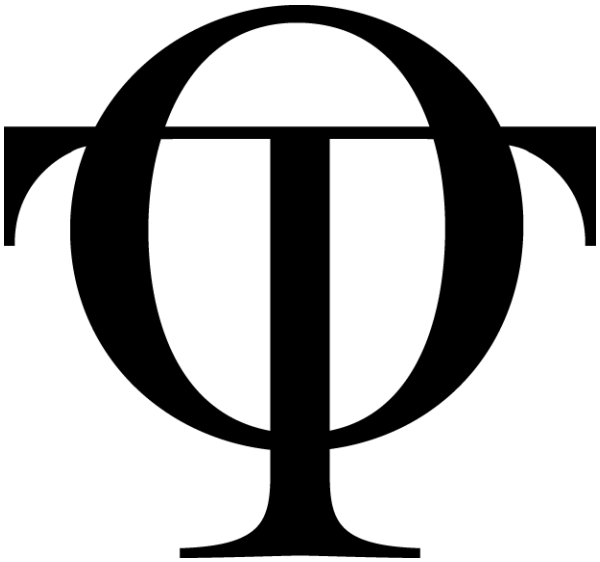
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



STUDENT HANDBOOK

Entry Level Masters Program, Programs in Occupational Therapy

2026 - 2027

Limitations of Handbook

This handbook is intended to provide information for the guidance of Columbia University Occupational Therapy students. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein, accuracy cannot be absolutely guaranteed, and anyone who needs to rely on any particular matter is advised to verify it independently. The contents of this handbook are subject to change, and the Programs reserve the right to depart without notice from any policy or procedure referred to in this handbook, or to revise and amend this handbook in whole or in part at any time. This handbook is not intended to and should not be regarded as a contract between the University and any student or other person.

Students should also refer to the Essential Policies for the Columbia Community, https://universitypolicies.columbia.edu/**,** *the university publication on policies and regulations.*

Updated 10/5/2026

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK

This Handbook contains information and policies adopted by the Programs in Occupational Therapy. Some of the information is contained only in the Handbook and is provided here in greater detail than in any other document. All of the information relates to some aspect of your education, and it is important that you become familiar with the contents.

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Introduction to the Programs in Occupational Therapy

Introduction

The curriculum of the Programs in Occupational Therapy at Columbia University reflects the mission of the University, the philosophical base of the profession, the beliefs and values of the faculty about professional education at the graduate level, and the needs of our graduate students. Our entry-level professional program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) and has been since 1943. The Programs in Occupational Therapy received a full ten-year accreditation in 2023. Our next accreditation visit is scheduled for the 2032/2033 academic year. The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) is part of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), and can be contacted by telephone (301) 652-6611, via their website (www.acoteonline.org), or by mail at:

ACOTE
c/o Accreditation Department
American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E
Bethesda, MD 20814

Mission Statement

The Programs in Occupational Therapy are guided by the missions of Columbia University, the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (VP&S), and the Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine of which it is an integral part. "The University recognizes the importance of its location in New York City and seeks to link its research and teaching to the vast resources of a great metropolis. It seeks to attract a diverse and international faculty and student body, to support research and teaching on global issues, and to create academic relationships with many countries and regions. It expects all areas of the University to advance knowledge and learning at the highest level and to convey the products of its efforts to the world." The mission of the VP&S is: We aspire to transform human health by driving discovery, advancing care, and educating leaders. We do this work in service to others and our community locally and globally. The Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine's mission is to provide the highest quality care to our patients; advance the science and practice of rehabilitation through innovative basic, translational, and clinical research; educate students, trainees, and practitioners to become leaders in rehabilitation medicine; support our faculty, students, trainees, and staff in their clinical practice and academic activities and provide an environment conducive to lifelong learning; provide a supportive work environment that promotes personal and professional growth, safety, and well-being; build a bias-free and diverse community and work to eliminate structural barriers that serve to perpetuate inequities; advocate for equity and inclusion for people of all backgrounds and identities, including a special focus on people with disabilities; support the missions of Columbia University, Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, and New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

These institutional missions create a favorable climate for the Occupational Therapy Programs to shape their curricula well beyond the medical model. The Occupational Therapy Programs' mission is to educate and prepare a diverse group of occupational therapists to be leaders in promoting health, well-being, and adaptation through occupation as practitioners, consultants, educators, advocates, and scholars in a variety of socio-cultural, geographic, community, and institutional contexts. The programs aim to be supportive and responsive to the continuously changing needs of NYC and wider community through integrating its scholarship and teaching with the vast resources of the metropolitan area.

The programs' various curricula are built on the premise that attainment of competence and scholarship requires that once having been provided with the resources, students learn how to learn independently and collaboratively. This emphasis upon both independent and collaborative learning is viewed as the most effective mechanism for preparing students to practice in an evolving health care system.

Graduates of the programs are professionals who can identify human and environmental challenges, can independently and collaboratively search for and create resources to develop solutions, and through a process of clinical reasoning determine and implement optimal intervention strategies. Mastery of these skills is achieved through a curriculum model that simultaneously provides a variety of clinical and academic resources and teaches students to rely on their own resources. The program also provides a foundation for graduates to assume responsibility for lifelong learning and for contributing to the growth and evolution of occupational therapy.

Professional Values Statement

Successful transition to the role of an OT practitioner requires a strong sense of commitment to professional values, lifelong learning, personal growth, and evidence-based practices.

What are professional values?

Professional values are beliefs that are observed as guides for conduct in behaving, in this instance, as an occupational therapist. These professional values can differ from personal value preferences. AOTA has identified seven core values and attitudes: Altruism, Equality, Freedom, Justice, Dignity, Truth, and Prudence.

What are professional values at VP&S?

We are committed to fostering an environment that values civility, acceptance, respect, ethics, and support (CUIMC CARES - Civility Acceptance, Respect, Ethics and Support), ensuring that our staff, faculty, and students have meaningful opportunities to put these values into action. At VP&S, we strive to educate the next generation of leaders who will serve neighboring, national, and global communities through the lens of health equity, promoting both well-being and state-of-the-art care of patients. Their experiences at VP&S will shape the future and set the standards for health care throughout the United States and globally. Guided exposure and training will foster the highest principles of humanism and professionalism in their responsibilities to their

patients, to their community, and to society. The values of humanism, collaboration, inquiry, transformation, growth and wellness – both individually and collectively inspire our efforts to pursue these goals.

Humanism and Collaboration

- Build authentic relationships with patients and team members through active listening, fostering empathy, and shared decision-making
- Partner with health care professionals-in-training, sharing values and expertise to ensure future generations of outstanding care clinicians who will reduce suffering and promote the health of patients and the wellness of communities
- Promote health equity and structural competency within the healthcare system, educational settings, and in interpersonal interactions

Inquiry and Transformation

- Engage in scientific investigation to expand understanding, drive innovation, and transform Medicine
- Critically assess and apply emerging scientific evidence to advance systems that ensure high-quality equitable health care

Growth and Wellness

- Develop a pattern of reflective practice and recognize limitations, and engage with others of diverse viewpoints to inform growth and lifelong learning
- Attend to personal wellness and pursue support when needed, recognizing this as a professional strength

These statements represent the schoolwide values for the VP&S curriculum. Clinical students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of each prior to graduation.

VP&S Student Rights and Responsibilities

At the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (VP&S), students have the **right to learn** in an environment that promotes respect, professionalism, and academic integrity. Students also have the responsibility to allow others to learn by contributing to a community grounded in those same principles.

The CUIMC CARES is a medical center code of values and the VP&S Educational Program Values outline expectations for professional conduct, mechanisms for reporting concerns, and institutional processes that support a safe and respectful learning environment. These expectations align with many accreditation standards. There are mechanisms for students to share concerns by submitting a Clinical Learning Environment Concern report. Within the MD program this includes the VP&S Standards of Professionalism and VP&S Honor Code and Policies.

Rights

VP&S students have the right to:

- Learn free from undue interference, demonstration - protest, discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment in classrooms and/or clinical spaces.
- Study, and relax in a safe, clean, and respectful environment.
- Seek redress when their rights are violated through the Columbia University Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) or the VP&S Learning Environment and Mistreatment Policy

- Be treated with dignity and professionalism by peers, faculty, and staff.

Responsibilities
VP&S students are expected to:

- Uphold the CUIMC CARES Code of Values and the VP&S Educational Program Values and the OT Program Honor Code, VP&S Standards of Professionalism in order to support an environment that allows all community members to exercise their rights.
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the ethical and professional standards of the professions – (e.g. medicine, genetic counseling, psychology, occupational and physical therapy etc.).
- Foster a culture of mutual respect, honesty, and accountability in all academic and clinical settings.
- Take responsibility for their actions and engage in remediation when appropriate.
- Monitor official Columbia University communications, including email, to remain informed of institutional policies and expectations.

What are professional values at the Programs in Occupational Therapy?

Professional values and their corresponding behaviors at this university begin with the concept that we are a community composed of many individuals. While individual needs in this community are important, of paramount importance is the understanding that we are all current or future members of a professional group. Professionals are often called upon to lay aside personal concerns and to consider the values of the professional group.

During your student career, you will become familiar with the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards. This document represents the values held by your profession and is a guide to conducting yourself as a health professional. These professional values will likely cause you to examine your personal values for signs of congruence or lack thereof.

The faculty and administrative staff members of the Program in Occupational Therapy will assist you in the development of professional behaviors for occupational therapy practice. It is expected that your personal values of honesty, integrity, and responsibility will remain active while you are a student and will be incorporated into your professional values. In the spirit of establishing a community for learning which will benefit all of us and which will assist you on your path toward becoming a professional, we expect all faculty, administrative staff, and students to conduct themselves according to specified behavioral standards when interacting with each other. These standards are based on open communication, bias-free dialogue, collaborative interaction, and tolerance for individuality. We believe that adherence to these standards by all of us will establish the foundation for mutually rewarding relationships. This foundation will ultimately enhance the atmosphere for teaching and learning and will afford all of us opportunities for professional growth. Communication guidelines supporting our professional values will be emphasized and reinforced throughout the courses and across program communications by recognizing relevant community agreements.

In the Programs in Occupational Therapy at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, we believe that training occupational therapists who are future agents of change requires the highest

commitment to our longstanding core values and code of ethics of the occupational therapy profession.

We believe striving for an inclusive academic community that supports all members regardless of identity, status, or attributes is a lifelong and continuous process. Therefore, we commit to:

On-Going Professional Development

- CUOT faculty, staff, and students are participating in continuous professional development training.

Threading Principles of Empathy, Effective Communication, and Professionalism into Our Curriculum, Courses, and Pedagogy

- Courses are being revised to be more inclusive and informed by key principles that embody empathetic clinical reasoning and effective communication.
- We are training faculty that an inclusive approach to pedagogy is not an add-on to a course. It is a manner of teaching, designing courses, and measuring learning outcomes.
- We make sure that the classroom environment is inclusive by holding space for respectful conversation and providing real-time opportunities for professional development, learning, and growth. Actions and remarks directed at a person because of their identity are never tolerated at Columbia University and will be dealt with following established protocols.

Building Community by Valuing and Celebrating All of its Members

We believe that being part of a community and collective action are important steps in creating a more inclusive culture. Therefore, we are committed to sustaining and strengthening our efforts through the following:

- Consistently evaluating and revising our admissions process to recruit, retain, and celebrate our student body.
- Actively employing ways to recruit, mentor, promote, and celebrate our faculty and staff.
- CUOT Programs Student Engagement and Belonging Committee and Student Advisory Board.
- A student-led chapter of the Coalition for Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD).
- The Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA).

Curriculum

Philosophy

Our curriculum is founded on three philosophical ideas that are consistent with the revised Philosophical Basis of Occupational Therapy (2017) and AOTA's Vision 2030, which holds that occupational therapy enriches life for all individuals and society through meaningful engagement in everyday activities. First, we recognize that persons are active beings who develop and grow by participating in meaningful occupations and that they are influenced by occupational contexts. Second, consistent with the roots of our profession, our curriculum emphasizes the integration of behavioral and physical health across the lifespan, the promotion of health and wellness, and the

prevention of disability across occupational contexts. Third, curricular content prepares students to become practitioners who influence the health of people, populations, and communities.

The curriculum is guided by Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2000; Kitchenham, 2008) which suggests that student learning is a transformational process. Students enter our program as unique occupational beings with pre-requisite knowledge. Our curriculum offers learning experiences that build on and challenge previously held knowledge and assumptions resulting in a shift in each student's frame of reference from student to practitioner. This transformational process is facilitated through significant learning experiences that involve mastering ***foundational knowledge, applying*** and ***integrating*** knowledge, and critically reflecting on the learning process (Fink, 2013). Through this reflective process, students are focusing on ***human dimensions*** and ***caring*** and become aware of how their perspectives, feelings, and ideas affect their clients and impact service provision. Students enter the program transitioning from different stages of their professional development. We offer support to help them transition to graduate-level learning and adapt to their roles as independent and collaborative learners. This ***learning how to learn*** continues with increasing complexity throughout the curriculum promoting lifelong learning.

Fink, L.D (2013). *Creating significant learning experiences, revised and updated: An integrated approach to designing college courses.* Jossey-Bass.

Kitchenham, A. (2008). The evolution of John Mezirow's transformative learning theory. Journal of Transformative Education, 6(2). 104-123,

Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Program Learning Objectives

The overall CUOT program educational objective is to prepare students to assume a variety of roles including provider, researcher, consultant, educator, case manager, leader, manager, and advocate. Students will:

1. Have acquired, as a foundation for professional study, a breadth and depth of knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences and an understanding of issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.
2. Have achieved entry level competence through a combination of didactic and fieldwork education so they may practice as a generalist using various delivery models across current and emerging areas of practice and settings.
3. Use theory and evidence to inform practice for persons, groups, and populations to achieve occupation-based outcomes across the lifespan. This includes using evidence-based evaluations and interventions to address behavioral and physical aspects of performance in a variety of contexts.
4. Have acquired the skills needed to be a life-long learner who seeks evidence, communicates effectively, and demonstrates cultural humility and ethical practice.
5. Effectively articulate the distinctive roles of occupational therapy practitioners and participate collaboratively with the inter-professional team.

6. Effectively collaborate and communicate with occupational therapy assistants in the supervisory process for service delivery.
7. Advocate as a professional for oneself, clients, the profession, and access to occupational therapy services.
8. Be prepared to be a consumer of research and engage in the scholarship of integration, application, teaching and learning to support best practices to promote health, well-being, and prevent disability.

Curricular Threads

Threaded throughout our curriculum, with increasing complexity throughout the two years, are the following themes: occupation; context and environment; diversity, equity, and inclusion; the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching; and leadership and advocacy.

