

# STUDENT HANDBOOK



# Master of Occupational Therapy Student Handbook

## Introduction and Purpose

Trinity provides this Handbook for Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) degree students as a supplemental compendium of policies stating requirements and expectations for students enrolled in the Occupational Therapy Master's degree program. The MOT Student Handbook incorporates by reference the policies and expectations for all students at Trinity as stated on Trinity's website <http://www.trinitydc.edu/policies> and the [NHP Catalog](#).

The Dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions, the MOT Program Director, and the MOT faculty have broad authority and responsibility to ensure the fulfillment of academic expectations and requirements for all MOT students.

While this Handbook provides general guidance, the MOT Program Director and NHP Dean reserve the right to make decisions in particular cases appropriate to the circumstances and facts presented. To that end, students must accept and follow their instructors' directions in courses, their academic advisors, the Dean, and other legitimate campus authorities.

The MOT Student Handbook is intended to provide students with important information and resources to help them succeed in their occupational therapy academic program and develop into entry-level practitioners. The Handbook contains information about the MOT educational program and the relevant policies, procedures, and professional behavior standards necessary to successfully complete the MOT program.

Students are expected to:

- Carefully read the Handbook and use it as a reference while at Trinity.
- Accept and agree to uphold all program and university policies and procedures described in University policies, the MOT Handbook, and the University Catalog. Students are to follow those policies and procedures during interactions with fellow students, faculty, university personnel, professionals, families, and clients in the community.
- Sign the MOT Handbook acknowledgment form indicating they have read the Handbook, understand the MOT program's accreditation status, and agree to meet all program and university policies while at Trinity. Students should retain a signed copy of the form for their records and return the original to the MOT Program to be placed in the student's file.

By enrolling at Trinity, the student inherently accepts the rules of the institution and the directions of the faculty and administrative staff. This includes accepting academic policies and procedures regarding course schedules, registration, financial aid, payment arrangements, enrollment in specific courses, following course sequences, prerequisites, and all related academic matters. The deans of the academic units and the provost have broad final authority to resolve student academic issues. Insubordination, the refusal to follow a legitimate direction, may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

This Handbook is reviewed each academic year and updated accordingly. The program values student and faculty suggestions during the regular review process.

## The University

Trinity Washington University has a [Student Handbook](#), a guide for students enrolled in all programs at Trinity. It contains policies, processes, and resources.

The Student Handbook is a companion guide to numerous other policy statements and guidelines in the [Trinity NHP Graduate Catalog](#) that contains the respective schools' academic policies and other policy statements available on Trinity's website at [www.trinitydc.edu/policies](http://www.trinitydc.edu/policies). Trinity reserves the right to amend these policy statements at any time.

## The School of Nursing and Health Professions

Trinity's School of Nursing and Health Professions emphasizes educating culturally competent healthcare practitioners who value healthcare delivery resulting from and influenced by a client-centered approach incorporating technology and evidence-based practice to generate effective client care outcomes. The liberal arts provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to think critically about how societal and professional conditions can enhance or impede the quality of care delivered, thus affecting client outcomes.

The School of Nursing and Health Professions offers professionally oriented graduate degree programs in counseling, occupational therapy, public health, and nursing. At the core of health professions is the ability to apply evidence-based practice, see the client holistically, provide culturally competent care, understand the roles of various healthcare providers, and effectively communicate succinctly and accurately. Through concentrated study, students gain in-depth knowledge and expertise in these fields in conjunction with the opportunity for practical application of what they learn in the classroom. We expect collaboration among healthcare professionals to achieve the best outcomes for clients when each healthcare professional recognizes the strengths and skills their colleagues bring to the team.

## Policies and Procedures

Trinity Washington University strictly adheres to ethical, legal, safety, and professional behavior standards. The following documents can be found in the Trinity Student Handbook, found at [www.trinitydc.edu/policies](http://www.trinitydc.edu/policies):

- [Academic Honesty Policy](#)
- [Harassment Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Technology and Telecommunications Policy](#)
- [NHP Graduate Program Policies](#)
- [Student Grievances](#)

## Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates of all divisions in the School of Nursing and Health Professions will:

- Demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills,
- Apply evidence-based practice within a professional context,

- Demonstrate critical thinking as evidenced by delivery of safe, ethical, and legal care as a member of an inter-professional healthcare team,
- Demonstrate leadership in healthcare,
- Successfully attain professional certification and licensure.

## The Master of Occupational Therapy Program

### History

Trinity's Master of Occupational Therapy is one of four graduate programs in the School of Nursing and Health Profession and the second Trinity occupational therapy program. The MOT program earned Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) accreditation in April 2017.

### Accreditation

Trinity Washington University's entry-level occupational therapy master's degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org). Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, all states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

### Program Description

Trinity's MOT program is designed to meet ACOTE standards for accreditation and provide access to high-quality occupational therapy education to students from diverse educational and professional backgrounds through a blended learning educational model. The program prepares students for success in fieldwork, on the NBCOT certification exam, and in entry-level practice as a generalist practitioner.

The 70-credit MOT program requires five semesters of full-time academic study (didactic and clinical education) and two 12-week Level II fieldwork placements (24 total weeks) in two different healthcare settings. Master of occupational therapy students must pass all Level I and II fieldwork placements to matriculate through the program and be eligible for graduation.

The program utilizes a blended-learning format where a large percentage of didactic content is delivered online through Moodle, an online learning management system. Online and hybrid courses occur throughout the curriculum. Online learning combines synchronous and asynchronous experiences. They are designed to incorporate best practices and may include assigned reading, lectures, videos, and podcasts linked to discussions, quizzes, and assignments. Hybrid courses are a blend of online and on-campus experiences. Students attend in-person classes on campus for eight weekends per semester, which may include lectures, discussions, and laboratory activities. Community experiences and Level I fieldwork (FW) complement didactic coursework in designated semesters. Level I FW placements

provide opportunities to interact with clients, families, and professionals in diverse practice settings, observe OT assessments and treatments, and practice skills under the supervision of an appropriate professional. All Level I FW rotations and community experiences occur in addition to on-campus and online sessions. Students complete two Level II FW placements in their final two semesters of the program. Completing all coursework and Level II fieldwork allows students to graduate with a Trinity MOT degree.

