

Plan for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Occupational Therapy Graduate Program
The University of New Mexico

A. College, Department, and Date

1. College: School of Medicine
2. Department: Division of Occupational Therapy, in the Department of Pediatrics
3. Date: October 2, 2008

B. Academic Program of Study

Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT)

C. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Diane Parham, PhD, Professor & Program Director; DiParham@salud.unm.edu

D. Broad Program Goals & Student Learning Outcomes as Related to UNM Student Learning Goals

MOT Program Goals (Competencies) & Student Learning Outcomes	UNM Student Learning Outcomes		
	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility
Occupational Therapy Student Learning Outcomes			
A. Professional Knowledge and Reasoning in Practice			
1. Identify and apply in practice the basic principles and concepts that link occupation to health and well being of people with and without disabilities.	X		
2. Use principles of evidence-based practice to select and competently apply clinical assessments and therapeutic strategies.	X	X	
B. Professional Communication			
1. Clearly and accurately communicate and document clinical and professional information, in written and oral forms.	X	X	
C. Professional and Ethical Development			
1. Demonstrate ethical awareness, compassion, cultural sensitivity, and cultural responsiveness when providing interventions and planning programs.	X	X	X
2. Articulate the importance of advocacy for services and policy on behalf of people who have disabilities or are at risk for disability.	X	X	X

E. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Program

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)			
SLO	Means of Assessment	Measurement Type	Criteria for Success
A. Professional Knowledge and Reasoning in Practice			
A.1. Identify and apply in practice the basic principles and concepts that link occupation to health and well being of people with and without disabilities.	Total NBCOT* exam scores & pass rate.	Direct	Mean total score above the national mean; exam pass rate > 95%.
	Master's research project or thesis & poster.	Direct	Pass rate > 95%, as judged by student's master's research committee.**
	<i>Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student</i> *** score for Section II (Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy)	Direct	Satisfactory section score for > 95% of students
A.2. Use principles of evidence-based practice to select and competently apply clinical assessments and therapeutic strategies.	NBCOT exam scores on evaluation and intervention domains (Domains 1-3).	Direct	Mean scores above the national means.
	OTSPA**** performance.	Direct	Satisfactory scores > 95% of students.
	<i>Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student</i>	Direct	Final passing scores for > 95% of students.
	Employer Satisfaction Survey***** for UNM OT graduates	Indirect	High satisfaction reported by 90% of employers.
B. Professional Communication			
B.1. Clearly and accurately communicate clinical and professional information, in written and oral forms.	NBCOT exam score on professional standards & responsibilities domain (Domain 4).	Direct	Mean score above the national mean.
	OTSPA performance.	Direct	Satisfactory scores > 95% of students.
	<i>Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student</i> Scores for Sections III (Evaluation), IV (Intervention), & VI (Communication)	Direct	Satisfactory section scores for > 95% of students

C. Professional and Ethical Development			
C.1. Demonstrate ethical awareness, compassion, cultural sensitivity, and cultural responsiveness when providing interventions and planning programs.	OTSPA performance.	Direct	Satisfactory scores > 95% of students.
	<i>Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student</i> Scores for Sections I (Fundamentals) & VII (Professional Behaviors)	Direct	Satisfactory section scores for 95% of students
	Employer Satisfaction Survey for UNM OT graduates	Indirect	High satisfaction reported by 90% of employers.
C.2. Articulate the importance of advocacy for services and policy on behalf of people who have disabilities or are at risk for disability.	NBCOT exam scores on professional standards & responsibilities domain (Domain 4).	Direct	Mean score above the national mean.
	UNM OT graduate follow up survey.*****	Indirect	Advocacy actions reported by > 50% of each class, post graduation.

* NBCOT = National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapists, which administers a nationally normed examination. Passing score is required for practice as an occupational therapist in the U.S. and for licensure as an occupational therapist in most states (including New Mexico). Domains of the examination are:

1. Gather information regarding factors that influence occupational performance.
2. Formulate conclusions regarding the client's needs and priorities to develop a client centered intervention plan.
3. Select and implement evidence-based interventions to support participation in areas of occupation (e.g., ADL, education, work, play, leisure, social participation) throughout the continuum of care.
4. Uphold professional standards and responsibilities to promote quality in practice.

** Criteria for passing the Master's research project or thesis are:

1. Project & thesis: Student orally presents research study on which the student participated for the MOT degree, and is able to answer questions about any aspect of the study (purpose & rationale, literature review, methods, results, discussion) clearly and accurately.
2. Project: Student provides detailed explanation of his or her contribution to the faculty member's study
3. Project & thesis: Summarizes study visually and orally via a research poster that accurately depicts all aspects of the study.

*** *Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student* = formal assessment tool developed by the American Occupational Therapy Association for evaluation of OT student performance during advanced fieldwork, in which students perform clinical functions of an occupational therapist in a clinical or community-based setting. Passing score on this instrument is required in order to sit for the NBCOT exam.

**** OTSPA = Occupational Therapy Student Performance Assessment. This is the final examination for the MOT degree at UNM. The student must demonstrate clinical assessment, intervention planning, and documentation skills with a simulated patient, while being observed live on video by faculty, who score the student on specific procedural and interactional criteria.

