

**THE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
ASSISTANT
PROGRAM GUIDE**



***PEARL RIVER
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OTA PROGRAM
FORREST COUNTY CENTER
5448 U.S. HIGHWAY 49 SOUTH
HATTIESBURG, MS. 39401
OTA Office: 601-554-5487***

PURPOSE OF THE OTA PROGRAM GUIDE

The OTA Program is an in-person career technical program and this guide is designed to inform each student with the basic information regarding policies and procedures of the program. This guide complies with the current Pearl River Community College (PRCC) Catalog and the PRCC Student Handbook- Cat Country Guide.

The PRCC Student Handbook (Cat Country Guide) may be accessed at: <https://prcc.edu/river-life/cat-country-guide/> and it is also available in PDF format for your convenience. This handbook represents the effort of the Office of Student Affairs to communicate facts and policies concerning Pearl River Community College. Members of the student body should develop an understanding and appreciation of their college and the ideals for which it stands after reviewing Cat County Guide. It is not assumed that these policies are complete, nor will they serve indefinitely. They will be amended as changes in local conditions and practices may indicate.

PRCC reserves the right to change all policies, rules or procedures stated within the Student Handbook (Cat Country Guide).

Non-Discrimination Policy

Pearl River Community College offers equal education and employment opportunities. The College does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

For inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policy or to request accommodations, special assistance, or alternate format publication please contact the Office of Disability Services at ADA@prcc.edu or 601-403-1215.

Accommodations Policy

Pearl River Community College provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Pearl River Community College will follow the guidelines as set forth in the “Pearl River Community College Disability Services Guidebook and Procedural Standards.” A copy of this document may be obtained online at: <https://prcc.edu/current-wildcats/disability-services/> and you may contact Office of Disability Services at ADA@prcc.edu or 601-403-1215.*

*At the start of each OTA course, your instructor will review the syllabus for the course in which all this information is published, reviewed and discussed. Afterwards, students sign a “Syllabus Statement of Understanding” form on the first day of each class.



Pearl River Community College Mission Statement

Pearl River Community College is a public institution committed to providing **quality educational and service opportunities** for all who seek them.

Pearl River Community College Strategic Goals

1. To prepare students to complete a degree or certificate program and to be competent in careers for which they have been prepared.
2. To provide quality student services.
3. To provide access to college courses and programs using various instructional methods, including distance education and dual enrollment/credit courses.
4. To employ qualified faculty and staff, compensate them well, and provide opportunities for their professional development.
5. To provide facilities, technology, and support staff in order to improve student learning, enhance faculty and staff performance, and augment community services.
6. To provide adequate communication among campus personnel and community members regarding the College goals, outcomes, and activities.
7. To recruit and retain students from a diverse population.
8. To provide workforce training programs that meet requirements of business, industry, educational, and public service agencies for basic skills, specific job skills, and technical skills training.

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Mission Statement

Consistent with the mission of Pearl River Community College, the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is committed to providing a quality technical training program. The program strives for the development of competent, diverse and ethically responsible entry-level occupational therapy assistant practitioners which meet the evolving demands of local communities, the OT profession and society.

The PRCC OTA Program is The PRCC Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is (301) 652-6611, and its web address is www.acoteonline.org.



Our OTA Program affirms [the philosophical base of occupational therapy](#) which was adopted by the AOTA Representative Assembly Coordinating Council for Representative Assembly in April of 2025.

We affirm the following vision statement of the American Occupational Therapy Association in addition to its four foundational pillars:

Vision 2030

“Enriching life for ALL individuals and society through meaningful engagement in everyday activities.”

1. Inclusive and Equitable Professional Community
2. Evidence-Based, Client-Centered and Innovative Practice
3. Universally Recognized with Valued Experience
4. Occupational Justice and Advocacy

STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program believes that engagement in occupation promotes health and wellness to address the needs of the whole person. We believe that the principles and techniques of occupational therapy provide an important and powerful means to assist individuals and communities to improve their quality of life.

The OTA Program believes that students learn on multiple levels, whether it be through explicit or implicit learning, via several mechanisms and processes that are unique to the individual. Explicit learning is “head knowledge” gained by instruction, reading, observation, discussion and other types of activities. Implicit learning is “learning through doing” and is gained by repetition of an emergent skill. Both types of learning are necessary for “role functioning” which includes the student role as well as the role of occupational therapy assistant. The OTA program seeks to provide a combination of both types of learning in order to develop the practical and process components required for entry-level practice in occupational therapy at the assistant level. The OTA program recognizes that people learn via an individualized combination of sensory modalities. Multiple modes of learning are utilized (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic) to help maximize student learning. Learning requires exposure, repetition, association, and application to become functional and useful in dynamic clinical environments. The Program believes that learning occurs in progressive stages in which foundational information is obtained, associated, synthesized, applied and generalized.

The OTA Program believes that students will prosper within the field of occupational therapy when provided a quality education which promotes self-direction, professionalism, high ethical standards, respect for diversity, teamwork, community service and life-long learning. We deem these qualities to be primary attributes for success in occupational therapy when combined with knowledge and skill competence.

The OTA Program concurs with Knowles’ (1990) six assumptions about adult learning. First, adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it. When an adult learner sees how a given area of learning has relevance to his/her own life, motivation to learn is markedly increased. Secondly, adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and lives. Individuals who have attained this level of self-awareness have an internal need to be validated as capable of self-direction. Third, adult learners bring life experience to their learning. Learning which can be related to a student’s life experiences will be internalized more readily. Fourth, “Adults become ready to learn things they need to know and do in order to cope effectively with real-life situations.” (Knowles, 1990, p. 60). Fifth, adults are life-centered (i.e. task-centered or problem-centered). They are willing to put forth much more effort into problems which they envision they may encounter in their own (private or professional) lives. Finally, the most powerful motivators for adults are internal. In fact, educational research has indicated that internal motivation toward a given activity is undermined by the introduction of external rewards.

Because of the six assumptions listed above, the OTA Program attempts to infuse its curriculum

with opportunities for self-directed learning, exploration related to “learning how to learn”, relating new learning to one’s life experiences, emphasis upon helping students determine their learning needs and opportunities to solve relevant practice related problems.

It is widely accepted in the field of adult education that Knowles’ principles are not universally applicable to all learners or learning situations. Learners at a college level may have varying levels of ability to assume adult roles and behaviors. They also are hindered in their ability to be self-directed in their learning when they are presented with information which is new to them and not closely related to previous life experiences. In addition, when there is a need to assist students in learning extensive information in a limited time period (as is the case with a two-year OTA program) there is a need for a more directive (rather than facilitative) approach to instruction.

Thus, the OTA Program attempts to provide relevant learning opportunities in a structured environment while injecting opportunities for self-directed adult forms of inquiry and learning. The OTA program believes that learning should continue after graduation and throughout an individual’s professional life. Therefore, lifelong learning is promoted throughout the Program and self-directed learning experiences are offered in each semester to facilitate learning habits that will support this value.

The OTA Program believes that adults learn to act upon community values through experience. Therefore, the Program includes community endeavors to give students experiences of putting their altruistic and creative interests into action to facilitate community-oriented behaviors.

The OTA Program believes that to be fully successful in their occupational therapy careers, graduates must eventually take on adult learner characteristics.

Educational Goals

- 1.** PRCC’s OTA Program will prepare competent, entry-level graduates who will work under the direction of a registered occupational therapist and be employed in the role of occupational therapy assistant in a range of settings.
- 2.** PRCC’s OTA students will demonstrate practical knowledge and skills which are necessary for employment in entry-level positions in the workforce according to MCCB Curriculum Framework.
- 3.** PRCC’s OTA students will report overall satisfaction with program instruction.
- 4.** PRCC’s OTA graduates will report strong fieldwork placements and satisfaction with their academic program.
- 5.** PRCC’s OTA graduates will pass the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Exam.
- 6.** The PRCC OTA program will support the professional values of self-direction, professionalism, teamwork, community service and life-long learning.