## Mission and Philosophy

**Program Mission:** Consistent with Trinity’s institutional mission, Trinity Washington University’s Master of Occupational Therapy program aims to develop competent, caring, and committed generalist practitioners who exemplify Trinity’s core mission values of respect, justice, and service. Students will be reflective of the occupational therapy profession and Trinity and prepared to meet the occupational needs of diverse populations in our community. Our blended learning program is committed to the following:

- Offering high-quality hybrid professional education to a diverse student population,
- Providing classroom, fieldwork, and community experiences that enrich student learning and prepare students for current and emerging practice settings in their communities,
- Establishing strong clinical partnerships with the local and global community.

We envision building a community of faculty, students, and alumni with strong ties to the occupational therapy profession, Trinity's healthcare professional programs, and the Washington, DC community. We want our program recognized for the quality of our faculty, program of study, and fieldwork experiences; professional preparation and quality of our graduates; and our contributions to promoting access and health through consultation, collaboration, research, and service.

**Program Philosophy:** The Trinity MOT program is designed per the American Occupational Therapy Association's Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education (AOTA, 2007) to meet the missions of Trinity Washington University and the Master of Occupational Therapy program. The program seeks to educate clinicians who embody the core values of Trinity and the occupational therapy profession and possess the necessary skills for success in entry-level practice. With practical and fieldwork experiences, we develop clinical skills, support evidence-based practices, and build professionalism. We are committed to providing innovative teaching, advising, and supportive learning to educate strong, caring clinicians who contribute to the healthcare community and the profession of occupational therapy.

Educating future professionals is a complex process, and current models of medical education suggest that occupational therapy education must combine academic knowledge with clinical skills and professional identity training to prepare graduates for entry-level practice (Harden, Sowden & Dunn, 1984). The MOT program combines foundational knowledge about occupational therapy and biomedical and sociocultural contributors to health and disability with practical and fieldwork experiences that develop clinical skills, support evidence-based practice and build professionalism. The program implements innovative teaching and professional mentoring to educate strong, caring clinicians who can contribute to the healthcare community and the profession of occupational therapy.

MOT students must invest considerable time and effort to participate actively in synchronous and asynchronous classroom discussions, assignments, simulations, and clinical placements. Students who invest in learning are challenged to become self-directed learners, reflective and critical thinkers, and

creative problem-solvers, which is the ultimate goal of all graduate and professional education (Knowles, et al., 1998). These skills and a commitment to lifelong learning are needed for occupational therapy practice in current practice settings. Students will be prepared to provide the necessary skills to expand occupational therapy into emerging settings and new communities and populations.

**Program Philosophy of Teaching and Learning:** In a professional program, learning must be an interactive and reciprocal process that requires both teachers and learners to be involved and committed. The Trinity MOT program recognizes that students come to their professional program with a variety of educational backgrounds and life experiences, as well as different preferred ways of learning. Trinity's integrated MOT curriculum is designed to help students with varying backgrounds and learning preferences make ongoing connections between coursework and clinical practice and apply what they are learning to clinical situations from the first semesters of the program. The curriculum is designed to connect core concepts and themes between courses and across semesters. Courses are designed with clear learning outcomes that allow students to measure what they are learning. Faculty are committed to providing varied learning experiences and teaching methods that make course material accessible and meaningful to every student. This integrated model of professional education will facilitate active learning, build clinical reasoning and professional-practice skills, and prepare students from diverse backgrounds for entry-level practice and professional success. Education promotes professional and clinical reasoning, critical reasoning, cultural understanding, and the integration of professional values, theories, ethics, and skills (AOTA, 2018, p. 1).

Students in a graduate program must take responsibility for their learning and become actively engaged in the learning process. Students must be prepared to invest considerable time and effort outside of class and participate actively in classroom discussions, assignments, practicums, simulations, and clinical placements to succeed in the MOT program. Students who invest in learning will be challenged to become self-directed, reflective, critical thinkers, and creative problem-solvers.

## Curricular Framework

The Trinity MOT program prepares occupational therapists for generalist practice in traditional and emerging practice settings. To meet this goal, we have adopted an integrated model curriculum design where courses are linked within a given semester and build on each other cumulatively from semester to semester. Trinity MOT students are introduced to the core material and clinical skills in their first semester. They gain advanced knowledge to build clinical competence and professionalism by revisiting topics and experiences as they progress through the program. This curricular design model is consistent with contextual learning concepts from cognitive psychology and constructivist models of adult education and has gained increasing support in medical education over the past decade (Harden, 2014). This model fits the program's philosophy of OT education by engaging students through various learning experiences and providing clear links between coursework and clinical experiences.

The Trinity MOT program has identified five curricular threads that give organization and coherence to the course sequence and that support the mission and vision of the program and the philosophy of the occupational therapy profession:

- Occupation and Occupation-Based Practice,
- Scholarly Inquiry and Evidence-Based Practice,
- Therapeutic Processes,

- Professional Development and Leadership,
- Advocacy, Community Involvement, and Service

Course organization and sequencing are guided by a belief that training occupational therapy professionals requires transmitting four types of information or knowledge:

- Basic and advanced didactic information,
- Pragmatic knowledge (thinking and therapeutic skills),
- Applied knowledge (clinical application of knowledge and skills),
- Professional knowledge (professional behavior and communication).

The curricular framework is built around these four teaching/learning modules. The curriculum is structured so that each semester involves classes that impart basic or advanced information (e.g., functional anatomy, neuroscience, research), classes focused on training clinical skills (e.g., OT Process Series), clinical intervention courses that introduce clinical reasoning, assessment and treatment through both practicum and clinical placements (e.g., Pediatric Intervention), and professional seminars designed to build professional identity and behaviors. The purpose is to integrate multiple ways of thinking and to know into each semester of academic work so that students gain knowledge, skills, and clinical/professional competence from their first semester of the program.