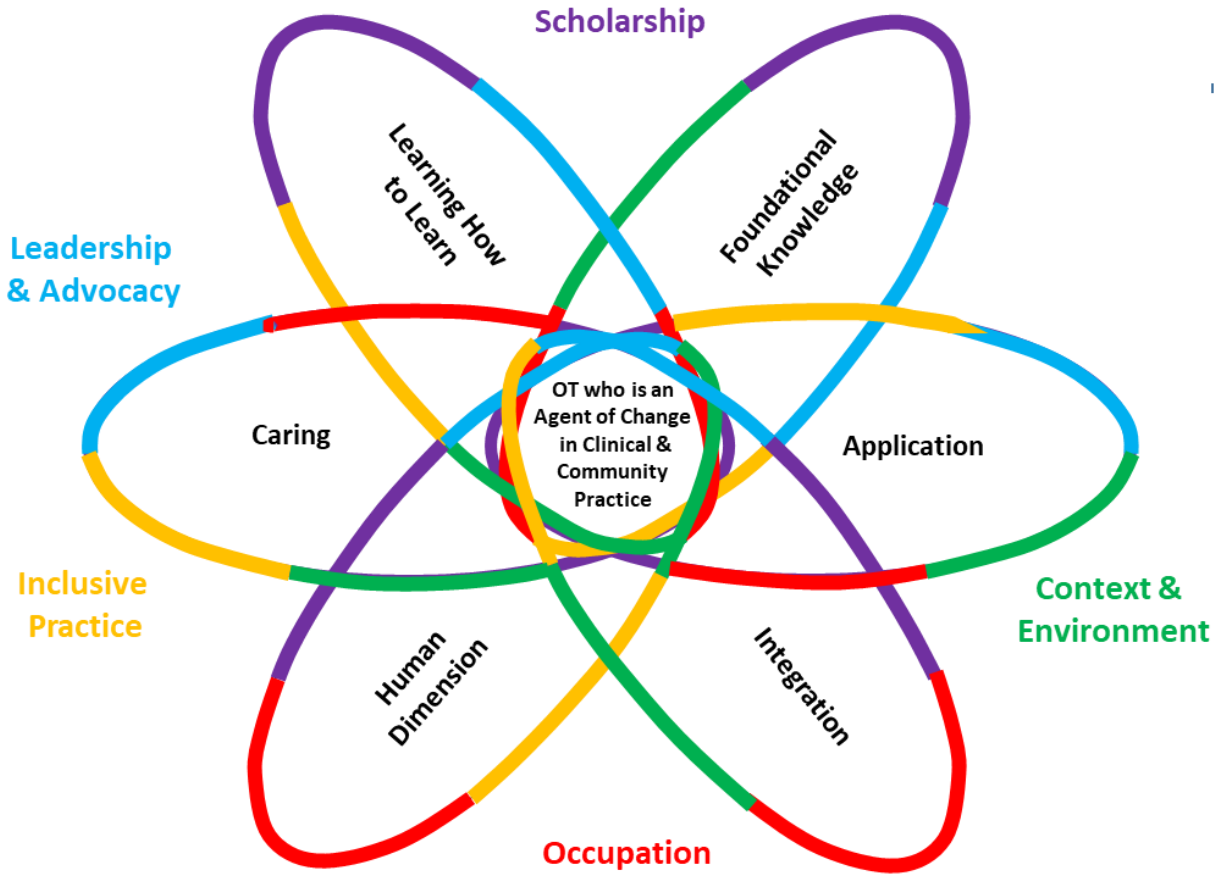
- Occupation: Content related to occupation addresses (a) theories of occupation and occupational science; (b) occupational and activity analysis; (c) the use of occupation as a means and end; (d) the use of occupation in clinical assessment, prevention, and intervention; (e) the relationship between occupation and adaptation; (f) the role of technology in occupational participation; and (g) the implementation of occupation-based community programs. (PLO 2, 3, & 8)
- Context and Environment: Content related to context and environment addresses the physical and virtual spaces in which clients perform desired daily occupations, as well as the social, cultural, political, and personal contexts that influence performance and function of desired occupational roles (e.g., students are exposed to the wide continuum of care from acute to health and wellness; environmental adaptations). Context and environment also refer to the role of technology in the promotion of access to context and environment, as well as to the healthcare settings in which occupational therapy services are provided (e.g., hospitals, community, and primary care). (PLO 2, 3 & 5)
- Inclusive Practice: an understanding of occupational justice; the cause and effects of occupational injustice; health disparities of historically and intentionally excluded communities; the effects of culture on occupation; and promoting an inclusive approach to care. (PLO 1, 4, & 6)
- Scholarship: Occupational therapists must be life-long learners who continuously contribute to the knowledge base of the profession. Scholarship is multifaceted and includes but is not limited to the: (PLO 4, 7, & 8)

    - Scholarship of Discovery: involving the generation of research and the dissemination of findings through publication and presentation.
    - Scholarship of Integration: involving the interpretation, dissemination, and application of knowledge across professions through interprofessional collaboration.
    - Scholarship of Application: involving the application of research to remedy societal problems, including clinical conditions requiring evidence-based health care practices.
    - Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: involving the development of teaching models to advance optimal learning and skill mastery with patients, clients, colleagues, and students.

- Leadership and Advocacy: Occupational therapists must understand and assume the roles of leaders and advocates to successfully navigate the climate of limiting reimbursement systems and legislation that impact the provision of occupational therapy services for patients and populations. Leadership and advocacy must also encompass the promotion of social and occupational justice for historically and intentionally excluded and marginalized societal populations. (PLO 5, 6, & 7)

Curriculum Graphic

Our curricular graphic depicts how the six dimensions (i.e., foundational knowledge, application and integration of knowledge, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn) that produce significant learning interact with each other resulting in the transformation of the student into an occupational therapy practitioner that can act as an agent of change for their clients. The graphic also illustrates how the curricular threads are interwoven within each of the six dimensions. As stated earlier, these threads include occupation; context and environment; inclusive practice; scholarship; and leadership and advocacy.



Modified from Fink, 2001

Curriculum Sequence

Students come with a broad preparation in the liberal arts and clearly delineated prerequisite courses in the physical and behavioral sciences, as well as communication skills. All content in the program builds on this earlier foundation. In the first semester, the primary focus of instruction is on imparting ***foundational knowledge*** related to the occupational therapy domain and process, body structure and function, clinical conditions, as well as research and evidence-based practice. During the second semester the focus of the instruction shifts from foundational knowledge to a greater emphasis on ***application and beginning integration,*** including the first course that focuses on the application of the OT process and the first of four embedded Level I fieldwork experiences. The content provided in the first year provides the foundation for the continued application of the OT process across the lifespan and begins to prepare students for their Level II fieldwork experiences. Courses of instruction during the second-year focus heavily on ***clinical application and integration*** of knowledge gained in the first year. The research component of the program extends throughout the two years starting from foundational knowledge in statistics and research methods and advances to evidence integration and critical appraisal. Embedded throughout the curricular sequence are opportunities for self-directed and collaborative learning, as well as self-reflection that foster the elements of ***human dimension, caring*** and ***learning how to learn***.

<u>First Semester (Fall 1)</u>

To establish a strong foundation in the occupational therapy (OT) domain and process the **Occupation: Science and Practice** course introduces students to the history of the profession, the OT practice framework, occupational science, and other foundational concepts. The **Approaches and Models in Occupational Therapy** course allows students to critically examine common approaches and models that are used to guide clinical practice**.** Alongside these courses, basic science foundational courses, such as **Human Anatomy Foundations for Occupational Therapy** and **Kinesiology,** highlight the relationships between body structures, body functions, and occupational performance and allow students to begin to explore the consequences of dysfunction. **Clinical Conditions I: Behavioral Health** covers signs, symptoms, behaviors, and diagnostic classification of behavioral health disorders. The curriculum's research sequence begins with **Research I: Statistics and Research Methods** which introduces basic knowledge in quantitative and qualitative statistics, the research process, and types of research in clinical practice.

<u>Second Semester (Spring 1)</u>

Neuroscience Foundations for Occupational Therapy is included in this semester to continue students' understanding of the relationships between body structures, body functions and occupational performance. **Clinical Conditions II: Physical Health** addresses medical, neurological, and orthopedic conditions, and includes a lab component that begins the skill development process of physical exams. The **Assessment and Evaluation** course introduces students to the importance of reliable and valid clinical assessment and the fundamentals of measurement theory with a focus on applying theory to appropriately select assessments and interpret assessment findings to inform patient-centered decisions. The first of the **Application of**

the OT Process (AOP) in Adults: Behavioral and Physical Health I course includes group dynamics, where students examine various group theories. Beginning application and integration of theory and evidence-based practice within the field of behavioral health OT are explored. This course includes the first of four embedded level I fieldwork experiences. To enhance students' essential professional skills for effective and compassionate clinical practice in occupational therapy, the **Professional Skills in Clinical Practice** course covers key aspects that may shape communication in a clinical practice such as self-awareness, bias mitigation, and intersectionality of identity and empathetic dialogue. The **Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Advocacy, Administration and Delivery (LEAD) I** course introduces the students to the basic concepts related to their roles as future leaders and advocates. The students will learn skills in leadership, management, and supervision within a healthcare team as well as understanding the impact of sociopolitical factors, health policies, and historical and current legislation on OT services and professional practice. Building on foundational knowledge presented in Research I, **Research II: Inquiry of Evidence** focuses on integrating and applying the research skills of locating, analyzing, synthesizing, and critiquing quantitative and qualitative research to inform clinical practice**.**

Third Semester (Summer 1)

The primary focus of instruction in the third semester is on the application of the OT process across the lifespan. **AOP with Children I: Behavioral and Physical Health** covers foundations of pediatric practice, typical and atypical development, and the evaluative process. Integrating the content presented in AOP Adults I, **AOP Adults II: Behavioral and Physical Health** focuses on assessment and evidence-based treatment interventions to maximize engagement in occupation for adults with a wide variety of medical conditions, such as those associated with orthopedics, cardiology, and oncology. In **AOP Older Adults I: Behavioral and Physical Health** students are introduced to individual and group assessment and intervention approaches designed to meet the occupational, behavioral and physical needs of older adults. Coupled with AOP Older Adults I is **Community-Based Program Development and Grant Writing,** which is a year-long course that is completed in the final semester of study. This course allows students to consider various modes of service delivery, needs assessment and design of a community-based program, and to explore the process of grant writing. The **Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Advocacy, Administration and Delivery (LEAD) II** course centers the principles of professional OT practice introduced in LEAD I, and engages students to integrate the information to plan, evaluate, and demonstrate knowledge of the business aspects of practice.

Fourth Semester (Fall 2)

In the final semester, the clinical content increases in complexity and includes three embedded level I fieldwork experiences. **AOP with Children II: Behavioral and Physical Health** covers evidence-based interventions across a range of pediatric practice areas and service delivery models. It is coupled with the pediatric full-day, once weekly fieldwork I experience that takes students into schools, private practices, and hospitals. **AOP with Adults III: Behavioral and Physical Health**, exposes students to evidence-based evaluations and interventions designed to meet the needs of adults with neurophysiologic problems. **AOP with Older Adults II: Behavioral and Physical Health**, addresses issues and special topics for older adults throughout the continuum of care and in varied contexts. Weekly level I fieldwork is carried out in community-

based programs serving older adults. The **Student to Clinician** course serves as a "bridge" course that allows students to transition from the academic environment to the clinical environment in preparation for their level II fieldwork experiences. The **Modification and Assistive Technology** course focuses on learning about the various types of assistive technology devices and occupational therapy services including but not limited to: evaluation and assessment, selection and training, procurement, legislation and funding. Finally, the culmination of the research curriculum occurs during this semester in **Research III: Critical Appraisal.** In this course, students integrate and apply previously gained knowledge to critically appraise a research topic of interest that is relevant to occupational therapy. Students present their findings at the program's annual Research, Innovation, and Community Day, an event that showcases students' work in critical appraisal of clinical research, innovative accessibility designs, and community-oriented program development.

Spring 2/Summer 2/Fall 3 (optional)

In the second spring and summer, students participate in two Level II fieldwork experiences, each 12 weeks in length. One experience is required to be in Behavioral Health. The other can be in either Adult Physical Health or Pediatrics. Students are also able to participate in a 3rd optional fieldwork in the third fall where they can do either Adult Physical Health or Pediatrics (whichever was not completed in the spring/summer) or do fieldwork in a specific specialty area (hands, burns, policy, etc.).

Students participating in the MS-OTD accelerated program can participate in the third optional fieldwork experience if they defer their admission to the MS-OTD program to the following fall.

Please see the Fieldwork Manual for more information.

Electives

Our program offers 3 zero-credit electives that can be taken on a voluntary basis: Teaching Assistantship, Columbia Commons, and Cultural Immersion and Global Services. Please see the bulletin for course descriptions.

Student Success and Support

The Programs in Occupational Therapy offer several resources to support our students' professional development, growth, and success, including the Student Support Team and faculty advisement. Columbia University's Office of University Life offers additional student support services designed to "build relationships across schools, strengthen campus-wide support, and help students grow, connect, and thrive." Students also support each other and collaborate with one another through our student associations and affinity groups.

Student Support Team

The ultimate concern of the Student Support Team (SST) is to foster student academic success and retention by bridging the gap between classroom and clinical instruction for students that may need additional support.

The SST consists of the Director of Student Engagement and Belonging; the Educational Learning Specialist; the faculty liaison for the Office of Disability Services; the Level 1 Fieldwork Coordinator and select faculty members representing the foundational and clinical course content areas. The Program Director is not a member of the SST but attends and participates in the meetings as an ex-officio member.

Referral to the SST is made by either the student's academic advisor, the Educational Learning Specialist, or the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee. The SST works directly with the student to develop Student Support Plans (SSP) and/or to connect the student with additional university resources as appropriate.

Development of Professional Behavior

Advisement

Throughout one's participation in the occupational therapy program, every student is assigned to an advisor. Students provide input into their advisement goals before enrolling in the program and this input is considered when assigning advisors.

The advisor is responsible for guiding and supporting students throughout their progression in the program. This includes providing academic advising, coaching students on professional expectations, assisting with academic or personal challenges that may affect performance, and mentoring students as they work toward their professional aspirations. Advisors also review and discuss feedback regarding academic standing from the Academic Progress and Promotions Committee, helping students understand expectations and identify opportunities for improvement and development.

The advisor formally meets with each advisee at least once during each semester but is always available when a student requests a meeting. The advisor may also serve as a liaison between the student and other faculty members, university services, and support resources. Each student is also advised by the fieldwork team.

As part of the advisement process, all students engage in ongoing professional identity development and reflection throughout the program. Students are provided with **Professional Identity Formation (PIF) resources** through Canvas that support self-assessment, reflection, and goal setting in three areas:

1. Values & Ethical Orientation (Who am I becoming?)
2. Relational & Behavioral Practice (How am I showing up as a professional?)
3. Professional Agency & Growth (How am I developing as a professional?)

Students maintain a **Professional Identity Formation Portfolio (PIF Portfolio)** and update it throughout the program. Students share their PIF Portfolio with their faculty advisor at least once per term to facilitate coaching, reflection, and professional goal-setting conversations. The PIF Portfolio is intended to support each student's professional growth, self-awareness, and development of an emerging professional identity as an occupational therapist.
Minor developmental concerns related to professional expectations are typically addressed through advisement discussions, reflection, coaching, feedback, and goal setting between the student and advisor.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled advising meetings.

