

## Essential Functions for Occupational Therapy Assistant Students

These are standards for OTA students and applicants to the OTA program based on required abilities, capabilities and functions as interpreted by the OTA Program Director and are based on functions/abilities needed for a student to safely engage in educational, learning, and training activities in a manner that does not endanger themselves, other students, patients or the public.

Function	Standard	Examples of Activities
Visual	Visual ability sufficient to see details at close and far range. Ability to observe, receive & obtain visual information from all relevant sources for assessment required in patient/client care situations. Accurate color discrimination required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See and read course information, clinical forms, charts</li> <li>• See and read computer screens and other equipment</li> <li>• Oversee set up and implementation of treatment activities</li> </ul>
Hearing	The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words, sentences and to hear and interpret loud, soft, and muffled sounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear and Interpret alarms, machinery, and emergency alarms, cries for help.</li> <li>• Use call light and hear intercom speakers</li> <li>• Use the telephone</li> </ul>
Tactile	Tactile sensation adequate for physical assessment, and sensory stimulation interventions inclusive of size, shape, temperature, texture, vibration, pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palpate pulse rate, and muscle movement, anatomic structures.</li> <li>• Detect safe heat level on various tools, splinting and appliances.</li> </ul>
Fine Motor	Ability sufficient to provide safe and effective care and documentation including operation of equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write and document legibly</li> <li>• Grasp and pinch</li> <li>• Cut and open containers</li> <li>• Repetitive hand use</li> <li>• Electronic documentation.</li> </ul>

Gross Motor	Gross motor ability sufficient to provide safe and effective patient care. Physical strength to perform all types of patient transfers and lifts from a variety of surfaces and levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand, bend, stoop, squat, crawl, kneel, reach, balance, sit,</li> <li>• Perform CPR and client evacuation</li> <li>• Use safe body mechanics to lift, push, pull.</li> </ul>
Environmental	Ability to tolerate environmental stressors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inside and occasional outside</li> <li>• Work with chemicals and detergents</li> <li>• Tolerate exposure to fumes, odors, dust, temperature changes</li> <li>• Work in areas that are close, crowded and noisy</li> <li>• Work in areas of exposure to infectious waste, body fluids, wet or humid conditions</li> <li>• Work in areas of potential physical violence</li> </ul>
Communication	<p>Communication ability in English sufficient for appropriate interaction in verbal, written, non-verbal and electronic forms.</p> <p>Ability needed for entering, transcribing, recording, storing, or maintaining information in written or electronic form.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read, understand, write and speak English so that others will understand</li> <li>• Explain treatment</li> <li>• Perform health teaching</li> <li>• Validate responses/messages with others</li> <li>• Documentation</li> </ul>
Mobility	Ambulatory capability to sufficiently maintain a center of gravity when met with an opposing force as in lifting, supporting, and /or transferring a patient/client.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propel wheelchairs, and ambulate patients using a gait belt.</li> <li>• Move and obtain patient care equipment.</li> <li>• Aid patients in dressing, bathing, and grooming</li> <li>• Move freely from place to place.</li> </ul>
Cognitive-Perception	The ability to perceive events realistically, to think clearly, rationally and to function appropriately in routine and stressful situations including recognizing that something is wrong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend to multiple priorities in stressful situations</li> <li>• Recognize rapidly changing patient status</li> </ul>

Critical Thinking	Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to exercise sound clinical judgment</li> <li>• Ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense</li> </ul>
Interpersonal	Developing constructive and cooperative relationships with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage variety of patient expressions in a calm manner</li> <li>• Behave in an ethical manner</li> <li>• Establish rapport</li> </ul>
Activity Tolerance	Ability to tolerate lengthy periods of mental and physical activity over a period of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand and or sit for long periods</li> <li>• Selective attention without distraction</li> <li>• Move or attend frequently</li> </ul>

Students who feel they do not possess these essential abilities/functions should seek assistance from the Murray State College Academic Advisement Office to determine if a reasonable accommodation of a disability can be approached with the program. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process and to assist in communication between the faculty and the Academic Advisement Office.

Adapted from O\*Net (D.O.T.), Baptist Hospital Health Schools essential functions, various OT/OTA Job analyses and Job descriptions, and Iowa Community College Core Performance Standards.

I certify that I have read and understand the above essential functions and that I meet each of them, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

J.R. 7-25-08; rev. 6-11-09