**Curricular Threads:** The Trinity MOT program identified five curricular threads that give organization and coherence to the course sequence and support the program's mission, vision, and philosophy of the occupational therapy profession.

1. OCCUPATION AND OCCUPATION-BASED PRACTICE - The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 4<sup>th</sup> ed (AOTA, 2020) places human occupation at the center of occupational therapy practice. This thread of occupation as the means and end of occupational therapy intervention runs through the entire curriculum. Our primary focus on occupation is designed to provide students with a strong foundation grounded in the basic tenets of occupational therapy and the use of occupation as a therapeutic tool and product of the intervention. The goal is for our graduates to embrace the unique contributions of occupational engagement to health, participation, and well-being as core values.
2. SCHOLARLY INQUIRY AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE - This curricular thread addresses the scientific basis of occupational therapy intervention and advances AOTA's Vision 2025 (2017). It is designed to provide students with the basic skills needed to deliver science-driven, evidence-based assessments and interventions. A second goal is to train students in skills necessary for participation in scholarship and service to promote occupational therapy practice.
3. THERAPEUTIC PROCESSES - This curricular theme focuses on developing clinical knowledge and skills needed for entry-level generalist practice in traditional and emerging settings. It involves competence in knowing *what* is essential. It involves *how* to do things such as functional transfers, collecting data for an occupational profile, or writing progress notes to document treatment outcomes, and *why* this is the best strategy. The material presented in this curricular thread is closely tied to and builds on foundational information from the occupation and the Scholarly Inquiry and Evidence-based Practice thread.
4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP - This curricular thread addresses the growth of professional behaviors and communication patterns needed for entry-level generalist practice. As students' progress through the MOT program, they must acquire the didactic

knowledge and skills required for occupation-based and evidence-based practice and the patterns of behavior, communication, and collaboration essential to being an occupational therapist. One goal of this thread is to help students develop a professional identity and the professional skills needed to practice. Another goal is to facilitate a commitment to ongoing professional growth and development, life-long learning, and participation in professional organizations.

5. **ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AND SERVICE** - The final curricular thread addresses the program's commitment to promoting access to health care and providing service to the community. This is consistent with the institutional mission and the mission of the MOT program. This thread aims to help students develop social awareness and prepare them to be advocates for their profession and the communities where they practice.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Master of Occupational Therapy Program will:

- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills in a variety of professional contexts to work effectively with clients, families, and others,
- Demonstrate clinical skills in assessment, treatment planning, treatment implementation, and documentation at the level needed for entry-level practice in a variety of settings,
- Describe the importance of scientific inquiry and research for clinical practice and demonstrate the skills necessary to locate, evaluate, and apply scientific evidence to the occupational therapy process,
- Apply the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics in professional practice during interactions with clients, families, other professionals, and groups,
- Pass the NBCOT certification exam.

## Academic and Conduct Policies Specific to the Program

Master of Occupational Therapy programs' policies and procedures are consistent within Trinity and the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Students are required to satisfy both the requirements of the MOT program and the policies and procedures of the University to remain in good academic standing.

The requirements reflect the core mission values and vision of Trinity, which emphasizes a commitment to the education of women (and men), values and integration of liberal learning through professional preparation, and grounding in the mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and the Catholic tradition, welcoming persons of all faiths, to achieve the larger purposes of learning in the human search for meaning and fulfillment.

Trinity Washington University strictly adheres to ethical, legal, safety, and professional standards. Students who compromise this integrity will be suspended from the Master of Occupational Therapy program.

While the following sections provide general academic guidance, specific rules and expectations for student work in courses and fieldwork settings will appear in each course syllabus. The Dean of NHP, MOT Program Director, and faculty reserve the right to expand and change the specific academic guidelines as necessary to maintain compliance with accreditation and licensure rules, as well as the rules and expectations of fieldwork partners.

The Dean of NHP, the MOT Program Director, and the faculty have broad authority and responsibility to fulfill academic expectations and requirements for all MOT students. While this Handbook provides general guidance, the Dean and directors reserve the right to make decisions in particular cases appropriate to the circumstances and facts presented.

## Attendance

Trinity MOT program expects students to attend and actively participate in all scheduled lectures, labs, fieldwork, and professional seminars. Class attendance and participation are essential to building knowledge, competence, and confidence. Students are expected to be on campus for all scheduled class meetings. Students are expected to arrive for class on time, remain in the classroom for the entire class period, follow the instructions, and actively participate in course activities. Students are not permitted to use cell phones for calling or texting during class, and using PDAs and laptops is at the course instructor's discretion. Failure to follow classroom expectations and lack of active participation will severely affect course grades and professional behavior assessments. These expectations apply to virtual and face-to-face on-campus sessions.

Instructors will monitor student attendance in face-to-face and online activities. Students who miss a class must contact the course instructor and MOT Program Director as early as possible to avoid grade penalties.

**Excused absences** *may* be granted for an immediate family member's death, including a spouse, sibling, parent, or child. An excused absence *may* also be granted for the performance of Jury duty and inpatient hospitalization of the student. A physician's office visit, a student's emergency room visit, a visit to a relative in the hospital, or car mechanical problems do not automatically constitute grounds for an excused absence. All excused absences are at the discretion of the MOT Program Director. Proper documentation must be provided, such as a death certificate, record of inpatient hospitalization, or jury duty summons, to be granted an excused absence. The MOT Program Director will notify the faculty members concerned that the student has been granted an excused absence. Students granted an excused absence must make up missed clinical, classes, or exams.

**Unexcused absences:** Two or more absences over a 16-week semester may fail the course.

**Participation in Laboratory Activities:** Students in the MOT program are expected to participate in all learning activities. Occupational therapy is a hands-on profession that involves close personal contact with clients. Laboratory activities with classmates are critical to learning clinical skills and essential to courses. While we understand that students may find it initially uncomfortable, participation in activities, including hands-on and simulated assessment and intervention activities that involve touching and moving, is necessary for satisfactory completion of coursework and progression in the program. For this reason, students must participate in all activities to earn a passing grade.