If a student has a concern about their advisor relationship, they can reach out to the Associate Director to discuss a potential change in advisor.

Policy for the Development of Professional Behavior

The Programs in Occupational Therapy are committed to supporting students in the development of an emerging professional identity as occupational therapists.

The Policy for Development of Professional Behaviors will be briefly reviewed at orientation, with an in-depth review occurring during an information session at the beginning of the first semester.

Professional Identity Formation (PIF) is understood as a developmental, reflective, and socially situated process through which students progressively integrate professional values, behaviors, reasoning, and responsibilities into a coherent professional self. As described in the Advisement section, ongoing professional identity development is supported through faculty coaching and mentoring, reflective activities, goal setting, and maintenance of a Professional Identity Formation Portfolio.

Professional Readiness Support Process

The Professional Readiness Support Process provides a mechanism for additional structured support when concerns arise regarding a student's readiness for professional practice. While most professional development occurs through routine advisement and use of the PIF Portfolio, the Professional Readiness Support Process establishes procedures for situations in which additional documentation, structure, accountability, or support are needed to promote student success and ensure readiness for client care, fieldwork participation, and professional collaboration.

The Professional Readiness Support Process is not intended for routine developmental feedback or minor concerns that can be addressed through the normal advisement process. The Professional Readiness Support Process is considered when documented concerns regarding a student's professional behavior, ethical judgment, interpersonal conduct, reliability, accountability, or other professional expectations indicate that the student may benefit from a structured plan with clear expectations, supportive resources, and defined criteria for demonstrating professional readiness.

The Professional Readiness Support Process may be initiated based on either of the following professional readiness indicators:

1. **Ongoing Professional Readiness Concern**: A pattern of concerns that continues despite prior feedback, coaching, or opportunities for improvement addressed in routine advisement and through use of the PIF Portfolio, suggesting that the student would benefit from additional structure and support to align with occupational therapy professional expectations.
2. **Urgent Professional Violation**: A single serious incident involving safety, ethics, integrity, or another significant concern that affects client safety, fieldwork readiness, or

professional functioning. Depending on the nature of the incident, institutional conduct processes may be initiated in parallel with, or in place of, the Professional Readiness Support Process.

If the Professional Readiness Support Process is initiated, a confidential **Professional Readiness Support Record** will be opened. Activation of the process requires review and approval by the Academic Progress and Promotions Committee based on documented evidence that one or more professional readiness indicators are present. Upon approval, the student and their faculty advisor will be notified and will collaboratively develop a **Professional Readiness Support Plan**. The plan will identify areas of concern, supportive actions and developmental activities, success criteria, and timelines for completion. Plan requirements will be determined by the student, advisor, and Academic Progress and Promotions Committee in consultation with the Student Support Team.

Routine advisement and use of the PIF Portfolio will continue for the student for broader professional identity formation beyond those specific areas for which the Professional Readiness Support Process provides structured and documented support.

Depending on the nature of the identified concern, successful completion of the specified Professional Readiness Support Plan goals may be required before the student is eligible to participate in additional Level 1 or Level 2 fieldwork experiences. If so, such requirements will be outlined in the plan. Delays in fieldwork placement may affect progression through the curriculum and delay graduation.

At the conclusion of the structured support period, the Academic Progress and Promotions Committee will evaluate the student's progress using evidence related to the goals, activities, and success criteria outlined in the Professional Readiness Support Plan.

The Committee will determine one of the following outcomes:

- **Plan Completed:** The student has met the stated success criteria and will continue participation in routine advisement and use of the PIF Portfolio without additional Professional Readiness Support Process requirements.

- **Continued Professional Readiness Support:** The student has demonstrated meaningful progress but has not yet met all success criteria. The Professional Readiness Support Process may be extended for one additional semester with a revised or continued plan.

- **Additional Action Needed:** The student has not met success criteria or continues to demonstrate concerns that affect readiness for fieldwork or practice. The Committee may recommend referral to the Center for Student Success and Intervention and/or convening of a Dean's Disciplinary Hearing in accordance with University policies.

Student Resources

Columbia offers many resources for students. Resources can be found on our centralized Courseworks site as well as through the Office of University Life. If you need a specific resource and cannot find it, reach out to your advisor or a member of the staff.

Students can also find information on our student organizations on our website and the centralized communication site.

Our program has several student groups:

Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)

The SOTA is a student-formed and led organization that operates under the patronage of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the OT program administration. Each OT program hosts a SOTA chapter that aims at enhancing the student's professional development, leadership skills, community engagement, and advocacy. Several positions are created to form the SOTA Chapter board including President, Vice president, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraise Chair, Social Activities Chair, Community Service Chair, and Professional Development Chair. Each of these positions is elected and voted on by current students in the OT program. A new SOTA board is elected as the senior members graduate from the program. SOTA positions are voluntary and should not affect the students' academic progress. Additional information about SOTA can be found at the AOTA website, https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Students/SOTAs.aspx

Coalition of the Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (COTAD)

COTAD is a student-formed and led organization that aims at empowering OT students to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in OT education and practice. Similar to SOTA, COTAD operates under the AOTA patronage and with guidance from the hosting OT program. Positions within COTAD are elected by current students and service is voluntary. COTAD forms its mission, vision, and goals based on the institutional needs as perceived by the OT students. COTAD can operate with or without the collaboration of SOTA. Additional information about COTAD can be found at https://www.cotad.org/.

Student Affinity Groups

Columbia University's Affinity Groups are dedicated to fostering an inclusive academic community where every graduate student feels valued, supported, and empowered to excel. Our affinity groups serve as vital pillars in achieving this vision by providing safe spaces for graduate students who share common identities, experiences, or interests. Through meaningful dialogue, mentorship, advocacy, and educational programming, our affinity groups aim to:

- Cultivate Belonging
- Empower Voices
- Promote Academic Excellence
- Advocate for Equity
- Engage in Community Outreach
- Cultural Affinity Groups

Student Advisory Board

The Student Advisory Board is an elected group of students from both the first and second year of the MS program and the OTD program who work with the departmental Student Engagement

and Belonging Committee to provide a student perspective and advocate for student initiatives and changes.

Students with Disabilities

Disability Services (DS) supports students with various types of disabilities including but not limited to physical, hearing, visual, learning, psychological, and chronic medical conditions. DS helps to coordinate accommodations and support services, thereby cultivating a campus culture that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of students with disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations are adjustments to policies, practices, and programs that facilitate access to Columbia's academic programs, campus resources, and activities. Examples include exam accommodations, note taking, sign language interpreters, assistive technology, and accessible housing coordination. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and students seeking them are required to register with the office. Accommodations and services do not begin automatically upon enrollment at Columbia, nor do the accommodations and services received in high school or at other universities automatically transfer to Columbia. Any student is welcome to discuss their needs with the program's liaison to DS, Dr. Julia Guzmán, at jg3740@cumc.columbia.edu.

Civic Learning and Engagement: Community Service

In keeping with our vision of developing future-minded leaders with a global view of occupation, the Programs in Occupational Therapy have developed expectations related to community service. While we do not require participation, we strongly encourage students to engage in civic learning and community service activities. The Programs in Occupational Therapy define community service as performance of voluntary work, consultation or duties for the benefit of local and global communities/institutions and the profession of occupational therapy. Community service activities are designed to promote community health, well-being, capacity building, quality of life and principles of occupational justice. Community service activities include though are not limited to:

- Engagement in leadership and advocacy in professional organizations, for example NYSOTA Lobbying Day in Albany, NY or AOTA Hill Day in Washington, DC
- Volunteering with program initiatives including high school outreach to educate about the occupational therapy profession.
- Volunteering during a one-time community event
- Volunteering with long term projects such as the Columbia-Harlem Homeless Medical Partnership (CHHMP)
- Collecting and donating resources for communities that have sustained catastrophic events
- Participating in community educational events as speakers or support staff

Academic Policies and Standards

Academic Standards

Grades and Points

A minimum of 65 credits, which includes all required academic coursework and successful completion of two 12-week clinical fieldwork educational experiences, are required to meet the graduation requirements. All students must take the courses in the sequence described in the curriculum design. Courses in each semester serve as prerequisite courses for each subsequent semester.

The Programs in Occupational Therapy use a letter grade system for all courses except Student to Clinician, Fieldwork II and program electives. Grades of "P" and "F" are not included in the computation of the GPA.

Grades and corresponding points are defined as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A	95 – 100	4.00
A-	90 – 94	3.67
B+	88 – 89	3.33
B	84 – 87	3.00
B-	80 – 83	2.67
C+	78 – 79	2.33
C	74 – 77	2.00
F	< 74	0.00

Any final course grade greater than or equal to 0.50 will be rounded up.

Students are required to maintain a minimum semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) to remain in good academic standing. Additionally, students must complete and pass each clinical education (i.e., fieldwork) course in sequence.

Academic Requirements

Full-time students can expect to complete the program in 24 calendar months. All students must complete at least one fourth (15 - 16 points) of the program in an academic year to maintain satisfactory progress. Transcripts of students' records are issued at the end of each term, and the academic performance of each student is reviewed by the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee. To continue in good standing, students must maintain an average term GPA of 3.0 (B). Students who fall below this average will be placed on academic probation. To continue in the program, the student must achieve a GPA of 3.0 (B) by the end of the following term. Any student unable to achieve this GPA, or who is placed on academic probation for a second time, is subject to dismissal from the program. In instances where a student may withdraw from the program, be granted a leave of absence, or interrupt the program of study because of mitigating

circumstances, a determination of satisfactory progress will be subject to review by the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee.

Failure of an Academic Course

A student who receives a grade of F in a required course must repeat that course and may do so only one time. As the curriculum is sequential, failure in any course leads to a student being withdrawn from the program. A student withdrawn from the program due to failure of a required course is permitted to return the following academic year to repeat the course. It is recommended that the student audit all courses during that semester regardless of course grades. The details of the conditions for the student to return to the program during the following academic year will be determined by the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee. Students required to repeat a course must pay all applicable tuition and fees. The failing grade (F) remains on the student's official transcript and is included in the academic record, whether or not the student repeats the course and passes it after the second attempt. Permission to return the following academic year to repeat a course is only permitted once. A student failing more than one course throughout the student's tenure in the program may not continue in the program.

Failure of a Level II Fieldwork Experience

A student who receives a grade of F in a required Level II fieldwork (FW) experience must repeat that FW experience and may do so only one time. A failure in a required FW experience will result in the student being placed on Probation and may result in a student being withdrawn from the program if a fieldwork site cannot be secured within the required timeframe. Students required to repeat a FW experience must successfully complete a student support plan (SSP) designed to address the areas of concern prior to placement at an alternative FW site. The Academic Progress and Promotion Committee may also stipulate specific competencies that must be achieved during the repeated FW experience. The failing grade (F) remains on the student's official transcript and is included in the academic record, whether or not the student repeats the FW experience and passes it after the second attempt. Permission to repeat a FW experience is only permitted once. A student failing more than one FW experience throughout the student's tenure in the program may not continue in the program.

Written Exam Grading Guidelines

The following guidelines pertain to courses that have a written examination. The passing grade for a written examination is 74%. Students who fail an examination will be offered a retake examination. The course instructor will notify the student of the failing grade in writing and provide details about the student support plan (SSP) and the retake examination options, including a timeline for completing the retake. It is the student's responsibility to contact the course coordinator after receiving that information to discuss the SSP and the retake examination. Students must contact the course director within 5 days during the Fall and Spring semesters and within 2 days during the summer semester. If the student fails to contact the course director during the timeframes as specified, the student will not be eligible for a retake examination. The details of the SSP and retake examination are at the course coordinator's discretion. If the student earns greater than or equal to a 74% on the retake examination, a score

of 74% will be recorded and applied to compute the final averaged course grade. If the student earns below 74% on the retake examination, the earned score on the retake examination will be recorded and applied to compute the final averaged course grade.

A student is only allowed one retake written examination in each course. A maximum of three retake written examinations will be given during the first academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer), and a maximum of two retake written examination will be given during the second academic year (Fall). Retake written examinations must be completed prior to the start of the subsequent semester.

Lab Assessments:
In courses that include lab components, students must pass all summative lab assessments to pass the course. Students who fail a summative lab assessment will be required to retake the assessment. The course instructor will notify the student of the failing grade in writing and provide details about the SSP and the retake assessment options, including a timeline for completing the retake. A student is only allowed one lab assessment retake per course.

Academic Requirements Related to Clinical Courses

The clinical courses have additional academic progress requirements. The clinical courses are:

- Application of the OT Process Children: Behavioral and Physical Health I & II
- Application of the OT Process Adults: Behavioral and Physical Health I, II & III
- Application of the OT Process Older Adults: Behavioral and Physical Health I & II

To pass a clinical course, students must have earned a passing grade on all summative lab assessments and a passing grade on one of the written examinations in courses that have two summative written exams. If both written examinations are failed, even if the student has an overall passing grade, they cannot pass the course.

Students must also pass the associated Level I Fieldwork (FW) experience to pass the course. Passing or not passing Level I FW is based on the FW educators' evaluation, and the CUOT FW Team and the Course Director's assessment of the student's professional behavior, performance, and ability to complete all required elements per the course syllabus and FW manual. Ultimately, the CUOT Program determines the student's final Level I FW grade.
If the FW Site or CUOT Program identifies an issue during the FW rotation, the Course Director and FW team will refer the student to the Student Support Team (SST) for the development of a SSP. All requirements of the SSP must be met for the student to pass the Level I FW experience.

Should the student not pass the Level 1 FW final evaluation or pass the final evaluation but fail to successfully complete the requirements of the SSP, the student will be brought before the CUOT program's Academic Progress and Promotion Committee to determine whether they pass/fail the FW experience and the associated course.

In clinical courses that are prerequisites to fieldwork, the record of students receiving a B- or below (with C being is the minimum passing grade) are subject to review by the Academic Progress and Promotions Committee (APPC) prior to Level II Fieldwork (FW). The APPC may refer the student to the SST for the development of an SSP in collaboration with the course director.

The student must complete all requirements of the SSP prior to beginning their Level II FW experience.

Incomplete

A student can request a mark of Incomplete (INC) from the instructor in writing if they have satisfactorily met all other requirements of a course but have been compelled for reasons beyond their control to postpone certain assigned papers or reports. The outstanding work must be completed prior to the beginning of the next semester or before being permitted to advance to Level II Fieldwork.

During fieldwork, students may require additional time to successfully meet the performance competencies as outlined on the fieldwork performance evaluation. In these cases, a learning plan will be developed and implemented. The decision to grant a fieldwork extension is made by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator(s) in conjunction with written and/or verbal feedback from the fieldwork site and/or the fieldwork educator. A grade of "INC" will be entered in these cases and converted to either a P or F depending on student's achievement of the competencies. A fieldwork extension may also be granted when the student is in good standing, but personal circumstances warrant delaying completion of fieldwork or when a delay in the start of the fieldwork experience occurs. The grade of "CP" will be entered in this case and is converted to a grade of "P" once the fieldwork has been successfully completed.

