



## University of Pittsburgh – OT Program – Curriculum Design

The design for the OT curriculum is based on the interaction of concepts from the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organization (WHO), 2001), and three primary roles expected of entry-level occupational therapists as delineated in the ACOTE Standards – practitioner, manager, and contributor. The matrix formed by ICF concepts and the primary roles serves as an organizer for the relationship between the courses in our curriculum and the content within courses.

World Health Organization. (2001). *International classification of functioning, disability and health*. Geneva: Author.

The vertical axis of our curriculum matrix is formed by the following **ICF concepts** (WHO, 2001, pp. 8, 10):

- Environmental factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives.
- Participation is involvement in a life situation.
- Participation restrictions are problems an individual may experience in involvement in life situations.
- Activity is the execution of a task or action by an individual.
- Activity limitations are difficulties an individual may have in executing activities.
- Body functions are the physiological functions of body systems (including psychological functions).
- Body structures are anatomical parts of the body such as organs, limbs and their components.
- Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as significant deviation or loss.
- Functioning indicates non-problematic aspects of health and health-related states.
- Disability indicates impairment, activity limitations or participation restrictions.

The horizontal axis of our curriculum matrix is formed by the three **primary roles** expected of an entry-level occupational therapist.

### Role of Practitioner:

The occupational therapy practitioner, based on outcomes that are meaningful to clients, uses evaluation data to formulate and implement interventions to establish, restore, maintain, or enhance functional and structural integrity, activity, and participation in lifestyles that are optimally independent, productive, and satisfying to clients. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to:

- Establish therapeutic relationships with clients and caregivers, and professional relationships with colleagues consistent with the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (AOTA, 2015);
- Screen and evaluate client's participation and participation restrictions, activity and activity limitations, functional and structural integrity and impairments, psychosocial factors and occupational environment; document the findings and accurately interpret the results;
- Formulate, implement, and document occupation-based intervention, using current best evidence, to enhance functioning and reduce or prevent disability; and,



- Develop and implement a transition plan in collaboration with clients in preparation for the discontinuation of occupational therapy services when appropriate.

### **Role of Manager:**

The occupational therapy manager plans, organizes, implements, staffs, directs, and evaluates occupational therapy services; coordinates these functions with other health, education, and work-related services; and promotes understanding of occupational therapy services. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to:

- Use data when making resource and program management decisions and apply management principles and strategies to direct occupational therapy services; and,
- Relate the roles and functions of occupational therapy to other health care services and describe the influence of external factors, such as demographic trends, public laws, health care policies, and reimbursement policies on health care services, and implement methods to effect change.

### **Role of Contributor:**

The occupational therapy contributor has a professional responsibility to recognize and influence health care within the context of world, national, state, community, and work environments. Contributors participate in the development and application of a scholarly body of knowledge within occupational therapy practice. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognize, integrate, and discuss issues pertaining to public health and occupational therapy practices, and articulate and implement methods to effect change;
- Find, analyze, and integrate scholarly works from both occupational therapy and other appropriate sources; and,
- Design, implement, and disseminate beginning level research/program development projects as well as articulate the basics of programmatic grant writing.

**Curriculum Matrix: ICF x Primary Roles.** Table 1 demonstrates how the roles of practitioner, manager, and contributor interact with the ICF concepts to create the framework used by the University of Pittsburgh Occupational Therapy Program to plan, implement, and evaluate the program.