## Assignments

All assignments must be the student's original work, not copied from another source or another student. All assignments and examinations are to be completed individually unless otherwise stated as 'group work' in the instructions/rubric for the assignment.

**Expected Writing Style:** American Psychological Association (7<sup>th</sup> ed) Style (APA): APA is a resource

used to cite sources within the social sciences. All written work must be typed, double-spaced, and in a scholarly format consistent with APA guidelines unless otherwise instructed by faculty. Please ensure that the typed work displays consistent font style and size unless utilized appropriately for emphasis. The [Grammarly](#) program is highly recommended.

Students are responsible for submitting assignments on the due date specified in the course syllabus/Moodle unless the instructor has granted permission, in advance, to submit materials at another time. The privilege to submit late assignments will be at the professor's discretion. Each day an assignment is submitted late without the approval of the instructor, twelve percentage points (12%) will be deducted from the final assignment grade. After three days, the assignment will receive a zero. Discussion posts will be counted as late if submitted later than 11:59 pm on the due date. Submission times are given in Eastern Standard Time (EST).

## Examinations

Quizzes/Examinations are to be taken as scheduled unless an extraordinary circumstance prevents the quiz or examination from being taken. In any such event, the faculty member must be notified via email at least 1 hour before the quiz or examination. The MOT Program Director must approve all make-up assignments, quizzes, or exams before the due date. The Director, faculty member, and the student may arrange an alternative date and time for the make-up exam to be proctored if the student has been granted an excused absence. Any unexcused absence from an exam will result in a zero.

Exams and quizzes require [Safe Exam Browser](#). Students will take the assessment through Moodle, enabled with the software. Students must ensure their devices can download the Safe Exam Browser program software.

Students are not allowed to use faculty-only restricted resources to prepare for assessments. Students are not allowed to receive assistance of any kind from other students during the administration of an assessment. Exams and quizzes are used to evaluate critical thinking, not memorizing content. Any student suspected of cheating will be referred to the Dean of NHP. The MOT program follows Trinity's [Academic Honesty policy](#).

Students who observe or are aware of any breach of Trinity's academic honesty policy on the part of another student are encouraged to confront the violator and ask them to report the infraction. If the violator refuses, then the student witness should make the report directly to the faculty member or their academic Dean.

Faculty members who suspect a student of cheating, including plagiarism, should report the case immediately to their academic Dean, who will consult with the faculty member while also sending a notice to the AHRB chair and provost.

## Blended Learning

The Trinity MOT program is offered through a blended learning model that combines online/virtual instruction with face-to-face meetings on campus, community activities, and fieldwork experiences. This blended learning model requires students to complete a substantial portion of their didactic learning off

campus via Moodle, Trinity's online learning management system. Although the distance education requirements for each course may vary, students should be aware that this is a full-time graduate program with rigorous standards and expectations. Students should expect to spend 40 hours or more per week completing synchronous and asynchronous learning. Specific course requirements and expectations will be clearly outlined on each syllabus.

Course Schedule and Modules: On-campus class sessions are facilitated on Fridays and Saturdays, eight weekends each semester. All MOT courses will use a schedule where content is divided by weeks or learning modules to facilitate learning. Course content for each week or module will be available to students via Moodle. Students can expect to spend much of their on-campus time in active learning and laboratory activities and should dress accordingly.

## Distance Education Learning

The MOT Program uses Trinity email, Google applications, and Moodle as the primary vehicles for communicating important information to students. It is essential that students log into Moodle regularly. Selected textbooks may have computerized elements. Students are expected to develop competence in using these elements and "plug-ins". Students are expected to have an alternative plan for technical disruptions. Technical issues are unacceptable excuses for not submitting assignments or completing quizzes/exams. The following policies related to student learning in the MOT program are in place.

- **Recordings:** Synchronous classes will be held via Zoom. Students are **NOT PERMITTED** to record the online synchronous sessions without written permission from faculty ahead of the session. This includes using the Zoom recording feature or external devices like cell phones.
- **Postings:** Students are **NOT PERMITTED** to copy and share items posted on Moodle. The materials on this course website are only for the use of students enrolled in this course for purposes associated with the course and may not be retained or further disseminated.
- **Preparation for class:** Classes require students to synthesize fundamental and theoretical knowledge. The best tools are your assigned readings, videos, recorded lectures, and PowerPoint presentations. Students are expected to prepare for each week/module and participate in class discussions and group activities. The instructor will facilitate discussions and pose questions, assuming that the student has prepared before the class session.
- **Background:** Please be mindful of distracting backgrounds and noises during synchronous sessions and adjust your settings accordingly. Non-distracting virtual backgrounds are permitted. Please dress appropriately and professionally during all sessions.
- **Communication:** Trinity faculty, staff, and students are expected to use Trinity email, Google applications, and Moodle as the primary vehicles for communicating important information. Students must check their Trinity email account and course Moodle site at least once daily. Faculty and students should make every attempt to respond to email and Moodle communication within 48 hours.

## Statement about Technology

A blended learning graduate program, such as the Trinity MOT program, requires considerable computer work and the use of online resources. Students in the MOT program must be proficient in computer skills and have access to a computer and a reliable internet connection to complete assigned distance learning activities outside the face-to-face classroom. Students are expected to be able to effectively use Microsoft Office tools such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google applications, and online learning management systems. Trinity's policy on [Minimum Computing Standards](#) is available via the Trinity homepage.

Exams and quizzes require [Safe Exam Browser](#). Students will take the assessment through Moodle, enabled with the software. Students must ensure their device can download the software for the Safe Exam Browser program.

**Moodle-Specific Information:** Students are required to complete a Moodle course for students before the first day of classes in the first semester. There may be learning resources your instructor might refer you to or require you to engage in or download. Experience has shown that successful Trinity MOT students are self-motivated and have excellent time management skills. Students should submit assignments on time. Students should not wait until the last minute to submit assignments. Allow yourself extra time to resolve technology issues. Students may choose to print materials so they may continue their studies without a computer.