Additional Academic Requirements and Competencies

There are several exams that must be passed with a minimum grade of 80% to progress through our program. Some of these exams are associated with courses and must be satisfactorily completed during the semester that the course is given. Others may be health science campus-wide exams or exams housed on the OT Canvas Communication site, but these must also be completed during a specific time frame. These time frames are provided during the course or semester.

- Students in the entry level program in Occupational Therapy are required to pass an exam related to Medical Terminology. All students who have not previously completed a Medical Terminology course with a B or higher must complete this competency on the Class of 2028 Canvas site in September 2026.
- Students in all Programs in Occupational Therapy are required to pass exams related to Human Subjects Protection Training. This exam is given to all health science students and faculty and is required prior to involvement in research projects. This exam is given as part of the Research Methods course.
- Students in all Programs in Occupational Therapy are required to pass an exam related to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This exam is sent by the university to all health science students and faculty and is required prior to clinical involvement and involvement in research projects. Please note that this is different from the HIPAA certificate required by the Research I course.
- All students are required to complete a NY State Mandated Reporter training in their first semester and document completion on Exxat.

- All students are required to complete "e-CUIMC", which is a one -week virtual orientation to interprofessional education in the Fall semester of the first year. Students are assigned to interprofessional teams that work collaboratively around a patient case study while learning about each member's roles and responsibilities on a health care team.
- All students are required to complete the joint OT/PT Mindfulness series.
- We recommend that students in the Programs in Occupational Therapy complete a civic learning and engagement experience prior to graduation. Please see the relevant section of this handbook.
- A writing competency may be recommended by the faculty for students who need to improve their academic writing. Students may also be referred to the Columbia Writing Center.

Academic Progress and Promotion Committee

The ultimate concern of the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee (APPC) is the student's ability to competently practice occupational therapy and, ultimately, the welfare of the patient/client. The APPC consists of a chairperson, appointed by the Program Director; the Level 2 academic fieldwork coordinator; and select faculty members that represent the foundational and clinical course content areas. The Program Director is not a member of the APPC but attends and participates in the meetings as an ex-officio member. The APPC serves as the primary decision-making body of the MS program and forwards its decision to the Program Director.

The APPC meets regularly to review student progress and determine academic standing. As part of its evaluative function, the APPC reviews the progress of each student by a thorough assessment of the student's record and appraisal of:

- Knowledge (Course Grades)
- Skills (Laboratory and Clinical Education Performance)
- Attitudes (Professional Behaviors)

The APPC will also consider recommendations and/or evidence of progress on SSPs as reported by the SST.

Faculty members with a conflict of interest will recuse themselves from voting on the academic standing of students as appropriate. The APPC will submit its decision to the Program Director, who will render a final decision.

Faculty advisors will meet with their assigned students after each meeting of the APPC to notify them of their academic standing (documented in writing) and share the feedback of the APPC.

Academic Standing

The academic standing of each student is determined at the end of each semester as the APPC reviews students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Honors: A cumulative GPA of 3.81 or above, plus consistently demonstrates professional skill attribute development as evidenced by steady progress according to the Professional Identity Development and Reflection (PIDR; see Development of Professional Behaviors - Advisement) process.

Very good: A cumulative GPA of 3.31 – 3.8, plus consistently demonstrates professional skill attribute development as evidenced by steady progress according to PIDR process.

Good: A cumulative GPA of 3.0 – 3.3, plus consistently demonstrates professional skill attribute development as evidenced by steady progress according to PIDR process.

Warning: Demonstration of the minimally acceptable academic standards (i.e., grades of C) and/or clinical performance during a semester and/or receives recommendation for Professional Readiness Support Process. Students on warning status will receive notification of such from the Program Director in writing.

Probation: A semester GPA below 3.0 (B) or a cumulative GPA below 3.0 (B), a failed level 2 FW experience and/or lack of sufficient progress on Professional Readiness Support Process and Professional Readiness Support Plan.

- Any student placed on probation will receive a letter from the Program Director outlining suggestions to improve performance in consultation with the student's advisor and the SST, and the consequences if satisfactory academic progress is not achieved.
- The Office of Student Financial Planning will be advised of the student's academic standing, and the student will also receive a Financial Aid Warning from this Office if placed on academic probation. See Satisfactory Academic Progress as it Relates to Financial Aid.

Suspension: Serious lapses in professional behavior may lead to suspension in accordance with University policy as defined in Essential Policies for the Columbia Community. See also Dean's Discipline.

Withdrawal: A student may be withdrawn from the program at the discretion of the APPC. Possible reasons for withdrawal may include but are not limited to the following:

- Inability to demonstrate the *Technical Standards*, with or without reasonable accommodations, as delineated by the program
- Being on probation more than once
- Failure to satisfy probationary, leave of absence, or suspension criteria as established by the Program Director following advisement of the APCC
- Students who fail one course are withdrawn from the Program but are permitted to return the following academic year to retake the course and may do so only once.
- Failure of two courses (academic and/or clinical) results in mandatory withdrawal and dismissal from the program.

The Faculty of the Programs in Occupational Therapy reserves the right to dismiss, or to deny admission, registration, readmission, or graduation to any student who, in the judgment of the Faculty of the Programs in Occupational Therapy, is determined to be unsuited for the study or practice of Occupational Therapy. These decisions may be based on factors including but not limited to academic and/or professional integrity.

Academic Standing Appeals Process

The MS program faculty encourages open student-faculty communication to affect a mutually satisfactory solution to problems relating to academic matters, including violations of academic and clinical integrity or the Program's Code of Conduct. Any student in the entry-level MS program who disagrees with a decision made by the Academic Progress and Promotion Committee (APPC) that affects their academic standing in the program and wishes to appeal the decision, must notify the Program Director in writing, within seven days of receiving the decision, to request an appeal hearing before the Health Professions Education Academic Appeals Committee (HPE AAC). Within this request, the student must indicate the reason for the appeal. Reasons for students to appeal a decision include:

- **Procedural Errors**: Errors in the grading process, such as miscalculations or deviations from the established grading policy. This reason should only be utilized after the student has brought the potential miscalculation to the instructor's attention, and the student believes an error still exists.
- **Bias or Discrimination**: If a student believes that bias or discrimination influenced their grade (e.g., based on race, gender, or other protected characteristics), they may file an appeal.
- **Arbitrary or Capricious Grading**: Grading appears inconsistent with a student's performance or doesn't follow standard evaluation criteria.

It should be noted that if a student is appealing an APPC decision of suspension or withdrawal from the MS program, the student cannot attend classes during the appeals process.

The levels and process of appeal are listed in consecutive order below.

1. Health Professions Education Academic Appeals Committee

A student must notify the Program Director in writing within 7 days of the decision by the APPC that they are requesting an additional level of review. The Program Director will then notify the Chair of the Health Professions Education Academic Appeals Committee (HPE AAC).

a. Composition: The HPE AAC is made up of at least five faculty members representing various health profession educational programs, such as the Programs in OT, Programs in PT, Human Nutrition, and Genetic Counseling.
b. Function: Responsible for reviewing disciplinary and academic decisions made by the APPC, if requested by a student. Prior to a final decision on the adverse action appeal, the HPE AAC will conduct a fact-finding hearing that allows a student to present their viewpoint either in person or written and allows them to bring along a VP&S faculty member or advisory dean. Students are always free to consult an attorney, but they may not have an attorney present during any hearing or at any appeal. The student need not be present to hear other witnesses, and there is no formal cross-examination of witnesses or objecting to evidence.
    - The HPE AAC will then issue a final decision and submit it to the Program Director, who will render a final decision and notify the student in writing. The student may, if desired, request an additional level of review.

A student must notify the Program Director in writing within 7 days of the decision by the HPE ACC that they are requesting an additional level of review. The Program Director will then notify the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine or their designee the Appellate Officer.

2. Dean of the Faculty of Medicine or their designee as the Appellate Officer

A student may appeal the decision of the VP&S AAC within seven days of notification to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine or their designee as the Appellate Officer will make a final determination. There is no further appeal within the University.

Implication of Academic Standing on Financial Aid

Federal regulations require that the Programs in Occupational Therapy establish, publish and apply standards of satisfactory progress for financial aid eligibility, regaining financial aid eligibility if it is lost, and processes to appeal termination of financial aid. These policies can be found on the Student Financial Services website.

Registration, Drop and Add

Students will be notified by the Programs via email of assigned days and times for registration. Course names, course numbers, and registration call numbers will be provided by the administrative staff in advance of the scheduled registration days. Students are responsible for checking their registration times on Vergil. Students must be in good standing in terms of no outstanding tuition balance or fees and have completed all student health requirements to register. If the registration deadline has passed and students have failed to register for the following semester courses, a second call for registration will occur at the start of the new semester. Students who have clear accounts will be able to register. If this registration period is missed, for whatever reason, a late registration fee of $50.00 will be imposed and the student must see the Administrative Assistant to register. As this is a professional curriculum, all courses are required courses and cannot be dropped. If an error occurs or a fieldwork course must be added or dropped due to a schedule change, please see the Administrative Assistant.

Interrupting Your Studies

The term Withdrawal is inclusive of both Withdrawn Students and Students Taking a Leave of Absence.

Withdrawal

If a student should decide to withdraw from the MS program, a statement is added to the student's transcript indicating such withdrawal. Depending on the date of withdrawal, a student may be entitled to some pro-rated refund of tuition. In most cases, ancillary fees will remain on the student's account, in addition to a $75 withdrawal fee. The policy, as per the Registrar, is as follows:

Refunds are a percentage of charges (including tuition, dining and housing) assessed to the student based on the date of the student's last day of attendance (separation) as reported by the Program Director. A refund calculation will be based on the last day of attendance. However, a

student may be charged for services (e.g. housing, dining) utilized after the last day of attendance.

Fees not subject to refund include health services, medical insurance/Blue Cross, course related fees, materials fee, technology fees, international student service charge, and late registration.

Students will not be entitled to any portion of a refund until all Title IV program fees are credited and all outstanding charges have been paid. A separate financial aid refund calculation will be made after tuition and fees have been adjusted.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence generally refers to scenarios where a student demonstrates compelling reasons and the necessity to interrupt their studies. There are multiple leave of absence types a student may pursue or otherwise be subject to, including those arising from Voluntary and Involuntary circumstances.

A student who must interrupt study temporarily to take a leave of absence (academic, medical or other) should review the Student Financial Services Withdraw or Request a Leave of Absence site for important information.

Leaving school on a temporary or permanent basis may change the amount you are responsible for paying for your time in class, the amount of financial assistance you receive and other areas where your education costs may be impacted. Visit the Financial Implications of Leaving School.

Students requesting a leave of absence or withdrawal must submit a Withdrawal and Leave of Absence Notification Request Form. Students will receive an email confirmation at their University email address that serves as documentation of successful submission. Students should also notify the Program Director. If a student notifies the Programs that they will be withdrawing or taking a leave of absence but does not complete the form within 5 business days, the Programs will complete the form and use the date the student notified the Programs as the date of determination.

- Academic Leave of Absence: Students who fail one course (NOT more than one course) may apply for an academic leave of absence. If granted, the student would return the following academic year to repeat the course. See Academic Standards.

- Medical Leave of Absence: Students who have a medical challenge that limits their ability to continue their studies may apply for a medical leave of absence. The medical or mental health professional who has been providing treatment to the student will, with the student's written consent, confirm in writing that a Medical Leave is warranted due to the student's medical challenge. Documentation should be from an outside provider, not from Student Health on Haven. Supporting medical documentation will be dated within 14 calendar days of the request for Medical Leave. The Program Director may request a consultative review of the medical or mental health documentation by a Columbia health professional on the Columbia University Irving Medical Center campus. This consultation may include conversation between the treating health care provider and the designated University health professional.

- Other Leave of Absence (i.e., personal emergency or military service): Students who have extraordinary circumstances that arise that interrupt their studies may apply for a leave of absence. At the discretion of the Program Director, supporting documentation may be requested from the student to substantiate such a request.

- Involuntary Leave of Absence: The Program Director may place a student on an Involuntary Leave of Absence for reasons of personal or community safety. This process is undertaken only in extraordinary circumstances when there is compelling information to suggest that the student is engaging in or is at heightened risk of engaging in behavior that could lead to serious injury to others, including as a result of physical or psychological illness. Students should refer to the University's official regulations in the Essential Policies for the Columbia Community https://www.essential-policies.columbia.edu/involuntary-leave-absence-policy.

The Program Director may stipulate conditions for granting leave, for students while on leave and for return, including an administrative medical or mental health evaluation and/or a review by the appropriate faculty committee. Such review does not guarantee readmission. Students approved to return after leave in the first semester will re-start the curriculum. Students approved for return after leave in subsequent semesters will restart the curriculum in a manner determined by the Academic Progress and Promotions Committee.

Leaves are granted for a maximum of one year from the date of withdrawal. If the student does not return after a one-year leave of absence, their matriculation may be terminated; the student would be permitted to re-apply to the Program. Extensions due to extenuating circumstances may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. Students may be permitted a maximum of two leaves of absence during the two-year curriculum.

Students are not permitted to live in campus housing while on a leave of absence. Students may request to have their Columbia University health insurance continued while on leave (additional fees may apply). Students should consult directly with Student Health on Haven regarding the Columbia University health insurance and options related to continuation of coverage during the withdrawal period. Students receiving financial aid must complete an exit interview with Student Financial Planning before the leave begins.

Awarding of the Degree and Graduation Ceremonies

Columbia University awards degrees five times a year, in February, May, June, September, and October. The University's main graduation and the Program's Convocation and Awards Ceremonies occur Wednesday and Thursday, respectively during the graduation week in May. Any interruption that causes a break in completing the didactic or clinical education portion of the curriculum on time may necessitate a delayed graduation. Students who remain in good academic standing are still invited to participate in graduation ceremonies. Receipt of the diploma with corresponding date of graduation will be deferred until September, October, or February upon successful completion of clinical education.

Transcripts

The amended Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 prohibits release of educational records without the written consent of the student. Official transcripts may be requested through Vergil. Two options are available:

- Printed on paper via mail delivery, which takes about 3 days from processing to delivery.
- A secure pdf format via email for immediate delivery. However, with the pdf format, it is best to check with the third-party recipient to determine if this method of delivery is acceptable.

The procedure for ordering transcripts can be found on the Registrar's website: https://registrar.columbia.edu/content/transcripts

Professionalism and Conduct

Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation

The purpose of this document is to clarify the technical standards that are necessary for successful completion of the didactic and clinical components of the Occupational Therapy Program at Columbia University. Students must possess the physical, cognitive, emotional, professional, and interpersonal abilities needed to complete the curriculum and graduate, with or without reasonable accommodations. Eligibility for admission is evaluated individually, considering the skills, attributes, and accommodations required to meet these standards, in alignment with federal, state, and institutional policies.

Applicants to the program are required to sign this document as part of the application submission process. If a student feels that they require reasonable accommodation for didactic and/or clinical components of the program, they must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and follow the required procedures before any accommodations can be made. All students are valued participants whose experiences and perspectives strengthen the diversity of our program. All candidates for a degree must be able to complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of academic and clinical training, with or without reasonable accommodation, and these standards will be reviewed again at least at each phase of the curriculum. If a change in status occurs after admission that affects a student's ability to meet a technical standard, they are required to notify the Program Director and ODS. Students may be asked to re-sign this document after a change in status.

