfully passed two Level II Fieldwork experiences.

**Twenty-five percent requirement:** At least 25% of the credit requirements necessary for obtaining a diploma/degree in any program must be taken at Madison College. In some situations, a higher percentage of core courses are required to be taken in residence. Check with the school office for information.

**Graduation requirement:** To complete the OTA program requirements and be eligible for graduation, you must be registered for and successfully complete your second Level II Fieldwork during the semester prior to graduation.

**Fees associated with Fieldwork:** In order to participate in Fieldwork, you will need to purchase a membership with Viewpoint (approx. \$100), a platform that houses vaccination and caregiver background information required for fieldwork. You may need to also purchase a membership to myClinicalExchange (approx. \$20), a platform required by some fieldwork sites that houses onboarding information.

**Fees associated with graduation:** The Madison College graduation fee is \$20. This fee is a processing fee that covers the cost of producing and shipping the diploma. You can choose to pick up your diploma at the store for free, or pay the \$20 fee for online processing and diploma shipping.

### **OTA Program Transfer Policy**

The OTA Faculty and Madison College provide many resources for successfully moving through the program courses, fieldwork experiences and graduation. Within the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), there are five OTA programs. If a situation occurs where you want or need to transfer from one OTA program to another, a clear process of transition and communication is essential.

The Madison College OTA program supports and upholds all policies of Madison College and adheres to the most current information regarding credit for prior education and for the procedures for transfers to and from Madison College. If you are interested in transferring to another college that is not part of the WTCS, you are responsible for identifying and following the particular admission and transfer requirements of that institution.

For any student seeking transfer from one WTCS OTA program to another, the credit transfer is expedited by the state-wide curriculum, although sequencing and pre-requisites may vary. This can delay graduation. The student is responsible for requesting the transfer of their own official transcripts and for forwarding their own health records. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevents OTA Faculty from forwarding official records.

The OTA programs in the WTCS adhere to the regular procedures of their colleges for transfer of credits and application to transfer into or from the programs. The applicant is advised that

admission is based on space availability. Priority for admission to Madison College OTA courses is given to current Madison College students.

Each OTA program in the WTCS will request an OTA Student Transfer Recommendation Form from the OTA Program Director of the exiting program.

**Procedure:**

Transferring **to** another OTA Program in the WTCS:

- Follow the requirements of the program to which you are seeking admission.
- Follow the process for forwarding your official transcript through the Registrar's Office.
- Consult with student services on relevant impact of a transfer (e.g., Financial Aid, Workforce Dev.)
- Inform the OTA Program Director of intent prior to the commencement of the next academic term.
- Sign a release of information authorizing the OTA Program Director to complete and forward the OTA Student Transfer Recommendation Form.
- Return any program property prior to departure.

Transferring in **from** another OT program in the WTCS:

- Complete an application for admission into the OTA program at Madison College, with all related fees and admission requirements identified on the program's webpage.
- College transcripts will be reviewed by the Madison College Admissions office and OTA Faculty to determine if advanced standing is appropriate.
- Provide syllabi of previously taken OTA courses.
- Submit a letter of intent to the OTA Program Director with at least 60 days advance notice to the term to which you are seeking admission. Start communication about intent to transfer as soon as possible to facilitate the process.
- Request that an OTA Student Transfer Recommendation Form be completed by the OTA Program Director of the outgoing program. This form is completed and sent confidentially to the OTA Program Director at Madison College for admission consideration.
- If admission requirements are met, and space is available (both classroom and fieldwork sites) the OTA Program Director will request an interview to discuss program transition and reasons for transfer. If there are concerns about academic standing and/or professional behaviors, admission into the OTA program may be denied. If accepted, a Student Learning Plan may be developed for remediation and clarity of expectations. Enrollment in OTA courses are based on the established sequence and pre-/co-requisites to ensure integrity of the curriculum design and program outcomes.
- Application to transfer into the Madison College OTA program must be within one year of leaving the original OT or OTA program.

- A practical exam demonstrating competency (75% or above) for previously completed OTA courses will be required.

### **Professional Credentialing**

There are several steps to obtaining professional credentials as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA).

