

College of the Canyons
Occupational Therapy Assistant
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2022; 6:00pm-8:00pm

Commenced: 6:00 p.m.
Adjourned: 7:35 p.m.

Attendees:

John Adam	Director, Rehab Services / Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital
Barbara Ahlberg	OT / Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital / Santa Clarita SELPA Program
Michelle Asuncion	OT / Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital
Dr. Kathy Bakhit	Dean, Health Professions and Public Safety / COC
Dr. Anant Desai	President / Interface Rehab, Inc.
Dr. Luda Gorokhov	OTD MSM, OT / Providence Holy Cross Medical Center
Dr. Jenna Mele	Clinical Instructor / CBD / Owner / Connected Care Aging Solutions
Karen Ozaki	M.S., Ed., OTR/L / Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital
Natalie Seguin	Pediatric OTR/L / Progressive Steps
Dr. David Pevsner	PT DPT / Director of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program / COC
James Veal	MHA, COTA/L, FWECP / Westgate Gardens/St. Catherine University
Mary Kay Wolfe	OTD, OTR/L / Program Dir. / USC Occupational Therapy Department
Paige Yaffe	OT / Director of Rehab Services / Brandman Center PACE Program

The purpose of the meeting is to receive industry feedback regarding the viability of a new Occupational Therapy Program that is in consideration to be offered at College of the Canyons.

Overview of OTA Program Initiation

Discussion begins with review of labor market research for Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA), which reveals the following:

- The job market is going to remain steady for this occupation.
- Seventy-four percent of employees are able to find jobs within a year after completing a program.
- Fifty-three percent of students attained a living wage within a year of completing a program.
- Eighty-seven percent of individuals who occupy a job as an OTA come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- In the South Central Coast Region, there were one hundred and sixty-four OTA job openings in 2019.
- One hundred and ninety OTA job openings the South Central Coast Region are anticipated in 2024.
- The entry-level hourly earnings for an OTA is \$35.82.

- There were two hundred and five regional completions in 2020 and one hundred and sixty-nine regional openings in 2020 in the South Central Coast region in programs related to Occupational Therapy Technology.
- The fourth fastest growing occupation in Los Angeles County is OTA.

Input from the Advisory Board

- Industry professionals in attendance at the meeting were asked to share their experience hiring OTAs.

Dr. Luda Gorokhov: Holy Cross only posts job openings for Occupational Therapists (OTs) and not Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) because of the difficulty in getting positions filled.

Karen Ozaki: Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital currently has on COTA FTE and one per diem COTA. COTAs are doing treatments in the Acute Rehabilitation Unit and Outpatient sections of the hospital.

Paige Yaffe: COTAs working for The Brandman Centers PACE Program are instrumental in coordinating with the Occupational Therapists to ensure that documentation and treatments are completed. The Brandman Centers are having difficulty hiring full-time COTAs because of a lack of programs that can provide the certification that is needed.

Michelle Asuncion: As a hiring manager at a previous hospital, there was difficulty hiring COTAs because of a lack of candidates and experience.

Barbara Ahlberg: There is difficulty finding and maintaining COTAs in early intervention.

- The Advisory Board was asked if an Occupational Therapy Assistant Program was needed.

Anant Desai: An Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is needed and program development should move forward.

Dr. Luda Gorokhov: An OTA Program is needed. A community college that offers this program would be important because there are very few that do.

Dr. Jenna Mele: There is a need for COTAs but the change in Medicare reimbursement for COTAs vs OTRs should be considered.

Barbara Ahlberg: Adding an OTA Program would be valuable to the north end of LA County as there is a large underserved population of children between zero and three years old.

Review of Program, Course Sequence, and Curriculum/Instructional Design

- James Vea shared the five steps of accreditation with the meeting attendees, which are: A) Letter of Intent, B) Eligibility Application, C) Candidacy Application, D) Preaccreditation Review, E) On-site Evaluation
- The missions, visions, and philosophies for both the college and OTA Program were shared with the meeting attendees.
 - Philosophy is based on 5 core values
 - Teaching and learning
 - Respect for all people
 - Partnership with community
 - Excellence
 - Creativity and innovation
 - OTA program's mission has embedded COC's core values
 - Demonstrate **creative** skilled interventions appropriate to the employment as a competent, ethical and socially responsive entry level occupational therapy assistant who **teaches** others about occupational therapy and serves the complex and culturally diverse population of Santa Clarita and its surrounding communities.
 - Demonstrate the **respectful** understanding of occupationally-driven human beings and their physical, cognitive, developmental, psychosocial challenges that prevent them from participating independently in self-directed activities of daily living, following the pattern of active **learning** experiences that are focused on specific capabilities or knowledge areas.
 - Demonstrate **excellence** in the skills appropriate to work as a generalist in a wide variety of settings including, but not limited to hospitals, rehabilitation centers, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, school systems, psychiatric hospitals, private practice outpatient clinics, as well as **innovative** emerging areas of practice, and in doing so, contribute to overall **community** at large.
 - Work effectively in collaboration with an occupational therapist.
- James Vea shared in detail the A.S. Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum overview.
 - COC OTA program course comparisons with other colleges in California
 - Clovis Community College at Clovis, CA in the State College Community College District, Northern California (199 miles from College of the Canyons): 81 units
 - Grossmont College at El Cajon, CA in the Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District, Southern California (157 miles from College of the Canyons): 71 units
 - Sacramento City College at Sacramento in the Los Rios Community College District, Northern California (350 miles from College of the Canyons): 67-74 units

