ST CLAIR COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapy Assistant Program (2015)

St Clair College OTA/PTA Program

Mission Statement

St Clair College OTA/PTA program will offer a comprehensive, multimodal and practical education in the field of OTA/PTA. This education will be provided in an inclusive student centered environment. We will graduate well rounded individuals of personal and professional integrity with a high level of clinical competence across multiple, diverse patient settings. Our graduates will have instilled a passion for their chosen field and will be desirous of continued personal and professional growth.

St Clair College OTA/PTA Program Goals

- **To provide comprehensive, practical, relevant and multimodal education in the field of OTA PTA**
- **To graduate passionate, knowledgeable, effective and highly ethical OTA/PTA professionals**
- **To inspire graduates in the pursuit of continued professional growth**
- **To inspire graduates in the pursuit high moral values, mutual respect and acceptance, sincerity, honesty and self-respect.**

St Clair College OTA/PTA Program Curriculum Framework

The OTA/PTA program at St Clair College adheres the approved Program Standards for OTA/PTA issued by the MTCU in 2008. These standards can be found at:
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/health/OTA_PTA.pdf

The curriculum framework for this program is founded in the eleven vocational learning outcomes identified in this document.

MTCU Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs) are as follows:

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. Communicate appropriately and effectively, through verbal, nonverbal, written and electronic means, with clients, their families, and significant others, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, other health care providers, and others within the role of the therapist assistant.

2. Participate in the effective functioning of inter-professional health care teams within the role of the therapist assistant.

3. Establish, develop, maintain, and bring closure to client-centred, therapeutic relationships within the role of the therapist assistant.

4. Ensure personal safety and contribute to the safety of others within the role of the therapist assistant.

5. Practice competently in a legal, ethical, and professional manner within the role of the therapist assistant.

6. Document and complete client records in a thorough, objective, accurate, and nonjudgmental manner within the role of the therapist assistant.

7. Develop and implement strategies to maintain, improve, and promote professional competence within the role of the therapist assistant.

8. Perform effectively within the roles and responsibilities of the therapist assistant through the application of relevant knowledge of health sciences, psychosociological sciences, and health conditions.

9. Perform functions common to both physiotherapy and occupational therapy practices that contribute to the development, implementation and modification of intervention/treatment plans, under the supervision of and in collaboration with the occupational therapist and/or physiotherapist.

10. Enable the client's occupational performance by contributing to the development, implementation, and modification of intervention/treatment plans, under the supervision of and in collaboration with the occupational therapist.

11. Enable the client's optimal physical function by contributing to the development, implementation, and modification of intervention/treatment plans, under the supervision of and in collaboration with the physiotherapist.

In reference to these VLOs the MTCU indicates, "the vocational learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance." (MTCU, 2008)

St Clair College OTA/PTA Program Philosophy

We believe that St Clair College OTA/PTA Program should provide students with the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become highly competent OTA/PTAs. We believe that this goal should be achieved through a collaborative effort involving students, the educational institution and clinical placements. We believe that behaviours and attitudes of all parties involved with the program should reflect the professional and ethical standards of the OTA/PTA, OT and PT professions. We also believe that personal and professional integrity of all parties involved with the program should reflect sound moral and ethical principles, sincerity, honesty and self-respect.

Curriculum Framework

Introduction

The curriculum framework for the OTA/PTA program at St Clair College reflects the unique needs of a college level, knowledge based, practical/hands on profession. The framework reflects three distinct elements: Curriculum, teaching and learning and professional practice standards. The curriculum itself represents the MTCU vocational learning outcomes which are in turn reflected in course content, knowledge and the skillsets required by graduates to practice within the OTA/PTA profession. Teaching and learning reflects the theoretical foundations of the pedagological methods selected to best reflect the learner and the profession and to best prepare the students for practice. Finally, the element of professional practice standards reflects the practice standards of the College of Occupational Therapists and The College of Physiotherapy of Ontario and are taught both independently and blended into coursework throughout the program.

The program seeks initially to provide factual information required in the OTA/PTA arena. Once the foundational information is provided the program seeks to provide hands-on experience through which factual information may be assimilated and associated practical skills may be developed. The factual knowledge base development continues concurrently throughout the program. As the program progresses it provides a supervised clinical environment in which direct patient contact and the professional environment allow further knowledge, professional and clinical skill development. The program also expects completion of general education components to broaden the knowledge base of graduates and develop "well rounded" graduates. Furthermore an ongoing expectation of mutual respect, sincerity, honesty and self-respect is emphasised through all elements of the program delivery. On completion of the program it is expected that the graduate will be a competent entry level OTA/PTA with a broad knowledge base, a clear grasp of professional expectations and the ability and desire to continue the lifelong professional and personal learning process.

Integration of Vocational Learning Outcomes

While it is recognised that the above categories are all important, some of the requirements are best suited to implementation throughout the program and are reflected in many of the courses, other skills and knowledge are required early providing a foundation, and some require prior knowledge and skills on which they can develop.