The first step is to graduate from the OTA program. At this point you are an OTA graduate. There are many places you can work without additional credentialing, such as activities settings or as a case manager, but you won't be providing "occupational therapy services" without the next two steps.

Certification with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) requires passing a nationally administered OTA competency exam after graduation from an OTA program. Passing the NBCOT exam allows you to use the credential COTA. The cost to take the NBCOT exam in 2022 is \$515 USD.

NBCOT.org provides the procedures on how to apply to take the national examination. This includes contacting [Transcripts](#) at Madison College to have your official transcripts sent to NBCOT. It is important to wait until your diploma is received before requesting transcripts to ensure that your graduation has been included on your official records. When you are able to apply to take the national examination, select the state(s) you would like your results sent to for licensure as a COTA.

A state license as a COTA is required by most employers who bill for occupational therapy services, such as hospitals, schools and clinics. State licensure requires completion of an ACOTE-approved educational program such as Madison College's OTA program and a passing score on the NBCOT exam.

After graduation, follow the procedures indicated on the state's licensing agency website. In Wisconsin, the [Department of Safety and Professional Services](#), (DSPS) uses a License portal for application for an OTA license. Follow the instructions to request Madison College School of Health Science to verify your graduation. Your NBCOT exam results will automatically be sent to the state you selected or you can follow the instructions in License to request them. It is possible to obtain a temporary license to practice as an OTA if you have completed your OTA program, have secured employment and have applied to take the NBCOT exam. Fees are charged for state credentialing and an additional fee is needed for a temporary license.

Following initial licensure, many states require continuing education or other continuing competency mechanisms for annual or biannual renewal of credentials. In Wisconsin, OTA licensure is renewed biannually during odd-numbered years, and renewal fees are assessed to cover costs.

Those who have a felony conviction may encounter additional state regulatory requirements and are advised to contact the OTA Program Director early in their academic career to confidentially discuss initial credentialing implications on an individual basis.

## **Student Records**

### ***College Policies:***

- Your educational records are maintained by the Enrollment Center at Madison College
- Documentation of confidential records of informal and formal proceedings and consequent actions that occur as part of a course grade or conduct disputes shall be filed with the [Dean of Students](#) Office.
- Messages and other electronic communication in Navigate can be added and viewed by you, OTA Faculty or other members of your care team. It is possible for OTA Faculty and advisors to insert notes to be shared among the care team that are not visible to you, but this is the exception. It is the policy of Madison College that the information in Navigate is intended to inform the entire care team, including you, about meetings held, academic progress and resources offered. Information documented in Navigate by the care team will not contain sensitive or personal information. Messages and notes in Navigate from counseling and DRS are private and cannot be accessed by OTA Faculty, or other members of the care team.

### ***OTA Program Guidelines:***

- An electronic program file that includes information related to academic grades, professional development, academic plans of study and course status reports is maintained in the Madison College Intranet One Drive, accessible only to the OTA Program Director and the OTA Faculty. When requested, the files can be shared with you.
- Individuals over the age of 18 must provide written authorization for OTA Faculty to share academic information with parents or other parties.
- Documentation related to formal communications or conferences that could lead to program actions, will be reviewed and co-signed by all parties involved to promote accuracy of communication. This includes course status reports.
- Program files are maintained for three years after graduation from the program.
- Program files for individuals who have left the program due to academic failure or voluntarily with a stated intent to return at a future date are maintained for five years.
- As an OTA student, it is recommended that you keep personal copies of all records as you may need them in the future. This could include, but is not limited to health forms, CBC information, course syllabi, program requirements, fieldwork evaluations and the curriculum guide and student handbook.

## **Continuing Education**

After graduation it will be your responsibility to maintain competence, broaden skills, and maintain your license through continuing education. During the OTA program you will be notified of appropriate continuing education offerings and encouraged to participate. This includes state and national conferences, and student related gatherings. You are also advised to regularly maintain a portfolio of such participation for updating resumes and providing evidence of continuing education to agencies such as the Wisconsin DSPS, Department of Public

Instruction and NBCOT.