These goals align with the OTA Program’s mission of providing a quality technical training program.

STATEMENT OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program's curriculum is a modified developmental design guided by the Program's educational philosophy. A developmental approach which progresses students from simple to more complex learning is practical for use in a two-year technical program. The developmental design is enhanced by principles of adult learning and supported by curricular threads which reflect the values of the Program and institution.

The OTA Program extends the mission and strategic plan of Pearl River Community College (PRCC). PRCC's mission emphasizes access, service and quality education. PRCC's strategic goals emphasize career success, graduate transfer, quality, access, professional development, technology, diversity and workforce training that is relevant to the needs of the marketplace.

The curriculum is guided by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. (2023). *2023 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Standards and Interpretive Guide*. <https://acoteonline.org/accreditation-explained/standards/>, and upholds the professional standards of the Mississippi Occupational Therapy Practice Act of Mississippi Code of 1972 (last amended 2023) <https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/static/resources/138.pdf>

The curriculum honors and emphasizes the ethical principles of the AOTA 2020 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (https://research.aota.org/ajot/article/74/Supplement_3/7413410005p1/6691/AOTA-2020-Occupational-Therapy-Code-of-Ethics) and reflects the values of the instructors with respect to professional behaviors, self-direction, awareness of self, community and quality service delivery.

The curriculum also aligns with the Mississippi Community College Board's Mississippi Curriculum Framework which forms the standard OTA course sequence and primary curricular structure of all OTA Programs within the state. <https://www.mccb.edu/curriculum/occupational-therapy-assistant>

The OTA Program recognizes that effective practice in occupational therapy requires a combination of knowledge, development of skill sets, clinical reasoning and practical skills. Our OTA Program prepares students for practice within the field of occupational therapy by combining these components.

The curriculum provides an upward spiraling process of knowledge acquisition, association and application with corresponding progressive skill development. There is a progression from direct presentation of factual material (intake information) toward association of that material with expanded information and skills practice during lab activities (manipulation). Ultimately, the student's knowledge, reasoning and practical skills are applied in appropriately supportive fieldwork settings to allow all elements of the student's education to consolidate into a functioning whole.

The curriculum emphasizes the progression of learning through the stages of intake, manipulation and application. However, we believe that practical skill components should always be present in

the student’s education, with more emphasis upon applied skills as the educational experience progresses. This provides balance in the areas of explicit and implicit learning throughout the student’s learning process.

The curriculum has five educational threads which give shape to the educational experience and encapsulate the *SCOPE* of the curriculum. These threads lead to important student outcomes.

Thread	PRCC graduates will:	Measurement:
S trong professional values	<p>Develop habits to support engagement in consistent self-directed learning.</p> <p>Demonstrate effective teamwork skills.</p> <p>Demonstrate strong awareness of ethics in OT practice.</p> <p>Express importance of lifelong professional development and learning.</p> <p>Express internalized values and motivation to improve the health of their communities.</p>	<p>Level II Fieldwork performance measures</p> <p>Engagement with self-directed learning in each didactic semester</p> <p>Demonstration of teamwork skills in group activities</p> <p>Group discussions and demonstrations</p> <p>Community service participation and reflective exercises</p>
C ertification	Pass the NBCOT certification exam	NBCOT reports
O ccupational Therapy Skills	<p>Demonstrate the ability to deliver occupational therapy assistant services at entry-level competency under the supervision of an occupational therapist.</p> <p>Demonstrate effective communication skills including written, verbal, and therapeutic use of self.</p> <p>Demonstrate competent clinical skills to support OT practice.</p>	<p>Level II Fieldwork performance measures</p> <p>Graduate surveys</p> <p>Employer surveys</p> <p>Objective testing</p> <p>Demonstrations</p> <p>Lab practicals</p> <p>Presentations</p> <p>Clinical Simulations</p> <p>Assignments</p>
P erformance in occupations	<p>Recognize the centrality of occupations across the lifespan.</p> <p>Express understanding of how contexts, performance skills and client factors can affect occupational performance.</p> <p>Demonstrate effective use of occupations, contrived and preparatory methods to support occupational performance.</p>	<p>Level II Fieldwork performance measures</p> <p>Performance in lab simulations</p> <p>Objective testing</p> <p>Graduate surveys</p> <p>Employer surveys</p>
E vidence-Based Practice	Understand how to access and	Level II Fieldwork

	utilize research under self-direction to guide clinical practice. Express the importance of using research to facilitate professional development.	performance measures Graduate surveys Employer surveys Written assignments Class discussions Clinical simulations
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OTA Program Course Sequencing

The developmental nature of the OTA Program curriculum is illustrated by four major course sequences which progressively build various areas of content. This content reflects dominant areas of general occupational therapy practice and those that are reflected within the needs of the local community. The following chart illustrates these course sequences through consecutive semesters. Green italics represents manipulative classes and bold blue represents application classes.

Sequence	Prereq	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
A – Phys Dis	1. A&P1 2. A&P2	1. Therapeutic Anatomy 2. Pathology of Physical Disabilities	Kinesiology	Orthopedic Conditions	<i>1. Concepts</i> 2. Level 1B FW
B – Practical skills	Communications		<i>OTS I</i>	<i>OTS II</i>	<i>1. OTS III</i> 2. Level 1B FW
C – Psychosocial/ Developmental	Social Science Humanities	1. Path of Psych Conditions <i>2. Group Process</i>	1. Pathology of Developmental Conditions <i>2. Therapeutic Media</i>	Level IA FW	Level 1B FW
D – Essential foundational information		1. Foundations 2. Medical Terminology		Healthcare Systems	Transitions 1 Transitions 2 (semester 5)

Students apply and integrate previously learned information in manipulation courses. The course curriculum requires the student to implement limited OT services in a supervised clinical or community setting during Level I Fieldwork in preparation for Level II Fieldwork. Level II Fieldwork is a clinical affiliation internship for eight weeks involving 30 or more hours per week of clinical performance (except in usual circumstances in which fieldwork is completed on a part time {at

least half-time basis} for a longer duration). Students are required to complete the equivalent of 16 weeks of full-time clinical fieldwork to be eligible for graduation. Clinical fieldwork sites are available at local, regional and national levels and must be completed within **20 months** of completion of classroom (didactic) program requirements.

The length of our program and the sequence in which it occurs are reasonable and appropriate and are guided by the Occupational Therapy Assistant Mississippi Curriculum Framework (CIP: 51.0803) in accordance with Mississippi Community College Board's expectations of all Occupational Therapy Assistant Programs within the state.

Graduation/Post-graduation Information

Students in the OTA Program typically graduate in the spring (i.e.- their fifth consecutive semester) following completion of the two-year program. After final transcripts have been posted, the student schedules the national certification examination which is administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT www.nbcot.org) at Prometric Testing Centers. In order to be eligible to take this examination, the student must have successfully completed all course work including clinical fieldwork, applied for graduation and paid all fees and been awarded the Associate in Applied Science degree with the major of Occupational Therapy Assistant Technology. Upon successful completion of this examination, the graduate will become a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant and will be eligible for licensure in any state including Mississippi. **If a student has a felony conviction, they may be prevented from taking the exam. This possible restriction is handled on a case-specific basis by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.**

In Mississippi, graduates are permitted to work as an occupational therapy assistant with a limited/temporary permit from the Mississippi State Board of Health. This permit is considered valid until the result of the first national certification examination after graduation is received. The **Temporary Permit** can be renewed only **ONCE** if the graduate fails the certification exam (provided that the original limited permit has not lapsed). After the graduate passes the examination, a permanent license is granted. Temporary permits are not required as a graduate can opt to pass the test first and then apply for a permanent license. Other states have their own individual requirements for limited permits and licensure. **Please note that a felony conviction may prevent students/graduates from being able to qualify for a license in some or all states.**

The PRCC OTA Program adheres to the educational standards of the profession set forth by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (**ACOTE, 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814**). Web address: www.acoteonline.org; Phone contact information: Members: 1-800-SAY-AOTA (729-2682), Non-members: 301-652-6611

References

American Occupational Therapy Association, (2015). 2015 occupational therapy code of ethics.

Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.pdf>

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American Occupational Therapy Association (2011), Definition of occupational therapy for the AOTA model practice act. Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Advocacy/State/Resources/PracticeAct/Model%20Definition%20of%20OT%20Practice%20%20Adopted%2041411.ashx>

Knowles, M. (1990). *The adult learner: a neglected species*. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co.

Mississippi Code of 1972: Index for Chapter 024 of Title 73. (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.mscode.com/free/statues/73/024/index.htm>.

ORIENTATION

In addition to this Program Orientation, all new students entering Pearl River Community College will be required to enroll in Orientation, LLS 1313 or LLS 1311 for transfer students. This class will guide students through the first semester at Pearl River Community College and a student cannot graduate from the college and in some cases, register, when this course is listed as “incomplete”.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The PRCC OTA Program faculty have specified the following non-academic criteria (*technical standards*) which all students are expected to meet to participate in the OTA Program and professional practice.

1. **OBSERVATION:** The student must be able to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory exercises and clinical experiences in the professional program component and be able to assess and comprehend the condition of all clients assigned for assessment and treatment.
2. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** The student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with clients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood and performance levels, assess non-verbal communication and be able to effectively and efficiently transmit information to clients/caregivers, fellow students, faculty/staff and all members of the health care team.
3. **MOTOR SKILLS:** The student must have sufficient motor function to elicit feedback from clients using appropriate therapeutic maneuvers, be able to perform basic tests, possess all

skills necessary to carry out therapeutic procedures, be able to perform movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to clients to ensure their safety.

4. **INTELLECTUAL/CONCEPTUAL/INTEGRATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES:** The student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, evaluate and synthesize. Problem solving and critical thinking skills are demanded of all Allied Health Practitioners and are essential to provide quality care to the people we serve.

5. **BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES:** The student must possess a level of emotional health necessary for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities, attention to client-centered care and the development of a mature, sensitive and effective relationship with clients. Students must also be able to tolerate taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to a changing environment, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent to the clinical nature of their clients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interest and motivation are personal qualities that each student should possess.

GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES

Academic Requirements & Expectations

1. All academic courses (non-OTA courses) should be completed during or before the fall semester of the second year, so the student is eligible to begin Level II fieldwork to graduate with their respective class at the end of spring semester. A student may not be able to proceed to Level II fieldwork until all academic classes (with exception of OT Transitions II) have been completed. OT Transitions II cannot be taken until the student has completed Level II fieldwork. All cases are examined individually, however, graduation with a student's respective class will be postponed until all requirements are met for graduation.

2. Students must pass all OTA courses with a grade of "C" or better* in order to continue through the program each semester. At midterm of each semester, students will meet with OTA faculty to discuss their status within the Program to identify and address any areas of concern that either the instructors or student may have. A Midterm Meeting form will be completed and kept in the student's record to document the meeting and if necessary, follow-up meeting notes will be sent to the student's PRCC email address and all faculty members present. Student success is of utmost importance to the OTA Program and 100% retention is our goal. **We want students to fulfill their dreams and make it to the finish line!** Therefore, if it is deemed at midterm that the student is in jeopardy of falling below the required "C" average in at least ONE course, the student will be required

to schedule and meet with Cassie Jackson, PRCC's Career and Technical Services Coordinator. Her office is at the end of our hall on level 2 and her contact information is as follows: phone 601-403-1843, email cjackson@prcc.edu. If a student withdraws from the OTA program for any reason, they will be required to re-apply for re-admission. There is no guarantee of re-admission.

3. Clinical fieldwork affiliations must be completed and passed within 20 months of academic and technical course work completion. Students are only allowed to attempt a maximum of three Level II fieldwork rotations; therefore, Program policy allows a student to repeat *one* failed Level II fieldwork within that timeframe in cases absent of ethical and legal violations.

***Grading**

Grading will maintain consistent with the grading scale of the college.

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 59

Grading systems and the objectives to be used in each OTA course are included on the course syllabus that are reviewed and provided to students at the first meeting for each course. Students will sign a Syllabus Statement of Understanding form at the end of that class. Exams, lab practicals, assignments, papers, quizzes or any other criteria to be used in grading are marked and returned to the student for review (either digitally through Canvas or physically) and filed in each student's record. It is the responsibility of each student to review their grades and any applicable feedback from the instructor. If there is a dispute regarding a grade, the student should notify the instructor NO LATER than 3 days after the grade is issued. See current Student Catalog for more information on grade appeals. Each student is expected to check with the instructor about missed assignments, tests and classwork. Class notes should be obtained from a reliable classmate and make-up assignments will be permitted at the discretion of faculty.

Despite meeting academic requirements, serious ethical violations (e.g., cheating, HIPPA violations, improper use of social media, actions which seriously detract from a positive learning environment, etc.) may result in immediate dismissal from the OTA program.

Student Ethics

The student shall:

1. Use their own knowledge and skills to complete examinations without referring to others' answers, old examinations, class notes or other references during the exam, unless specifically permitted by the instructor. Cheating can result in dismissal from the OTA Program.
2. Use their own knowledge to write papers or compile research information. Students shall not use AI programs unless explicitly instructed/permitted, plagiarize, quote or copy the work of others without giving proper recognition (i.e.- citations, references) as stated in a standard manual on style (e.g.- APA 7th Ed.). Plagiarism shall be defined as 6 or more identical or functionally identical words in a row that correspond to another person's work.
3. Respect the opinions of instructors and other learners. Students shall not insult, slur or degrade instructors, other health professionals or fellow students.
4. Respect the limited resources of textbooks, library books, reprints and journals. Students shall not mutilate, deface, damage or withhold resources for their own use.
5. Conserve limited resources by using only supplies needed for completion of assignments and maintain equipment in good working order. Students shall not waste supplies or misuse equipment.
6. Assist in maintaining class and laboratory rooms in good order. Students shall not leave rooms dirty or in disarray or disorder upon completion of their assignment in each room.
7. Complete all assignments by the scheduled date and time or make satisfactory arrangements with the course instructor for an extension.
8. Observe all safety procedures when working with clients and equipment. Students shall not endanger the safety and welfare of clients, other students or faculty and staff.
9. Observe all policies and procedures established by PRCC, the OTA Program and all clinical sites. Students shall not excuse themselves without specific permission by a faculty member or clinical supervisor.
10. Respect the confidentiality of client/patient information regardless of source. Students shall not repeat information outside of the classroom, clinic or facility in which any part of the client/patient's name appears (except initials).

- 11.** Work in cooperation and respect with other health care team members and be professionally sociable. Students shall not interfere with or obstruct the rendering of the services provided by other health care members.
- 12.** Protect the property rights of the facility, fieldwork site and client/patient. Students shall not remove or borrow property without permission and shall not damage or misuse property while in the facility, clinic or client's home.
- 13.** Respect other students' projects. Students shall not handle, steal, alter, deface or otherwise harm another student's project, especially in a manner which might cause the project to receive a lower grade by the instructor.
- 14.** Recognize that questions and relevant class discussions are encouraged by the OTA Program. Students shall not display negative non-verbal behavior or carry on discussions when another student is addressing the instructor or the class.
- 15.** Understand that dismissal from the Program for ethical or academic misconduct will disqualify that student to be eligible for readmission to the OTA program.
- 16.** Understand that cheating on exams, quizzes, assignments and any Program work is an egregious offense and all of the following should be understood.
 - a. All OTA students will complete their own work on all assignments or exams UNLESS EXPLICITLY INTRUCTED TO WORK IN PAIRS OR GROUPS. Students who are found to have utilized inappropriate resources to complete OTA program work or who APPEAR to have utilized inappropriate resources will be given a grade of zero on that assignment and may be subject to DISMISSAL from the program at faculty discretion.
 - b. Students are expected to avoid the appearance of cheating. Any student who facilitates or enables cheating (or who appears to do so in the judgment of the faculty) by another student will be subject to the same penalties as the cheating student.
 - c. Students who are unsure of what is acceptable in each assignment should seek clarification from the instructor before an issue arises.
 - d. Cheating includes but is not limited to looking at another's test answer sheet, using notes during testing, using electronic devices (cell phones, ear buds or smart watches that are on or with a student during testing will be considered cheating) and plagiarism (using other's words without citation – and defined as six or more of the same words in a sequence). All electronic devices will be placed in a centralized location deemed by the instructor/proctor during the duration of the testing time.
- 17.** Maintain the integrity of equity and fairness while completing fieldwork by understanding

the following:

- a. Students will not be allowed to complete Level II fieldwork rotations at sites which employ family members or known associates of the student within the therapy department.
- b. Students will also be diverted from fieldwork sites in which the student has had a previous relationship such as employment or extensive volunteering.
- c. Should conflict issues be discovered after fieldwork has been planned or commenced, the student will be required to complete fieldwork at a neutral site. The OTA Program does NOT guarantee that new arrangements can be made to ensure that the student graduates with their class.

Write-ups for ethical issues:

If a student demonstrates unethical behavior or judgment which compromises safety or educational experiences of other students and/or brings undue harm to the Program or its reputation, students may be counseled on the issue to first raise their level of awareness. In such case, a written summary of the meeting will be provided to the student who will have opportunity to review it and make any desired comments. Concrete expectations will be provided through an “Action Plan” signed by all parties to prevent further issues. The use of such Action Plan is akin to being placed on “probation” ONLY if to the discretion of faculty, the offense deems that to be the appropriate course of action.

If a student is counseled a second time over ethical issues, whether the offenses be similar or different, showing a pattern of poor judgment or ethical functioning; or if the student violates the terms of the original Action Plan, the Program reserves the right to dismiss that student from the Program, irrespective of that student’s academic performance. It should also be noted that students may be dismissed after a single episode of unethical behavior (e.g. fighting, threatening another student, etc.) if that episode rises to a level in which expulsion (i.e.- “dismissal”) seems appropriate in the judgment of the Program Director and/or Administrator of Career and Technical Education. Due to the rigorous nature of the curriculum, the OTA Program does not “suspend” students for re-entry at a later time.

Student Conduct

1. All students are expected to be truthful, to show proper regard for others and not be overtly disrespectful, to have regard for the preservation of state and college property, as well as the property of others, and to conform to all other stated rules and regulations of this institution. Please refer to the Cat Country Guide for a more thorough description of Student Conduct expectations.

2. Students are expected to clean up after themselves, including washing dishes after use.
3. Smoking/using tobacco products (including vape pens) is not permitted on PRCC property and consequences for violating this policy can be found here: <https://prcc.edu/faculty/policy-procedure-manual/student-affairs/tobacco-free-policy/>
4. Students are not allowed in the Teacher's Lounge unless assigned as a work-study or office assistant.
5. Students displaying repeated anti-social (e.g. rude, aggressive, insulting) behavior will be given a verbal warning, then a written warning, and if the behavior continues, will be dismissed from the Program to preserve the educational experience of the rest of the class.
6. Cell phones should be inaudible during lectures, labs and exams so class activities are not disturbed. The instructor reserves the right to collect phones during class time if students are in repeated violation of the policy set forth by the OTA Program.
7. During testing students should have their bookbag and other loose belongings secured under their desks away from the testing space. All electronic devices such as cell phones and Apple/smart watches must be placed in an area designated by the instructor/proctor. Students will not be allowed to leave the classroom once testing has begun unless they submit their completed or incomplete exam first.
8. Students discovered cheating through visual evidence, evidence of plagiarism or credible report from other students are subject to dismissal from the Program. See number "16" in "Student Ethics" section to review how serious the OTA Program regards cheating.

Professionalism

Demonstrating professional behaviors is **very** important in being a successful student and professional health care provider. Examples of professional behaviors will be discussed in further detail and included on the syllabus of each course. Professionalism is a component of your final grade in all OTA courses except for Level II Fieldwork courses in the final semester. Examples of professional behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Being prepared for class by bringing all needed books, supplies and clothing.
2. Turning in assignments on time (i.e.- meeting all deadlines set forth by the Program).
3. Being consistently physically present (i.e.- minimal absences) and on time (i.e.- minimal tardies).
4. Being intellectually/emotionally/mentally present during class (i.e.- no cell phone

usage* for unrelated activities during class).

5. Being ethical and positive in how you present yourself and what you add to the class.

***Use of cell phones during class times are restricted due to the distractions they bring to the learning environment.**

Dress Code/Hygiene

The dress code for OTA students is based upon professional and safety considerations and is designed to be consistent with the code of the affiliated clinical settings.

1. Classroom dress:

- Shirt must not be distracting (e.g. showing cleavage, abs, etc.)
- Apparel should not be imprinted with obscene logos or slogans.
- Shorts do not rise above the tip of one's middle finger when hands are placed at one's side.

2. Lab dress will be determined by the faculty. However, in all cases:

- a. Hair must be neat and clean. Hair styles must prevent hair from falling forward into the student's or patient's (lab partners) face. Shoulder length or longer hair should be tied back during appropriate lab activities.
- b. Shoes must not have slippery soles or have a likelihood of coming off during therapeutic procedures. Athletic or walking shoes are recommended. Shoes should be closed toe/closed heel for labs or clinicals due to safety concerns. High heels are inappropriate and it is recommended that a pair of athletic shoes with socks be stored in a locker or the student's car if needed.
- c. Fingernails are to be kept trimmed and clean (i.e.- no excessively long nails).
- d. Jewelry must be conservative and kept to a minimum. Dangling and/or excessive jewelry are prohibited during laboratory time and/or when working with clients during clinicals.
- e. In clinical settings make-up and jewelry should be conservative and appropriate and hair coloring should be limited to traditional shades.
- f. Facial piercings and exposed tattoos are usually prohibited by fieldwork sites and should be removed and/or covered in accordance with the policy of each site.
- g. Beards/facial hair must be clean and neatly trimmed.
- h. Adequate personal hygiene should be maintained at all times. When working closely with clients or classmates (e.g.- lab activities), students should refrain from smoking as it leaves an odor which many would interpret as unprofessional and unpleasant.

Post-Graduation Survey

Please note that ACOTE requires that each graduate of an accredited program supply the educational institution with graduate and employer survey information post-graduation. This information is vital to track the employment rate and other data that can indicate the career success of PRCC OTA Program graduates. The Program Director will email the survey to each graduate in December of the graduation year. This email communication will be sent to the personal email address provided on the student application, so if there is a change, OTA faculty should be notified of the updated email address. Surveys must be returned by December, 31st of graduation year and participation in this survey is required and congruent with acceptance into the OTA Program. Since these annual statistics are required information used during the accreditation process; we require that an agreement of understanding be signed during orientation.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Policy: Pearl River Community College prohibits academic misconduct.

Procedure:

Academic misconduct is a serious offense because it diminishes the quality of academic scholarship; defrauds society, the institution, faculty, and other students; and undermines the efforts of those who eventually depend upon the knowledge and integrity of our faculty and staff. Academic policies apply equally to students and faculty at all locations.