Table 1. ICF concepts and professional roles

		ROLES		
		Practitioner	Manager	Contributor
ICF*	<b>Environment Factors</b>	Analyzes the influence of the environment on impairments, activities and participation and adapts environment and/or recommends changes.	Plans, establishes and manages organizational, educational and community environments.	Uses research evidence to identify & influence health within multiple environments. Advocates for the needs of consumers served by OT.
	<b>Participation / Participation Restriction</b>	Evaluates and intervenes for factors that enable or restrict full participation of consumers of OT services.	Considers social, economic, political, legislative and policy issues to plan, establish and manage service delivery systems that promote participation of OT consumers and populations with disabilities.	Uses & designs research to examine factors that enable full participation of individuals and populations and disseminates findings to consumer, professional, regulatory and health policy groups.
	<b>Activities / Activity Limitations</b>	Analyzes everyday activities and occupations. Evaluates and intervenes for factors that enable or limit expected, required, or desired activities/ occupations of consumers of OT services.	Plans, establishes, and manages resources and service delivery systems that reduce activity limitations & promote activities for OT consumers and populations with disabilities.	Uses and designs research to examine factors that enable activities and occupations of individuals and populations, and disseminates findings to consumer, professional, regulatory and health policy groups.
	<b>Body Functions &amp; Structures / Impairment</b>	Evaluates and intervenes for factors that influence optimum health as well as deviations and loss of functions/structures.	Plans, establishes, and manages resources and service delivery systems that reduce impairments and promote healthy function of body functions/ structures for OT consumers and populations with disabilities.	Uses and designs research to examine factors that prevent deviations & loss of functions/structures to promote health of individuals and populations, and disseminates findings to consumer, professional, regulatory and health policy groups.

\*International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health



**University of Pittsburgh**  
**Department of Occupational Therapy**  
**Level I Fieldwork Education**

Fieldwork education is a crucial part of professional preparation and is integrated as a component of the curriculum design. It is an extension of the Pitt OT program within the clinical/community setting. The fieldwork experience provides the OT student with the opportunity to learn professional responsibilities by having them modeled by qualified and experienced personnel and to practice these responsibilities under supervision. The purpose of Level I Fieldwork is to introduce students to fieldwork, apply knowledge to practice, and develop understanding of the needs of clients. Students are expected to actively participate with clients throughout the fieldwork experience.

**Course Description**

This course applies knowledge to practice and develops understanding of the needs of clients.

**Relationship of this Course to the Curriculum Design**

This course introduces students to the fieldwork experience, integrates content in the curriculum, and focuses on preparing the student for the practitioner role (P) by experiential learning in Level I fieldwork. As a practitioner (P), the student will need to evaluate a client's occupational needs, problems, and concerns, understand the client and the essential role of access and participation in meaningful and productive activities in the client's health and well-being, address the client's occupational performance problems in an intervention plan that includes intervention focused on facilitating improved engagement in occupations, and review the client's progress toward targeted outcomes. The manager role (M) and contributor role (C) are addressed in learning activities and discussions in fieldwork seminar. As a manager (M), the student will need to identify their role as a consultant and supervisor of occupational therapy services. As a contributor (C), the student will use evidence to contribute in each fieldwork experience, learning activity and seminar discussion. Students will integrate the ICF with levels of body structures, body functions, activity, participation, and environmental factors during fieldwork.

**Course Outcome**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate increased involvement in the fieldwork experience, apply knowledge to practice, and develop and understanding of the needs of clients.

**Specific Course Objectives**

- Understand the needs of clients throughout the life span (pediatric, adult, and geriatric) across practice setting.
- Demonstrate ability to identify pertinent client behaviors, and psychosocial and environmental factors that influence performance.



- Observe and engage in, as appropriate, aspects of occupational therapy services (i.e., occupational profile, interview, analysis of occupational performance, intervention plan/implementation – individual and group) with clients. Demonstrate positive interpersonal skills including but not limited to cooperation, flexibility, tact, empathy, and respect for diversity during all interactions.
- Identify and demonstrate understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion in populations and practice settings.

### **Professional Expectations**

- Adhere to ethical standards, site's policies and procedures, and safety regulations.
- Demonstrate effective time management, initiative, engagement, preparedness, problem solving, and ability to follow through with responsibilities.
- Collaborate with supervisor(s) to maximize learning experience and respond to constructive feedback.
- Uses self-reflection, asks questions, and demonstrates ability to analyze, synthesize, and interpret information.
- Communicates verbally and nonverbally with clients, supervisor, and staff; exhibits appropriate level of confidence; and verbal and written language is appropriate to the recipient of the information.