### **OTA Graduate References**

If you plan to ask a particular instructor for a job reference you will need to complete a Student Reference Release Form. This form will be provided prior to graduation but can be requested from the OTA Faculty at any time. Without the Student Reference Release Form, OTA Faculty can only report that you are enrolled in the program.

When a reference is requested, it is helpful know specific duties of the position so that Faculty can provide a comprehensive reference.

### **OTA Program Fieldwork Experiences**

#### ***Fieldwork Participation***

Fieldwork participation is an integral part of the OTA program curriculum at Madison College. During fieldwork experiences, you are given the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom setting to actual consumers. This is done with the supervision of OTA Faculty and/or fieldwork educators that may be occupational therapists or OTAs employed at the clinical sites. The goal is for you to gain a wide variety of experiences throughout your tenure in the program. Criteria for passing fieldwork experiences will be discussed in detail in each course. There will be a separate Fieldwork Handbook for Level II fieldwork experiences that occur in the fourth semester of the program. Your ability to participate in the fieldwork portion of your educational experience assumes:

- You have fully participated in and demonstrated competency in the skills identified in the present and past semesters of the OTA program
- You observe professional dress codes and behavior
- You have fully completed all program health requirements and the caregiver background check

***To complete your OTA program, you must successfully complete two-Level II FW experiences (16 weeks full-time/or the equivalent part-time experience- min. 20 hrs/wk.) Experiences during Level I FW cannot be substituted for any part of Level II FW.***

***You must complete all Level II FW within 18 months following the completion of the didactic portion of the program.***

You will complete your FW in at least two different practice areas at two different FW sites. During your FW advising meeting you will indicate your preferences. You are encouraged to consider populations that offer a wide range of experiences, exposure to clients of various ages and to a variety of diagnoses. All placements are dependent on availability.

***Level II FW can be completed in a minimum of one setting if it is reflective of more than one practice area, or in a maximum of three different settings.***

### ***Off-Campus Educational Experiences***

Cost and liability of travel to and from off-campus fieldwork experiences, including, but not limited to fieldtrips, clinical experiences, and off-campus labs are your responsibility. The OTA Faculty will accompany and supervise your participation in off-campus program experiences unless the experience is observational in nature, or when supervision is provided by the on-site clinical facility.

You must introduce yourself as a student to all patients, clients and clinical personnel in the fieldwork setting. You must wear appropriate attire and a name badge when in any clinical setting. Patients, clients or other consumers of the services have the right to refuse to be observed and/or cared for by you in the clinical setting. In the event of a client refusal, the clinical faculty will work with you on creating an alternative learning experience.

### ***Establishing the Clinical Affiliation***

Each fieldwork site utilized by the OTA program will meet the guidelines for selecting clinical education sites.

The OTA fieldwork sites will be reviewed and revised as needed if changes occur in objectives, programs, and personnel at the site. Furthermore, you will only be assigned to fieldwork sites with properly executed and unexpired written agreements in place.

Fieldwork sites are established either by contact from the faculty at Madison College, or by the site contacting the OTA program expressing interest in working with students. Prior to sending students to any site, OTA Faculty will perform an on-site visit to determine compatibility of the strengths and needs of the site, and the needs of the program. If you have a site that you would like the OTA program to consider for future placement, please inform the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and follow-up will be performed as appropriate.

### ***Making Fieldwork Assignments***

For course specific Level I Fieldwork experiences, individual course instructors will assign you to appropriate clinical sites. For Level II Fieldwork experiences, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will assign you to appropriate clinical sites. Every effort will be made to ensure you are exposed to a variety of treatment contexts and populations.

Fieldwork Assignments are made based on:

- strengths/needs of the fieldwork site
- your strengths, needs and interests
- type(s) of fieldwork rotations previously completed

### ***Requirements for Fieldwork Participation***

- You are required to carry health/accident insurance during all semesters of the program.
- You are required to comply with all health requirements of the program.
- You must hold a current CPR certification for the healthcare provider during Level II Fieldwork.

Compliance with the above requirements will allow you to participate in fieldwork experiences.