Academic misconduct is unethical conduct in the context of a class that may compromise the integrity of PRCC. All work submitted in a course must be the student's own work. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, deceptive acts such as the following:

1. Asking for or giving another student information during a test
2. Copying answers from another student's paper or intentionally allowing someone to copy from one's own paper during a test
3. Using materials prohibited by the instructor during a test
4. Either impersonating another student during a test or having another person assume one's identity during a test
5. Changing answers on a previously graded test in order to have a grade revised
6. Stealing examination materials
7. Plagiarize, which is copying material, either exactly or in essence, and not providing appropriate documentation, including for Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools
8. Copying or falsifying a laboratory or clinical project/assignment, including computer programs, in either disk or hard copy form
9. Allowing someone else to compose or rewrite a student's assignment
10. Stealing, buying, selling, or otherwise providing research papers
11. Misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to complete assignments, to plagiarize, to paraphrase, or to submit false information

12. Submitting fraudulent or falsified documents to obtain excused absences, or other academic benefits

Refer to the course syllabus for specific course policies regarding academic misconduct. As with other violations of student conduct, academic misconduct may result in disciplinary action on a case-dependent basis, up to and including dismissal from the college.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Policy: Pearl River Community College may restrict the use of electronic devices in instructional settings.

Procedure: *The possession of a cell phone, smart watch, Bluetooth device (e.g. - ear buds) or other communication device is prohibited in any setting in which testing of any sort is taking place, whether the device is on or off.* This procedure is only changed with permission of the instructor. Unless permission is given by the instructor, the use of cell phones or other communication devices is prohibited in all College instructional settings including classrooms, laboratories, shops, libraries, auditoriums or any other location where instruction, recitation, performance, or any other educational activity is occurring. The use of any device equipped with memory capability such as a computer, calculator or other device is subject to restrictions, including being banned completely, by the instructor of a course. These restrictions must be communicated to the student in the course syllabus at the beginning of the course, but are subject to change if a reasonable effort is made by the instructor to communicate any change to the student.

A person violating this policy is subject to disciplinary action, which may include confiscation of the device, dismissal from the instructional setting, dismissal from a class in which the violation occurs or dismissal from the College. Any device confiscated must be returned to the student at the end of the class period or event or transferred to the appropriate Campus Vice President no more than 24 hours after the confiscation.

Due process will be afforded to any student disciplined as a result of violating of this policy and procedure.

Due Process

Student due process will be granted in accordance and as outlined in the PRCC Cat Country Guide and details can be found here: <https://prcc.edu/faculty/policy-procedure-manual/student-affairs/students-due-process/>. Pearl River Community College affords due process to all students in accordance with the law.

PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

Policy: Pearl River Community College will have a written probation/suspension procedure for all institutional and financial aid programs based on a minimum standard of progress.

Procedure:

The faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees desires for each student enrolling in Pearl River Community College to be successful in reaching his or her academic goals. With that in mind, the probation and suspension procedure encourages students to do their very best. If a student fails to meet the academic/financial aid requirements, based on a cumulative grade point average one semester, he or she will be placed on academic/financial aid probation. If the student should fail to remove the deficiency the next semester, he or she will be placed on academic/financial aid suspension and be required to sit out of school one semester. When re-enrolling in school after being on academic/financial aid suspension, the student will be on academic/financial aid probation for that term and must remove the deficiency during that term.

The academic/financial aid probation and suspension procedure is as follows:

Total Hours Attempted for Quality Points	Cumulative Grade Point Average
0 – 24 hours	1.50 GPA
25 – 36 hours	1.75 GPA
37 – and above	2.00 GPA

Student Complaints

It is encouraged by the OTA faculty that student complaints of any nature be initially directed to the faculty member involved. The meeting will be documented on the Occupational Therapy Advisement form, which allows the student to have written input on complaints and then suggestions on a plan of corrective action. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the meeting, they are encouraged to proceed up the chain of command (i.e., Program Instructor/Program Director, and if applicable, Dean of CTE Programs, Vice President of Forrest County Operations, then the President of PRCC) following the Grievance/Appeal procedures located at <https://prcc.edu/faculty/policy-procedure-manual/student-affairs/grievance/>

ATTENDANCE

1. Attendance in all OTA classes, laboratory sessions and clinical fieldwork rotations is mandatory. Students are required to be present each day for all lectures and laboratory sessions since professional programs such as the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program are concentrated learning experiences.

2. Should a student miss a lecture or laboratory session of an OTA course without prior approval, a notification (phone call or text) should be sent to the instructor of the course to minimize point deductions from the Professionalism Score within the course.
3. Understand PRCC's policy on attendance which affirms that ***students missing a class more than twice the number of times it meets in a week during a semester may be dismissed from that class due to excessive absences.***
4. If a test or quiz is given on the day a student misses class, they will be allowed to make up the test if the student provides proof the absence was **excused or at the discretion of the instructor for the course in which the absence occurred.** Policies are explicitly reviewed at the start of each course and listed in each course syllabus.

Examples of excused absences include the following:

- a. Illness or pregnancy-signed physician statement.
- b. Accidents, illnesses, or surgeries with hospital admission.
- c. Death of immediate family member – spouse, children, parents, stepparents, stepchildren, brother, sister, or grandchild. Three days of bereavement may be taken in such unfortunate circumstances. A one-day leave may be granted on death of an in-law or grandparent. Documentation such as an obituary notice will need to be submitted.
- d. Military leave-Military personnel, if called to active duty of the Armed Services, will be allowed to return to the OTA Program upon return from duty if in good standing when called to active duty.
- e. Pregnancy may also be cause for temporary withdrawal from the program, due to liability factors at clinical sites, use of various modalities in OTA classes, as well as the demands physically in carrying out the duties of an OTA. For safety reasons of the fetus and mother, written verification from the attending physician stating the student's ability to safely continue the program is required. This statement should be submitted to the Program Director no later than the third month of pregnancy.

Please note that the instructor of each course has discretion to excuse other absences not explicitly stated above. However, the student should note that the policy of the OTA Program is to only excuse absences that rise to the level of those listed above. Other absences will impact the student's professionalism grade in the course(s) missed. The student will have a much greater likelihood of having an absence excused if **advanced written notice is given.*

5. All make-up exams will be administered at the discretion of the course instructor regarding date/time and format. It is the responsibility of each student to schedule such make-up exams, assignments, etc.
6. The scheduling of make-up lab check-off exams will be determined by the instructor and is the responsibility of the student to initiate the scheduling process.
7. A student leaving class prior to being officially dismissed by the instructor, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, may be considered absent.
8. Attendance rules regarding Level I and Level II Fieldwork are stated in the course syllabi and fieldwork manuals. An Absentee Communication Form **MUST** be completed and submitted to the instructor at the **next session** following the absence any time there is a fieldwork absence. Clinical experiences, in many cases, cannot be made up and have a heavy impact on the student's grade.

NOTE: Summer classes are 8 weeks in length in the OTA program. PRCC views them as two contiguous classes. Due to the semester being half the length of fall and spring semesters (which are normally 16 weeks in length), students will be in lectures, labs, etc. for double the time in a summer semester week (i.e.- longer class days).

Tardies

1. Three times late constitutes one absence and a student is considered late after the instructor has initiated the class at the designated start time.
2. A student may be considered absent if arrival to class is fifteen (15) minutes after class was scheduled to begin unless otherwise approved by the instructor.
3. Being late >5 minutes will impact your professionalism score in the class.

Community Service Requirement

Involvement in community service is a necessary component of the OTA Program and is a requirement during each semester. Instructors will facilitate such assignments, but it is ultimately the student's responsibility to obtain, schedule and organize their time to attend and participate in such endeavors. The instructor reserves the right to use observation and student reporting to determine the student's quality and quantity of involvement in the above projects.

Fieldtrips

As well as being involved in community service, there will be fieldtrips scheduled over the course of the OTA Program. Some of them will be in the summer semester while others

will be scheduled during the other spring and fall semesters. Please know that you will be given the information concerning the fieldtrip date and time prior to the trip and that there may be a minimal out of pocket expenses for travel or food involved. Attendance is mandatory as these are learning experiences that cannot be made up at a later date.

HEALTH AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Pearl River Community College is interested in not only each student's health when they are initially enrolled, but also in their continued good health.

By the beginning of the first semester in the OTA program, each student must complete a student health form (i.e.- schedule/complete a physical exam). Copies of the health form, TB skin test results and any lab work will be securely kept in each student's file. Additional examinations and/or immunizations may be required immediately prior to fieldwork assignments in accordance with facility expectations. This may incur an additional cost to the student.

