



JEFFERSON COLLEGE OF REHABILITATION SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Academic Policies

Academic Year 2022-2023

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Thomas Jefferson University is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin, marital status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, veteran's status or any other protected characteristic. Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning Thomas Jefferson University's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is directed to contact their Student Affairs Dean, the Title IX Coordinator, or Human Resources – Employee Relations, who have been designated by Thomas Jefferson University to coordinate the institution's efforts to comply with these laws. Any person may also contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Director, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Region Three, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, regarding the University's compliance with the equal opportunity laws.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Jefferson holds itself accountable, at every level of the organization, to nurture an environment of inclusion and respect, by valuing the uniqueness of every individual, celebrating and reflecting the rich diversity of its communities, and taking meaningful action to cultivate an environment of fairness, belonging, and opportunity

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

The Department of Occupational Therapy reserves the right to amend, modify, rescind, or implement any policies, procedures, regulations, fees, conditions and courses described herein as circumstances may require without prior notice to persons who might thereby be affected. The provisions of this handbook are not and may not be regarded as contractual between or among the College, its students or its employees or agents.

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GENERAL INFORMATION AND ACADEMIC POLICIES

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ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

GRADING CRITERIA

Jefferson College of Rehabilitation Sciences adopted the following grading system in courses:

Letter Grade	Numeric Value	Quality Points
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92.99	3.7
B+	87-89.99	3.3
B	83-86.99	3.0
B-	80-82.99	2.7
C+	77-79.99	2.3
C	73-76.99	2.0
C-	70-72.99	1.7
D	60-69.99	1.0
F	Below 60	0.0
WF		0.0

The college also recognizes the following grades, which are not calculated into grade point average. Courses designated as Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit, along with minimum threshold numerical grades to achieve Pass or Credit will be identified on the course syllabus.

P: Pass	Awarded when a student successfully achieves the minimum threshold for a course labeled Pass/Fail.
CR: Credit	Awarded when a student successfully achieves the minimum threshold for a course labeled CR/NC.
NC: No Credit	Awarded when a student has not successfully achieved the minimum threshold for a course labeled CR/NC.

*In East Falls, students receive Credit/No Credit in fieldwork courses. Credit (“Cr”) is given to students who earn a 79 or higher.

COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM

Students are required to complete their course of study, including fieldwork and capstone components, within one and a half times the published length of the program.

Program	Length of Program	Time for Completion
Center City MSOT	2 years	3.5 years
East Falls MSOT	2.5 years	3 years 9 months
Center City OTD	3 years	4.5 years

Each Program curricula is designed to be delivered sequentially, where concepts and skills are introduced, expanded upon, and mastered across the program. Competencies are enhanced and assessed at different points across the curriculum. To be most effective at delivering the requisite competencies in accordance with accreditation standards, students must be continuously enrolled from the point of matriculation until graduation unless a leave of absence is approved. If a personal or medical leave of absence is required, the leave must be approved and must not exceed one calendar year.

GRADE POINT REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher to remain in good academic standing. Students with CGPA below 3.0 are placed on probation and must raise their CGPA to 3.0. To be a candidate for graduation, students must have successfully completed all credits and required courses of their specified program with a minimum grade of C or better (or Pass/Credit in a non-letter grade course), and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher on all coursework.

Please Note: While a grade of C or better is considered a passing grade in the OT curriculum, grades earned below a B will make it more difficult to remain in good academic standing and achieve the minimum required 3.0 cumulative GPA to progress in the curriculum and meet graduation eligibility requirements.

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The **Student Affairs Committee (SAC)** is comprised of Department program directors (PD), Academic Fieldwork Coordinators (AFWC) and a faculty member-at-large. SAC meets twice monthly to review all academic actions related to student progression, retention, and remediation. Additional meetings may be called when an action or need arises between scheduled meetings.

Students' academic records and professional behavior are reviewed at the end of each semester to evaluate, academic standing, progression through the program, and satisfactory completion of degree requirements. SAC determines the actions to be imposed and length of time of the action(s). The SAC Chair communicates the committee decisions to the Department Chair. The Department Chair or Program Director formally communicates decisions of the committee to the student and notifies the student when problems in academic performance may jeopardize their academic standing.

SEQUENCE THROUGH THE PROGRAM

The curricula are designed so students are enrolled in an entry-level program in occupational therapy that follows the sequence of courses of their program. If a student is returning from a leave of absence, they will wait **until the sequence is repeated in the program curriculum.**

PLEASE NOTE: In Center City, students register themselves for the repeated course; in East Falls, the program director registers students.