In accordance with Columbia's policies which, in turn, embody applicable federal, state, and local laws (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act), the occupational therapy program does not discriminate in admissions or educational programs against any individual on the basis of their disability. No otherwise qualified individual with a disability will be excluded from admission. However, the use of an intermediary that would, in effect, require a student to rely on another individual's power of observation and/or communication is not considered a reasonable accommodation. Prospective and admitted students should be referred with questions to the ODS and the admissions committee makes the determination based on ODS's recommendation. Should, despite reasonable accommodation (whether the candidate chooses to use the accommodation or not), a candidate or student's existing or acquired disability interferes with patient or peer safety or otherwise impede the ability to complete the occupational therapy program and advance to graduation or fieldwork training, the candidate may be denied admission or may be separated, discontinued, or dismissed from the program.

The following abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards, and are requirements, with or without accommodations, for admission, promotion, and graduation.

Fundamental Knowledge
Students must demonstrate the ability to:

- Acquire, retain, and apply foundational knowledge in occupational therapy and related biomedical, behavioral, and social sciences.
- Learn and engage effectively through a variety of instructional methods, including lectures, laboratories, simulations, clinical experiences, group work, independent study, and the use of technology.
- Process information efficiently, including sustaining attention, organizing information, and recalling previously learned material as required by the curriculum.
- Perform quantitative and qualitative reasoning and calculations necessary for coursework and clinical decision-making.
- Understand how spatial relationships and movement sequences affect daily activities and therapeutic interventions.
- Maintain sufficient alertness and engagement to participate in academic and clinical activities safely and effectively.

Physical Skills and Safety
Students must demonstrate the ability to:

- Frequently lift and carry up to 25 pounds and occasionally up to 50 pounds, with the physical capacity to perform examinations and execute movements required to safely handle, manipulate, lift, transfer, and guide individuals and objects of varying sizes and weights during activities, while preventing injury to clients and self.
- Coordinate gross and fine motor movements, assume a variety of body postures, demonstrate postural control and proper body mechanics, maintain balance, and integrate senses to complete academic requirements and clinical competency.
- Tolerate physical activity for up to 8-10 hours per day, sitting for up to two hours at a time and sufficient endurance to set up the educational and clinical environment to effectively manage client care within reasonable time while adhering to best practice guidelines.
- Access transportation to academic and clinical education sites.
- Use and coordinate gross and fine motor movements to safely handle equipment and tools while performing therapeutic interventions and procedures to meet learning and clinical goals.
- Adhere to safety standards applicable to inpatient and outpatient settings and other clinical, academic, and community activities.
- Demonstrate sufficient ability to detect temperature, texture, vibration, and pressure to safely perform assessments and interventions.
- Respond appropriately to emergency situations to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others.

Communication Skills
Students must demonstrate the ability to:

- Communicate clearly, accurately, and effectively with clients, families, peers, faculty, supervisors, and members of the interprofessional healthcare team in spoken, written, and electronic formats.
- Obtain relevant information, including medical and occupational histories, in a timely and professional manner.

- Develop therapeutic relationships through respectful, empathic, and culturally responsive communication.
- Interpret and respond appropriately to verbal and non-verbal communication cues.
- Produce accurate, organized, and timely documentation, including evaluation reports and treatment plans, consistent with academic, clinical, and legal standards.
- Communicate proficiently in English at a level sufficient to ensure patient safety and effective collaboration in healthcare and community settings.

Appropriate Professional Attitudes and Behaviors
Students must demonstrate the ability to:

- Exhibit professionalism, integrity, accountability, and ethical conduct consistent with occupational therapy standards and codes of ethics.
- Maintain appropriate emotional regulation, resilience, and adaptability in academic and clinical environments that may involve uncertainty, stress, and extended hours.
- Interact respectfully and effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including differences in culture, language, socioeconomic status, ability, religion, and lived experience.
- Establish compassionate therapeutic relationships while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- Work collaboratively as a member of interprofessional and supervisory teams.
- Accept feedback constructively and modify performance in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Demonstrate responsibility for personal conduct, appearance, and communication consistently with professional expectations.
- Prioritize tasks, manage time effectively, and respond appropriately to changing clinical demands.
- Make timely and safe decisions, including recognizing when to seek supervision or assistance.
- Apply ethical reasoning and professional judgment in academic and clinical situations.

<u>Honor Code for Academic and Professional Conduct</u>

The Programs in Occupational Therapy are committed to the highest academic and professional standards. To this end, there is an expectation that all students, faculty and staff will act in ways consistent with these standards. Conduct must reflect honesty and integrity in all activities associated with our programs and with all parts of the university. The following reflects our programs' Honor Code and applies to but is not limited to classroom and clinical settings.

To signify your understanding and agreement with these standards, please read the following and sign where indicated. Note that academic work includes but is not limited to all assignments handed in for review, all presentations, all labs, and all fieldwork assignments, as determined by course directors and/or clinical instructors, and all extracurricular assignments associated with Columbia University. Clinical settings are those settings in which students are placed for any assignment used in fulfillment of our program's requirements, or as part of an extracurricular activity associated with Columbia University.

- Students in the Programs in Occupational Therapy are expected to fully engage in all aspects of the curriculum. This includes fulfilling all requirements of each class, as delineated in each course syllabus, and in the student handbook.
- All assignments and examinations will reflect full participation in accordance with the guidelines established by each course director.
- Each student must fully contribute to all assignments that are collaborative or group based. Under no circumstance will a member of a collaborative effort be "carried" by their group or receive credit when that student did not contribute.
- All submitted assignments must reflect original work. Any information that is not original must be properly referenced according to the APA guidelines.
- All students are expected to be respectful of classmates' and of faculty work. Recording class sessions and discussions is not allowed without the instructor's advanced permission. Do not forward information, course material, slides or handouts provided to you in any form of media, whether in hard copy, online, via email attachments, or via Courseworks, to anyone who would not ordinarily have access to this information. Keep in mind that material prepared for you by faculty is typically under copyright control.

No assistance, unless authorized by the course director, will be used on any assignment or examination. The Programs have a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is defined as: "*the giving or receiving of unauthorized and or unfair aid in academic work. This may occur by, but is not limited to: lying, deceiving, stealing, talking, signaling, copying from other students, and unauthorized usage of books, data (both in hardcopy and electronic formats), study aids, or other sources in a manner inconsistent with the expectations established by*"[1] the Programs in Occupational Therapy.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to*:*

- *Submitting essays, or portions of essays, or other prose written by other people as one's own;*
- *Failing to acknowledge, through proper footnotes and bibliographic entries, the source of ideas essentially not one's own;*
- *Failing to indicate paraphrases or ideas or verbatim expressions not one's own through proper use of quotations and footnotes;*
- *Submitting an essay written for one course to a second course without having sought prior permission from both instructors;*
- *Collaborating with other students or outside sources on an assignment or examination without specific permission from the faculty member to do so;*
- *Using another person's or institution's research or data without attribution."*[2]

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[1] Based in part on the Social Media Policy from the University of Kansas Medical Center http://www.kumc.edu/Pulse/policy/socialmedia.html

[2] SIPA. http://www.sipa.columbia.edu/prog/deans.html Accessed June 9, 2006

It is each student's responsibility to direct any questions or concerns about what constitutes academic and clinical integrity to a faculty member. Within the Programs in Occupational Therapy, the Faculty and the Due Process Committee shall be responsible for reviewing charges of academic misconduct brought against a student. The consequences of a violation will be determined by the faculty. The Programs in Occupational Therapy reserves the right to dismiss, or to deny admission, registration, readmission, or graduation to any student who in the judgment of the Faculty of the Programs in Occupational Therapy is determined to be unsuited for the study or practice of Occupational Therapy. The Programs in Occupational Therapy reserves the right to require its students to sign the Honor Code annually.

My signature below signifies that I read, understand and am fully committed to the Honor Code.

Code of Conduct

The faculties of the Programs in Occupational Therapy have formulated the following guidelines as a framework for ethical and responsible behavior. A student in the Programs has the responsibility to:

1. Behave honorably at all times;
2. Be sensitive to the needs and concerns of others;
3. Make conscious efforts to understand and respect the values and practices of others who are different from them;
4. Carry out assignments as an individual, unless otherwise assigned, and to avoid the incorporation of the ideas or works of others without proper attribution. All sources of ideas and direct quotations must be clearly documented. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism that is punishable as an academic offense;
5. Be respectful of classmates' and of faculty work; do not forward information, course material, slides or handouts provided to you in any form of media, whether in hard copy, online, via email attachments, or via courseworks, to anyone who would not ordinarily have access to this information. Keep in mind that material prepared for you by faculty is typically under copyright control.

Students in the Programs in Occupational Therapy are expected to meet all standards set forth in our Programs' Honor Code, a copy of which is in this handbook.

Standards of Behavior

As members of the Columbia University community, all students are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect, integrity, and civility. These core values are key components of the Columbia University experience and reflect the community's expectations of Columbia University students. Students are therefore expected to conduct themselves in an honest, civil, and respectful manner in all aspects of their lives. Students who violate standards of behavior related to academic or behavioral conduct interfere with their ability, and the ability of others, to take advantage of the full complement of university life and will thus be subject to Dean's Discipline.

The continuance of each student upon the rolls of the University, the receipt of academic credits, graduation, and the conferring of any degree or the granting of any certificate are strictly subject

to the disciplinary powers of the University. Although ultimate authority on matters of student discipline is vested in the Trustees of the University, the deans of the colleges and their staff are given responsibility for establishing certain standards of behavior for their students beyond the regulations included in the Statutes of the University and for defining procedures by which discipline will be administered.

Policy on the Use of the Internet and Social Media Sites

Columbia University's Programs in Occupational Therapy appreciates the use of the Internet and of social media sites as a means of communication. Social media sites include but are not limited to Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, and podcasts. Additional Internet uses include but are not limited to email, texts, and personal web pages.

It is important to remember that the Internet and social media sites have extensive networks and audiences; there is virtually no privacy on any of these sites or means of communication. In addition, the role of the professional does not end when one leaves school or work, and for this reason, one must understand that behavior on social media sites can reflect negatively on one's place of learning, work, and on one's profession. In addition, particular types of postings and communications may be unethical, if not illegal. Violations can be considered under the realm of academic misconduct and subject to disciplinary action, as well as subject to criminal and/or civil liability.

Furthermore, as you embark on a professional career, it is important to understand that the role of the professional is to some extent based on an implied contract between the profession and society. This includes awareness of society's needs, exhibiting values that are humanistic in nature, maintaining accountability to self and others, and adhering to ethical principles and values as articulated in AOTA's Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics.

- Every student has been given a UNI, which is the basis of their Columbia University email account. It is our policy that all communication with our program and our faculty is done using your Columbia email.
- Under no circumstance, regardless of the email address associated with any of your internet or social media sites, is personal health information or academic standing of other individuals to be posted or shared. Even if concealing one's identity, HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) laws may be violated.
- Comments that are derogatory, inflammatory and/or defaming of any individual, assignment, event, policy, etc. related to Columbia University or to any of our fieldwork sites or academic partners are strictly prohibited.
- In addition, the following may be considered unprofessional behavior, subject to academic misconduct, and serve as the basis for disciplinary action. Please keep in mind that if the department contacts you about any pictures, comments, texts, etc, that are considered unprofessional, it is expected that they will be taken down immediately.
    - General display of rude, offensive, or vulgar language.
    - Display of language, photographs, or videos that may be considered offensive and/or disrespectful of any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

- Presentation of photographs or videos of yourself or others that may be interpreted as condoning irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or violating the Columbia University Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative.
- Presentation of photographs or videos of yourself or others that show engagement in illegal activities including use of recreational drugs.

- When posting information, unless otherwise officially authorized, you may not represent yourself as a spokesperson for the university or program, or as an official representative of the university or program.
- In many workplace settings it is strictly prohibited to engage in social media while within the institution's boundaries. It is our policy that personal engagement on social media sites while on fieldwork, in class, or at conferences is strictly prohibited3.
- You may not disguise your identity to get around any of these guidelines and policies.

Photography Release

The Programs in Occupational Therapy at Columbia University and its representatives on occasion take photographs for the school's use in print and electronic publications. This serves as public notice of the Programs in Occupational Therapy's intent to do so and as a release to the Programs in Occupational Therapy of permission to use such images as it deems fit. If you object to the use of your photograph, you have the right to withhold its release by filling out a form at https://cumc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eeBJ7k7eViB0zjw.

Academic and Professional Infractions

Due process procedures can be instituted under two general categories: academic or disciplinary (non-academic) infractions.

- Academic Infraction: Faculty, staff or students may file an academic grievance with the course director or the Director of the Programs in Occupational Therapy, if one believes that a student has committed an academic infraction.
- Disciplinary Infraction (non-academic): The Program Director/Assistant Dean of Education can institute the Dean's discipline proceeding if a student's behavior or use of language seriously threatens our ethical standards and/or standards of conduct for our program and University.

Academic Infraction Policy

Faculty, staff, or students with concerns that a student has committed an academic infraction should contact the course director or the Director of the Programs in Occupational Therapy.

Based on the information provided to the Program Director, an academic infraction disciplinary proceeding may then follow. An academic infraction disciplinary proceeding begins with a

[3]It is our policy that the use of laptops, electronic notepads, tablets, smartphones, etc. while in class or on fieldwork is a privilege and is restricted to note taking for that class or treatment planning related activities while on fieldwork (N.B.: The use of electronic devices while on fieldwork requires approval from your site) . Any other use of such devices may call for the immediate loss of that privilege and may be considered academic misconduct.

written communication from the Program Director requiring the student to attend a disciplinary hearing to respond to a specified charge. The hearing is held, in collaboration with the Columbia University Center for Student Success and Intervention (CSSI) before a committee of three members of the Programs in Physical Therapy faculty, appointed by the Program Director in consultation with the Director of the Physical Therapy program. The Program Director is ex officio and non-voting. CSSI provides note taking at the hearing. The hearing is a fact-finding proceeding. The student is informed of the evidence that led to the charges against them and asked to respond in the hearing. The student may request witnesses to appear on their behalf and may submit relevant documents or information. While the student must attend the initial portion of the hearing to respond to the specified charge, the student may not be present to hear other witnesses and there is no formal cross examination of witnesses or objecting to evidence. In addition, although students are always free to consult an attorney, they may not have an attorney present during a disciplinary hearing or at any appeal.

After the disciplinary committee has heard the student and others and considered all the evidence, it reaches a determination and consults with the CSSI regarding sanctions. The Program Director notifies the student in writing of that decision. If the student is found to have committed an academic infraction, the penalty can include failing and repeating the course, additional remediation coursework, probation, suspension, dismissal, or any combination of these.

If a student disagrees with the Disciplinary Committee's decision and chooses to appeal their decision, the appeal must set forth a concise statement of the incident to include times, dates, people involved, the grounds for the appeal, and the specific request that the student is making. The appeal shall be directed to the Vice Dean for Education for the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons. Usually, the Vice Dean's review relies solely on the written record and does not include a new factual investigation. The Vice Dean will notify the student of the decision following completion of their review.