All students must provide a copy of health records which include:

- 1. Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) immunization (usually found on childhood vaccination record)**
- 2. Tuberculosis (TB) test result (annually)**
- 3. Drug screen (10 panel drug screen required) *note drug testing may be required at the beginning of each fieldwork rotation as well**
- 4. General Health Status Report (i.e.- Health Examination Report/physical)**
- 5. Record of all childhood vaccinations (e.g.- Form 121)**
- 6. COVID vaccination card (if applicable) *some fieldwork sites require this**

If unvaccinated for Hepatitis B (HBV), it is recommended that all students admitted into the program begin the HBV immunization series (at their own expense) by the start of the first day of class and provide evidence of having started the 3 shot series. The second inoculation should be one month following the initial shot. The third inoculation should be received within 5 to 7 months of the initial shot. Failure to adhere to time frames for follow-up shots may result in lack of protective immunity and will render the entire series void. Students declining HBV immunization must sign a declination form and understand that if they become infected with HBV, they may be unable to complete clinical rotations and/or may be unemployable as an OTA. Proof of HBV vaccination (or declination form in some cases) and an updated, negative TB skin test must be obtained before entry into any fieldwork experiences.

Additional random drug testing may be performed at the discretion of the Program in accordance with PRCC policy or requirements of fieldwork sites prior to fieldwork rotations. Each student must complete a Random Drug Testing Consent form at orientation. Any positive drug test will be investigated and may result in ongoing random drug testing at the expense of the student or dismissal from the OTA Program.

INFECTION CONTROL

Transmission of infection is an ever-present risk for both workers and clients in health care environments. OTA students will receive detailed training in Level I fieldwork classes and OTS I regarding use of personal protective equipment (e.g.- gloves, masks), sterilization techniques and hand washing. Students are expected to apply these procedures as a top priority when engaged in laboratory or fieldwork activities.

After instruction in safety and universal precautions, the student assumes the risk of infection due to their own actions in the clinical setting and the inherent risks involved due to the nature of the profession. Each student will be taught and expected to practice good patient contact procedures. Due to the nature of the OTA profession, each student may come in contact with potentially infectious blood or body fluids while out at fieldwork. Each student will receive training in bloodborne pathogens and instructed in the correct procedures and techniques of handling and disposing of biological hazards. Failure to adhere to correct safety procedures may result in infection/disease for the student or their co-workers. Repeated disregard for safety will result in dismissal from the OTA Program.

SAFETY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Please review basic safety procedures for various educational activities. Please be aware that added precautions will be given at time of lab practice.

Educational Activity	Safety Procedures
Infection control of objects	Wipe down any devices/implements shared among lab mates in between uses with antiseptic or alcohol wipe. (e.g.- blood pressure cuffs, pulse oximeters)
Use of Ultrasound	Do not place US over eyes, heart or throat. Keep US sound head moving during treatment. Observe safe parameters for intensity.
Use of Electrical Stimulation	Do not place electrodes near heart or head.
Use of TENS unit	Do not place electrodes near heart or head.
Use of Hot packs	Be sure to have appropriate number of layers (at least 6) in between skin and hot pack (covers and/or towels).
Use of hydrocollator	If retrieving hot packs always use tongs. (Do not try to retrieve packs with your fingers)
Use of cold pack/ice massage	Do not maintain contact with ice on skin for > 1 min after partner reports skin feels numb.
Use of laser unit	Use eye protection. Do not look at laser. Observe safe parameters for intensity.
Use of fluidotherapy	Be sure to secure sleeves of unit. Dust on floor can create a slipping hazard.
Use of weights, pulley system	Keep fingers away from weights

	Use good body mechanics
Splint Making	Use spatula to retrieve splint material from splinting pan. Use extra care with heat gun; do not point gun at skin. Use cooling techniques before placing hot splint material on partner. Do not spray cold spray into partners face. Remove splint from partner before attempting cutting modifications.
Lifting and other Body Mechanics activities	Use leg muscles rather than back and arm muscles. Keep center of gravity over base of support.
Wheelchair activities	Be aware of others in your environment to prevent collisions. Be aware that inclines can be difficult to manage.
Practice of transfers	Always use good body mechanics (e.g.- weight shifting techniques). Lift with legs not your back. Do not attempt to lift more than your perceived limit. Use gait belts unless otherwise instructed. Be sure wheelchairs are locked!

Evacuation of OT Program Area:

In the event OTA must evacuate from the OT program area, please see the evacuation route posted next to the doorway in OTA Program areas (i.e.- rooms 239, 245 and 230). You will proceed down the nearest stairwell and out of the side door at bottom of the stairwell.

Specific events that may affect the evacuation procedure:

Active Shooter

Your instructor(s) will review specific active shooter protocol for the Program based on classroom location of potential incident. It is highly recommended to follow stated protocol as deviation from such could result in injury or death. If circumstances are such that require you to “escape the area”, do so at your own risk and discretion and flee to the safest place you perceive. Look for directions from PRCC Campus Police, PRCC employees and other first responders when you exit the building. If there is no one to guide you, seek what you perceive to be the safest location where you can be hidden from threats.

Bomb threat

If possible, pull the fire alarm and proceed quickly from building. The OTA Program will meet together at the grass area between the Allied Health Building and Building #7- past the far NE corner of the back-parking lot. OTA students/faculty must stay together so we can count and be accounted for in this emergency situation. Campus police and instructors may direct the group from there if necessary. **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY.**

Fire

If possible, pull the fire alarm and proceed quickly from building. The OTA program will meet together at the grass area between the Allied Health Building and Building #7- past the far NE corner of the back-parking lot. If you are unable to descend the stairs in the stairwell nearest to the OTA Program (due to smoke or flames), attempt to exit in either the middle or far stairwells. OTA students/faculty must stay together so we can count and be accounted for in this emergency situation. Campus police and instructors may direct the group from there if necessary. **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY.**

BACKGROUND CHECKS

In accordance with fieldwork site agreements, students are required to submit to a criminal background check in which the Program financially covers via “Student Fees” at the start of the Program. This will be scheduled and performed on-site at PRCC. Some fieldwork sites require additional, more in-depth background checks, to be performed at the student’s expense or in some cases, covered by the site.

CRIMINAL RECORDS

It is expected that all students accepted into the Allied Health Programs at Pearl River Community College will:

1. Be aware that students requiring separate certification, licensure, or registration exams may not be permitted to sit for those exams, regardless of the student’s ability to complete college educational requirements, if that student has been convicted of a felony, is or was involved in drug abuse or has violated other rules of the licensure body.
2. Not incur a felonious conviction during Program enrollment, thus jeopardizing one’s ability to become certified or licensed. The student is required to notify the Vice-President of Forrest County Operations of any criminal conviction while in the OTA Program.
3. Not use illegal substances as PRCC prohibits unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on PRCC property or as any part of its activities. The College reserves the right to refer students to a physician of the College’s choice in the event of a suspected violation of this provision.

STUDENT LABORATORY

It is our philosophy that doing is a vital aspect of learning. Performance in labs prepares the

student for performance in fieldwork. The more practiced and confident the student is when they leave campus, the greater likelihood of proficiency during clinical fieldwork rotations. The OTA student should recognize the value of individual instruction and demonstrate the ability to receive and accept feedback (i.e.- constructive criticism). Students should also learn to give feedback in a constructive manner as this is a detrimental part of the supervisory process. Course instructors have the right to schedule additional lab sessions, if needed, to ensure student competency.

Safety procedures while engaging in lab activities are listed in this manual, are posted in Lab Room 245 and/or are reviewed by the instructor in preparation for each activity. Per state law, students must be supervised at all times when engaged in lab activities. If supervision is unavailable, students must reschedule lab work for another time when supervision will be available.

USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

In some OTA courses, equipment and tools will be utilized that can be dangerous if used inappropriately. Examples of such equipment include, but are not limited to: electrical stimulation devices, paraffin, the ultrasound unit, moist heat, tools and chemicals for therapeutic media class, therapy balls and splinting equipment. In each case, safety instructions will be provided prior to educational use of equipment, tools, devices or substances. It is imperative that all students pay close attention to these instructions and refrain from using implements which are not well-understood.

Policy: Safety shall be the number one priority for staff and students in all educational and lab activities.

Safety in Educational/Lab Activities Procedures:

Safety is the number one priority in all educational activities. The following procedures are required to maximize safety and prevent accidents or other health impacting events:

- 1.** Students may use classrooms for practice of clinical skills or lab activities only with OTA faculty present. If faculty are not present, even if activity seems safe, do not engage in clinical skills or lab activities.
- 2.** The instructor will educate students on safety procedures for individual clinical and lab procedures. Faculty shall be responsible for demonstrating proper use of any hazardous materials and appropriate use of department equipment. Students must pay close attention to instructions and be mindful to adhere to safety precautions.
- 3.** No equipment or supplies may be removed from the Program area without faculty approval. With faculty permission, you may sign out selected equipment and supplies. All equipment and supplies that are removed from the classroom should be returned the next class day unless another agreement has been made with a faculty member.

4. Students will be instructed on appropriate infection control procedures during Fieldwork, OT Skills 1 and Foundations courses, begin in semester one.
5. Emergency and evacuation procedures will be conspicuously posted in each classroom area.
6. Students will contribute to maintaining the classroom so that it is a safe environment.
7. Students assume responsibility for following instructions during an emergency.
8. Students should notify safety personnel immediately after any injury. They should then contact their instructor and/or the chair of the department.
9. The lab safety book with emergency procedures, safety policies, and Material Safety Data Sheets is located in the centralized lab area on the main windowsill area.
10. Standard precautions as defined by Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) shall be followed at all times.
11. First aid kits are available in the main lab area (room 245) and main classroom (room 239) areas.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Support Services (SSS) at Pearl River Community College is one of the TRIO Programs (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html>) funded by the US Department of Education. SSS is currently available at PRCC Poplarville Campus for all students enrolled in PRCC who meet eligibility criteria. It has been in existence since 1990. 2024-2026 Pearl River Community College Catalog 55

The program is designed to provide academic support services to improve academic performance and increase retention and graduation rates of PRCC students. SSS provides opportunities for participation of eligible students in study skills development, tutoring, educational planning, educational counseling or advising, personal counseling, financial aid resource advising and assistance in completing applications (FASFA, scholarships), career; major exploration and guidance, test preparation, transfer assistance, cultural; social enrichment activities, resource assistance and advocacy for students with disabilities. SSS serves to motivate and support students as they make the transition from one level of education to the next while working toward the successful completion of their post-secondary education. A student must be a US Citizen or permanent resident and should qualify under one or more of the following categories:

- be a first-generation college student (neither parent has a four-year college degree)
- be low-income (according to guidelines established by the US Department of Education)
- have a documented disability (physical, learning, etc.)

To apply for services, please contact the Student Support Services Office at (601) 403 - 1266 or (601) 403 - 1285. Jefferson Davis Hall, Room #109 and; or (601) 403-1265. For more information* regarding Student Support Services, please visit the PRCC website at <https://prcc.edu/academics/services-resources/office-of-student-support-services/>.

*At the start of each OTA course, the instructor will review the syllabus for the course in which this information is published, reviewed and discussed. Afterwards, a “Syllabus Statement of Understanding” form is signed on the first day of each class. A link to Student Support Services is also published on the syllabus home page in Canvas.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The college seeks to preserve and promote the physical and mental well-being of its students. A registered nurse is employed full time by the college during the regular school year. A modern health clinic is located in Crosby Hall on the main Poplarville campus. In cases of serious illness, an effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian, but in cases of emergency, action will be taken on the advice of the attending physician, with the understanding that the cost of the special services and medicines will be incurred by the student or person responsible for the student expenses. Special medicines, x-rays, and medical services, other than those rendered by the school nurse, are not provided at college expense. PRCC also has a Mental Health Services app on Riverguide for each student to use when needed and the link is listed below:

<https://dynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com/Submit/Page?form=85f9acf3-bcd6-47c9-baa1-1654b51cf74e§ion=730048&page=565011&token=KZjLrI7hVPI23hEcNU4SII0tkSB4M97XB08ne4RNleU>

PRCC’s Mental Health Services form should be completed to discuss your needs with our Mental Health Services Coordinator, who can help connect you with appropriate services. PRCC does not offer appointments with certified mental or physical health specialists. This request is not intended to provide mental health diagnosis or treatment. Students should seek immediate advice from a physician, psychologist, or psychotherapist if there are physical, medical or disability questions or concerns.

EXPLANATION OF FEES

Students will be required to set up a Tuition Payment Plan at the time of registration/validation. A payment plan may be set up at: www.MyCollegePaymentPlan.com/pearlriver. Failure to complete your payments by the final examination date will result in your inability to access your grade report.

Financial assistance programs are designed to assist students who are seeking a certificate or degree from the institution they are attending in meeting the costs of their education. Pearl River Community College offers a variety of programs from federal, state, institutional, and private sources. It is important that students understand the policies regarding the assistance awarded to

them and that they are award of the financial aid and academic requirements for retaining eligibility for their aid. Financial aid professionals are available to assist students who have questions or who need additional information during regular office hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 4:00 pm. The telephone number for the Office of Financial Aid at the main campus in Poplarville is 601-403-1029. The Forrest County Center Financial Aid can be reached at 601-554-5502, and the Hancock Center Financial Aid Department can be reached at 228-467-2761 or at 228-467-2762.

The “**Free Application for Federal Student Aid**” or **FAFSA**, should be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The school code for PRCC is **002430** and should be included on your FAFSA so that PRCC can access your information. Students need to allow 7-10 business days for delivery of their electronic Student Aid Report, or SAR, to the Office of Financial Aid at PRCC from the U.S. Department of Education following submission of the FAFSA. This report is required for determination of eligibility for all federal aid programs, including grants, work-study, and student loans. Financial aid is awarded on an academic year basis (August to August), and students must reapply for federal, state, and institutional, if applicable, financial aid each year.

Current Cost	OTA Program 2024 (Year 1)	OTA Program 2025 (Year 2)	Total Cost of Program (2-yr program 2024- 2025)*
Tuition	5250.00	3500.00	8750.00
Program Fees	3300.00	2200.00	5500.00
Books & Supplies	1700.00	1000.00**	2700.00
Loan Fees	0	0	0
Distance Education Fees	0	0	0
Total Cost of Tuition	10250.00	6700.00	16950.00

*Fees are subject to change.

**** Cost of year two may vary due to Level II fieldwork site location in which extra costs for travel/commuting can be incurred.**

According to FASFA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), cost of attendance is defined as total amount of attending the program, which includes tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, loan fees as well as fees associated with distance education.

REFUNDS AND WITHDRAWALS

Information regarding PRCC’s policy on withdrawals from class(es) and refunds can be found at [https://prcc.edu/about/student-consumer-information-guide/refund-policy-and withdrawal](https://prcc.edu/about/student-consumer-information-guide/refund-policy-and-withdrawal). Students may be eligible for a partial refund of tuition and room and board of PRCC dormitory housing up until the 4th week of the semester in spring and fall and up until the 2nd week of summer semester. A Withdrawal Form must be completed and submitted before a student can be considered officially withdrawn. Information concerning the details of withdrawal procedures can be found in the link above, the College Catalog or by contacting the Office of Student Success (Crosby Hall, Poplarville Campus) at (601) 403-1250. Please note that federal student aid recipients who begin attending classes during a semester and who cease attending or performing academic activities prior to the end of the semester and never complete a Withdrawal Form are considered by the federal government to be an “Unofficial Withdrawal”. They may also be considered an Unofficial Withdrawal when he/she fails to earn a passing grade in at least one course during the semester. In the case of a student earning no passing grades (e.g., all “F” grades or a mixture of “F”/“W” grades), the Office of Financial Aid must assume the student is an unofficial withdrawal unless the student/instructor can document attendance and academic activity. If you intend to withdraw, please make your intentions known by following the correct procedures as there are negative consequences to this that could affect your ability to obtain future financial aid.