Semester by Semester Course Rationale

Semester One:

The first (and second semester) are seen as being heavily weighted to developing a sound knowledge base and begin to explore professional issues. In the first semester students learn about the structure and history of the Canadian health system, developmental psychology, the fundamentals of rehabilitation, anatomy and physiology. From a practice perspective the foundations of professional skills including safety, ethics and professionalism, therapeutic communication and relationship skills are all addressed. The importance of personal values is also stressed. These personal and professional values are revisited often throughout subsequent semesters and courses and reiterated, reframed and addressed in specific scenarios and situations. During semester one a number of site visits are made to allow students an early look into some of the arenas they may expect to work.

Semester Two:

In the second semester the developing knowledge base from semester one is built on through courses on clinical pathology, human movement, communications disorders, gerontology and psychiatric conditions. In many respects the prior knowledge proves a backdrop for the new course material. These are again heavily knowledge based courses however professionalism and personal values are reintroduced to provide them with contextual meaning. The human movement course begins some hands on exploration of direct client skills.

Semester Three:

Having spent the first two semesters building a knowledge base and beginning to develop professional ideals and early skills the third semester is structured in such a way as to further focus this knowledge into a professional skillset. The students attend school for the first 8 weeks of semester three with both OTA and PTA skills classes. These classes are focussed on the theoretical foundations of OTA and PTA skills development and the practical implementation of these skills. Issues of safety, professionalism, documentation, therapeutic relationships, ethics and personal integrity and growth are revisited. While all previously formally addressed these values are heavily infiltrated onto all of the clinical skills scenarios that are taught. Each course includes 5 hours of "lecture" and 4 hours of "lab" per week over the eight week period.

On completion of the eight weeks of class students go on their first seven week, full time, placement. During this period students attend in a variety of settings including long term care facilities, hospitals, clinics etc. and they may be supervised by a variety of professionals including OTs, PTs and OTA/PTAs. While many placements represent a single discipline, many allow the students a variety of professional experiences. It is expected that during the placement the student will be able to use clinical skills directly with patients under supervision. In addition students are expected to use their time for learning, researching methods and discussion with and observation of their supervisor. Each placement receives at least one site visit from a faculty member.

Semester Four:

The fourth semester is structured in a similar way to semester three whereby students attend school for the first 8 weeks and placement for the subsequent 7. Classes are focussed on further development of the theoretical foundations of OTA and PTA and the practical implementation of these skills. The semester four courses expand on the fundamental knowledge and skills base from semester three and focus on application of these skills to specific populations, demographics and conditions. Again multiple professional, safety, documentation issues, clinical skills and personal growth are reiterated during this semester.

On completion of the eight weeks of class students go on their second seven week, full time, placement. The set-up is similar to semester three. It is expected that during the placement the student will be able to further develop their clinical skills directly with patients and again under supervision. At the conclusion of the second placement it is expected that the student will be at a competency level consistent with a practice entry level OTA/PTA.

Theoretical Teaching and Learning Foundations of the Curriculum Framework

In developing the program the curriculum has been structured in such a way as to utilise primarily cognitive teaching and learning skills in the early stages and moving toward a constructivist, active learning model later. The later courses take on significant elements from the competency–based learning and assessment model. That said, the experiential and competency based elements of learning are also incorporated in the more cognitive delivery models where ever possible. This is seen even in the more factual based initial courses such as anatomy, physiology and pathology etc.

In the earlier stages of the program because information assimilation by students is a key requirement the multifaceted approach to delivery of the requisite elements is recognised as imperative. There are many learning styles and it is therefore necessary to utilise a broad range of delivery methods. As such multi-media, Power-Point, in class speakers, video, hands on manipulation of musculoskeletal models, fresh mammalian bone, joint and muscle and indeed fellow students are all incorporated into the early stages of the program. From a more experiential and self-learning perspective group work, self-reflection and professional interviewing are all required for some elements.

As the students progress they will attend classes that expect them to utilize elements of hitherto primarily cognitively delivered knowledge and translate this into practical hands on experience where the will begin to develop clinical reasoning skills and a knowledge of evidence based, best practice for the OTA/PTA field. Initially this occurs in the class room and laboratory where the students are encouraged to experiment with movement patterns, gait, assistive devices, activities of daily living and physiological factors such as vital signs, strength, range of motion, etc. This increasingly constructivist approach allows the student to better understand through experience some of the theoretical elements taught in current and previous classes. In addition, a number of site visits in the first two semesters will allow students to see a variety of differing arenas in which OTA/PTAs may find employment. This experience allows through student enquiry, practice professional presentation and - through assignment expectations- self-reflection.

After the first two semesters successful students undertake courses to develop specific OTA and PTA skills. The third semester focusses on general practice skill development and the fourth semester on specific skill development based on pathology, disease and different patient populations. These skills require a building on the knowledge and experience of the prior two semesters and are based on evidence based best practice scenarios.