If the student disagrees with the Vice Dean's decision, a final appeal to the Dean of the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons can be made. Such an appeal must be made within seven days following notification of the Vice Dean's decision. The Dean typically relies on the written record and does not conduct a new factual investigation. The Dean's decision is final – there is no further appeal within the University.

Every effort should be made to resolve the appeal at the level at which it occurs. If, at any step, the appeal is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student, the student may pursue the matter at the next step according to the procedure outlined.

<u>Disciplinary (Non-academic) Infractions: Dean's Discipline</u>

A student charged with a disciplinary infraction subject to "Dean's Discipline" is entitled to notice of the charges, an opportunity to be heard, and an opportunity to appeal a disciplinary decision. Faculty, staff, or students with concerns that a student has committed a non-academic infraction should contact the Director of the Program in Occupational Therapy within sixty days of the alleged infraction. Dean's Discipline refers to all matters related to standards of ethical and professional conduct. Dean's Discipline does not apply to sexual assault.

Ordinarily, a disciplinary proceeding begins with a written communication from the Director of the Programs in Occupational Therapy requiring the student to attend a disciplinary hearing to respond to a specified charge. (In rare cases, the proceeding may begin with an oral communication requiring the presence of the student at a hearing.) The hearing is held, in collaboration with the Columbia University Center for Student Success and Intervention (CSSI), before a committee comprised of the Director of the Programs in Physical Therapy and three faculty members not integral to the case from other programs or schools at the medical center.

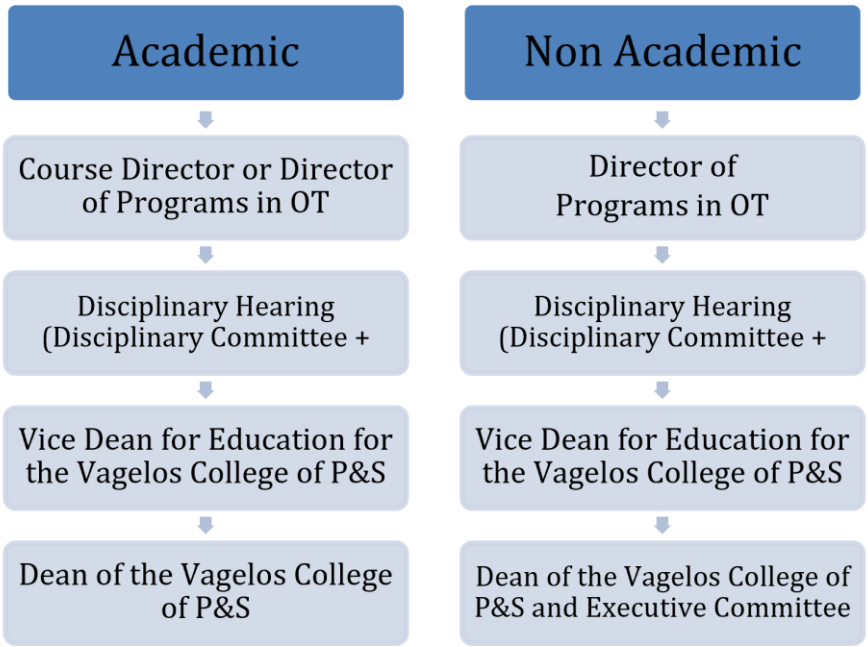
The hearing is a fact-finding, not an adversarial courtroom-type proceeding; the student may not be present to hear other witnesses and there is no formal cross-examination of witnesses or objecting to evidence. In addition, although students are always free to consult with an attorney, they may not have an attorney present during a disciplinary hearing or at any appeal.

At the hearing, the student is informed of the evidence that led to the charges against them and asked to respond. The student may offer their own evidence. This includes the student's own appearance at the hearing and may include the appearance by others (witnesses) on their behalf and any written submission or relevant documents the student may wish to submit.

After the disciplinary committee has heard the student and others and considered all the evidence, it reaches a determination and consults with the CSSI regarding sanctions.
The Director of the Programs in Occupational Therapy will notify the student in writing of that decision. If the student is found to have committed a disciplinary infraction, the penalty can include censure, conditional probation, conditional suspension, dismissal, or any combination of these.

The student has the right to appeal a decision that results from a disciplinary hearing to the Vice Dean for Education of the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons. The appeal must be made in writing within seven days from the date the student is notified of the decision, and it must clearly state the grounds for the appeal. Such an appeal should be sent to the Vice Dean for Education at the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons who will notify the student and the Program Director of the final decision. Usually, the Vice Dean for Education at the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons relies solely on the written record and does not conduct a new factual investigation.

Once informed of the decision of the Vice Dean for Education, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council. The appeal must be made in writing within seven days from the date the student is notified of the decision, and it must clearly state the grounds for the appeal. Such an appeal should be sent to the Dean at P&S 2-401. The Dean focuses upon whether, in the Dean's view, the decision made and the discipline imposed are reasonable under all of the circumstances of the case. There is no further appeal within the University. The Title VI, Title IX Policies and Rules of University Conduct are adjudicated through separate policies and procedures. Community members may find other university policies at:
https://universitypolicies.columbia.edu.



Classroom, Clinical, and Learning Environment Policies

Attendance

As our program is a "hands on, face to face" program with virtual components that is guided by the philosophy of adult learning and professional education, we expect all students to attend all mandatory curricular activities (classes, fieldwork experiences, mandatory meetings, etc.) and assessments, be on time, and be engaged, as is required in a clinical work setting.

Students should not schedule events that would result in an absence from a mandatory curricular activity or assessment. We recognize that students may experience planned or unplanned life events that may impact learning, however, and have designated the following circumstances as acceptable reasons for being absent from a mandatory curricular activity:

- Acute illness
- Urgent health care needs or to access health services
- Personal crisis (for example, death in the family)
- Religious holiday observances (as described in the Columbia University Regulation on Religious Holidays)
- Participation in a scientific conference where the student is the lead author/presenter and directly participating in the conference presentation
- Significant life event not otherwise specified

If a student anticipates missing a mandatory session or assessment, they **must request an approved absence from their course directors and/or FW coordinators at least 4 weeks in advance of the event.** The student will be notified that the absence is approved within 1-2 weeks of the request. The student is responsible for coordinating with the course director or FW coordinator to make up missed content/assignments.

In cases of unanticipated absences involving illness and unexpected emergencies, students must notify the Program Director, their advisor, and course directors by email prior to the class if possible or within 24 hours of the missed class. **If an email is not received within 24 hours, the absence will be considered an unexcused absence**.

Unexcused absences are those due to any reason other than those stated above. Students are responsible for all missed course content and assignments. Faculty is not responsible for reviewing missed course content with students on an individual basis.

The instructor has the right to lower the final course grade by 1 full letter grade due to excessive (15% or greater of missed class time) unexcused absences, and/or lateness. If your class average is a "B," your grade will be entered as a "C." If your average is "B-" or below and is lowered due to excessive unexcused absences, and/or lateness, this will result in receiving an "F" for the course, as passing in our program is a "C." Excessive unexcused absences or lateness will also result in feedback through our development of professional behaviors system.

Missed assignments and examinations are subject to a grade of "0".

Students that miss 20% or more of class time due to a combination of excused and unexcused absences may be asked to develop a Student Support Plan with the course director to address missed course content and demonstrate competency.

Major Religious Days

It is the policy of the University to respect its members' religious beliefs. In compliance with New York State law, each student who is absent from school because of their religious beliefs will be given an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study, or work requirements which they may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days. No student will be penalized for absence due to religious beliefs, and alternative means will be sought for satisfying academic requirements involved.

Officers of administration and of instruction responsible for the scheduling of academic activities or essential services are expected to avoid conflict with major religious days as much as possible. If a suitable arrangement cannot be made between the student and the instructor involved, students and instructors should consult the appropriate dean or director. If an additional appeal is needed, it may be taken to the Provost.

- While the Programs in Occupational Therapy will do its best to accommodate religious beliefs and observances by its students, requested adjustments must be reasonable, made well in advance of the requested day(s), and allow for the fulfillment of academic requirements.
- Absences due to religious obligations are excused but do count towards the 20% threshold for the development of a student support plan at the discretion of the course director as stated above.

Classroom and Laboratory Expectations

- Communication during class, such as talking to another student, texting, side chats, etc. will not be tolerated.
- Handle all laboratory materials with care.

- Return materials to their original place.
- Return all borrowed materials.
- Report broken or non-working equipment to the instructor.
- Students should restore the space to order at the end of the class by replacing furniture as directed, removing any trash, and cleaning up after themselves.

Course Assignments

Course directors determine if they prefer assignments to be submitted electronically or in hard copy. Unless otherwise preferred and/or required by a faculty member, students are expected to submit all written assignments electronically.

It is our Programs' policy that written assignments such as literature reviews, papers, and case studies be submitted to Turnitin.com prior to submitting to your course director. Be sure to manage your time effectively when completing assignments. Course directors will provide instruction on this prior to the first assignment.

Course assignments with corresponding due dates are published by each course director in the course syllabus and on the course's Canvas site. Students are expected to be aware of all assignment due dates and to submit all assignments on time.

A late submission of an assignment will result in the assignment grade being dropped by 10% for each calendar day that the assignment is late. For example, if the maximum number of points on an assignment is 100 points and the assignment is turned in one day late, the maximum points the student can receive on that assignment is 90 points. **Assignments that aren't turned in within 5 calendar days of the required due date automatically receive a grade of zero**. Repeated late submissions of assignments within a course or across courses will result in a referral to the SST to develop a SSP.

Technology

Laptop computers or tablets can only be used in class to take notes or participate in course activities. Other uses will neither be permitted nor tolerated. Examples of other uses include completing the work of another class, online shopping, chatting, or social media. It is expected that students will comply with this policy as such use is at best distracting to students and faculty.

- If there is a pending emergency situation, the student must notify the instructor in advance that their phone (on vibrate only) might signal, and they might have to leave the room. Even under these circumstances, the student cannot answer the phone in the classroom and should sit near the exit so that they can leave with no disruption.

Dress Code

Students must maintain an optimal level of personal hygiene and professional appearance in the medical center environment, even when they are not seeing patients. Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities. In environments that include contact with patients or clients, the following are not appropriate for the workplace: jeans, overalls, sweatshirts, sweatpants, shorts, leggings, halter or tank tops, non-collared tee shirts, workout clothes, sandals or open-toe shoes, caps, bandanas, baseball hats, or body or facial piercings other than ears and those required by a student's religious or cultural beliefs. Adapted from the Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons Dress Code.

Communication Outside the Classroom

While it is expected that students will converse with each other to and from class, it is important that you are aware of your surroundings. As this is a medical complex, personnel, family members, and visitors are often within one's immediate environment. Hallways, elevators, bathrooms, libraries, computer labs, etc. are considered extensions of the classroom. In the medical setting, it is important to never discuss medical conditions (personal or in the abstract), medical cases, etc. in any public space within the medical center.

Guidelines for Remote Learning

During remote instruction, class sessions will be held via Zoom. Just as the classroom is the clinic, please think of the online classroom as a telehealth clinic.

Below are the guidelines for participating in Zoom class Sessions:

- Do not share class Zoom links with individuals outside of the course.
- Present yourself **professionally** for all Zoom class sessions. Please **dress appropriately** as if you are in a classroom setting.
- Choose the **best space available** and maintain a posture that is conducive for learning. Please do not attend class while lying in bed or reclined on your couches. Choose one spot throughout the session and avoid moving around while in class.
- Faculty will check **attendance** at the beginning and intermittently during the session. Make sure to sign-in every time.
- Be mindful of proper lighting and background noise when your video and audio settings are turned on.
- Cameras are required to be on during class. If you have an issue that will prevent you from turning on your video, you must let the faculty member know.
- Please refrain from moving your device while on camera to avoid distraction to other users on the call.
- Make sure to set your **microphone on Mute** unless participating in discussion or asked by the instructor to unmute.
- Please use the **Raise Hand** feature on Zoom or type in your questions in the Chat box unless otherwise indicated by the instructor.

Examination Conduct

Our courses will use ExamSoft computer-based testing platform for written exams.
Students with the need for testing accommodations and/or need to use out-of-class testing through the Office of Disability Services will also use ExamSoft with their approved testing accommodations. **Students needing new or updated accommodations must request testing accommodations at least 2 weeks prior to a scheduled written exam**. If accommodations are requested after that time, students may need to take that exam on paper.

To allow every student equal opportunity to succeed in an examination, the following procedures will be followed.

1. Students must begin an examination on time.

a) **If a student is unable to be present** for an examination due to illness, they must notify the instructor or the departmental office prior to the starting time of the examination. Unless such notice is received by the instructor or recorded in the office, make-up examinations need not be given.

b) Any student who is unable to take an exam on the date scheduled may petition the course director for permission to take the exam late. The course director will determine if the delay is warranted and will determine the date for the make-up test. The course director may consult with the academic progress and promotion committee. The student may be required to submit documents to support the request. If approval is given, the exam must be completed successfully prior to the start of the next semester. If level II fieldwork follows the semester, the student cannot participate in fieldwork until that semester is completed. There may be an exception if the uncompleted course is an elective. All students are on the honor code leading up to, during, and after the scheduled tests.

2. You must follow all instructions that your course instructor will send regarding downloading the Examplify software and the secure exam file prior to the scheduled exam date and time. Students who do not follow these instructions and do not have the secure exam file downloaded prior to the exam time will not be given extra time to take the exam.

3. Students must download the Examplify software and secure exam file on only one laptop or tablet device. Downloading the secure exam file on more than one device without written permission from the course instructor is considered a violation of Academic Integrity Policies. ExamSoft has a mechanism to inform the course instructor if the student has downloaded Examplify and the secure exam file on more than one device.

4. Adherence to the Honor Code is assumed and expected.

<u>In Class Examinations</u>

1. If a student arrives late, proctors may allow or deny a student the right to begin the examination later than the designated time based on the student's justifiable excuse for being late.
2. It is your responsibility to bring a fully charged laptop (Windows MS or Mac iOS) or tablet device (only iPads and MS Surface are supported) on the day of the exam. The department has limited laptops available to borrow on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see the Administrative Assistant to check one out. Students using a tablet device must have a Bluetooth-enabled keyboard. Some classrooms may not have enough power outlets for all students in the class. It is not the course instructor's responsibility to bring power strips.
3. You must notify your course instructor no less than 24 hours prior to the date and time of the exam if you are not able to bring a laptop or tablet for the exam. Students who do not bring a laptop or tablet device without notifying the course instructor within the prescribed time frame may not be allowed to take the exam. Loaner laptop computers are available on campus and the department has limited loaner laptops available on a first come, first served basis.

4. All students have the responsibility during examinations to neither give information nor to seek it from another student, or from any unauthorized source. If there is any clear evidence of any student violating this rule, the proctor will have that student turn in their examination immediately and leave the room. (A confiscated exam is equal to a failed examination). The Ethics Committee will review any student whose examination has been confiscated.

