



**SAMUEL
MERRITT**
UNIVERSITY

**Department of
Occupational Therapy**

**DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2019 - 2020

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WELCOME

On behalf of the Department of Occupational Therapy, I welcome you to the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) Program at Samuel Merritt University (SMU). As you begin your professional and graduate education, you will soon view the world in a new and different way. You will find that occupational therapy is not just a profession, but also a commitment to excellence and a way of life.

To help you effectively progress through the professional coursework, this *Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program Student Handbook* has been compiled to present information and policies relevant to you as a Doctor of Occupational Therapy student. This handbook is a companion to the *Samuel Merritt University Catalog and Student Handbook*. Because you are responsible for knowing and understanding the policies and procedures found in this handbook, as well as the *Samuel Merritt University Catalog and Student Handbook*, please ask for clarification if you have any questions about the information. We also welcome your suggestions for inclusion of additional information that would be helpful to you. The faculty reserves the privilege of revising policies and procedures found in this handbook at any time it is deemed necessary. We will distribute written revisions to you when changes are advisable.

Congratulations on your selection of occupational therapy as a career. You have chosen wisely. The occupational therapy profession is a growing and dynamic field. Occupational therapy is a well-respected discipline with many opportunities available for growth, advancement, and achievement. We hope you will enjoy becoming a member of this very special community. We look forward to the opportunity of getting to know you.

Kate Hayner, EdD, OTR/L

Associate Professor and Chair

Department of Occupational Therapy



OVERVIEW OF SAMUEL MERRITT UNIVERSITY VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Mission

Samuel Merritt University educates students to become highly skilled and compassionate healthcare professionals who positively transform the experience of care in diverse communities.

Vision

Samuel Merritt University is recognized as a premier health sciences institution. Expert faculty and staff shape an inclusive learning environment where students experience best teaching practices and state-of-the-art learning approaches. The University selects and supports students who flourish in its rigorous academic programs, learn to practice expertly, and pass licensure or certification examinations on first attempt.

Values

At Samuel Merritt University, we value...

- A learning environment where we challenge ourselves and our students to think critically, seek mastery, and act compassionately;
- A collegial environment where we are fair, respectful, and behave with integrity;
- A collaborative environment where we partner with one another and with others in the community;
- An innovative environment where we take reasoned risks and move nimbly;
- A results-oriented environment where we provide and expect exceptional performance and service.

OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTORATE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM VISION, MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Vision

We will be an innovative doctoral program preparing students to provide exceptional, holistic occupational therapy to meet the evolving occupational needs of society.

Mission

Our mission is to provide transformational professional education that prepares students to provide holistic, client-centered, and evidence-based occupational therapy to diverse communities in a continuously evolving healthcare environment.

The Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program aims to:

- Provide a creative and innovative graduate occupational therapy program that meet and exceed professional standards of excellence;
- Educate occupational therapy students to meet the societal needs for service provision;
- Provide an educational environment that fosters personal and professional freedom and responsibility, conducive to intellectual, social and cultural development;
- Educate qualified students from diverse backgrounds who have the potential to become competent, compassionate and contributing health care professionals;
- Offer curricula designed to prepare graduates who have the ability to think logically, critically and independently; who demonstrate competence in the application of knowledge and skills; and whose behavior is guided by professional, humanitarian and ethical values;
- Pursue its primary role as an educational program while facilitating the participation of its faculty, staff and students in community service, research, scholarly and professional activities;
- Service the community of health care practitioners by providing timely, relevant, and quality continuing education in occupational therapy;
- Engage in activities that contribute to the health and well-being of the community;
- Institute a caring atmosphere in which occupational therapy students, faculty, and community service providers work together to optimize their personal and professional development.

Philosophy

Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful activity (unique feature) or interventions to promote health and achieve functional outcomes (generic goals of most health care fields). Achieving functional outcomes means to develop, improve, or restore the highest possible level of independence (purpose/goal) of any individual who is limited by a physical injury or illness, a dysfunctional condition, a cognitive impairment, a psychosocial dysfunction, a mental illness, a developmental or learning disability, or adverse environmental conditions (population served). Evaluation is a process that is “focused on finding out what a client wants and needs to do; determining what a client can do and has done; and identifying supports and barriers to health, well-being, and participation” (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014, p. S13).