BENCHMARKS FOR PROGRESSION

- Students must earn a minimum grade of C in all occupational therapy courses and a Pass or Credit in all fieldwork courses.
- Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)
- Students must have achieved a minimum CGPA of a 3.0 and be in good academic standing within the Department, in order to be eligible for Level II fieldwork,

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY AND PROGRESSION FOR FIELDWORK

Students may only progress through fieldwork courses in sequence. Each experience builds on the successful completion of prior fieldwork experiences. Students will not be enrolled in subsequent clinical fieldwork experiences until prerequisite requirements are satisfied. Level I fieldwork placements are coordinated and scheduled between the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator(s) and the individual fieldwork site. Each Level I placement totals 32-40 hours. Any changes to the assigned fieldwork schedule must be approved by the AFWC and fieldwork prior to implementing the change. Level II fieldwork placements are full-time and require the application of occupational therapy knowledge. Students complete two 12-week placements in sequence, under the supervision of qualified occupational therapists. Level II Fieldwork must be completed within 15 months after students finish the final didactic semester.

Students must be in good academic standing with a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA (CGPA) and all courses passed with a minimum of a C grade by the end of the semester preceding Level II Fieldwork in order to progress to Level II fieldwork. Students who do not meet the CGPA and grade requirement will be guided by their academic advisor to the most appropriate course of action, which may include repeating coursework to raise the student's GPA. In the event students fail to achieve the cumulative GPA requirement for progression to fieldwork, they are dismissed from the department. The student's academic advisor will recommend that the student consider other health professions and/or career options outside of the department.

To successfully meet the Level II fieldwork requirement, students must complete a minimum of 24 weeks of full-time fieldwork.

SECOND CHANCE OPTION

DESCRIPTION

When students receive a final course **grade of C-** (not meeting minimum requirements for passing and progression in the program) due to academic performance, the *Second Chance Option* offers them the opportunity to demonstrate minimum mastery of course content and learning objectives

GUIDELINES

- When a student receives a grade of D+, D or F in a course, the student is not eligible to request the Second Chance Option.
- A student can complete the Second Chance Option **only once** while enrolled in the program.
- If a student receives more than one grade of C- in a semester, the Second Chance Option is only an option for one of those courses. The student should discuss options with their Program Director and Course Instructors.
- The grade on the Second Chance Option assessment is final and cannot be appealed.
- A **final course grade of C** is the highest course grade that can be earned after successfully completing the Second Chance Option.
- The course instructor determines the most appropriate assessment method, which may include, but is not limited to, an examination, presentation, or research paper.
- The Second Chance Option **cannot be used** under the following situations:
 - For Level I and Level II Fieldwork courses
 - For Doctoral Capstone courses
 - For courses that use a Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit grading system
 - In cases of Academic Integrity Policy/Community Standards violations
 - When professional behavior is the primary reason for not passing the course
 - When the procedures outlined in this policy are not followed
- All efforts will be made to complete the Second Chance Option assessment process before the start of the following semester; however, there may be circumstances when this is not possible.
- When administration and grading of the Second Chance Option Assessment is not complete before the start of the following semester, the student can continue in didactic coursework only. Once assessment process is complete:
 - If student receives a passing grade, they continue in the program.
 - If student does **not receive a passing grade**, they follow the deceleration and progression policy outlined in the Department of Occupational Therapy Student Handbook
- A student may concurrently pursue a grade appeal for the original final course grade and the Second Chance Option. Please refer to University [Grade Appeal Protocol](#) in the TJU Student Handbook for guidelines in filing a grade appeal.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The Course Instructor and/or the Program Director will NOT initiate the Second Chance Option process.
- If the student does not submit the completed *Second Chance Option Request Form* to the Course Instructor **and** Program Director within **two business days** after the final grade is posted to the Canvas course page, the Second Chance Option cannot be utilized and the student will follow the Deceleration and Progression policy outlined in the Department of Occupational Therapy Student Handbook.]

PROCEDURE

1. Student reviews academic progression policies in the Department of Occupational Therapy Student Handbook.
2. Student completes and submits the *Second Chance Option Request Form* (available on the Canvas Student Center) to the Course Instructor **and** Program Director within **two business days of the final grade being posted** to the Canvas course page.