### ***Dress and Appearance at Fieldwork Sites***

Professional standards of appearance are an important part of professional development as an OTA. Therefore, a high level of personal cleanliness must be maintained. You must abide by any specific dress code requirements the clinical facility may have in place. The dress code may reference particular rules. Prior to Level I Fieldwork experiences, the course instructor will provide guidance on the dress code. Prior to Level II Fieldwork, you should contact the clinical educator to verify the dress code prior to your first day at the facility. Program name badges must be worn unless otherwise stated.

### ***Guidelines for Protecting the Health of Self and Others***

Please see website Immunization Policy: <https://madisoncollege.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/health-education-policies#3011-accordion-item-2>

Madison College OTA Program does not mandate vaccinations but rather honors contractual requirements of clinical partners. In order for students to successfully progress through clinical rotations, they must meet clinical site specific health and safety requirements, including immunizations. Students may submit declination/waiver documentation for clinical site consideration however, sites may refuse students for clinical rotations if a student is not compliant with immunization requirements. The OTA Program cannot guarantee clinical site placement and therefore graduation if a student submits a declination/ waiver document that is not accepted by clinical sites. You are expected to adhere to the following guidelines to protect yourself, clients, and other health care team members from injury, infection, and harm. Failure to follow the standards of safe practice or college behavioral standards may result in dismissal from the learning site in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook. Reinstatement will be determined through college and clinical agency policies and procedures.

- Follow Standard Precautions and all Infection Control Policies and Procedures
- Use appropriate body mechanics when moving, lifting, and bending; seek assistance for lifts/moves when additional help is needed.
- Follow principles of clean and sterile techniques.
- Follow agency policies and procedures for the use of restraints.
- Assist clients in gaining self-control and/or use self-defense techniques in potentially dangerous situations.
- Maintain a clean, orderly work environment, free of safety hazards.
- Do not expose patients, families, and/or agency staff to possible infectious agents.
- Communicate changes in client's status in timely manner.
- Familiarize self with agency safety policies in case of fire, tornado, or other emergencies.
- While in fieldwork you assume responsibility for any accidents or injuries you may incur. Madison College assumes responsibility for accidents or injuries to persons or property at clinical sites.

### ***Infection Control***

Madison College is committed to providing a safe space for all students, faculty and staff. Our policies reflect the utmost consideration of health and safety guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control and local health officials. These policies are subject to change in the event those guidelines evolve.

## Covid-19

Covid-19 and other infectious diseases and viruses are active in our local communities. While Madison College cannot guarantee that our campus is free of infectious disease, with everyone working together we can reduce the risk of transmission of these diseases within our community. We have adopted rules that are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of these diseases and viruses on campus. The rules are based on guidance and recommendations from state and local health experts and authorities, including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and more. We expect that all students, staff and faculty will become familiar with the rules and comply with them as part of an overall effort to make our campus as safe as possible. We take the safety of our students, faculty and staff seriously. Failure to comply with the rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including exclusion from campus. Questions about the rules should be directed to the [Dean of Students](#), 608-243-4555.

If you become ill and have symptoms consistent with Covid-19, go to a local testing center or use a home test. Whether you are positive or not, you should not come to class if you are ill. If you test positive for Covid-19, stay home until symptoms resolve.

If you become ill and you are scheduled to go to a fieldwork site, contact the course instructor or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (if a Level II Fieldwork) and your clinical educator to determine the steps you should take for testing and the facility's policies for absences.

## Blood Borne Pathogens

Pathogens are organisms capable of causing disease. They are potentially present in human blood and all other body fluids, secretions and excretions. Exposure to pathogens in blood and other body fluids is an occupational hazard in health care. Standard Precautions are effective in preventing the spread of blood borne pathogens.

## Standard Precautions

To prepare for work in the healthcare field, you will be trained in the use of Standard Precautions and learn about the various types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including gloves and masks. According to the CDC, Standard Precautions are used for all patient care. They're based on a risk assessment and make use of common sense practices and personal protective equipment use that protect healthcare providers from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient. You will be expected to use Standard Precautions in all settings for your safety and the safety of others. This will include:

- Hand hygiene before and after client contact, eating or use of restroom.
- Use of personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, eyewear) as needed.
- Respiratory hygiene / cough etiquette. In the current situation, wear a mask and wash hands often if experiencing frequent coughing. Possibly, stay home until cough improves.
- Ensure appropriate patient placement (i.e. distancing or isolation when appropriate)
- Sharps safety, disposal or protection of sharps among vulnerable clients
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and supplies after use. Disinfecting wipes are available.

