

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Assistant

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

With increasing numbers of aging people requiring assistance, along with those recovering from surgery, health and chronic conditions, the need has never been greater for occupational therapists, physiotherapists and their assistants. Eastern College offers a diploma program to educate the paraprofessionals who will work under the supervision of Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists in the implementation of treatment programs. The program involves extensive theoretical education combined with practicum training with potential employers in hospitals, health units and private clinics. Students in this program will follow curriculum guided both by the currently identified functions, tasks, abilities and attitudes for entry-level, formally trained support personnel as defined by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists as well as by the competencies defined by the Canadian Physiotherapy Association for “Group One” physiotherapist support personnel.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

This program is designed to prepare students to enter the health care industry working in various settings as an occupational therapy assistant, a physiotherapy assistant or to perform elements of both roles under the supervision of a licensed Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, or both. Graduates may work in acute care, long term care or community care venues in either public or private settings.

PREREQUISITES

- Grade 12 or equivalent or mature student status
- Demonstrate fluency in English (oral and written)
- Clear Code of Conduct

PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Completion of a standardized health form and immunizations must be completed prior to placement.

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must obtain an overall grade, in each module of at least 70% in order to graduate and receive a diploma. A student must complete all requirements of Student Success Strategies as well as the field placement requirements.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours
Student Success Strategies	20
Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals	40
Enhanced First Aid with Level C CPR	20
Anatomy and Physiology	80
Expository Writing	40
Current Social Issues	40
Introduction to Health Care and Rehabilitation	60
Introduction to Psychology and Mental Health	80
Introduction to Biomechanics and Applied Kinesiology	80
Human Development and Growth and Development	80
Rehabilitation Processes	80
Human Disorders and (Dis)Abilities	60
Anatomy and Physiology Comprehensive Review	20
Mental Health and Psychology Comprehensive Review	20
PTA Therapeutic Processes I	100
PTA Therapeutic Processes II	80
OTA Therapeutic Processes I	80
OTA Therapeutic Processes II	80
Professional Skills for the Health Care Student	80
Career Planning and Preparation Level I	20
Career Planning and Preparation Level II	20
Professional Integration for the OTA/PTA ¹	
Field Placements	18 weeks

TOTAL WEEKS **77**

¹Runs concurrently with Field Placements

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Student Success Strategies

In this orientation module, emphasis is placed on thinking about achieving success from Day One. This module stresses the importance of developing non-technical skills to enhance personal, academic, and career success. This includes understanding learning styles and honing practical study skills, such as memory, reading, note-and test-taking techniques. Personal exercises will focus on teamwork, decision making and problem solving skills, setting SMART goals and maintaining a positive attitude; techniques for managing change, stress and conflict will also be explored.

Enhanced First Aid with Level C CPR

This module introduces participants to intermediate first aid techniques and to Level C cardiopulmonary resuscitation. This training is ideal for medical workers and anyone requiring a strong foundation for future First Aid training.

Anatomy and Physiology

Students will be introduced to the major aspects of the structure and function of the human body, with emphasis placed on the components that form the basis of the field of exercise physiology. Students will learn anatomical terminology and the structure and function of the skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular, and nervous and digestive systems.

Expository Writing

Expository writing and speech surround us in our everyday lives. At work, people are required to produce reports and memorandums to inform their superiors and co-workers. This course will help build the oral and written expository skills needed for workplace success. Activities include reading assignments, class discussions, lectures on essay-writing technique, writing assignments and group work.

Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals

Through a combination of theory and hands-on-practice, this module examines the role and use of the computer in today's workplace. Emphasis is placed on those computers outfitted with the Microsoft Windows operating system. Students will review basic computer concepts, Windows OS usage, and complete hands-on training exercises in business-standard software applications, including Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Word. Keyboarding skills are also honed via daily keyboarding exercises and drills.

Current Social Issues

Issues such as population growth, forms of the family, organized religion, censorship and the status of women are treated from a sociological perspective. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing students' critical thinking and writing skills.

Introduction to Health Care and Rehabilitation

This course examines health care in Canada from its roots through to modern day, including the development of universal health care. The rehabilitation fields are discussed in detail with emphasis on the rehabilitation philosophy and the different roles of the occupational and physical professions. Students will develop an understanding of and begin to build the skills required in the role of a Therapist Assistant. Integral to this course is an introduction to institutional policies and procedures, universal precautions and documentation.

Introduction to Psychology and Mental Health

This course is designed to introduce the student to the scientific study of behaviours, mental processes and mental health. It will provide students an understanding of different types of psychology, different applications of psychology, and the role psychology plays in understanding the interplay between psychological conditions and human behaviour. Topics

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include sensation and perception, learning and memory, neurological aspects, intelligence, moral development, mental processes, language development and psychological disorders and therapies.

Introduction to Biomechanics and Applied Kinesiology

Students will obtain a basic understanding of human movement and biomechanics, including the physical laws affecting motion, human motion terminology and the human gait, issues of balance and alignment, posture and muscle imbalance, muscles and movements of the pelvis and lower extremities, upper body muscles, muscles acting at the hip and at the knee/ankle. The concepts of applied kinesiology are also discussed.

Human Development and Growth and Development

Human Development will examine relevant aspects of development across the life span with a view to identifying those factors in human development which affect and have an impact on our understanding of the entire human being and their motivations. This module also provides a study of the sequential changes in physical growth and motor development with emphasis on individual differences. Learning about growth and development provides a framework for understanding normal “landscape” that can guide interaction with clients in clinical situations.