- Santa Ana College at Santa Ana in the Rancho Santiago Community College District, Southern California (65 miles from College of the Canyons): 72 units. Note: As of 9/6/2022, Santa Ana College has applied for baccalaureate degree in OTA
- Los Angeles City College at Los Angeles, CA in the Los Angeles Community College District, Southern California (35 miles from College of the Canyons). Note: As of 9/6/2022, the OTA program at Los Angeles City College does not have any information posted due to applicant status.
- COC OTA program course comparisons with other healthcare programs at COC
 - Proposed COC's Associate Degree of Occupational Therapy Assistant program: 76 units
 - COC's Associate Degree of Nursing program: 79 units
 - COC's Associate Degree in Medical Laboratory Technician program: 82.5 units
 - The OTA unit load is comparable to other healthcare programs at COC and meets ACOTE's B content standards

Major Prerequisite Requirements for the OTA Program (28 units):

- Biosci 201 – Anatomy (4 units) AND Biosci 202 – Physiology (4 units) OR Biosci 204 – Human Anatomy and Physiology I (4 units) AND Biosci 205 – Human Anatomy and Physiology II (4 units) [*meets ACOTE standard B.1.1*]
- Coms 105 – Fundamentals of Public Speaking (3 units) OR Coms 105H – Fundamentals of Public Speaking – Honors (3units)
- English 101 – English Composition (4 units) OR English 101H – English Composition - Honors (4 units)
- Health 249 – Medical Terminology (3 units)
- Math 140 – Introductory Statistics (4 units) OR Math 140X – Introductory Statistics with Support (5 units) OR Math 140H – Introductory Statistics - Honors (4 units) OR Soci 137 – Stats for the Social Sciences (4 units) OR Psych 104 – Stats for the Behavioral Sciences (4 units)
- Anthropology 103 – Cultural Anthropology (3 units) OR Anthropology 103H – Cultural Anthropology – Honors (3 units) OR Psychology 101 – Introduction to Psychology (3 units) OR Psychology 101H – Introduction to Psychology - Honors (3 units) OR Psychology 240 – Abnormal Psychology (3 units) OR Sociology 101 – Introduction to Sociology (3 units) OR Sociology 101H – Introduction to Sociology - Honors (3 units) [*meets ACOTE standard B.1.2*]
- Psychology 172 – Developmental Psychology (3 units) OR Psychology 172H – Developmental Psychology - Honors (3 units) [*meets ACOTE standard B.1.1*]

Courses not listed that are required for the AS degree (6 units):

- The American Institution Requirement GE classes (6 units required):
- OPTION 1: One course from: Economics 170, 170H, Ethnic Studies 116^{*}, 117^{*}, History 111, 111H, 112, 112H, 116^{*}, 117^{*}, 120^{*}, 120H^{*}, or 130^{*} AND Political Science 150 OR 150H

OR

- OPTION 2: Complete both History 111 OR 111H AND History 112 OR 112H
- Physical Education and Wellness – 2 unit minimum requirement is met by OTA 141: Conditions, Wellness, and Fundamental Treatment in Occupational Therapy (2.0 units) [meets ACOTE standard B.1.3]

Courses that are prerequisites for general educational required courses:

- Biosci 100-General Biology (4 units) is a prerequisite class to Biosci 201 – Anatomy AND Biosci 202 – Physiology OR Biosci 204 – Human Anatomy and Physiology I AND Biosci 205 – Human Anatomy and Physiology II

Articulation of prerequisite courses for CUS Occupational Therapy programs

- CSUDH's Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy
- SJSU's Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy

For the Associate in Science Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant program at College of the Canyons, the OTA core courses would be 42.0 credit units, 1394 total hours [392 lecture hours, 192 lab hours, 810 externship hours (90 fieldwork level I hours, 720 fieldwork level II hours)]. At College of the Canyons, the following is the equivalent units to hours ratio – 1 unit lecture = 1 hour lecture, 1 unit lab = 3 hours lab, 1 unit externship = 60 hours externship. The following OTA core courses are based upon meeting the ACOTE B.2 - B.7 standards:

Year 1, Semester 1 - Fall: 16 weeks (12.0 Units)

- OTA 100: Structural Foundations and Theory of Occupational Therapy, 2.0 lecture units (32.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 110: Foundations of Activity Analysis and Application, 1.5 lecture units (24.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 120: Foundations of Biomechanics and Applied Kinesiology in Occupational Therapy, 3.0 lecture units (48.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 121: Fundamental Practice of Biomechanics and Applied Kinesiology in Occupational Therapy Lab, 1.0 lab units (48.0 lab hours total)
- OTA 130: Foundational Theory and Process in Neurological Disorders and Psychosocial Issues, 3.0 lecture units (48.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 131: Fundamental Practice in Neurological Disorders and Psychosocial Issues Lab, 1.0 lab units (48.0 lab hours total)
- OTA 133: Fieldwork Level I in Psychosocial Issues, 0.5 externship units (30.0 externship hours total)

Year 1, Semester 2 - Spring: 16 weeks (12.0 Units)

- OTA 141: Conditions, Wellness, and Fundamental Treatment in Occupational Therapy, 2.0 lecture units (32.0 lecture hours total)

- OTA 151: Fundamentals of Documentation in Occupational Therapy, 1.0 lecture units (16.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 161: Fundamental Theory and Process in Developmental Disabilities and Pediatric Conditions, 3.0 lecture units (48.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 162: Functional Interventions in Developmental Disabilities and Pediatric Conditions Lab, 1.0 lab units (48.0 lab hours total)
- OTA 163: Fieldwork Level I in Developmental Disabilities and Pediatric Conditions, 0.5 externship units (30.0 externship hours total)
- OTA 171: Fundamental Theory and Process in Physical Dysfunction and Adult Rehabilitation, 3.5 lecture units (56.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 172: Functional Interventions in Physical Dysfunction and Adult Rehabilitation Lab, 1.0 lab units (48.0 lab hours total)

Year 1, Semester 3 – Summer: 8 weeks (6.0 Units)

- OTA 173: Fieldwork Level I in Physical Dysfunction and Adult Rehabilitation, 0.5 externship units (30.0 externship hours total)
- OTA 202: Functional Management of Occupational Therapy Services, 1.5 lecture units (24.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 212: Advanced Functional Interventions and Evidenced Based Practice in Occupational Therapy, 2.5 lecture units (40.0 lecture hours total)
- OTA 222: Clinical Reasoning and Electronic Documentation in Occupational Therapy, 1.5 lecture units (24.0 lecture hours total)

Year 2, Semester 4 – Fall: 16 weeks (12.0 Units)

- OTA 233: Fieldwork Level II for the OTA #1, 6.0 externship hours (320 externship hours + 40 hours seminar = 360 hours total)
- OTA 243: Fieldwork Level II for the OTA #2, 6.0 externship hours (320 externship hours + 40 hours seminar = 360 hours total)

Review of OTA faculty requirements

- Program Director
 - Must be a full-time core faculty member
 - Must be an initially certified occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant who is licensed
 - Must hold a minimum of a master's degree
 - Must have a minimum of 5 years of documented experience in the field of occupational therapy
 - Have at least 2 years of experience in a full-time academic appointment with teaching responsibilities at the postsecondary level.
- Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC)
 - Must be a full-time core faculty member
 - Must be an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant who is licensed

- Must have at least 2 years of clinical practice experience as an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant
- Hold a minimum of a baccalaureate degree
- FTE Faculty Composition
 - The program must have at least two full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty positions
 - At a minimum, each program must have a core faculty who is an occupational therapist and a core faculty who is an occupational therapy assistant.

- Industry representatives expressed support of the OTA Program curriculum
- Anant Desai would like to see an Ergonomics/Body Mechanics course added.
- Paige Yaffe shared that the most important part of programs are the labs and field work.
- It would benefit students to have exposure to different settings while doing fieldwork.
- It would be best to offer Hybrid classes that do not have labs attached to avoid disconnect.
- Jenna Mele would like for students to learn dementia competent care.
- Paige Yaffe would like for students to have a basic understanding of mechanics.
- Interpersonal skills are highly desired in the field.
- Students need to be able to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- The Brandman Center PACE Program, Progressive Steps, Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital, and Interface Rehab Inc. would be willing to take fieldwork students.