## Social Media

MOT students are to refer to Trinity's [Social Media Policy](#) on the Trinity website.

## Behavioral Expectations

**Professional Behaviors and Care of Others:** As a practice profession, occupational therapy places great trust and reliance upon individual responsibility and accountability. Students are expected to exhibit personal and emotional characteristics consistent with a developing OT professional role and to professionally conduct themselves. In the first semester at Trinity, MOT students should exhibit these behaviors. Such expectations are also incorporated by reference into the preface of this Handbook and Trinity's Code of Responsible Conduct for Professional Students. Students' professional behaviors will be assessed regularly to meet the profession's standards. Progression in the program may be affected by students' unprofessional behaviors as assessed by faculty. Professional behavior advising occurs throughout the MOT program and is facilitated by MOT faculty advisors. A formal assessment of professional behaviors occurs in the second and fifth semesters of the MOT program.

**Reasonable Suspicion Drug and Alcohol Policy:** In the University setting and during fieldwork activities, OT students must uphold the standards of the OT profession to ensure safe, effective, and supportive client care. An impaired OT student may have altered judgment and skills. Appropriate management of abuse and addiction is critical for OT education and practice. Trinity Washington University's policy is to comply with federal and District laws and regulations detailing the use and detection of drugs and alcohol. This policy addresses drug and alcohol testing of OT students involved in fieldwork activities based on reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use. Students must also know that the fieldwork site may require a drug test at any time. Students are responsible for complete cooperation with and fulfillment of all requirements of the clinical site supervisors. This policy is subject to change at the sole discretion of the University and is meant to supplement other relevant University policies.

If a faculty member reasonably suspects that an OT student is impaired due to drug or alcohol use, that faculty member will consult with the OT Program Director. The Director may also consult with other university authorities depending upon the circumstances. The Director may require the student to take a drug test at the student's own expense. Depending upon the results of the test, the Director may recommend additional disciplinary action to the Dean or Provost. A student's refusal to take a drug test may incur disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

**Cheating:** Cheating will not be tolerated at Trinity. According to institutional policy, "Cheating is an

action that circumvents the learning process to gain grades and academic advantages without doing the intellectual work that merits the grades and rewards. Cheating is a fraud, a form of lying that misrepresents the academic work presented as if it were the student’s own work legitimately prepared.” Additionally, “Cheating does not require absolute proof of intent to cheat; an accusation and investigation of cheating are justified whenever a student presents someone else’s intellectual work without proper citation, and the penalties defined in this policy may ensue.” Students are NOT allowed to use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) on assignments/assessments, unless specified in the description of the assignment/assessment. Any form of cheating will result in an automatic grade of “zero”. Disciplinary action will be according to the University’s policy. Occupational Therapy students must embrace Trinity’s Honor System and demonstrate the ability to uphold the standard of integrity. [Trinity Academic Honesty Policy](#).

Students in professional programs must display appropriate and ethical standards as outlined by Trinity, the MOT program, and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Students must conform to the norms and requirements of the fieldwork placements. Faculty will review each student's academic and professional performance at least once a year to identify potential issues, develop strategies for addressing concerns, and monitor student progress in the program. Students who violate professional standards or workplace rules are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MOT program.

## Academic Progression

**Course Sequencing:** Students must successfully complete all courses with a grade of C or higher before advancing to the next semester. Trinity MOT students are introduced to the core material and clinical skills in their first semester, and gain advanced knowledge, to develop clinical competence, confidence, and professionalism through revisiting topics and experiences as they progress through the program. MOT faculty advisors collaborate with students throughout the program.

**Grading:** All MOT academic courses use Trinity’s graduate grading scale:

| Grade | Points       |
|-------|--------------|
| A     | 93-100       |
| A-    | 90-92        |
| B+    | 87-89        |
| B     | 83-86        |
| B-    | 80-82        |
| C+    | 77-79        |
| C     | 73-76        |
| F     | 72 and below |

A final grade of “F” in any course in the MOT program will result in dismissal from the program.

Level II fieldwork courses are graded PASS/NO PASS. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator assigns the final grades for the Level II fieldwork placements based on feedback from the fieldwork educator using the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation of the Occupational Therapy Student.

**Incomplete Work:** Students who cannot complete a course's requirements for compelling personal reasons may request a provisional grade of 'incomplete' from the course instructor. The student must be

passing the course to be granted an 'incomplete' grade. The student and faculty members must complete and sign the Trinity Request for Incomplete - Graduate form before the end of the final exam period for the semester. The contract must stipulate when the work will be completed, and how the final grade will be calculated if different than what is specified in the syllabus. If the missing work is not submitted within the predetermined time period, the 'incomplete' grade will automatically convert to an 'F.' Note that an 'F' in any course will result in dismissal from the MOT program.

**Generative Artificial Intelligence:** Students are NOT allowed to use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) on assignments/assessments, unless specified in the description of the assignment/assessment. In instances where the use of GAI is permitted, the student will: a) accept responsibility as owner of the work submitted and therefore accept responsibility for the validity of the content, b) accurately cite the use of GAI, c) acknowledge that the use of GAI contributed to their work even if that information is not in their final submission. Use of GAI beyond the approved instance and/or lacking appropriate citation is a violation of academic integrity. It is recognized that certain standard tools may be embedded with Assistive Artificial Intelligence (AAI) technology, and these may be used unless specifically prohibited. [Artificial Intelligence Policy](#)

**Grades for Progression:** OT students must earn a minimum grade of a “C” or higher in all courses and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for all semesters of academic work. Students who receive an 'F' in any course will be dismissed from the MOT program. MOT students will be placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 or have completed less than two-thirds of their attempted credits. Similarly, students with a 3.0 or higher GPA who fail a Level II fieldwork will be placed on Academic Probation. Students may remain on academic probation for no more than one semester. If the student's cumulative GPA does not improve to a 3.0 or above at the end of the semester of probation, the student may be dismissed from the MOT program.