Rehabilitation Processes

This module continues the introduction to client care practices and processes in rehabilitation. Topics addressed include means of monitoring client health, ethical concerns in rehabilitation, awareness of the effects of disability and helping relationships. Further, students will gain knowledge and practice in fundamental interventions such as body mechanics, positioning, client instruction, managing challenging behaviors and group work. In addition, the role of group work in rehabilitation, including common purposes for groups and planning and implementing group work is discussed and practiced. Administrative and data measurement activities required of the assistant will also be covered.

Human Disorders and (Dis)Abilities

This course introduces the student to a number of mental, physical, and developmental disorders frequently experienced by clients served by rehabilitation personnel. Topics include essential terms, etiology, signs and symptoms, medical/rehabilitation goals and interventions, as well as primary and long-term effects of the disorder/disability. Also discussed is how the interaction between the client, occupation and the environment can retain or alter the client's capacity to participate in society.

Anatomy and Physiology Comprehensive Review

In this brief module students will review the major structures and functions of the human body with emphasis on the musculo-skeletal, neurological and cardio-respiratory systems. Students will be actively involved as instructors of this material, utilizing skills obtained in other core modules.

Mental Health and Psychology Comprehensive Review

This module allows students the opportunity to refresh their knowledge of common mental health disorders and their impact on the individual and society. As with the Anatomy/Physiology Comprehensive Review, the students will develop their preparation, organizational and presentation skills as they step into the role of the instructor.

PTA Therapeutic Processes I

This combined lecture/lab module introduces the use of therapeutic exercise in physiotherapy. Students will gain an understanding of the purposes, benefits, and safe and correct implementation of therapeutic exercise. Different environments utilized for activities are addressed. This course will assist PTA students to gain knowledge of and practice in performing fundamental interventions used by therapist assistants working with clients in rehabilitation settings. Topics

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include bed mobility, lifting, transferring, use of ambulation devices and wheelchairs, range of motion and an introduction to a variety of modalities in client treatment.

PTA Therapeutic Processes II

This combined lecture/lab module is delivered in two sections. Section A provides an overview of the knowledge and skills that physiotherapist assistants need to work with clients who have pulmonary problems. Topics include the fundamentals of assisting in postural drainage, deep breathing and coughing, and other interventions. Section B offers an introduction to electrotherapy modalities used in physiotherapy. Topics include a general introduction to the principles of electrotherapy and the identification and participation in the safe operation of these modalities as used by physiotherapist assistants.

OTA Therapeutic Processes I

This combined lecture/lab module introduces the student to advanced therapeutic knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with working as an occupational therapist assistant. Students gain an understanding of the relationship among sensory motor, cognitive, and psycho-social skill deficits and the performance of self-care and productivity (home management and vocational) activities. Therapeutic activities used to assist people with these deficits are learned and practiced.

OTA Therapeutic Processes II

In this combined lecture/lab module, students are introduced to the techniques involved in the use of high and low tech assistive devices, wheelchairs, computers, splinting procedures, joint protection, energy conservation and work simplification procedures as well as the techniques, equipment and supplies needed to use play and leisure activities in the occupational therapy treatment process. The module also details how these devices and techniques are implemented with clients served in occupational therapy.

Professional Skills for the Health Care Student

This module is designed to equip students with the skills necessary for success in today's health care environment. Topics covered include: which jobs require professionalism, definitions and key elements of professionalism, why professionalism is important to all involved in the health care environment, making a commitment to the job, how to contribute to the specialized workplace, working with others, and ensuring success in the field placement and career.

Career Planning and Preparation Level I

This module introduces tools for planning and preparing for a successful job search, so that students can maintain a career-focused approach throughout their education program. Students will learn about the "Hidden" Job Market and ways to access it in their upcoming job search, how to research opportunities and network for industry contacts, and use appropriate etiquette when communicating with prospective employers. Students will identify their personal skills, values and preferences for the workplace, begin preparation of a professional resume and references, and organize proof documents for their career portfolio. Class discussions on various self-management topics introduced in Student Success Strategies will round out this module, which is a pre-requisite for Career Planning and Preparation - Level II.

Professional Integration for the OTA/PTA

This module is designed to be integrative where the activities will allow students the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge using their fieldwork experience. It will involve journal-style reporting, the exchange of experiences with other OTA and PTA students, and other assigned projects aimed at promoting the professions.

Career Planning and Preparation Level II

This module continues to build on the concepts and skills introduced in Career Planning and Preparation - Level I. Students will learn how to conduct an effective job search and identify various methods of applying for work with today's

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technology. Students will create a personal list of "Top Employers" and target current industry opportunities, while finalizing their professional resume, portfolio and career correspondence. Students will learn to identify the different types and forms of interviews, practice responding to typical questions, and practice follow-up, evaluation and negotiation techniques they can use to ensure success. Self-management topics from Career Planning and Preparation - Level I will be reviewed, with a focus towards on-the-job success in both learner placements and post-graduate employment.

Field Placements

In this combined program of study, efforts will be made to evenly divide Field Placements between the two disciplines. The Placements will be scheduled to ensure each student obtains a minimum of 30% experience in occupational therapy and physiotherapy. Students are expected to attend each placement a minimum of 35 hours per week. Note: A clear Vulnerable Sector Search is required prior to the start of the fieldwork placement. This will also be required to work in hospitals and government subsidized healthcare organizations such as long-term care facilities.