OTA and PTA classes run concurrently for 8 weeks and are taught by a Registered Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist respectively. These courses are both in-class and laboratory based. This utilises both multifaceted cognitive learning skills and constructivist elements such as hands on practice, experimentation and experiential learning, the later building on the former to cement a strong theory and practical skill set. The development of hands on skills is essentially competency-based with the more basic skills being developed, practiced and assessed first before the more advanced skills and competencies are addressed drawing on Bloom's Taxonomy. A key element of the OTA and PTA skills courses is safe and accurate application of skills. This requires a strong theoretical foundation on which to build. This skillset is developed through experience and practice initially in the laboratory and after progression through the required competencies and practical examination, in the placement arena. Due to the importance of development of a safe and accurate clinical skillset students are required to pass both the theoretical and practical elements of the OTA and PTA skills classes independently before they are allowed to advance in the program and attend placements.

Clinical placement is undertaken for a total of 518 hours in two placement blocks during semesters three and four. The placement component of this program has recently changed based on stakeholder and student input. Placements occur for two seven week blocks and attendance is 5 days per week. The purpose of the placement is for students to have hands on contact with patients under the supervision of a qualified OT, PT, OTA or PTA during which their skills can be practiced and developed in vivo. It is the intention of this program to provide each student with both OT and PT based input. It is expected that the student will receive theoretical input and coaching from their supervisor as well as take opportunities for research into specific clinical issues that may arise. Students are required to provide descriptive and reflective journals during the placement to enhance the process. In semesters three and four each placement block is provided immediately after the 8 week course element of the program to allow enrichment of skills and to allow utility of students in each placement agency. The utility issue from both the placement supervisor and student perspective has precipitated this change from a concurrent course work and placement, 2 day placement: 3 day class and 3 day placement: 2 day class weekly timetable, to the current 8 week class : 7 week placement schedule.

Admission Requirements

OSSD with the majority of courses at the College (C), University (U), University/College (M) or Open (O) level plus:

- Senior Level Biology (C) or (U)
- Grade 12 English ENG4U, ENG4C, EAE4C or EAE4U

Mature students - See **Admission Procedures** for details.
For more information, see the Admission Procedures document on the **Registrar's Office page**.

Field Placements

Employers who provide our field placement settings require a clear POLICE RECORD CHECK for criminal offences with vulnerable sector screening before accepting a student into the field placement setting. The record check MUST be obtained by the student at the student's expense. Students are expected to obtain this police clearance by mid-September. With-out the clearance the opportunity to complete field placements will be jeopardized.

Placements may be on day, afternoon or weekend shifts anywhere within Chatham-Kent, Windsor-Essex, Lambton or Middlesex. Students are required to provide their own transportation to the clinical area. The College is not able to guarantee placements in Windsor and/or Chatham or on a bus route.

Employment Opportunities

Graduate OTA/PTAs, work for such healthcare providers as hospitals, family health teams and community clinics, mental health facilities, long term care facilities such as Nursing Homes, Residential Care and Senior Assistive Living facilities, rehabilitation centers, and children treatment centers.

Health Requirements

- A satisfactory medical exam
- An up-to-date immunization record including tetanus and diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chicken pox), Hepatitis B (incl. Hep B titre within the last 24 months) and TB skin test.
- First Aid
- CPR - BCLS level C/AED
- NIOSH N95 Respirator Fit Test

Additional Information

- Program Physical Demands Analysis: **K893**

Program Costs

Fees are subject to adjustment each year. The fees for the current academic year are as follows:

Total 1st Year Tuition and Compulsory Fees: **$5,374.28**
For textbook prices see the **Bookstore web-site**.
For a breakdown of tuition and other compulsory fees for Canadian, U.S. and International students, see **Tuition & Fees**.

Contact Information

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DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Course Code	Credit	Course Name
Semester 1		
OTP100	4	Anatomy and Physiology
OTP105	3	Communication Skills for the OTA/PTA
OTP110	4	Orientation to Rehabilitation
OTP115	2	The Health Care System
SSC240	3	Developmental Psychology
ELEC1030	3	General Education Elective
MIC101	1	Introduction to Word-Processing Software
MIC102	1	Introduction to Presentation Software
Semester 2		
OTP200	5	Functional Human Movement
OTP205	4	Clinical Pathology for the OTA/PTA
OTP210	2	Communications Disorders in Rehabilitation
OTP215	2	Gerontology
OTP310	2	Psychiatric Disorders
ELEC1030	3	General Education Elective
MIC103	1	Introduction to Spreadsheet Software
MIC104	1	Introduction to Database Software
Semester 3		
OTP300	5	Therapeutic Skills – OTA
OTP305	5	Therapeutic Skills – PTA
ELEC1030	3	General Education Elective - Online
OTP301	17	Field Experience I
Semester 4		
OTP400	5	Therapeutic Skills – OTA II
OTP405	5	Therapeutic Skills – PTA II
OTP401	17	Field Experience II