***** Employer Satisfaction Survey for UNM OT graduates = Questionnaire sent annually to employers of alumni who graduated 1-2 years prior to the survey mailing. Employers are asked to rate alumni on questions related to knowledge, skills, habits, & ethics in the domains of professional practice, communication, and development.

***** UNM OT graduate follow up survey = Questionnaire sent annually to program alumni, approximately 6 months to 1 year after graduation. Graduates are asked for feedback on how well the curriculum prepared them for their professional work, as well as for information about their professional accomplishments and plans.

Who is Assessed

The program assessment process gathers evidence from all students, for all outcome measures. The program is small enough (24 admitted per year) to make this feasible and appropriate.

When Learning Outcomes Will Be Assessed (A) and Discussed (D)

In the following chart, A = Assessment and D = Discussion. Assessment results are analyzed by the key faculty involved with each measure (e.g., the faculty responsible for OTSPA also analyze results). Key faculty present results to entire faculty group, who then interpret and discuss findings during a designated weekly faculty meeting and/or 1-2 day retreat each semester.

Three-Year Timeframe for Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Outcome Measure	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011
OTSPA		A & D: Class of 2009		A & D: Class of 2010		A & D: Class of 2011
Research Project or Thesis		A & D: Class of 2009		A & D: Class of 2010		A & D: Class of 2011
Fieldwork Evaluation	D: Class of 2008*		A: Class of 2009	D: Class of 2009	A: Class of 2010	D: Class of 2010
NBCOT Exam	A & D: Class of 2008			A & D: Class of 2009		A & D: Class of 2010
Graduate Survey		A: Class of 2008	D: Class of 2008		A Class of 2009	D: Class of 2009
Employer Satisfaction Survey			A: Class of 2008	D: Class of 2008	A: Class of 2009	D: Class of 2009

* Class of 2008 entered the program in summer 2006, and therefore has a slightly different assessment schedule than subsequent classes, which enter in fall semester.

Who is Involved in Assessment			
Outcome Measure	Who Gathers & Analyzes Evidence	Who Interprets Evidence	Who Makes Recommendations
NBCOT Examination	NBCOT administers exam & analyzes scores in comparison to national data	All faculty	All faculty
Research Project/Thesis	Student's faculty advisor & research committee	Student's faculty advisor	Student's faculty advisor
Fieldwork Evaluation	Fieldwork Coordinator	Fieldwork Coordinator & Program Director	All faculty
OTSPA	Designated faculty who coordinate OTSPA administration	Designated faculty who serve as OTSPA coordinators	All faculty
Employer Satisfaction Survey	Designated staff members	Designated faculty member & Program Director	All faculty
Graduate Survey	Designated staff members	Designated faculty member & Program Director	All faculty

Process for Analysis, Interpretation, & Application of Findings to Initiate Change

- Changes in assessment mechanisms:** Faculty are assigned to oversee specific assessment tasks each year (e.g., two faculty work together each year to conduct OTSPA procedures, analyze the data, and present results to faculty). All faculty meet in a designated weekly faculty meeting (2-hour meeting), or within the course of a 1-2 day retreat (2 or 3 times per year) to discuss assessment findings and consider whether changes should be made. The recommendations that result from the discussion are documented in meeting notes as Action Items. Faculty who are responsible for conducting the assessments implement the changes in assessment procedures. In some cases, discussion results in changes in the scheduling of data collection or changes in outcome measures.
- Changes to curriculum design:** Changes in curriculum design do not frequently occur. They usually result from extended discussions during a retreat, which as noted above, is scheduled 2 to 3 times per year. All faculty contribute to decision making around any curriculum design changes. When discussing the implications of curriculum changes, faculty consider the total picture provided by all assessment data in order to prioritize changes that will support student learning. Changes in curriculum design are also influenced by information beyond student outcomes, for example, the program's strategic plan and SWOT analysis.
- Changes in pedagogy:** Changes in pedagogy are usually linked to individual courses and instructors, and are usually implemented by individual faculty members in order to strengthen student learning. Program assessment may contribute directly to changes in pedagogy. For example, if NBCOT exam scores or fieldwork evaluation ratings indicate weaknesses in students' cultural awareness, this would call for a change in the way that this topic is dealt with across the curriculum and within individual courses, perhaps by including a variety of learning experiences that incorporate cultural awareness and sensitivity. In addition to data from summative program assessment, faculty consider student course evaluations each semester, as well as student forums each semester where each class meets with faculty to discuss the program in a formative evaluation process. Before changes in pedagogy are implemented, faculty discuss the changes they are considering in a faculty meeting or retreat. Decisions regarding changes in pedagogy are recorded in an Action Plan for each course to be revised.

Communication of Recommendations

Recommendations may be initiated by faculty, fieldwork educators, students, alumni, or others who are invested in the program. Most often, however, it is the faculty who generate recommendations in response to program assessment findings. Recommendations are routinely discussed by faculty (including the Program Director) as a group at regular faculty meetings and biannual retreats. Meeting minutes are recorded in writing, with a designated space for action items and persons responsible, so that plans and decisions can be easily identified and reviewed. Meeting minutes are sent via e-mail to all faculty, and are stored electronically for easy retrieval. Staff involved with program evaluation procedures may attend meetings, and will receive a copy of the meeting notes. If a faculty or staff members cannot attend a meeting on a program evaluation process that they are involved in, the program director or other faculty member will meet with them to go over the pertinent information.