## Transmission-Based Precautions

Transmission-Based Precautions are the second tier of basic infection control and are to be used in addition to Standard Precautions for patients who may be infected or colonized with certain infectious agents for which additional precautions are needed to prevent infection transmission. When needed, the appropriate PPE will be provided for your use.

- Contact Precautions for patients with known or suspected infections that represent an increased risk for contact transmission.
- Droplet Precautions for patients known or suspected to be infected with pathogens transmitted by respiratory droplets that are generated by patient who is coughing, sneezing, or talking.
- Airborne Precautions for patients known or suspected to be infected with pathogens transmitted by the airborne route (e.g., tuberculosis, measles, chickenpox, disseminated herpes zoster).

## Exposure Incident

An exposure incident is defined by Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) as a specific eye, mouth or other mucous membrane, non-intact skin (cuts, abrasions, sores) or parenteral (penetrating the skin) contact with blood or other potentially infectious material that may or can occur during your clinical or lab experiences.

If you are exposed to an infectious agent at school or a community setting as part of your coursework in the OTA program alert an instructor or clinical educator immediately.

For any exposure follow these steps:

- notify the instructor or lab personnel
- apply first aid
- complete Madison College Accident/Incident Report form with instructor or lab personnel
- if on campus, report to the Madison College Community Clinic for immediate care
- if needed, obtain medical evaluation immediately or within 24 hours from personal health care provider (at student's cost)

## **Confidential Information**

The relationship between a healthcare provider and a patient is very personal and confidential from both an ethical and a legal standpoint.

During your fieldwork, you may have access to the medical records of your patients, and likely the records of other patients. With the advent of the electronic medical record, entire medical records are easily accessible. However, as a guaranteed protection of the privacy of patients in medical and clinical settings, no one has the authority or reason to review any information in a patient's medical record other than as it pertains to the care being provided. You will need to adhere to the rules of confidentiality and privacy and only access records that pertain to the care you are providing.

It is a firm policy of every Health Care Agency and of Madison College that personal or medical information about patients or clients you encounter are never inappropriately discussed either inside or outside the agency or school. You may not discuss the patients that you see in the course of your fieldwork with family and friends. You may not release medical or personal information without written consent of the patient. This includes speaking with the patient's family if the patient has provided the proper authorization.

It will be imperative for you to observe these rules of confidentiality and privacy in order to be successful in your fieldwork.

## Statement of Acknowledgement, Agreement, and Understanding

After you have received, read, and thoroughly explored the information in the 2026-2027 OTA Program Curriculum Guide and Student Handbook please answer the following questions on this page or through [the Microsoft Form](#).

### Statement of Acknowledgement, Agreement, and Understanding

- \_\_\_ I attest that I have received, read and thoroughly understand the information in the 2026-2027 OTA Program Curriculum Guide and Student Handbook.
- \_\_\_ I attest that I will abide by the policies and procedures of the OTA Program and Madison College as summarized in the 2026-2027 OTA Program Curriculum Guide and Student Handbook.
- \_\_\_ I will abide by the policies and procedures of the OTA program and Madison College as summarized here.
- \_\_\_ I agree to secure and review annual updates of these publications I agree to secure and review annual updates of these publications
- \_\_\_ I attest that I have reviewed and will abide by the information listed below as described in the 2026-2027 OTA Program Curriculum Guide and Student Handbook and on the Madison College website.

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Grade Appeals Process](#)

[Classroom Disruptions](#)

[Harassment/Discrimination](#)

To affirm your understanding and agreement with this Curriculum Guide and Student Handbook, print this page, sign below, and submit to Debbie Bebeau.

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## References

Gupta, et al. (2011). The philosophical base of occupational therapy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(6), S65. doi: 10.5014/ajot.2011.65S65.

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2019). [Value of occupational therapy assistant education to the profession](#). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 73(Suppl. 2), 7312410007.

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