

## **Essential Functions for Occupational Therapy Education at Ithaca College**

### **Introduction**

All students in the Ithaca College occupational therapy program must be able to perform the essential clinical as well as academic requirements, as the overall curricular objectives are to prepare students to practice in their chosen field. The purpose of this document is to assure that all students entering the occupational therapy program know and understand the requirements, and can make informed decisions regarding their pursuit of this profession. Students must be able to meet these standards to be successful in coursework and fieldwork. A student with a documented disability will not be precluded from participating in the program. This student will need to be able to perform all functions with reasonable accommodation.

### **Essential Functions**

In order to meet the demands of coursework and fieldwork, occupational therapy students at Ithaca College must have the capacity to observe and communicate; demonstrate sufficient gross and fine motor ability, physical strength, agility, and endurance; demonstrate emotional stability to exercise good judgment and to work effectively in potentially stressful situations; and have intellectual ability to synthesize data and solve problems. These essential functions are detailed below.

### **Procedures for Implementation of Essential Functions for Occupational Therapy Education at Ithaca College**

1. All applicants will be referred to the Department of Occupational Therapy Essential Functions upon application to the program.
2. Accepted students (and parents/guardians if student is <18 years of age) will review the Department of Occupational Therapy Essential Functions and sign the Affidavit entitled "Essential Functions for Occupational Therapy Education at Ithaca College" within the first semester in the occupational therapy program. Students with documented disability may meet with personnel from Student Accessibility Services to review and sign the Affidavit.
3. The document will be reviewed as needed with students throughout the program.

**Essential Functions and Examples**

<b>Skill Area</b>	<b>Essential Function</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Emotional	<p>Students must possess the ability to adapt to the environment, cope with stressors, and assume daily responsibilities.</p> <p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• possess emotional health required to make sound judgments</li> <li>• demonstrate behaviors appropriate to the situation</li> <li>• use appropriate coping strategies</li> <li>• demonstrate active learning</li> <li>• respond to stressful situations effectively by recalling knowledge from short term and long term memory</li> </ul>	<p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manage more than one patient at one time</li> <li>• demonstrate flexibility in managing, organizing and administering care to patients in clinical settings</li> <li>• create functional interventions outdoors, in small homes, on playgrounds, and in hospital rooms</li> <li>• implement stress management activities when necessary</li> <li>• demonstrate comfort with discussing and being present during a variety of medical procedures</li> <li>• observe universal precautions when bodily fluids are present</li> </ul>
Communication	<p>Students must possess the ability to understand and utilize verbal, non-verbal, and written communication, including oral and written English clearly, effectively, and efficiently.</p> <p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain treatment procedures</li> <li>• initiate health teaching</li> <li>• document and interpret patient/client information</li> <li>• utilize effective note taking skills</li> <li>• complete written and reading assignments in a timely fashion</li> <li>• assess and respond to verbal and non-verbal communication</li> <li>• communicate with others professionally during times of high stress</li> </ul>	<p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document information according to occupational therapy practice standards</li> <li>• give oral presentations to a variety of professionals</li> <li>• provide training and teaching to patient/client, family members and other professionals</li> <li>• provide information to health care teams for optimal patient/client management</li> <li>• conduct interviews and evaluations</li> </ul>

Skill Area	Essential Function	Examples
Cognitive/ Critical Thinking/ Clinical Reasoning	<p>Student must meet academic standards and possess critical thinking abilities sufficient for making sound judgments.</p> <p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• utilize their full intellectual abilities with an understanding of the rationale and justification within clinical and laboratory settings.</li> <li>• recall, interpret, analyze and apply information from a variety of sources, including reading material, lecture, discussion, patient observation, examination and evaluation</li> <li>• determine what data and methods are needed to solve problems</li> <li>• demonstrate appropriate responses to stressful and emergency situations</li> </ul>	<p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtain examination data and develop a plan of care given a patient/client diagnosis (ie. stroke)</li> <li>• develop and progress an intervention program for a patient/client</li> <li>• adapt and change an intervention within a session, depending on patient response</li> <li>• identify key underlying problem areas impacting function</li> <li>• conduct a self-assessment and create a professional development plan based upon areas that need attention</li> <li>• apply evidence based research to clinical cases</li> <li>• conduct activity analysis and apply to clinical situations</li> </ul>
Sensory-Motor	<p>Students must possess adequate strength, dexterity, balance, and sensation, to accurately carry out physical activities through an 8-10 hour work day.</p> <p>Student will demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a variety of patient evaluations and interventions including (but not limited to): palpation, patient transfers, joint measurement, manual muscle testing, standardized and non-standardized assessments</li> <li>• safely guard patients with limited mobility or unsafe balance responses</li> <li>• observational and interview skills to obtain accurate information in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings</li> <li>• provide safe, reliable, efficient emergency care</li> </ul>	<p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist a patient who is dependent with transfer (bed to chair)</li> <li>• provide cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)</li> <li>• safely guard a child with special needs on playground equipment</li> <li>• read numbers on a goniometer</li> <li>• use physical agent modalities</li> <li>• assess color changes of the skin</li> <li>• provide passive and active ROM</li> <li>• assist clients with ADLs and IADLs</li> </ul>

Skill Area	Essential Function	Examples
Social - behavioral	<p>Student must possess interpersonal abilities sufficient for appropriate, respectful and effective interaction with individuals and caregivers of various backgrounds.</p> <p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop mature, sensitive and effective rapport with peers, faculty, health care providers</li> <li>• function effectively in environments with high physical and mental demands</li> <li>• display flexibility and adaptive skills in a variety of conditions</li> <li>• demonstrate professionalism, compassion, integrity, empathy, interest and motivation</li> <li>• interact with groups from various social, cultural, and religious backgrounds</li> </ul>	<p>Student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate in small and large group discussions</li> <li>• deal with sensitive, confidential information respectfully and within the ethical standards of the profession</li> <li>• meet externally established deadlines</li> <li>• provide emotional support to patients/clients during critical periods</li> <li>• use “people-first” language when speaking about patients/clients with disabilities</li> <li>• initiate communications to clarify situations</li> </ul>

**Student Accessibility Services:** <http://www.ithaca.edu/sas>

The Ithaca College student handbook details services available to students with disabilities.

<http://www.ithaca.edu/policies/vol7/general/070103/>

Services and accommodations for students with disabilities are coordinated by the Student Accessibility Services for Students with Disabilities. The Director and Assistant Director of that office are available during office hours to assist students in accessing reasonable accommodations and in determining which accommodations are appropriate. Students must maintain current eligibility for accommodations in accordance with the Student Accessibility Services. Students will be ineligible to receive accommodations without providing documentation on his/her disability and consenting to the limited sharing of information.

