

Department of Communication Disorders and Occupational Therapy (CDOT)
Program Assessment Report
Occupational Therapy Doctorate (Professional)
2024-2025

The UA/UAMS Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) degree in the Department of Communication Disorders and Occupational Therapy continues to ensure that degree candidates meet the minimum academic and clinical practicum requirements established by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). Program Goals are based on the knowledge and skills recommended by ACOTE to prepare graduates to pass the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) board exam and to pursue competitive employment opportunities.

Graduate students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to 1) foundations of occupational therapy professional practice; 2) screening, assessment, evaluation, and diagnosis of deficits and disorders that impact occupational performance; 3) evaluation, treatment planning and implementation, discharge planning, and ongoing community support. Students must successfully complete all didactic coursework and multiple clinical rotations (Level I and 2 Fieldwork) to progress to the Doctoral Capstone. The Doctoral Capstone consists of two parts: the [doctoral capstone experience](#) and the [doctoral capstone project](#). The doctoral capstone experience and project are intended to provide the students with in-depth exposure to at least one of the following: clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, program development and evaluation, policy development, advocacy, education and leadership.

In 2024, the OTD program revised the Strategic Plan and Plan for Program Evaluation. The OTD program had a very successful year hiring the final tenure-track faculty position (start date June 16, 2025). The annual accreditation report was completed and an interim ACOTE report was submitted April 18, 2025. We are actively searching for an Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) and have identified an interim AFWC to fill in while the search is conducted.

Program Goals:

1. GOAL: Maintain high levels of teaching effectiveness.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT / OUTCOME: All OTD faculty met this benchmark in 2024

- A. Student Course Evaluations: All Faculty scored in at least "Category II, Meets Expectations (2 - 2.9 points): Identifies strong/meaningful teaching and advising practices that advance student success.
- B. Student evaluation scores on the questions below average 3.6 – 4.2 in each course.

My instructor displays a personal interest in students and their learning

My instructor is effective in teaching the subject matter of this course

Overall, I would rate this instructor as

- C. All faculty continue to contribute to Quality Improvement Activities in each course. Bi-annual curriculum retreats occurred in Fall 2024, and Spring 2025.

PLAN: Continue to support faculty professional development. All faculty professional development plans include 6 hours of continuing education per year to support currency to teach assigned courses. Continue to monitor faculty teaching effectiveness through course evaluations and initiate program level end of semester survey in 2025.

- 2. GOAL: Compliance with administrative, educational, fieldwork, and capstone ACOTE standards with regards to implementation and Program Evaluation.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT / OUTCOME: Completed Interim Report April 18, 2025 (outcome expected August-Sept. 2025). Identified areas to strengthen compliance and improvements to OTD Website were made. The program has adopted all 2023 ACOTE Standards and is set to implement all new standards by the ACOTE deadline, July 1, 2025.

PLAN: Complete comprehensive curriculum evaluation by July 1, 2025 to ensure all ACOTE standards are fully met by the designated courses and assessment of student learning accurately and completely meets the educational standards. Make curricular adjustments as needed.

- 3. GOAL: Recruit an academically strong, diverse student body while also ensuring we are meeting our mandate as Arkansas land-grant institution. We strive to maintain a 100% retention and graduation rate.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT / OUTCOMES: 93% Retention Rate in 2024. For the cohort beginning January 2025, 30/30 (100%) students remain in the program at the conclusion of the Spring 2025 semester.

PLAN: Continue to take a proactive approach to remediation and student outcomes by requiring all faculty to report mid-term grades. Students are expected to meet with faculty teaching courses in which they earn a C or lower on any exam or assignment.

Continue regular and robust recruitment efforts to increase enrollment to 32 students/cohort and sustain enrollment expectations.

4. GOAL: Employer Satisfaction with Graduates

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT / OUTCOMES: The 2024 employer survey (n=13) found the following:

- 12 students are employed at organizations represented in the survey.
- 85% of respondents rate the knowledge and skills of UA/UAMS OTD graduates as above average or well above average. The remaining 15% rate their knowledge and skills as average.
- Demonstrates foundational knowledge of OT principles: 8/13 Excellent; 5/13 Good
- Applies evidence-based practices: 6/13 Excellent; 5/13 Good; 1/13 Satisfactory
- Utilizes appropriate assessment tools/techniques: 6/13 Excellent; 5/13 Good; 1/13 Satisfactory
- Maintains safe therapeutic environment: 8/13 Excellent; 2/13 Good; 2/13 Satisfactory
- Communicates effectively: 6/13 Excellent; 5/13 Good; 2/13 Satisfactory
- Collaborates well with interdisciplinary teams: 6/13 Excellent; 7/13 Good
- Shows cultural humility in diverse settings: 9/13 Excellent; 6/13 Good
- Demonstrates leadership potential & problem-solving skills: 4/13 Excellent; 6/13 Good; 2/13 Satisfactory, 1/13 Fair
- Proactively seeks opportunities for professional growth: 4/13 Excellent; 6/13 Good; 2/13 Satisfactory, 1/13 Fair
- Displays innovation in addressing challenges: 9/13 Excellent; 6/13 Good; 0/13 Satisfactory, 1/13 Fair
- Exhibits strong work ethic & reliability: 8/13 Excellent; 3/13 Good; 2/13 Satisfactory, 0/13 Fair
- Maintains ethical standards & professionalism: 9/13 Excellent; 4/13 Good; 0/13 Satisfactory, 0/13 Fair
- Demonstrates effective time management: 7/13 Excellent; 4/13 Good; 1/13 Satisfactory, 1/13 Fair

- **QUALITATIVE FINDINGS: Do you feel the OTD program prepares graduates to meet the needs of your organization?** Students are well prepared and professional. The program is getting better every year. Good problem solvers, critical thinkers and motivators. Safe & reliable.

PLAN: Initiate Program Advisory Board (summer 2025) and continue monitoring student performance in clinical coursework and employer satisfaction.

OTHER NOTES:

- The program continues to increase the number of clinical contracts for fieldwork and doctoral capstone placements. There are currently 274 recorded active sites for fieldwork and doctoral capstone sites in Exxat, the fieldwork and doctoral capstone site management/ student placement system. This is an increase of 108 active contracts from the previous reporting period.
- 100% of students successfully completed Level I and II fieldwork placements during this reporting period.
- 100% of students successfully completed the Doctoral Capstone Experience and Project during this reporting period.
- The NBCOT board exam pass rate for 2024 was 96%. The student 1st time pass rate for 2024 was 73.9%, which is above the national average (~68% first time pass rate). At the time of this report, 20/22 students graduating in December 2024 passed the NBCOT board exam.
- The program's admissions cycle for January 2026 closed in April, 2025. 33 students have accepted the admissions invitation at the time of this report. The program will host it's 2nd Annual New Student Welcome Day in July to improve retention from program acceptance to matriculation.