To minimize disruptions during exams, and to ensure that every student has the same opportunity to take their exams in a quiet environment, the Programs in Occupational Therapy have adopted the following policy.

- **All personal belongings**: backpacks, bags, coats, hats, books, notes, cell phones, etc.; are to be left by the entrance of the room in which the exam is given. Hats with brims cannot be worn during exams.
- **Students may ask the proctor for permission to use foam ear plugs for noise cancelation before the exam begins.** No other headphones or noise canceling items may be used unless you have been granted a previous accommodation by ODS.
- **Food** is not permitted during the exam.
- **Cell phones** should be off. For any student who uses a cell phone to tell time, you will need to either use the clock in the room, or a non-digital wristwatch.
- **Students are not permitted to talk** with one another for any reason during the exam.
- **Questions about the exam items** will not be permitted. If for some reason a student has a question that one feels must be asked, one can use the notes feature on Examsoft to write a question for faculty review. The "questioned" item must be answered, or no credit will be given.
- While we encourage each student to use the **restroom** prior to the exam, if it becomes absolutely necessary to use the restroom, please follow the following procedure:
    i. Raise your hand to request the break.
    ii. Only one student can leave at a time.
    iii. Show the proctor that you have hidden your exam on your device.
    iv. Do not take any personal belongings of any type with you.
- **When you are finished with your exam,** submit it on ExamSoft and show the proctor the screen with confirmation. Then get your personal belongings and leave as quickly and quietly as possible. Do not communicate with anyone in the room, even if you are finished with your exam.
- When just outside the exam room, please **be respectful** of those taking the test, and remain quiet until you leave the area.

<u>Remote Examinations</u>

During remote examinations, the use of a second mobile device for live proctoring will be required.

- All students are required to have two devices when taking a remote exam:
  (1) a dedicated device (desktop, laptop, tablet) where Examplify is uploaded which students will use to take the remote exam; and
  (2) a second mobile device (a smartphone or tablet) with a front-facing camera that will be used to activate a live Zoom call for remote proctoring. Make sure this device is fully charged.
- The course faculty or an admin staff member will be present on the Zoom call to monitor and proctor throughout the duration of the exam. Ensure your exam area is free from any distractions for the duration of the exam. Your exam area must be cleared of all papers, notes, notebooks, textbooks, calculators, and mobile devices (other than the device you are taking the exam on and your proctoring device). Please make sure that you are logged out of Canvas on all of your mobile devices and the computer you are taking the exam on.

- **Second mobile device positioning:** the second mobile device needs to be mounted or positioned approximately at a 45-degree angle from the student so that the front-facing camera of the device will enable the exam proctor to see the following:
  a. A clear view of the student's head and upper body.
  b. A clear view of the student's desk with the keyboard and/or mouse, free of any unauthorized materials.

Use a mobile device mount or pop socket or lean the device against a surface (e.g. in front of a stack of books, a lamp, or wall) to position the device correctly. See image to the left for suggested positioning of the second device.

Use the course Zoom call link to join the call at the beginning of the exam time. Make sure your video is ON and audio on MUTE throughout the duration of the exam. Virtual Backgrounds must be TURNED OFF.

Students should not leave the Zoom call until the exam has been submitted on Examplify. Any violation of this guideline is subject to the Academic Integrity policies of the program.

Should you experience any issues while taking the exam, use the Zoom chat function to reach out to the exam proctor. If you cannot resolve the issue, the proctor should reach out to Examsoft Support at 866-429-8889 ext. 1.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Coursework and Fieldwork

<u>Purpose and Educational Philosophy</u>
The Columbia University Programs in Occupational Therapy (CUOT) recognize that artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly integrated into academic, professional, and healthcare

environments. This policy is not intended to ban AI tools. Its purpose is to ensure that students use them in ways that strengthen, rather than replace, the clinical reasoning, critical thinking, professional judgment, scholarly writing, and ethical decision-making central to occupational therapy practice.

This policy supplements Columbia University's policies on generative AI. Students are responsible for reviewing and following the University's official AI policy: https://provost.columbia.edu/content/office-senior-vice-provost/ai-policy

Our guiding principle is cognitive challenge. Learning occurs through the effort required to reason through a case, synthesize evidence, and form a clinical opinion. When AI performs that work for a student, the student loses the opportunity to develop those skills.

Core stance: The student is the first draft; AI is the reviewer.

Assignments are designed to assess each student's ability to synthesize information, demonstrate clinical reasoning, reflect on professional experiences, and communicate effectively. All submitted work must therefore represent the student's own intellectual effort, analysis, interpretation, and voice.

Students must do the cognitive work first: reason through the problem, develop their clinical judgment, and draft their own response. AI may then be used to pressure-test that thinking by identifying supporting or contradictory evidence, highlighting gaps, or checking accuracy. Students must lead with their own reasoning and use AI to evaluate and strengthen—not generate—their work. All AI use must be transparent, limited, and consistent with academic integrity standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all students in the Programs in Occupational Therapy at Columbia University and to all academic and experiential settings, including:

- Coursework, written assignments, examinations, and presentations
- Clinical documentation practice, case analysis, and intervention planning
- Fieldwork and experiential placements, in addition to each site's AI and data policies; the more restrictive policy applies
- Capstone, scholarly, and research work

"AI tools" include publicly available generative tools, such as large language model chatbots, AI writing and image generators, and AI-enabled features embedded in other software. At fieldwork sites, students must obtain permission before using AI and must follow the site's privacy, data-security, and AI policies.

Permitted, Conditional, and Prohibited Uses

Appropriate AI use depends on the learning objective of the task, not simply on the tool. Faculty may restrict AI use for specific assignments and must communicate those restrictions and their rationale in the syllabus or assignment instructions. The categories below provide a starting framework.

Category	Examples
Generally permitted **Supports learning; the student remains in control**	• Brainstorming and clarifying concepts • Obtaining plain-language explanations of theory or research • Generating practice questions and study scenarios • Fact-checking the student's own draft against credible evidence • Using accessibility and learning-support accommodations • Editing grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax • Improving clarity, readability, and organization • Refining writing style, tone, and sentence structure • Identifying areas for revision or proofreading
Conditional **Allowed only with disclosure and faculty approval**	• Drafting or restructuring portions of written work • Summarizing literature that the student subsequently reads and verifies • Scaffolding documentation, such as goal language, that the student then revises • Generating images or media for assignments
Prohibited **Replaces learning or breaches privacy**	• Submitting AI-generated work as the student's own original thinking • Entering protected health information (PHI) or personally identifiable information (PII) into nonsecure tools • Using AI on assessments when it is expressly prohibited • Presenting AI output as verified fact without checking the evidence and sources

Privacy, Confidentiality, and PHI/PII

Protecting client information is non-negotiable. It is an ethical duty under the AOTA Code of Ethics and a legal duty under HIPAA whenever real client data are involved.

- Never enter PHI or PII into a publicly available AI tool. This includes names, dates, locations, photos, diagnoses linked to identifiers, or any detail that could identify a real person.
- De-identify information before considering AI use. Remove all 18 HIPAA identifiers and remember that combinations of rare or specific details may still permit re-identification.
- Use only institutionally approved, secure, healthcare-appropriate tools with required data agreements.
- On fieldwork, follow both this policy and the site's data and AI policies. When in doubt, do not enter the information.

Academic Integrity, Disclosure, and Citation

Transparency distinguishes appropriate assistance from academic misconduct. Students must be honest about what the AI tool did and what they did.

Disclosure

- Disclose AI use whenever it materially shapes an assignment, using the format specified by the instructor. The disclosure should identify the tool, describe the prompting approach, and explain how the output was used and verified.
- When uncertain whether disclosure is required, disclose.

Citation and Verification

- Cite AI use in accordance with current APA guidance when directly using AI-generated text or relying on AI-generated ideas, analysis, or data interpretation.
- Verify every source provided by an AI tool. AI-generated citations may be inaccurate or fabricated; an unverified reference will be treated as a fabricated reference.

Documentation Requirements

When AI is used, students must retain and submit the following when requested by the instructor:

1. The original, unedited draft
2. The final version incorporating AI-assisted revisions
3. A completed AI Disclosure Form/Checklist indicating whether AI was used, the specific tool(s), the purpose of use, and how the output informed revisions

Verification and Accountability

Students are responsible for everything they submit, whether or not AI was used. AI may assist verification, but it does not replace professional judgment. Before relying on AI output, students should use the VERIFY checklist below.

	Check	Question
V	**Vet the tool**	Is the tool appropriate for this task and grounded in credible sources?
E	**Exclude PHI/PII**	Have I removed all protected and identifying information?
R	**Review the output**	Have I checked the output for accuracy, bias, and hallucinations?
I	**Identify AI use**	Have I disclosed and cited the AI assistance appropriately?
F	**Filters applied**	Have I evaluated the output for bias, cultural responsiveness, and clinical appropriateness?
Y	**You decide**	Does the final professional judgment remain mine?

Questions, Concerns, and Suspected Misuse

- When AI expectations are unclear, ask the instructor before proceeding.
- Suspected policy violations will be addressed through applicable CUOT and Columbia University academic integrity and due-process procedures, including an opportunity for review and student response before a determination is made.
- Because AI-detection tools may produce false positives, detector output alone will not be treated as proof of a violation. Concerns will be evaluated in the full context of the student's work.

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or more often as needed, as technology and professional guidance evolve.

Academic Integrity and Acknowledgment

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and professionalism. Undisclosed AI use or submission of AI-generated content as original work may constitute a violation of academic integrity and may result in consequences under:

- The CUOT Honor Code
- Columbia University academic integrity policies
- Applicable program and University disciplinary procedures

Faculty may request drafts, revision histories, AI disclosures, supporting documentation, or an oral or in-person explanation of the work to verify authorship and compliance with this policy.

Acknowledgment: Submission of the AI Disclosure Document

By submitting coursework, students affirm that the work represents their own intellectual effort and that any AI use has been accurately disclosed in accordance with this policy. Students must submit the AI Disclosure Document as directed by the course instructor (see Appendix).

Policy on Authorship

Authorship on Manuscripts, Presentations, and Posters

In accordance with the *American Psychological Association* publication manual (2019) and the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* guidelines for authors (n.d.), authorship credit of any work generated by students as part of their CU Occupational Therapy Program curriculum will be determined by the faculty advisor/course instructor based on significant contribution to three primary areas:
(1) project idea generation and/or research design;
(2) project development and/or research data collection, analysis, and interpretation;
(3) poster or paper presentation development, or manuscript preparation and revision.

Authors should substantially contribute to all three areas of project generation and dissemination.

Students are not permitted to use any of the information related to a course assignment in a presentation or publication (other than using it as a citation) without the expressed permission of their faculty advisor/course instructor.

This pertains to any class assignments in which the student (1) participated as a group member or (2) completed independently with faculty feedback and guidance.

Faculty advisors/course instructors who provided guidance and feedback regarding development of a student's course assignment should be listed as authors on any poster, presentation, or manuscript derived from the course. Students should discuss all ideas for poster, presentation, and manuscript proposal submissions with their faculty advisors/course instructors prior to actual submission. Failure to do so will result in withdrawal of the submission.

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Guidelines for contributors. (n.d.). The American Journal of Occupational Therapy. Retrieved May 18, 2011 from http://ajot.submit2aota.org/journals/ajot/forms/ajot_guidelines.pdf

Clinical Drug Testing Policy

All Columbia University Irving Medical Center students, which include all Occupational Therapy students, are required to submit to drug testing. This is typically handled prior to the first fieldwork assignment. The CUIMC Policy and Procedure on Pre-Clinical Drug testing is distributed to all Occupational Therapy students during the fall semester.

The Director of Student Health Services and the Director of AI:MS (Addiction Illness: Medical Solutions) have also provided this summary of components of the policy:

Students in the School of Nursing, College of Dental Medicine, and the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons will be required to undergo a 9-metabolite urine drug screen during the semester prior to the beginning of their clinical rotations.

Students will not be able to begin a clinical rotation until they have been cleared by this process.

Confidentiality
Drug Screening results will be held in strict confidence in the student's medical record unless released at a student's request or under certain specific circumstances: a danger to self or others, including risk to patients, failure to follow up with a mandated program following a positive test. Should evaluation of a positive test or recommended treatment interfere with a student's ability to complete a clinical rotation, a medical leave will be required.

Positive Test Result
Students who have a positive test reported to the Student Health Service will be required to have an evaluation by the Director of the AI:MS (Addiction Illness: Medical Solutions) program. They will determine further evaluation and follow-up, which may include evaluation by an addiction specialist, follow-up urine drug testing, evaluation in the Mental Health Service, or referral to a drug treatment program.

Scheduling of Testing
In order not to overwhelm clinical laboratory facilities, students will be scheduled to pick up their test requisition from the SHS during a specified two-week interval. Once a requisition is picked up, there is a 72-hour window for students to report to the LabCorp or Quest laboratory to have their test completed. Failure either to pick-up the requisition within the assigned 2-week window, or fill the requisition within the assigned 72-hour window, will be treated as a positive test, and evaluation by the Director of the AI:MS (Addiction Illness: Medical Solutions) program will be required.

Please see Drug Testing for the complete Pre-Clinical Drug Testing Policy and Procedure.

University Requirements for Participating in Research

All research protocols at Columbia University must be approved by the Columbia University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the study to proceed. The university's IRB Board serves to protect human participants in biomedical and behavioral research. As of January 1, 2001, the Dean of Health Sciences at Columbia University mandated that any essential investigator (including individuals who obtain consent, collect data, and/or administer tests) submitting a research protocol to the IRB, or participating in the study, must fulfill specific requirements. While these requirements are subject to change, currently the requirement is a passing grade on the Behavioral and Social Science Test (BSST) examination. This examination reflects the investigator's knowledge of inherent concepts for appropriate human subject protection and good clinical research. To fulfill this university requirement, occupational therapy students are required to submit proof of passing the Good Clinical Practice test at the conclusion of OTM6571. Meeting this requirement will be discussed in Research Methods. You may learn more about this requirement by accessing the rascal page of Columbia's website (see instructions below). https://www.rascal.columbia.edu.

Students involved in clinical research are also expected to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). To do so, each student is required to review the course content associated with HIPAA, which is available online, and to successfully complete the HIPAA exam, also available online. Information about this is distributed prior to receiving an activated email address.

Proprietary Rights in Intellectual and Technological Products

Students, as part of a class assignment, may create, invent, and/or develop a product that has commercial value. Prior to the marketing of such products, all individuals involved must provide a report to the program outlining the plan for commercialization. The University has the right to maintain control over the marketing plan. Any proceeds from such products may be shared between the individuals involved, the Programs in Occupational Therapy, and the University, as described by the policies set forth by the Columbia Innovative Enterprises.

Program Administration and Communication

Columbia University Student Email Communication Policy

Columbia University has established email as an official means of communication with students. An official Columbia University email address is required for all students. The University has the right to send official communications to the University email address, which is based upon the University Network ID (UNI) assigned to the student.

The University expects that every student will receive email at their Columbia University email address and will read email on a frequent and consistent basis. A student's failure to receive and read University communications in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.