3. Upon receiving the *Second Chance Option Request Form* from the student the Program Director schedules an advising meeting with student and course instructor within **three business days** to review student eligibility and the Second Chance Option guidelines and procedures.
4. After the advising meeting, the Program Director and Course Instructor make final determination of student's eligibility.
5. Program Director notifies student of their eligibility in a letter **within one business day of the advising meeting**. If eligible, the notification letter will include the assessment method (e.g., examination, presentation, or research paper). Eligibility status is final and cannot be appealed.
6. Eligible student notifies Program Director and Course Instructor of their confirmation to continue with the Second Chance Option **within one business day of notification**.
7. Students who confirms to continue with the Second Chance Option pay an administrative fee of \$200.00.
8. Course Instructor administers the Second Chance Option assessment **prior to the start of the following academic semester; however, this timeframe is not guaranteed**. The Second Chance Option assessment date is at the Course Instructors discretion.
9. Course Instructor grades the Second Chance Option assessment **within 5 business days after completion of the Second Chance Option assessment**.
 - If student **receives a passing grade** (demonstrates minimum mastery of course content and learning objectives) **they receive a final course grade of C** and are eligible to progress in the program.
 - If student **does not receive a passing grade** (does not demonstrate minimum mastery of course content and learning objectives) they receive the original course grade of C- and follow the deceleration and progression policy outlined in the Department of Occupational Therapy Student Handbook.

PLEASE NOTE:

The Second Chance option assessment may require in person and/or on campus requirements. Students must be available for the Second Chance option assessment on the date and at the time designated by the Course Instructor, even if this date falls outside of the academic calendar dates for a given semester. There are no exceptions.

ACADEMIC ALERT

Students are issued an academic alert when they earn less than a 3.0 **Semester** GPA (SGPA). Students are required to earn a semester GPA of 3.0 or higher in the following semester.

When students receive an academic alert, they are encouraged to schedule a meeting with their advisor to discuss their performance during the previous semester, brainstorm possible challenges and areas of strength going into the new semester in order to create a plan to raise their SGPA in the following semester.

PROBATION

Students are placed on academic probation, and are not in good academic standing under the following circumstances:

- When students earn a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) below 3.0.
(Note: The BS/MS Programs' CGPA is comprised of all OT courses.)
- When students earn a final course grade of C- or D; or a 79 or less in a pass/fail or credit/no credit course.

After Student Affairs Committee review, the Department Chair is advised of the recommended student action and an official notification is generated by the department and sent to the student and appropriate University officials. Students should meet with their advisor to discuss their situation and to seek support when these instances occur.

A student's probationary period is one full time (9 credits or more) semester. If a student's semester is below 9 credits, the probationary period may extend an additional semester if the curricular plan allows. At the end of the probationary period:

- The student achieves the minimum cumulative grade point average (3.0) and is reinstated in good standing, or
- The student fails to achieve the minimum cumulative grade point average (3.0) at the end of the probationary period is dismissed from the College for academic underachievement, or
- In **extraordinary cases**, where the student has made significant progress toward achieving the minimum grade point average, the Program Director, in consultation with the Department Student Affairs Committee, may recommend granting one additional probationary semester. If, at the conclusion of the extended probationary semester, the cumulative grade point average is still below the minimum 3.0 the student is dismissed for academic underachievement.

Students who are placed on probation due to a grade in a course must follow deceleration standards outlined below.

DECELERATION

Students must decelerate (not progress in the full-time program) under the following circumstances:

- For all Students:
 - When students are placed on academic probation the semester prior to Level II Fieldwork; they must decelerate, not progress to Level II Fieldwork, until student returns to good academic standing
 - Failure to achieve a grade of C or higher in the repeated course will result in academic dismissal from the program.

AND

- For Students Enrolled in the **MSOT Program in East Falls**:
 - When students earn a final course grade of C- or D in any class or a 79 or less in a credit/no credit course, students decelerate and must repeat the course and earn a grade of C or higher/Credit in a Credit/No credit course to proceed in the program.
- For Student enrolled in the **MSOT Program and OTD Program in Center City**:
 - When students earn a final course grade of C- or D in any course, students decelerate and repeat the course when it is offered again in the curriculum. Students must earn a grade of C or higher in the repeated course(s) to proceed in the program. The student must complete and submit a signed change of status form to the University Registrar at the time of deceleration, and again upon successful remediation when full time status is resumed.

Students may be required to enroll in remediation coursework as part of the deceleration process. Please see deceleration below.

After the deceleration requirement is passed successfully, students must earn a CGPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the following semester in which they resume full-time enrollment in the program. Failure to earn a CGPA of 3.0 or higher will result in dismissal from the program.