The philosophy of the Department of Occupational Therapy is based upon the premise that the process of "occupation," has a restorative or normalizing effect. The ultimate goal of occupational therapy is to enable individuals to assume an optimal level of independent functioning and sustain the highest quality of life so they can be productive, contributing members of society.

Within the context of this philosophy, the faculty of the Department of Occupational Therapy believes each individual is unique and is best understood as a "biopsychosocial" human being. Each person is a unified whole who operates in a variety of roles and lives in continually developing, mutual relationships with others and with their environments. These environments consist of the aggregate of physical, psychosocial, cultural and spiritual realms within which persons and society interact and engage in purposeful occupations. The ultimate goal of occupational therapy practice is to assist individuals, families, and communities to achieve health and meaningful occupational function within the individual, situational and cultural realms.

The development of values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to competently serve diverse cultural populations is required in post-baccalaureate preparation. The balanced study of the natural and social sciences and the humanities provides a foundation, which promotes critical judgment, respect, and concern for individuals, communities, and society. A broad education in the liberal arts and sciences is requisite for the development of knowledge, skills, and inquiry essential to professional occupational therapy practice. Occupational therapy upholds and draws upon the tradition of scientific inquiry while contributing to and disseminating the body of knowledge in health care.

We strive to best serve each new generation of students by fostering an educational and social milieu that allows optimum learning. We recognize our students as adult learners who must also cooperate with each other, both in class and as therapists later on. Teaching and learning are shared processes that best occur in an environment that stimulates inquiry, promotes critical and independent thinking, and supports personal and professional development based on past experience and knowledge, skills and attitudes which students bring to the program. The faculty recognizes the uniqueness of the individual learner and implements a variety of teaching strategies to liberate the full range of individual potential. The changing health care delivery system of the future will rely more and more on the cooperation and interdependence of individuals in treatment teams for higher productivity and effective intervention.

The epistemological underpinnings of occupational therapy practice lie in the concept of treating the "whole person," rather than one segment of their being. The Mind-body model views the mind and body as one entity and derives its scientific support from research in neuroscience, health psychology, and psychoneuroimmunology. These evolving scientific disciplines provide the foundation to understanding the therapeutic value of occupation as we apply it in our study of occupational therapy.

In keeping with the historical philosophy of Adolph Meyer (1921), one of the founders of occupational therapy, the whole of human organization has its shape in a kind of rhythm. In addition to the biological rhythms of life, work, play, rest and sleep constitute rhythms that bring the organism into balance. It is through this process of occupation that one learns to attain balance that brings orderly rhythm to life. We are committed to the ongoing development of research on the concept of occupation and its importance in therapeutic intervention. Human occupation provides a vehicle for the interconnectedness of the person's daily life, their perceptions, values, habits and adherence to community, ritual and culture.

CURRICULUM DESIGN

In 2007, the AOTA developed a *Centennial Vision* and proposed occupational therapy to be “a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, and evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse work- force meeting society’s occupational needs” (AOTA, 2007, p. 614). In keeping with the *Centennial Vision*, the curriculum emphasizes evidence-based practice. Evidence based practice has been defined as “the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of the individual patient. It means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research” (Sackett, 1996, p. 71).

In accordance with the *Centennial Vision*, the curricular design of the OTD Program is a progressive, evidence-based education of knowledge and skills, and application of both, using a Mind-body Model. The themes or threads in the OTD Program are: evidenced-based practice, foundational knowledge, critical analysis and problem solving, occupational therapy theoretical tenets, occupational therapy processes, professionalism, clinical reasoning, and scholarship. Within these themes, students develop understanding of and skills in program development and implementation, research processes, advocacy and leadership.

The Mind-body Model is infused throughout the OTD Program curriculum. The science curriculum in the OTD Program is fully complimented by the holistic fundamentals that inculcate the student to recognize the whole person in the context of his or her physical, psycho-social, cultural, and spiritual realm. The rigorous science curriculum is seamlessly woven with the Mind-body philosophy. Occupational therapy is strongly influenced by medicine, and functional problems fall neatly into the biomedicine model (treating physical injuries or illnesses with specific treatment techniques); however, occupational therapy practice goes far beyond the realm of the physical body. The occupational therapy process addresses the client and his or her occupations as well as the context and environment in which those occupations are performed (Christiansen, Baum, & Bass-Hagen, 2005).