## Course Registration

The student is primarily responsible for ensuring adherence to the prescribed academic plan. Central to this responsibility is the appropriate use of Self-Service and academic advisement for adherence to registration requirements. Students are expected to navigate registration resources to manage their educational program, including accessing the course catalog, schedule of classes, and registration processes.

Required courses to complete the MOT program are on the Trinity website. The MOT program at Trinity does not include a part-time track. Credits earned in occupational therapy assistant programs, other occupational therapy programs, or previous work experience cannot be applied to Trinity's MOT program.

- Students must adhere to the program plan as shown in the curriculum and approved by their academic advisor,
- Students are required to take all courses per the curriculum design each semester,
- Students are responsible for registering for courses each semester via [Trinity's Self-Service](#) application,
- MOT courses are offered once every academic year.
- Students may be referred to enrollment services if they have an outstanding balance.

- Fieldwork experiences may require travel. Level I Fieldwork experiences begin in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester and continue through the 5<sup>th</sup> semester. Level II Fieldwork is full-time (36+ hours per week) and involves two 12-week rotations (24 total weeks) in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> semesters.

## Faculty Advising

Trinity MOT faculty members provide advising for all students enrolled in the MOT program. MOT faculty advisors support students in the areas of conduct to enter the profession of OT, academic standing and progression, and fieldwork education. Faculty may make referrals to Trinity's Center for Student Success as appropriate. The MOT Program Director will assign a faculty advisor to each student during their first semester of academic study, and, in most cases, students will retain the same advisor across subsequent semesters. In-person and virtual office hours are available for advising. The MOT faculty advisor will collaborate with students to develop remediation plans as needed.

Students must meet with their faculty advisor at least once each semester and more frequently to address concerns. Either the student or faculty member may initiate an advising session. The faculty advisor will document each meeting in Starfish.

## Academic Standing

Graduate students in the School of Nursing and Health Professions must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or greater. Students whose GPA is below the minimum will not be allowed to progress to Level II FW because they have not demonstrated the knowledge, critical thinking, or clinical skills necessary. Students receiving a grade of an "F" in a course are not considered to be in good academic standing, regardless of their GPA, and may be dismissed from the University.

MOT students will be placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 or if they have completed less than two-thirds of their attempted credits. Academic probation indicates that the student is no longer in good academic standing, and their eligibility to continue in the MOT program is under review.

Students may remain on academic probation for no more than one semester. If the student's cumulative GPA does not improve to a 3.0 or above at the end of the semester of probation, the student may be dismissed from the MOT program. Similarly, students with a 3.0 or higher GPA who fail a Level II fieldwork will be placed on Academic Probation. Students may repeat only one Level II fieldwork. A second failed Level II fieldwork will automatically result in dismissal from the program.

## Leave of Absence

Trinity MOT students may be granted a leave of absence for compelling medical or personal reasons that prevent the student from progressing in the program. Students should discuss their decision to seek a leave of absence with their faculty advisor first so that the faculty advisor is apprised of the situation and can support the student's decision to the Program Director. The student follows this meeting with a formal written request to the Program Director using the *Request for Leave of Absence* to document their reasons for seeking a leave of absence. In consultation with the faculty advisor and other faculty, the Program Director will decide on the request within one month of submission. Students may be granted a leave of absence for 12 months (one year). Because courses are sequenced to advance knowledge and clinical skill progressively, students must wait until the classes they need are offered again before re-enrolling. All

students, including those who are granted a leave of absence, must complete the MOT program and Level II fieldwork within four years of initial admission. Graduate students must seek readmission to Trinity if they are not enrolled for more than one year.

## Withdrawal

Trinity's MOT program is committed to the academic success of all admitted students. While we understand that students may decide to leave a program for multiple reasons, we encourage students who wish to voluntarily withdraw from the program to discuss their decision with their MOT faculty advisor and the MOT Program Director first. This informal discussion aims to make sure students are aware of the ramifications of their decision and to explore possible alternatives before beginning the formal withdrawal process. To withdraw, students must complete and submit the Complete Withdrawal Request form and submit a letter to the Program Director stating their wish to withdraw and the reasons for their decision. The process is complete when the student has completed the Trinity paperwork and withdrawn from all courses.

## MOT Program Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the Trinity MOT program for reasons that include:

- Failure to maintain the minimum GPA and academic standards specified in previous sections,
- Violation of Trinity's policies that specify dismissal, including the Academic Honesty Policy, Student Code of Conduct, and other relevant policies established by Trinity Washington University,
- Unsafe, unprofessional, unethical, or illegal conduct on campus or in a fieldwork setting,
- Inability to obtain required fieldwork placements as a result of information obtained on the criminal background check or other problems in fulfilling the requirements for fieldwork placement. Students who cannot secure fieldwork placements will be dismissed from the MOT program regardless of grade point average or class performance because completion of all fieldwork requirements is necessary for graduation,
- Failure to pass two Level II fieldwork placements within 24 months of completing academic coursework, or failure/withdrawal of two-Level II placements.

Students in danger of dismissal from the program due to poor academic performance are notified of this possibility in writing when placed on Academic Probation. Students who have problems with academic integrity or professional behavior will be notified of possible dismissal in writing.

## Grade Appeals

When the issue arises, students with questions about their grades are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the course instructors. Students who want to discuss a test or assignment grade should contact the course instructor and request a meeting to present concerns individually. In most cases, prompt attention to concerns helps the student understand where/why they are having problems and supports the instructor in facilitating learning. Grade changes are made at the instructor's discretion, and their decision is final.

Students in the MOT program may appeal a final grade below a "B" in a given course if they feel their class grade was unfair because 1) it was based on standards that were applied differently to them than to other students in the class, OR 2) the assigned grade was not based on the standards articulated in the

grading rubric or course syllabus.

MOT students appealing a grade below a “B” are expected to follow the grade appeal procedure as outlined in the [NHP Graduate Catalog](#).