Students may elect to redirect (auto-forward) email sent to their University email address. Students who redirect email from their official University email address to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost because of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from the responsibilities associated with communications sent to their official University email address.

All use of email will be consistent with other Columbia University policies including the Acceptable Use Policy (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/policy), and the Responsible Use of Electronic Resources, included in this handbook.

Communication within our Program

All students are expected to remain in communication with each course director, with the fieldwork educators, and with the Programs in Occupational Therapy. To this end, daily access to the Columbia University Internet system for ongoing communications within courses and about courses, department broadcasts, course assignments/readings, etc. is required. All students must activate and use their Columbia University identification (UNI) and password to access Canvas and email. **Students are expected to respond to emails sent from course directors, faculty, and administrative staff within two business days (48 hours).**

Faculty will make every attempt to answer student emails promptly, within two business days (48 hours). While individual faculty vary in their response times, students should not expect a response outside of traditional workday hours (Monday – Friday 9AM-5PM) or on holidays.

Canvas is an Internet-based program through which information related specifically to courses is disseminated. Everything from course syllabi, reading materials, class handouts, to course-based group discussions and exams, may be distributed and conducted on Canvas. Each course director will review how Canvas is incorporated into each course.

Our program also has a Canvas site with centralized resources for students. All program communication will come through this site. We expect all students to look for resources on the centralized Canvas site.

All students are expected to follow the Chain of Communication established by the Programs in all academic matters including coursework, fieldwork issues, student and faculty communication.

Membership in AOTA

Before arriving on campus, students are required to join our professional organization as a student member. Membership provides access to online AOTA journals, including the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, provides discounts for products and conferences, and gives access to "Member only" sites from which assignments may be based. The website for membership is www.aota.org. Membership must be renewed each year that you are in the program. Documentation of your membership must be maintained on Exxat.

Name Change

If you anticipate a name change from the name you used in your application, you did not apply with your legal name, or your legal name changes, you will need to submit an official name

change form to the Registrar's office: http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/name-change-affidavit.

In addition, please send an email to Eileen Lloyd at eileen.lloyd@columbia.edu indicating the name change. If you do not notify us directly, your name will not be updated in the Programs' records and systems. As a healthcare program, we are happy to use your preferred name, but we are required to maintain records in your legal name.

Official University Regulations and Policies

The University's official regulations are included in the University handbook, Essential Policies for the Columbia Community. This handbook is available online and at the Office of the University Senate, 406 Low Memorial Library. Because university policies and procedures are subject to change, please check the website, https://universitypolicies.columbia.edu/, for the most current information.

Regulations on the university policy site include but are not limited to:

- Student Email Communication Policy
- Information Technology (CUIT) Policies
- Social Security Number (SSN) Usage Policy
- Access to Student Records (FERPA)
- University Regulations
- Policies on Alcohol and Drugs
- University Event Management Policies
- Copyright Information for Network Users Policy
- Gender-Based Misconduct and Interim Title IX Policies and Procedures for Students
- Policy on Partisan Political Activity
- Campus Safety and Security
- Voluntary Leave of Absence Policy
- Involuntary Leave of Absence Policy
- Military Leave of Absence Policy

We encourage you to access these sites as they host the most updated policies. In addition, please review all the policies included in this document. The following pages also contain university policies.

Student Policies and Procedures on Discrimination, Harassment, Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct and Consensual Romantic and Sexual Relationships

Columbia University is committed to providing a learning, living, and working environment free from discrimination, harassment, and gender-based and sexual misconduct. Consistent with this commitment and with applicable laws, the University does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or gender-based or sexual misconduct in any form and it provides students who believe that they have been subjected to conduct or behavior of this kind with mechanisms for seeking redress. All members of the University community are expected to adhere to the applicable policies, to cooperate with the procedures for responding to complaints of discrimination, harassment and gender-based and sexual misconduct, and to report conduct or behavior they believe to be in violation of these policies to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action or Student Services for Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct. For additional information on these issues, policies and resources, please visit the Sexual Respect website at: https://titleix.columbia.edu/.

Complaints against students for gender-based misconduct are processed in accord with the Gender–Based Misconduct Policies for Students. Students who attend Barnard College and Teachers College as well as Columbia University are covered by these policies. The use of the term "gender-based misconduct" includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence.

Complaints against students for other forms of discrimination and harassment are processed in accord with the Student Policies and Procedures on Discrimination and Harassment and should be filed with the Dean of Students of the school in which the accused student is enrolled.

Complaints against employees and third parties affiliated with the University for discrimination and harassment are processed in accord with the Employment Policies and Procedures on Discrimination and Harassment. The use of the term "discrimination and harassment" includes discrimination, discriminatory harassment, gender-based harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

Columbia University maintains policies regarding consensual romantic and sexual relationships between faculty and students, and staff and students. The Faculty-Student Relationship Policy states that no faculty member shall exercise academic or professional authority over any student with whom he or she has or previously has had a consensual romantic or sexual relationship. This policy covers all officers of instruction, research and the libraries, including student officers of instruction and research and teaching assistants. The Staff-Student Relationship Policy states that no staff member at Columbia should participate in the supervision, employment actions, evaluation, advising or mentoring of any Columbia University student with whom that staff member has or has had a consensual romantic or sexual relationship, except in unusual circumstances, where explicit advance authorization has been obtained.

For further information and assistance, contact:
Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
103 Low Library, MC 4333
http://eoaa.columbia.edu/; eoaa@columbia.edu; 212-854-5511

Title IX Coordinator
Marjory D. Fisher
mdf2166@columbia.edu, 212-853-1276

Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
Laura Kirschstein
lbk2136@columbia.edu

Columbia offers several confidential resources to students who believe they were subjected to discrimination, harassment or gender-based or sexual misconduct and who do not wish to report to the University:

Counseling Services
CUIMC Mental Health Services (212) 305-3400
Columbia Morningside (212) 854-2878

Center for Student Wellness (CSW) (212) 305-3400

Sexual Violence Support Center, (212) 854-HELP

Office of the University Chaplain, 212-854-6242

Health Services*
CUIMC (212) 305-3400, CUIMC clinician-on-call (212) 305-3400
Columbia Morningside (212) 854-2284, Columbia Morningside clinician-on-call (212) 854-9797

*****Medical providers are considered confidential resources in the context of providing medical treatment to a patient.

Appendices and Forms

Academic Calendar

While the Programs in Occupational Therapy follow the university academic calendar, there are some exceptions. Course directors and/or Program Director will notify students of these exceptions.
The following Academic Calendar was correct and complete when compiled; however, the University and/or the Programs reserves the right to revise or amend it, in whole or in part, at any time.

Academic Calendar*, 2026 - 2027
Programs in Occupational Therapy

FALL 2026		
Tuesday - Thursday	September 1 - 3	MS Program Orientation
Tuesday	September 8	First Day of Classes
Friday	September 18	End of Change of Program Period; Last Day to Add a Class Last Day to Receive Tuition Refund for Class Dropped
Wednesday	October 21	October Degrees Conferred
Tuesday	November 3	Election Day - University Holiday (Note: Classes are held Monday)
Wednesday - Friday	November 25 - 27	Thanksgiving Holiday
Monday	December 14	Last Day of Classes
Tuesday - Wednesday	December 15 - 16	Reading/Study Days
Thursday - Wednesday	December 17 - 23	Final Exam Period
SPRING 2027		
	January 4 – 15	Level I Fieldwork (MS Class of 2027) (confirm dates with site)
Monday	January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday observed - University Holiday
Tuesday	January 19	First Day of Classes
Friday	January 29	End of Change of Program Period; Last Day to Add a Class Last Day to Receive Tuition Refund for Class Dropped
	February – April/May	Level II Fieldwork (MS Class of 2027)
Wednesday	February 10	February Degrees Conferred
Monday - Friday	March 15 - 19	Spring Break
Thursday - Saturday	April 8 - 10	AOTA Annual Conference (Boston, MA)
Monday	May 3	Last Day of Classes
Tuesday – Thursday	May 4 – May 6	Reading/Study Days
Friday – Friday	May 7 – May 14	Final Exam Period
Wednesday	May 19	University Commencement Ceremony
Thursday	May 20	Occupational Therapy Commencement Ceremony
SUMMER 2027		
	May 24 – August 20	OTD Programs Summer Block
	May 24– June 18	MS Class of 2028 Summer Course Block 1
Monday	May 31	Memorial Day – University Holiday
	June – August	Level II Fieldwork (MS Class of 2027)
	June 28 – July 26	MS Class of 2028 Summer Course Block 2
	August 2 – August 23	MS Class of 2028 Summer Course Block 3

*Calendar is subject to change. Dates apply to all programs except where noted specifically on the calendar.

Handbook / Bulletin Acknowledgement

All students are asked to sign an acknowledgement form that verifies their responsibility to review this Student Handbook, review the Programs' Bulletin, and to acknowledge that their Honor Code and Essential Function Form was signed and submitted. This form is distributed electronically to students during the Programs' orientation. The form states:

> *This is to acknowledge that it is my responsibility to review and become familiar with the Occupational Therapy Student Handbook. This handbook is posted on the Program's website under the student link. I also acknowledge that it is my responsibility to review and become familiar with the Occupational Therapy Bulletin, posted on the Program's website as well, under the Academic Programs, Student, and Prospective Student links.*

Artificial Intelligence Disclosure Form

CUOT follows Columbia University's policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in academic and fieldwork requirements.* Students must disclose the use of any AI platform, software, or application.

All CUOT students must complete and submit this form with each assignment or presentation. Unless otherwise directed by the course instructor or fieldwork educator, this form should be included as the cover page of the submission.

Protection of Intellectual Property
Students may not upload CUOT or Columbia University academic materials to AI platforms or applications. Protected materials include, but are not limited to:

- Course syllabi and assignments
- Fieldwork assignments*
- PowerPoint slides
- Assessment tools and handbooks
- Images and videos
- Sample assignments
- Test questions and quizzes
- Any other materials provided by faculty or instructors

Faculty-created materials may be protected by copyright or other intellectual property rights. Uploading or reproducing these materials on an AI platform without authorization may constitute misuse or plagiarism of intellectual property.

Permission to Use AI
AI may be used only when permitted by the course instructor or fieldwork educator. When AI use is allowed, students will receive guidance regarding:

- Which tools are permitted or prohibited
- How the tools may be used
- Any required limitations, documentation, or disclosure

Students are responsible for obtaining permission before using AI to complete course or fieldwork requirements. Failure to comply with this disclosure form, the CUOT AI Use Policy, or Columbia University's applicable policies may constitute a violation of academic integrity and may result in disciplinary action.

Student Disclosure Checklist

☐ I reviewed and understood the applicable University and CUOT policies before completing this assignment.

Use of AI

☐ No, I did not use any AI applications to complete this assignment.

☐ Yes, I used one or more AI applications.

AI tool(s) used:

Describe how AI was used:

Instructor or Fieldwork Educator Approval

☐ I discussed the use of AI with my instructor or fieldwork educator before completing the assignment.

☐ Not applicable.

Compliance

☐ I completed this assignment in accordance with the course syllabus, fieldwork requirements, and instructions regarding the use of AI.

Student name: _____

Course or fieldwork experience: _____

Assignment title: _____

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**Students must complete this form for fieldwork assignments only when requested by the fieldwork site, fieldwork educator, or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.*

Safety Manual

Health & Safety Policies and Procedures

The following document and links include the written policies and procedures regarding appropriate use of equipment and supplies, policies regarding the health and safety of clients, students, and faculty (including bloodborne pathogens, infection control, fire/safety, evacuation procedures etc.) in the Columbia University Occupational Therapy department.

OT Lab Procedures & Safety Policies

Sharps Management and Disposal

Even though class/lab procedures do not involve skin punctures, sharps and potentially contaminated tools used in classes are disposed of in a sharps container in the lab.

Environmental Hygiene

All classes that include a laboratory component abide by the following guidelines for environmental hygiene and infection control.

- Hand sanitizer is available throughout the campus.
- Disinfectant wipes and spray are used to sanitize equipment.
- Follow all cleaning policies related to covid-19.
- Eye wash station available to be used as needed.

Columbia University Safety Protocols

Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the science of fitting workplace conditions and job demands to the capabilities of the working population. The goal of ergonomics is to make work more comfortable and to improve both health and productivity. To meet these goals, the capabilities and limitations of workers and their tools, equipment and furniture are considered in conjunction with how they relate to particular tasks. The Environmental, Health, & Safety Department offers an Ergonomics Program.

Bloodborne Pathogens and Infection Control Procedures

Biological Safety Links

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan

Biological Safety Manual

Fire & Safety/Evacuation

Columbia University Irving Medical Center Annual Security and Fire Safety Report

University Links for Fire/Evacuation Policy & Procedure

Fire Safety Resources

CUIMC Facilities Fire Safety

Fire Safety Manual

Fire Safety Policies | Facilities Management

Smoking Policy

Smoke-Free CUIMC | Facilities Management

Fire pulls are located near either staircase on the 3rd floor of the Georgian Building. A strobe/siren alarm indicates that a fire pull has been activated and all must evacuate through

the front door of the Georgian Lobby. A fire marshal will indicate when it is safe to go back into the building.

Columbia University Public Safety Policies

University Links for Environmental Safety Policy & Procedure:

Columbia University Public Safety

Environmental Health & Safety

Campus Safety and Security

All Columbia University buildings are patrolled by CU security twenty-four hours per day.
Important Telephone Numbers

- CUIMC Department of Public Safety: (212) 305-8100
- NYPH Shuttle: (212) 305-2222
- NY Police Department (33rd Precinct): (212) 927-3200

Street Patrol
The area from 168th Street to 173rd Street along Fort Washington and Haven Avenues is patrolled twenty-four hours a day by C.U. Department of Public Safety.

Escort Service
Escort Service by the Columbia University Department of Public Safety is available to students within the following boundaries: W. 165th to W. 179th Streets, Broadway to Haven Ave. To request a door to door escort within this area, call Columbia Public Safety Office, 305-8100 or 5-8100, 15 minutes before you need the service so that staff may meet you. An escort by foot patrol officer is available 24 hours a day. During evening hours, 6pm to 7am, a vehicle escort may be available but cannot be guaranteed.

Computer Security

- PC Phone Home: Laptop and PC recovery software available for free online through CUIT.

- Operation ID: property engraving. Great for laptops, PDA's computers, etc. Free (property registered with NYPD and Columbia University Department of Public Safety.

For information, call (212) 854-8513. Refer to Facets for a more comprehensive look at security at Columbia University or visit the Columbia University Department of Public Safety web page.

Lion Safe App

- Public Safety's Lion Safe app allows the user to request emergency services at the touch of a button along with other useful quick links including maps, shuttle schedules, crime alerts, emergency protocols, campus safety notifications, and non-emergency numbers for each campus. The app is available for download at Columbia University Public Safety

Miscellaneous

Community Response Guidelines -Active Shooter Incident-

Emergency Protocols

Universal Waste Management

Portable Space Heaters

Bias Crimes Procedures

Sexual Respect and Gender Based Misconduct

Occupational Safety | Columbia | Research