In addition to developing the competencies to become a "generalist" practitioner, the curriculum will provide a sequential and developmental progression with the following themes:

Evidence-based Practice

As stated in our philosophy, the OTD program believes in educating the student on the essentials of evidence-based practice, which include researching, identifying, and deciphering existing evidence that may or may not support many interventions used by occupational therapy practitioners.

Throughout the curriculum, the student is frequently expected to locate and report on supporting evidence when completing scholarly papers and developing intervention plans. Students will develop clinical judgment, by incorporating credible evidence and recognizing absence of evidence, when making decisions about intervention strategies.

Foundational Knowledge

Early coursework aims to facilitate the student's understanding of the human anatomy and physiology, neuroscience, kinesiology, and biomechanics. In addition, literature search, review and synthesis, professional writing, and oral communication prepare the student to meet literary, scientific, academic, as well as practice expectations of the profession. Prior to delving into actual occupational therapy practices, the student learns about common human conditions that affect a person's occupation performance. We also utilize problem-based learning in our first simulation course to encourage students to apply knowledge gained and to develop skilled inquiry.

Critical Analysis and Problem Solving

The process of critical analysis begins in the first semester when the student has the opportunity through the foundation course, the therapeutic media course, and the first integrative seminar course to learn to analyze human factors that enable occupational performance. As the student has acquired these basic skills, case studies of individuals with disabilities and occupational performance deficits are used to further develop critical analysis and problem-solving skills. We also teach advanced quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis requiring students to analyze and interpret data.

The student's participation in guided clinical experiences, which include areas of mental health, pediatrics, physical disabilities, and three additional sequential integrative seminars utilizing both problem-based learning and simulation, demands the synthesis of skills in research, critical analysis, and problem solving in order to address occupational performance issues that are facing real-life and simulated clients. When students return from Fieldwork II and are entering the final semester of the program, they will implement their capstone project and complete the final report that they have been planning over the prior semesters.

Occupational Therapy Theoretical Tenets

The fundamental occupational therapy theoretical concept of occupation in relationship to human development, health, life's purpose and meaning, and existence is presented in the first semester and reiterated and emphasized throughout the curriculum. Through the knowledge and understanding of the occupational therapy's history, philosophy, beliefs, principles, values, and ever evolving theory and ideology, the student is expected to understand the intricacy of how human beings utilize occupations to define their lives through the selection of occupation, the performance pattern, and the performance context. The student understands that occupation is a driving and organizing force in human life. Occupational therapy theories and frames of reference are introduced to the student in the first semester with more neurologically-based frameworks introduced in the last semester. All theories and frameworks are re-visited in courses offering a clinical laboratory and the theory of practice courses that require the student to critically select and apply appropriate occupational therapy theories, perspectives, and frames of reference as a foundation for clinical evaluation and intervention to case studies and real-life clients.

Occupational Therapy Processes

The third edition of the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework* (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014) is introduced to the student at the start of the program. In order to assure comprehension of this basic yet complex occupational therapy conceptual and practice framework as a fundamental tool for evaluation and intervention with individuals, groups, and communities with a wide range of sociocultural needs, the introduction courses promote the student's ability to self-analyze his/her occupational performance area, skills, pattern, and context. The skills for activity/task analysis that are needed to understand occupation in relationship to the whole human being, mind, body, spirit, and context is constantly reinforced throughout the program. Additionally, the student is guided to acquire the basic skills of relating to and understanding the wholeness of their clients through effective communication and analysis of client factors and performance skills.

Having acquired the concept, knowledge, and skills needed to view human beings and their occupations through the lenses of a competent occupational therapy practitioner, the student begins the journey of applying theories to practices while specific skills are learned and practiced throughout the last two semesters of coursework. Although occupational therapy practice for children, adults with physical disability, and adults with mental health issues are explored in three

separate courses, the learning experiences for the student are consistent in order to establish a standard strategy that has been proven to be effective for our students' learning. The combination of didactic and hands-on learning bridges the gap between theories and practice. For each of these courses, the content emphasizes use of occupations, tasks, and activities to promote health and competence, as well as addressing the wholeness of a human being.