## Evaluation

Evaluation is an ongoing process aimed at assisting the student to demonstrate their ability to meet course and program learning objectives. Students and faculty collaborate to evaluate student progress, professional behaviors, and academic standing throughout the program. Evaluation feedback is timely and given regularly throughout the program and individual courses. Evaluation processes are explained in each course syllabus and at the beginning of each class and fieldwork experience. Faculty will assign grades for each course based on the extent to which the student meets learning objectives. Students assess their professional behaviors via self-reflection. Faculty advisors collaborate with program faculty to assess student professional behaviors using a professional behaviors rubric. Students are given feedback on their professional behaviors annually during advising sessions. The Occupational Therapy program may use various assessment modalities developed externally and internally to assess student progress and satisfaction with requirements.

### Faculty, Course, and Fieldwork Evaluation

On-going programmatic evaluation is mandated for accreditation and is advantageous for program success.

- Faculty evaluations are completed per policies in the Faculty Handbook. Data is collected and analyzed as part of the program evaluation.
- Course evaluations are conducted at the end of each semester per Trinity policy. Course evaluations are anonymous. Data is collected and analyzed as part of the program evaluation.
- Fieldwork evaluations are completed at the end of each fieldwork placement per the course syllabi. Students must submit their student evaluations of fieldwork experiences before the end of the semester. Data is collected and analyzed as part of the program evaluation.

The MOT program faculty will also engage in ongoing program evaluation to determine program effectiveness in preparing graduates for the NBCOT examination and careers as occupational therapists.

## Student Life at Trinity

### Student Accounts

**Email:** Students will be issued university IDs and email accounts before their first semester begins and are expected to have activated their accounts before the first day of class. Trinity faculty, staff, and students are expected to use Trinity email, Google applications, and Moodle as the primary vehicles for communicating information. Students must check their Trinity email account and course Moodle site at least once daily. Faculty and students should make every attempt to respond to email and Moodle communication within 48 hours. Faculty and staff are not responsible for responding to communications from personal accounts.

**Moodle:** Each MOT course will be assigned a separate Moodle site containing important course content. Although requirements for individual classes may vary, students are expected to log onto each course site

several times each week and to complete all assigned readings and online activities.

## Trinity Support Services

Trinity MOT students are given the same access to support resources and services as other university students. MOT students may access resources and support services on campus or virtually throughout the duration of the program. The [Health and Wellness Center](#) can provide counseling services and resources to support students' health and well-being.

## Academic Support for Students

As noted in the Trinity Academic Catalog, “Trinity is committed to providing all students with a wide array of services and support to help them succeed academically...” The [Academic Services Center](#) and [Center for Student Success](#) are available to all students enrolled at Trinity and offer several programs to assist students. These offices offer support with topics such as scholarly writing, tutoring, disability support services, and time management. Students are encouraged to schedule a session in advance! Here are some Trinity resources available to you through Academic Support Services.

- [Academic Services Center](#)
- [Disability Support Services](#) - Dr. Sarah Young, the Director for Student Support Services, is available to all students as needed to provide information about reasonable accommodations.
- [Tutoring Services](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

### Library and Online Databases

- [Trinity's Sister Helen Sheehan](#) Library Home Page – Your resource Center for Online Journals, the Trinity catalog, DVDs and Videos, Inter Library Loans, etc....
- [Trinity's Free Online Research Databases](#) – Your resource for online journals, periodicals, and statistical data. Remember it is free!
- [Dr. Kimberly LaBoone](#), Director of the Academic Services Center
- [Trisha Smith](#), University Librarian

Students not passing at the midterm of the semester may receive an academic warning from the course instructor via Starfish. It is recommended that the student meet with the instructor to collaborate on a remediation plan.

## Professional Development Opportunities

Students are required to participate in professional organizations annually. Faculty will present local opportunities and encourage students to explore their participation in state and jurisdiction advocacy and professional development activities.

**District of Columbia Occupational Therapy Association (DCOTA)**: DCOTA provides opportunities for students to advance their learning through continuing education short courses, annual conferences, and other educational opportunities. They also maintain job listings and other opportunities for students and graduates. Trinity students are encouraged to join DCOTA and participate in the programs offered. More information can be found at: [www.dcota.org/](http://www.dcota.org/).

**American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)**: The AOTA is a professional organization for

occupational therapists, providing resources for OT students and occupational therapy practitioners. Annually, students will participate in AOTA advocacy activities. Students are encouraged to explore resources at the AOTA website [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org), and to consider becoming student members. AOTA membership is an essential part of professional identity and professional responsibility. AOTA membership dues support and advance the profession of occupational therapy.

## Fieldwork

Students should review the MOT program Fieldwork Manual for specific requirements to participate in and complete Level I and Level II fieldwork.

## NBCOT Certification and Licensure

The Trinity MOT program graduates are eligible to sit for the national certification examination for occupational therapists administered by NBCOT. Completing this examination is required for practice as an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR), and licensure in all states. The NBCOT examination is offered as a computer-delivered examination on an on-demand basis. The NBCOT Candidate Handbook and exam application are available on the NBCOT website. <http://www.nbcot.org/>.

Candidates for the NBCOT examination will be asked to answer questions about their background, including felony convictions. A felony conviction may prevent students from sitting for the NBCOT examination. Interested students may preview their eligibility by paying a fee and asking the Qualification Review Committee of NBCOT to review their eligibility to apply for the certification exam. Further information can be obtained by contacting NBCOT directly at <http://www.nbcot.org/>.

Occupational therapists are currently regulated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Individual states and territories have adopted various types of regulation, ranging from licensure, the strongest form of regulation, to professional title protection or trademark status, the weakest form of regulation. In most cases, state licensure or regulation is based on the results of the NBCOT examination, so students apply for licensure in the states where they intend to practice after passing this examination. It is illegal to practice occupational therapy without conforming to the regulatory statutes of the state/jurisdiction. Find more information about licensure on the AOTA website.

## Additional Expenses Related to the Program

Students in the MOT program should expect to incur additional expenses beyond tuition and fees.