OTA Course Sequence

Curriculum for Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Associate in Applied Science

Prerequisites: **BIO 1514/1524 or 2514/2524** – Anatomy and Physiology I & II or Principles of A & P I & II; this prerequisite will count for the required Math Science academic elective. It is preferred that students have these courses taken PRIOR to entering the OTA Program. Proof of enrollment in these courses will suffice if the student is unable to complete them prior to program start date. In addition, Pearl River Community College also requires **core academic courses** (see course descriptions in bold below) to be completed before a student of the OTA Program will be eligible to graduate.

FRESHMAN YEAR		Semester Hours	Course Type
Fall Semester - 1st Semester			
OTA 1113	Foundations of Occupational Therapy	3	Intake

OTA 1213	Pathology of Psychiatric Conditions	3	Intake
OTA 1121	Medical Terminology	1	Intake
OTA 1132	Therapeutic Anatomy	2	Intake
OTA 1223	Pathology of Physical Disability Conditions.	3	Intake
OTA 1513	Group Process	3	Manipulative
<academic>** Social/Behavioral Elective <i>(if not taken already)</i>		3	

Spring Semester - 2nd Semester

OTA 1315	Kinesiology	5	Intake
OTA 1413	Therapeutic Media	3	Manipulative
OTA 1423	Occupational Therapy Skills I	3	Manipulative
OTA 1234	Pathology of Developmental Conditions	4	Intake
<academic>** Oral Communications Elective <i>(if not taken already)</i>		3	

Summer Semester - 3rd Semester

OTA 1913	Level I Fieldwork: Psychosocial/Specialty	3	Manipulative
OTA 1433	Occupational Therapy Skills II	3	Manipulative
OTA 1243	Pathology of Orthopedic Conditions	3	Intake
OTA 2813	Healthcare systems	3	Intake
<academic>** Written Communications Elective <i>(if not taken already)</i>		3	

SOPHOMORE YEAR

Fall Semester - 4th Semester

OTA 2443	Occupational Therapy Skills III	3	Manipulative
OTA 2714	Concepts in Occupational Therapy	4	Manipulative
OTA 2935	Level I Fieldwork: Physical Disabilities/ Pediatrics/Specialty	5	Application
OTA 2961	Occupational Therapy Transitions I	1	Intake
<academic>** Fine Arts/Humanities Elective <i>(if not taken already)</i>		3	

Spring Semester - 2nd Semester

OTA 2946	Level II Fieldwork A	6 (8wks)	Application
OTA 2956	Level II Fieldwork B	6 (8wks)	Application
OTA 2971	Occupational Therapy Transitions II	1	

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS: Prerequisites (8) + other academics (12) + OTA courses (68) = 88

**** It is strongly recommended, but not required, that the student take some of the elective courses prior to entering the program in order to lessen the course load while in the program.**

OTA Program Statistics

The total number of graduates from Pearl River Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant program during the 3-year period 2022-2024 was 52, with an overall graduation rate of 93%.

Graduation Year	Students Entering	Students who withdrew for reasons other than academic performance	Students Graduating	*Graduation Rate
2023	20	0	19	95%
2024	20	2	15	85%
2025	20	0	17	85%
Total	60	2	51	88%

*Graduation rate does not include students who withdrew for reasons other than academic performance.

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®) program data results:
<https://www.nbcot.org/Educators-Folder/SchoolPerformance>

STUDENT ADVISEMENT

OTA faculty have an open-door policy year around but are available specifically for advisement per posted schedules listing “Advisement Hour” on the front of their office doors. Appointments can be made for in-person meetings or Webex conferencing if necessary. Each student may schedule a meeting as needed, with the purpose of such meetings aimed at addressing conduct and responsibilities for entering the profession of occupational therapy, student progress and educational goals in addition to fieldwork expectations. As a part of the advisory process, faculty members will ensure that each of those topics are covered through documented in-class discussions, in addition to scheduled 1-on-1 meetings with each student at certain points during the curricular sequence. Faculty will also ensure that each student receives the unique PIN number they need in order to register for each semester once registration for subsequent semesters officially opens.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Please note that it will be the responsibility of the student each semester to register themselves for their classes. The OTA Faculty and the OTA Administrative Assistant can assist first-time freshmen students register if needed. However, beginning in second semester (**Freshmen Spring**), and the remaining three (3) semesters up until graduation/course completion, it will be the student's responsibility to register themselves in their classes and ensure they are registered in each OTA class required for that semester and if applicable, any academic course that is required for Program graduation. The student should make sure that the academic portion of their course requirements are met on schedule. Should you encounter any problems with your self-registration, you may contact your OTA instructor for assistance during the Advisement Hour listed on the schedule. If further assistance is needed, you may contact email fccadvisement@prcc.edu or call 601-554-5500.

Required Information for Registration

*Use the following as a guide for registration as you will need the **Class Number**, the **Class Name** and the **CRN Number** associated with the class to complete your registration each semester. This information is important for you to keep, so you will be able to access it when you register for your next semester. You must have the **CRN #** (class registration number) in order to obtain your class schedule. You may register for your classes online using the information listed below for each semester. If you need assistance, please see your instructor/advisor for any questions or concerns you may have.*

OTA Program Registration Schedule for Associate in Applied Science Forrest County Center

Fall Semester - Freshmen Yr.

<u>Class #</u>	<u>CRN #</u>	<u>Class Name</u>
OTA – 1113	11527	Foundations of OT
OTA – 1213	12595	Path of Psychiatric Cond.
OTA – 1121	12620	Medical Terminology
OTA – 1132	12619	Therapeutic Anatomy
OTA – 1513	18204	Group Process
OTA – 1223	15857	Path of Physical Disability Cond.

OTA Semester Hours (with elective) = 15

Spring Semester - Freshman Year

<u>Class #</u>	<u>CRN #</u>	<u>Class Name</u>
OTA – 1315	23072	Kinesiology
OTA – 1413	21658	Therapeutic Media
OTA – 1423	26857	OT Skills I
OTA – 1234	25368	Path of Developmental Conditions

OTA Semester Hours = 15

Summer Session- Freshman Year

<u>Class #</u>	<u>CRN #</u>	<u>Class Name</u>
OTA – 1913	33337	Fieldwork I: Psychos/Spec
OTA – 1243	33338	Path of Orthopedic Conditions
OTA - 2813	33339	Healthcare Systems
OTA – 1433	33340	OT Skills II

OTA Semester Hours = 12

Fall Semester - Sophomore Year

<u>Class #</u>	<u>CRN #</u>	<u>Class Name</u>
OTA – 2443	11789	Occupational Therapy Skills III
OTA – 2714	13355	Concepts in Occupational Therapy
OTA – 2935	11253	Fieldwork IB
OTA – 2961	11733	OT Transitions I

OTA Semester Hours = 13

Spring Semester - Sophomore Year

<u>Class #</u>	<u>CRN #</u>	<u>Class Name</u>
OTA 2946	21027	Level II Fieldwork A – (8 Week Fieldwork Rotation)
OTA 2956	21179	Level II Fieldwork B - (8 Week Fieldwork Rotation)
OTA 2971	26328	Occupational Therapy Transitions II

OTA Semester Hours = 13

*After successful completion of your OTA coursework, academics and your Fieldwork study you are now ready to apply for graduation. You may apply for graduation online at: www.prcc.edu click on the Academics page. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and you will see in the middle section in gray, Career/Technical. Click on the link to Apply for Graduation. Follow the steps on the page then click on the Apply for Graduation link at the top of the page and fill out the form. **Please note that for State scholarships and some other forms of financial aid you may need to add semester hours to meet those requirements.***