Consistent with the mission and philosophy of the Department of Occupational Therapy of emphasizing a holistic approach, in the last year of the program the student is exposed to various complimentary treatment interventions to augment traditional occupational therapy services. Additionally, during this last semester the student will choose one of five areas of advanced study to develop specialized skills in a practice area.

Professionalism

In order to fully embrace the holistic concepts stated in mission and philosophy of the Department of Occupational Therapy, the student is deliberately exposed to the complex environment of health care in order to understand how our profession is situated in that environment. The student will explore the roles and responsibilities of occupational therapy practitioners in the healthcare environment, administration and management, and professional development. The student will learn the importance of clinical competence and promoting the profession in context. The professional roles that the student will be progressively exposed to are intended to express the continuous development of a professional as well as the potential growth of the profession. Concepts of professionalism are introduced at the beginning (during pre-semester orientation) and throughout the OTD program. We have adopted a department philosophy of rapidly addressing concerns regarding professional behaviors and assisting students to develop strategies to bring about professional behavior.

The student will have numerous opportunities to practice and demonstrate professionalism throughout the program and in various contexts including large and small group work and interaction, faculty interaction, and faculty supervised clinical practice. In the second semester, the student will have opportunities to work with Doctor of Physical Therapy students in the communications course, allowing further practice in inter-professional communication. We expect professionalism during the fieldwork experiences and plan to further shape student skills by building confidence in leadership, advocacy and the implementation of the capstone project.

Mind-body

The Mind-body philosophy is infused into the OT curriculum throughout the two years of didactic courses and lab work and is expected to be incorporated into the philosophy of the student as she or he enters Fieldwork Level II. Our program's solid science curriculum is fully complimented by the holistic fundamentals that inculcate the student to recognize the whole person in the context of his or her physical, psycho-social, cultural, and spiritual realm. The rigorous science curriculum is seamlessly woven with the Mind-body philosophy.

Clinical Reasoning Skills

Assisting the student to develop sound clinical reasoning skills over the course of the OTD program curriculum is an important goal for the curriculum design. Foundational knowledge and skills are first instructed to the student, followed by evaluation of his or her comprehension of knowledge and ability to demonstrate skills. Throughout the didactic coursework, the student is constantly challenged to apply learned knowledge in case studies and class discussions. We have developed four sequential problem-based courses that utilize our simulation center to allow the student to apply his or her knowledge and to demonstrate use of clinical reasoning skills. By the second year the student must apply clinical reasoning in all three clinics during evaluation, treatment planning, and faculty-supervised provision of occupational therapy intervention for clients. Having the student implement intervention strategies, analyze outcomes, and determine efficacy of applied interventions provides for continual practice of clinical reasoning.

Scholarship

We develop the skills of scholarship by engaging the student in information-seeking activities, critically analysis of found information, and synthesis of obtained information in clinical reasoning processes. In the first semester, the student is introduced to types of research, critical analysis of published research, and scholarly writing. Following this introductory course is a second research theory course that serves to develop advanced skills in data analysis and interpretation.

Three important documents have been included in the planning process: *Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist* (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, 2011); and *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 3rd Edition (AOTA, 2014)*. These documents have provided the guide posts necessary to develop a viable entry-level doctoral program in occupational therapy.