REMEDICATION

Students who are required to decelerate due to failure to achieve satisfactory performance in didactic, fieldwork, or capstone courses are placed on academic probation and may be required to enroll in the *OCC 797 Special Topics* (East Falls) or *OT 699 Fieldwork/Capstone Challenges and Remediation Parts A & B* (Center City). The Department Student Affairs Committee will review each student's performance that led to academic underachievement in the specified course and deceleration in the program and determine if remediation is required. Students who demonstrated deficiency in core content/skill areas, and/or clinical safety issues will be required to enroll in remediation coursework. The Department Student Affairs Committee makes a recommendation regarding remediation to the department chair. The department chair's decision on remediation is final and cannot be appealed. Students pay tuition for the 1 credit remediation course each semester.

PLEASE NOTE: Center City students register for the course; East Falls students are registered by the program director.

Upon successful completion of the course, student resumes full-time progression in the program.

Through the coursework and with guidance from the instructor, students develop, implement and evaluate their performance on a remediation plan that addressed their unsatisfactory performance in the academic or fieldwork course.

REINSTATEMENT AFTER REPEAT OF COURSES

Reinstatement of academic standing is achieved after review by the Department's Student Affairs Committee (SAC) at the conclusion of each semester and a recommendation for reinstatement is made and forwarded to the Department Chairperson.

Students who are placed on probation because their course grade is C- or D must repeat the course. Good academic standing is reinstated if the student achieves a grade of C or above, or 80 or above in a credit/no credit course and their CGPA is a minimum of 3.0. Students can only repeat one course once during the academic program.

DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed under the following circumstances:

- If they fail to return to good academic standing after completion of a probationary period.*
- If they receive a final course grade of F/WF.
- If they earn 2 or more course grades of C- or D, inclusive of the original grade earned in a repeated course.
- If they receive no credit, fail, or withdrawal fail their Level I Fieldwork or Level II Fieldwork rotation.
- If they found responsible for violations of University Academic Integrity and or Community Standards Policies (refer to University Student Handbook)
- If they fail to meet standards and expectations outlined in an academic/professionalism learning contract.

*Students who are placed on probation because their cumulative GPA is below a 3.0 are dismissed if they do not achieve a CGPA of 3.0 within one full time semester.

Students who are placed on probation because their course grade is C- or D; or 79 or less in a credit/no credit course are dismissed if they do not receive a C or above in the repeated course.

REQUEST FOR READMISSION

Students who are dismissed from their program may petition the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy for readmission to the program within 1 year of the date of their dismissal. Students who have not been enrolled for greater than one year must re-apply through the Office of Admissions.

Upon receipt of the formal petition, which includes the student's description of the reason for dismissal, and a plan for success upon readmission to the program, the Chair will determine if readmission is offered.

Procedures are as follows:

1. Student is officially dismissed from the program.
2. If desired, the student may petition for readmission to the program (up to a year following dismissal)
3. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor to discuss their situation and guide students' development of the petition letter.
4. In their petition letter to the Chairperson, the student describes the reason for dismissal that identifies those actions which led to the dismissal. The petition also includes a success plan that describes what the student will do upon readmission to avoid further dismissal.
5. If approved, the student is readmitted to the program. Recommendation for readmission are made by the Student Affairs Committee and forwarded to the Chair of the Department who then upholds or rejects the recommendation. The Chair's final decision cannot be appealed.

Please note: All readmitted students are subject to the academic and curricular requirements in place at the time of readmission. Additionally, start terms for the readmitted students will be determined by the program and based on the student's plan of study; readmitted students cannot assume that they will start in the next immediate term after readmission has been granted.

The student's Department Chair, in consultation with their Program Director will indicate any requirements that the student must meet upon readmission. The student will be held responsible for fulfilling these special criteria of academic performance established with the program upon readmission, in addition to the overall program and College requirements for achieving good academic standing.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (Good Academic Standing) and have successfully completed all credits and required courses of their specified program with a minimum grade of C or better (or Pass/Credit in a non-letter grade course) to qualify for graduation pre-certification.

Students must submit an *Application for Graduation* in accordance with university application timelines. Students are responsible for any graduation application fees and must fulfill all financial obligations to the University.