- **Uniform and Supplies:** Students in the MOT program are required to purchase a Trinity OT polo shirt, teal scrubs, and lab equipment. At orientation, students are provided with information on how to order the Trinity OT polo shirt. The faculty will provide a list of course-specific lab equipment at the beginning of each semester.
- **Travel and Transportation to Community Sites:** Students are expected to have reliable transportation for fieldwork placements, site visits, community experiences, and advocacy events. Students must attend off-campus events for specific courses and Level I and II FW. Events and fieldwork may occur beyond the Washington, DC metropolitan area.
- **Books:** Occupational therapy textbooks may be expensive, but they are an investment in your future. The faculty has chosen current and frequently used texts in OT programs that provide you with evidence-based information.

- **Clinical Clearance:** Before Level I Fieldwork, all students must provide official documentation of current physical examinations, immunizations, flu shots, background checks, and any additional site-specific requirements. A list of all requirements is provided to students at orientation and on the Exxat platform. Students need clearance to complete fieldwork for matriculation through the MOT program. Students who do not meet health clearance requirements may be dismissed from the MOT program due to their inability to participate in fieldwork.
- **Health Insurance:** Trinity and all fieldwork sites require MOT students to carry personal health insurance. Students must submit proof of current insurance coverage before and throughout the MOT program.
- **Criminal Background Check:** Students must complete a criminal background check, fingerprinting, and drug screening prior to participating in fieldwork. If background testing reveals positive findings, fieldwork sites may not permit students to engage in fieldwork experiences. Trinity's agreements with clinical sites allow a site to request more frequent criminal background, fingerprinting, and drug screening at the student's expense.
- **Projects and Group/Teaching experiences:** Students are responsible for purchasing supplies for presentations, demonstrations, and group teaching/learning assignments.
- **Association Membership and Conference Fees:** Students are required to participate in Occupational Therapy professional events. All costs associated with these experiences are the responsibility of the student.

## Ethical Standards

Students are responsible for learning about and upholding the ethical standards of Trinity pertaining to research and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Code of Ethics for professional and ethical practice. The MOT program takes ethical responsibilities seriously, and students who violate the ethical standards of Trinity or AOTA are subject to dismissal from the program.

Trinity MOT students involved in research involving human subjects must follow guidelines and ethical practices outlined by the Department of Health and Human Services. Links to these guidelines and the Trinity policies on human subject research are available on the [Trinity IRB](#) webpage.

The AOTA Code of Ethics (2020) covers occupational therapy students in its definition of personnel. It lists seven ethical principles, each with implications for student behavior in the Trinity MOT Program. Students are introduced to the AOTA (2020) Code of Ethics in the first semester of the MOT program. Information about the [AOTA Code of Ethics](#) is available online.

## American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics

All students in occupational therapy programs at Trinity Washington University are expected to be familiar with and comply with the *Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2020)*. Students and faculty can access the open-source document in the American Occupational Therapy Journal.

# Occupational Therapy Technical Standards and Skill Requirements

The School of Nursing and Health Professions aims to prepare students to become healthcare leaders who make a difference in their clients' lives and the community. They care for others by integrating personal and social contexts into their life situation. The faculty of the occupational therapy (OT) programs are responsible for graduating ethical, competent, committed, and evidence-based professionals. Students must possess technical standards to ensure patient safety during occupation-based assessment and intervention and to function in academic, clinical, and community settings. According to federal guidance on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, "*the term technical standards refers to all nonacademic admissions criteria that are essential to participation in the program in question*" (34 C.F.R. pt. 104, app. A, 1980).

The following technical standards describe the essential technical skills necessary to graduate from Trinity Washington University as a prepared entry-level OT practitioner.

**Students must be able to do the following, with or without reasonable accommodation(s):**

## **Knowledge Acquisition & Application**

- Learn and apply foundational and practice knowledge
- Recognize, define, analyze, synthesize, and apply information using sound judgment and problem-solving skills
- Notice, respond to, and adjust to dynamic situations as they occur
- Plan, sequence, and coordinate tasks

## **Communication & Collaboration**

- Communicate effectively and respectfully with a variety of audiences
- Respect varying viewpoints using professional language across all interactions
- Produce communication in a clear, concise, and accurate manner
- Apply basic technological skills in educational programs
- Verbal and nonverbal communication may occur through spoken language, writing, digital formats, or through augmentative devices, interpreters, or other means

## **Professional & Ethical Conduct**

- Initiate, maintain, and conclude social interactions appropriately
- Demonstrate ethical behavior, reliability, and integrity
- Adapt behavior based on feedback from others and learned experiences
- Self-initiate actions to meet personal and educational needs
- Identify and reflect on personal strengths and needs while respecting those of others
- Demonstrate consistent and timely management of educational responsibilities
- Follow published policies and procedures

## **Functional Performance & Motor Coordination**

- Safely engage in or direct tasks that involve positioning, movement, and/or material handling
- Move and transport objects of varying sizes and weights
- Safely navigate within a variety of environments

### **Health & Safety**

- Engage in practices that prioritize the safety and well-being of self and others
- Notice, respond to, and adjust to unsafe situations as they occur
- Adhere to infection control standards and universal precautions

### **Summary Statement for Program**

All qualified students must be able to perform the technical standards of the Trinity Washington University occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant program, with or without reasonable accommodations. These Technical Standards are inclusive of diverse abilities and are grounded in the values of equity, access, and professional excellence.

### **Statement on Access and Inclusion**

Occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant education programs are committed to providing equitable access to education for all qualified students in accordance with the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment ensures that individuals are not denied equal protection under the law, including students with disabilities.

Students who disclose a disability and request reasonable accommodation(s) will be supported through reasonable, effective, individualized, and timely accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the program or create an undue burden.

### **Trinity Washington University's Academic Accommodations**

[https://discover.trinitydc.edu/disability/accommodation\\_registration/Student](https://discover.trinitydc.edu/disability/accommodation_registration/Student)