CURRICULUM

Year	Semester	Courses Number, Name, Units
One	Fall (15 units)	OT701 Integrative Seminar in Occupational Therapy Practices I (1)
		OT710 Anatomical and Physiological Basis for Human Occupation (5)
		OT711 Foundations of Occupational Therapy (3)
		OT712 Theories of Inquiry and Research Methodology I (3)
		OT719 Human Occupation Throughout the Life Span (3)
	Spring (14 units)	OT713 Introduction to Psychopathology (1)
		OT716 Therapeutic Media, Materials and Processes (2)
		OT717 Inter-professional Care and Communication (2)
		OT718 Functional Neuroscience (3)
OT720 Theories of Inquiry and Research Methodology II (2)		
Summer (11 units)	OT702 Integrative Seminar in Occupational Therapy Practices II (1)	
	OT709 Introduction to Professional Documentation (1)	
	OT715 Scholarly Writing (1)	
	OT721 Introduction to Fieldwork I (3)	
	OT728 Administration and Management (3)	
Two	Fall (16 units)	OT723 Capstone Project Exploration Seminar I (2)
		OT724 Conditions of Human Dysfunction (3)
		OT726 Theory and Practice in Psychosocial Dysfunction (4)
		OT732 Advanced Clinical Practice (Children) (4)
		OT752 Advanced Leadership Seminar (3)
	Spring (14 units)	OT703 Integrative Seminar in Occupational Therapy Practices III (1)
		OT729 Theory and Practice in Physical Dysfunction (4)
		OT731 Occupational Adaptations and Introduction to Modalities (3)
		OT736 Advanced Clinical Practice (Adults) (4)
Summer (6 units)	OT735 Capstone Project Planning (2)	
Three	Fall (6 units)	OT740 Fieldwork Level II (6)
	Spring (10 units)	OT741 Fieldwork Level II (6) OT754 Experiential Project (6) OT755 Capstone report (3)
Total units = 91		

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is the regional accreditation agency responsible for the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of institutions offering the baccalaureate degree and above in California, Hawaii, Guam and the Pacific Basin. Samuel Merritt University has been reaccredited until Spring 2021. The core purpose of WASC accreditation is to assure the educational community and general public that an institution meets the Standards of Accreditation, and the Core Commitments to Institutional Capacity and Education Effectiveness. Student learning is at the heart of the review process.

The OTD Program has been granted full accreditation until 2023-2024 by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. The phone number for AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA.

The Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) at SMU was re-accredited for 8 years until July 1, 2027. The Department of Occupational Therapy is no longer accepting students into the Master of Occupational Therapy Program.

The American Occupational Therapy Associations is located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. The telephone number for ACOTE is 301-652-6611 x2042. The telephone number for AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA.

Graduates of the MOT or OTD Programs will be able to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) (www.NBCOT.org). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). The credential will qualify the individual for state licensure in California.

The United States Department of Education recognizes ACOTE as the accrediting agency for professional programs in the field of occupational therapy. To be in compliance with accreditation, educational programs in occupational therapy must meet or exceed the minimum standards outlined in the 2011 STANDARDS FOR AN ACCREDITED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST OR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT. The standards document describes the minimum standards of quality used in accrediting programs that prepare individuals to enter the occupational therapy profession. The extent to which a program complies with these standards determine its accreditation status.

FACULTY AND STAFF

- Kate Hayner EdD, OTR/L, Chair, Department of Occupational Therapy
- Drew Ward, Administrative Assistant
- Marci Baptista, OTD, MOTR/L, CHT, CEAS
- David Boniski MS, OTR/L
- Donna Breger Stanton OTD, OTR/L, CHT, FAOTA
- Nancy Chee OTD, OTR/L CHT
- Beth Ching OTD, OTR/L
- Ciara Cox PhD, OTR/L
- Nandini Dasguta MS
- Elaina DaLomba, PhD, OTR/L
- Craig Elliot PhD
- Dominique Embry MS, OTR/L
- Laura Figueroa MS, OTR/L
- Kristina Fuller MOT, OTR/L
- Leila Gabriel EdD, OTR/L
- Kirsten Lindgren Gershoni MS, OTR/L
- Ginny Gibson OTD, OTR/L, CHT
- Gordon Giles PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
- Goli Hashemi MPH, OTR/L
- Stephen Hill, PhD
- Kristin Jones, MS, OTR/L
- Melisa Kaye, EdD, OTR/L, SIPT
- Elizabeth Kliene MOT, OTR/L
- Karissa Legleiter, MA, BS
- Scarth Locke MOT, OTR/L
- Linda Monroe MPT, OCS
- Tiana Nguyen, OTD, OTR/L
- Barb Puder PhD
- Chi Kwan Shea PhD, OTR/L
- Lauren T. Sheehan, OTD OTR/L
- Andrew Ward Smith - PhD
- Stacy Springer MS, OTR/L, ATP
- Robyn Wu OTD, OTR/L