GRADE APPEAL OR GRIEVANCE OF ACADEMIC ACTION

GRADE APPEAL

Students can appeal a final course grade. Students should refer to the [Grade Appeal Protocol](#) described in the University Graduate Policies.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE

All members of the Thomas Jefferson University Community have the right to express concerns when they perceive that they have been treated in a manner not consistent with the standards of conduct at the University. The student grievance procedure is intended to allow students this mode of expression. For academic grievances within the program, students should refer to the Student Grievance Procedure outlined in the JCRS Student Handbook. For grievances external to the academic program, students should consult the Grievance Procedure outlined in the Rights and Responsibilities section of the TJU Student Handbook.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

Students are encouraged to discuss their intent to withdraw with their faculty advisor and/or program director.

Students may initiate withdrawal from the program by due notice, provided they are not subject to dismissal because of failure, disciplinary action, or departmental academic or clinical dismissal policies.

Students must secure the approval of the program director and the Registrar to withdraw from their Program.

Students must complete the appropriate Registrar's forms. Notification to the instructor/program director/chair without completion and submission of the appropriate change of status form does not constitute official withdrawal.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students are referred to the policy in the College of Rehabilitation Sciences Handbook

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students are referred to the policy in the University Handbook

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Policy on transfer of professional credits.

Generally, a student may not transfer any credits from another institution to satisfy curricular requirements in the graduate programs within the Occupational Therapy Department. In highly individualized cases, a student who is transferring from an external professional program to a Jefferson entry level professional program in occupational therapy may request transfer of up to 9 credits during the admissions process only. The program director will review the learning objectives of the potential transferred course to determine if they align with a course offered within the specific Jefferson program's curriculum to grant approval.

STUDENT ADVISING AND SUPPORT

STUDENT ADVISING

Role & Responsibilities of the Academic Advisor:

An academic advisor is assigned to each student when they enter the program. The advisor reviews students' academic achievement, evolving professional development, and is a resource to the student throughout their enrollment in the OT program. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor once a semester to review academic progression and evolving professionalism. The advisor will assist the student in their academic program throughout the course of study; it is the student's responsibility to schedule individual appointments with their advisor and take advantage of group appointment times offered. Examples of how an advisor can work with you:

- **Personal Development** – Assist students in their adjustment to the university and location of resources such as personal counseling, financial aid, etc. Your advisor may inform you of scholarship and employment, and other leadership opportunities. It is not uncommon during the first semester for students to go through an adjustment period to graduate education in a professional program. Students who are experiencing unusual levels of stress and other emotional difficulties, are referred to the Student Counseling Center for support and assistance. If a student is having difficulty with general issues such as study habits, professional writing, or professional behavior, the advisor may work with the student to develop strategies or provide referrals to other academic and instructional supports which the student is responsible for utilizing.
- **Academic Standards & Progression** - Advising students of various consequences and options in the event that a final grade of "C" or less is earned or the student's CGPA is below 3.0. Guiding the student through situations when they fail to comply with departmental policies.
- **Course Withdrawal** - Discuss with student the implications of course withdrawal and explore possible alternatives or options to withdrawal. The advisor reviews this information with the student's Program Director.

ACADEMIC LEARNING CONTRACT

An academic learning contract is designed to assist students in successful academic and clinical pursuits. If a student is in danger of underachievement or demonstrating inconsistent professional behavior, a learning contract may be implemented. The contract is developed in collaboration with the course instructor, the student, and their advisor. When a learning contract is required for Level II fieldwork, it is drafted in collaboration with the student, AFWC, site supervisor, and any other relevant team member. The Program Director approves the final learning contract and a signed copy is placed in the student file.

When a learning contract is implemented, the student must meet the requirements of the contract as well as all course requirements in order to pass the course successfully. Consequences of failure to meet the requirements of the learning contract are defined in the contract itself and may result in the repeating the course, course failure, or dismissal from the program.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Instructional support services for students are available through the Office of Student Affairs (CC).

(https://www.jefferson.edu/university/academic-affairs/schools/student-affairs/academic-support/academic_support.html) or Academic Success Center (EF)

(<http://www.eastfalls.jefferson.edu/successcenter/index.html>). All students have access to the Canvas Help-line resources located in the Canvas Learning Management System.

Instructional support services are also offered within the Department of Occupational Therapy.

- The instructional support process will include assessment of the student's academic performance, development of a plan and goals, application of learning strategies, monitoring of learning and measurement of outcomes.
- The instructor collaborates with the student to help them master occupational therapy content through a process of guided self-learning.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Thomas Jefferson University is committed to providing equal education opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities, in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Thomas Jefferson University will provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals with disabilities to allow equal access and full participation to all University sponsored activities and programs.

For additional information, please refer to <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/disability-accommodations.html>



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