

# Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy Assistant



*The Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Assistant Program at Eastern College - Halifax Campus has been accredited by the Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) in collaboration with Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC) and the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). The status of Accreditation was granted to the program on April 30, 2014 for the period until April 30, 2020.*

## OUR MISSION

*We pledge*

To offer a program of study that prepares the student for ethical practice and rigorous employment standards to meet workforce demand in the field of Occupational or Physiotherapy according to the National Guidelines of practice set forth by the CPA and CAOT.

To develop partnerships with agencies, businesses and associations in the healthcare industry to facilitate clinical training, lifelong learning and social responsibility of faculty and students.

To participate in ongoing assessment of program outcomes, faculty effectiveness, student satisfaction and industry feedback to initiate improvement and strive for our goal of excellence in Occupational Therapy education.

To provide our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become gainfully employed as OTA/PTAs who effectively function under the supervision of a licensed therapist, and who are responsible, productive members of the health care community and society at large.

To instill value for life-long learning and contemporary practice to maintain expertise within the OT and PT professions.

To provide a positive, non-discriminatory and supportive learning environment.

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To support the faculty's commitment to being effective, ethical and caring educators and to further develop their expertise.

## 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 with a Grade 12 level Science course (Biology, Chemistry or Physics)
- Current Criminal Record Check (Clear Conduct Certificate)
- Vulnerable Sector Search
- Complete a standardized health form, proof of immunization (and chest x-ray as required)

## PREREQUISITES (continued)

- Exposure to the PT and OT field through one of the following:
  1. Documented volunteer work
  2. Documented job shadowing
  3. Written or recorded interviews with both an OT and a PT
  4. A research paper outlining an understanding of both professions and reasons for choosing the OTA/PTA career
  5. Documented personal experience as a client with an OT and PT
  6. Documentation of attending sessions with an immediate family member undergoing OT and PT treatment
- Ability to participate in lab activities scheduled outside of normal class hours

Clear Conduct Certificates: Students acquiring a Clear Conduct Certificate for admission into a program take on the reasonableness of its validity. Students are solely accountable for any offences not uncovered by the investigation being discovered and precluding the student from subsequent field placement or employment.

Out of Town Field Placements: You may be required to go out of town for your field placement. You may incur additional costs associated with these field placements (i.e. travel, accommodations, etc.). At this time, field placements occur only in Canada.

Please note: Eastern College reserves the right to deny admission into this program based on an unparoled criminal record that would bear relevance to the field placement requirements of the program. In addition, employers will be given a copy of the student's Clear Conduct Certificate on file prior to accepting students into the field placement situation.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must obtain an overall grade, in each module of at least 70% in order to graduate and receive a

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diploma. A student must complete all requirements of the Student Success Strategies, Career Planning and Preparation modules, the Field Placement requirements, as well as meeting the attendance requirements as outlined by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education throughout the duration of his/her program.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours
Student Success Strategies	20
Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals	40
St. John Ambulance Enhanced First Aid w/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 & Physiology Comprehensive Review	20
Mental Health & 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 I	20
Career Planning and Preparation II	20
Professional Integration for the OTA/PTA <sup>1</sup>	
Field Placements**	18 weeks
Study Breaks*	3 Weeks

**TOTAL WEEKS 80**

<sup>1</sup> Runs concurrently with Field Placement

\*number of breaks weeks depends on student start date

\*\*Work terms/internships are scheduled for a minimum of 20 hours per week, but the total number of hours worked and the timing of hours scheduled are at the discretion of the employer/host to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### **Student Success Strategies**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

### **Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals**

*Instructor Facilitated*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

### **St. John Ambulance Enhanced First Aid with Level C CPR**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students may be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to showing a demonstrative understanding of the material delivered.

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

### **Expository Writing**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

### **Current Social Issues**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **Introduction to Health Care and Rehabilitation**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

## **Introduction to Psychology and Mental Health**

*Instructor Led*

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 include sensation and perception, learning and memory, neurological aspects, intelligence, moral development, mental processes, language development and psychological disorders and therapies. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

## **Introduction to Biomechanics and Applied Kinesiology**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, practical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

## **Human Development and Growth and Development**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

## **Rehabilitation Processes**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

## **Human Disorders and (Dis)Abilities**

*Instructor Led*

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

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capacity to participate in society. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **Anatomy and Physiology Comprehensive Review**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, practical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **Mental Health and Psychology Comprehensive Review**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, and presentations in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **PTA Therapeutic Processes I**

*Instructor Led*

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 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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, physical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **PTA Therapeutic Processes II**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, physical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **OTA Therapeutic Processes I**

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, physical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## **OTA Therapeutic Processes II**

*Instructor Led*

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

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with clients served in occupational therapy. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, physical components, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## Professional Skills for the Health Care Student

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes and exams in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## Professional Integration for the OTA/PTA

*Instructor Led*

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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments and projects in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## 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 insure 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.

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## Career Planning and Preparation Level I

*Instructor Led*

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.

An introduction to Occupational Health and Safety will also be discussed, specifically the definition of occupational health and safety; an individual's safety rights; responsibilities under Nova Scotia law; hazard identification and control; WHMIS, First Aid and fire safety requirements. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, and quizzes in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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## Career Planning and Preparation Level II

*Instructor Led*

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 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. Students will be evaluated through a variety of assignments, projects, and quizzes in addition to their participation throughout the course.

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