FACULTY AND STUDENT COMMUNICATION

For full-time faculty, response time to electronic communications from students will be within 48 hours of the initial posting on weekdays. Weekends and holidays will not be counted in the 48-hour period. Faculty who are away from campus for an extended period of time and not able or not expected to respond to e-mail will provide an automated response informing students when they may expect a response.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Bi-monthly faculty meetings are held to discuss, among other agenda items, concerns regarding individual students. The aim of faculty is to address problems early on and to assist in insuring the student's success in the program. Occasionally, problems with writing (grammar, spelling, organization, flow/sequence, proper use of APA guidelines) arise. If the faculty determines a student needs assistance beyond the scope of the specific class, the student may be required to attend writing workshops on campus and verify attendance.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In addition to the content below, a university-wide Academic Integrity Policy is available in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog and Student Handbook. Every student is responsible to review, and become familiar with, the Academic Integrity Policy as presented in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog and Student Handbook.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not acceptable and may result in a number of consequences. Most people understand plagiarism to be the action of copying someone else's work, words, or ideas without giving proper credit. Sometimes it is very evident and at others, it is not as clear to the student. There are degrees of plagiarism, from outright copying written material without quotations or citation, to copying a small phrase or statistic without properly quoting or citing the source. We assume all graduate students understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If you do not feel you understand plagiarism please seek out help. Many sources are available in the library

and on-line.

If a faculty member believes plagiarism has occurred on an assignment in his or her course in the OTD program, he or she may do any of the following, depending on the extent of plagiarism:

- Counsel the student on plagiarism with a notice of this occurrence placed into the student's file.
- Give the student a failed grade on the assignment and require the student to complete the assignment again for the minimum possible passing points of 70%. A notice of this occurrence will go into the student's file.
- Fail the student's assignment without the option of redoing it. A notice of this occurrence will go into the student's file.

If a student has record of prior counsel regarding plagiarism the second occurrence will be sent to the chair of the department for determination of severity and consequences. Or, if the plagiarism is deemed to be so egregious on the first occurrence the faculty member may inform the chair of the department for possible further actions. The chair will make a determination after counsel with two uninvolved faculty members

The determination will take into account the following:

- The quantity of plagiarism in an assignment
- The number of prior occurrences
- The student's feedback on the occurrence
- The assignment instructions that were given to the student
- The involved faculty member's statement and suggested outcome
- The level of plagiarism (from citing the wrong source or poor paraphrasing to copying a full paragraph or paper)

Faculty recognizes plagiarism is often unintentional. Whether or not the student did or did not intend to plagiarize is considered but the extent of the infraction will determine the outcome versus the student's reported intent. When the plagiarism is minor, such as giving the wrong citation, the student will be counseled. Further consequences may be failing the assignment, receiving a D in the course, or failing the course and subsequently being dismissed from the program.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS

There is an expectation that all students will behave in a professional manner at all times. Please refer to the SMU Catalog. Professional behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in responsible and courteous communication;
- Maintaining a professional tone of voice in all communications;
- Listening to and acknowledging feedback from peers and faculty;
- Choosing appropriate dress for class and clinical activities;
- Participating actively in course activities and maintaining attention in class;
- Following directions during program activities including classroom and clinical settings.

Some examples of unprofessional behaviors:

- Tardiness;
- Side-talking in class;
- Eating in class (by permission only);
- Putting one's head on the desktop during lecture;
- Absence from class without notifying the professor prior to class;
- Walking away from a faculty member or peer during the course of a conversation;
- Using computers and electronic media during class for non-class related activity;
- Refusing to meet with a faculty member or the department Chair upon request of the faculty member or department Chair.

Faculty will track all unprofessional behaviors (as noted, in part, above) and will address these with the student as appropriate. If three occurrences of the same behavior occur, the student will be required to meet with the Program Chair. A mutual plan of resolution will be determined and a record will be placed in the student's file.

ACADEMIC CLINICAL EXPECTATIONS

In the clinical setting, observations and fieldwork experiences are designed to complement and reinforce the academic course work. The University expects students and faculty to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with federal and state law, and ethical practice, and to

observe and honor patient's rights, privacy, informed consent and dignity.

In the clinical setting, the fieldwork educator is authorized to dismiss a student for cause without notice. Situations in which this action is justifiable include, but are not limited to: behavior that seriously jeopardized the safety of others; substance abuse; insubordination; violation of federal law, state law and ethical practice. Such dismissal from a clinical site is automatically referred to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy. The student may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Due to the increasing number of occupational therapy students in California and the decreasing number of fieldwork sites, there is no guarantee of geographical placement or a specific practice area. Flexibility and a willingness to learn in any environment will provide students with the best experience.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

University-wide policies are fully addressed in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog. Every student is responsible to review, and become familiar with, the policies and procedures of Samuel Merritt University as presented in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog and Student Handbook.

Academic Advising

In addition to the information below, refer to the section on Academic Advising in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Each student will be assigned to an academic advisor. This faculty member will remain your advisor throughout the academic course work. When you begin Fieldwork II, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will take over as your advisor. Your academic advisor is responsible for consultation or guidance with respect to courses and program requirements as well as individual problems that impact your educational endeavors. Students are encouraged to meet once a semester to review their progress through the program. During the experiential component of the program, students will be assigned a faculty of record who will both advise and mentor students during this component of the program.

Access to Records

Refer to the section on Academic records in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Attendance

In addition to the information below, refer to the section on Attendance in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Regular classroom attendance is expected and essential to successful academic achievement in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program. Students are responsible for all work missed due to absences and must make arrangements with their instructors to make-up work. Make-up work for unexcused absences, including missed examinations, is at the discretion of the faculty member. All classes will have sign-in sheets. It is the responsibility of each student to sign in. No student may sign in for another student unless the professor provides explicit permission.

Award of Academic Credit

Refer to the section on Award of Academic Credit in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Advanced Standing Credit for Post-Professional Graduate Programs

Refer to the section on Advanced Standing Credit for Post-Professional Graduate Programs in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Transfer Credit

Refer to the section on Transfer Credit in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Challenge Credit

Refer to the section on Challenge Credit in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Grading policy

In addition to the information below, refer to the section on Grading in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog. http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Plus or minus grades will not be offered in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program. Refer to each course syllabus for the grading criteria in each course.

Graduation and Credentialing Requirements

In addition to the information below, refer to the section on graduation and credentialing in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Audit

Refer to the section on Audit in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Repeating a Course

Refer to the section on Repeating a Course in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Pass Fail Grading

Refer to the section on Pass Fail Grading in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

In Progress Grades

Refer to the section on In Progress Grades in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Withdrawal

In addition to the content below, refer to the section on Withdrawal in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

In the OTD program, if a student withdraws from a course then the student may become a part-time student and consequently may be subject to a change in tuition. Additionally, the student may be restricted in progressing to fulltime status in subsequent semesters.

Scheduling of Classes

Refer to the section on Scheduling of Classes in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Registration

Refer to the section on Scheduling of Classes in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Class Lists

Refer to the section on Class Lists in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Disclosures

Refer to the section on Disclosures in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Drop/Add

In addition to the content below, refer to the section on Drop/Add in the Samuel Merritt University

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

In the OTD Program, if a student drops a course during the add/drop period that student will become a part-time student and consequently will be subject to a change in tuition and may be restricted in progressing to fulltime status in subsequent semesters.

Transcript Requests

Refer to the section on Transcript Requests in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Clinical Requirements

Refer to the section on Clinical Requirements in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Client/Patient Participation in Course-related Activities

Refer to the section on Client/Patient Participation in Course-related Activities in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Participation in Course Activities

Refer to the section on Participation in Course Activities in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Liability and Malpractice

In addition to the content below, refer to the section on Liability and Malpractice in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Samuel Merritt University provides professional liability coverage for students and faculty as it pertains to fieldwork and other educational experiences. The acquisition of additional coverage is an individual decision based upon individual circumstances. Specific information about malpractice insurance is available upon request.

Safe and Professional Practice in Clinical Settings

Refer to the section on Safe and Professional Practice in Clinical Settings in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Licensure Requirements/Denial of License

Refer to the section on Licensure Requirements/Denial of License in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Evaluations

In addition to the content below, refer to the section on Evaluations in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

All instructors and courses are evaluated each semester. Students are encouraged to provide constructive feedback and criticism of the courses and faculty for continuous improvement of curriculum and teaching skills. The results of these evaluations will be anonymous. Students are encouraged to provide feedback and input. The intent of the course evaluation is to improve classroom and laboratory instruction. Comments of a personal nature concerning the instructor are not appropriate on professional evaluations. Students should seek out the instructor during his or her office hours to discuss concerns about the instructor's teaching methods.

For many students, the adjustment to a problem-based learning and adult learning model is a difficult transition. Graduate students learn best when they are stakeholders in the learning process and when the student takes responsibility for their own study habits and behaviors.

Finals Week

Refer to the section on Finals Week in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Forms and Petitions

Refer to the section on Forms and Petitions in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Independent Study

Refer to the section on Independent Study in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Clinical Readiness

Refer to the section on Clinical Readiness in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Leave of Absence

Refer to the section on Leave of Absence in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Student Classification

Refer to the section on Student Classification in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Student Research Degree Requirements

Refer to the section on Student Research Degree Requirements in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Graduate Progression and Graduation

In addition to the content below, refer to the section on Graduate Progression and Graduation in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Students are expected to maintain current CPR certification, provide evidence of successful completion of a tutorial on blood-borne pathogens, and maintain updated required immunizations and TB tests prior to progressing to fieldwork.

Graduate Probation and Dismissal

Refer to the section on Graduate Probation and Dismissal in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Graduate Dismissal

Refer to the section on Graduate Dismissal in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Graduate Procedures

Refer to the section on Graduate Procedures in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Eligibility to Participate in Graduation

Refer to the section on Eligibility to Participate in Graduation in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

Dates of Degree Conferral

Refer to the section on Dates of Degree Conferral in the Samuel Merritt University Catalog.

http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/academic_affairs/catalogs

PROFESSIONAL AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

American Occupational Therapy Association

Our national organization is the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The Association is responsible for developing standards for education and practice, for promoting the profession in important political issues such as in Health Reform and for marketing the profession to the public and to other professional organizations. We strongly encourage the students in our program to join the national association. It is a way of having representation at national meetings and having a voice in important decisions, which will affect you as an occupational therapist. The student fee for membership is \$75.00 per year. **Membership in AOTA is mandatory** for students in the OTD or MOT program at Samuel Merritt University. Benefits include receiving The American Journal of Occupational Therapy and OT Practice (a monthly newsletter that includes job notices). Additionally, membership with AOTA provides access to important information via online resources as needed for classes, and discounted continuing education opportunities. Website: www.aota.org

Occupational Therapy Association of California

Every state has professional association for occupational therapy. In California, it is called the Occupational Therapy Association of California, or OTAC, and is one of the largest in the nation and sponsors a state conference each year. The state conference is usually well attended and takes place in either Northern or Southern California. We would like to have student representation at the conferences so we can become a force in the political decision making process in California. Membership includes a newsletter and reduced rates for conferences and workshops. Information on state membership other than California may be obtained from

the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. **Membership in OTAC is mandatory** for students in the OTD or MOT program at Samuel Merritt University. The student fee for membership is \$ 59.00 per year. Website: www.otaconline.org

Student Occupational Therapy Association

The Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) is the official organization for educational programs. The purpose of the SOTA is to promote greater unity and understanding among the occupational therapy students and to present educational material that is of particular interest. The student association also serves as a community of support, is active in fund raising, and acclimates the student with the organizational structure and decision-making process of the profession. Students elect their own officers and send representatives to local chapter meetings. We encourage student involvement in this association so you can participate in faculty meetings and be involved in departmental and professional affairs. The fee for membership is variable from \$0 to \$10.00 depending on the decisions of the SOTA student leadership.

American Society of Hand Therapists

Student membership in the American Society of Hand Therapists (ASHT) is available. Benefits include receipt of the Journal of Hand Therapy (bimonthly) and ASHT Times, as well as reduction of cost for courses/workshops. Website: www.asht.org.

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