



## Program Progression Policies

Last Updated 3/10/25 by Juliane H. Chreston OTD OTRL

2023 ACOTE Standard A.3.3. The program must have documented and published criteria for successful completion of each segment of the educational program to ensure that students complete all graduation requirements in a timely manner. Graduation requirements must be given in advance to each student.

The published documents must include a statement that all Level II fieldwork and the doctoral capstone must be completed within a time frame established by the program.

The program must describe how retention practices support the needs of its diverse student population to complete the program.

The Occupational Therapy Program is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment that enables all students to successfully progress and complete their degree. The program's retention practices ensure that students meet academic and professional expectations while receiving the necessary support to address diverse needs. Policies such as required minimum grades, GPA maintenance, and structured remediation plans provide clear academic standards while allowing for individualized support through faculty advising, mentoring, and structured remediation opportunities. Additionally, provisions for leave of absence, grade appeals, and professional behavior guidance ensure that students facing personal or academic challenges have access to structured pathways for success. These policies, along with a commitment to professional development, uphold rigorous academic standards while promoting student success across a diverse population.

### Good Standing

To maintain good standing in the program and graduate on time, students must obtain a grade of C+ or better in each course and maintain an overall cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.

### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Points	Points per Credit
A	93-100	4.00
A-	90-92.99	3.67
B+	87-89.99	3.33
B	83-86.99	3.00
B-	80-82.99	2.67
C+	77-79.99	2.33
C	73-76.99	2.00
C-	70-72.99	1.67
D+	67-69.99	1.33

D	63-66.99	1.00
D-	60-62.99	.67
F	59 or below	0.00
P		0.00 points pass in a pass/fail course, not computed in grade point average, credits counted.
NC		0.00 points, failure in a pass/fail course, not computed in grade point average, no credit earned
W		0.0 points, withdrawn without penalty, not computed in grade point average. Given for withdrawal, previous to withdrawal deadline, and for certain extenuating circumstances thereafter, such as illness.
I		0.0 points, incomplete, not computed in grade point average, (see policy on incomplete grades)

Students must achieve the minimum required score for each level; rounding up of grades does not occur.

### **Student Withdrawal**

The Program follows the Concordia University withdrawal policy regarding process for withdrawal, time period for withdrawal, and refund of tuition and fees. Students can locate current withdrawal procedures on the University website at <https://www.cuaa.edu/about/offices/registrar/withdrawal.html> and information on refund of tuition and fees at <https://www.cuaa.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/tuition-fees.html> as well as within the Graduate Academic Catalog.

### **Submission of Work**

Assignments are due at the start of face-to-face classes or via Learning management System dropbox at the assigned time unless otherwise designated. Assignments submitted after these guidelines will be considered late and a 10% late penalty will accrue per day. Make-up quizzes, tests, and exams are at the discretion of the instructor. All assignments must be submitted in order to pass the course, even if no credit is awarded.

### **Professional Writing**

Graduate level writing including spelling, grammar, proofreading, and citation in APA format is expected on all written work. Work submitted below these standards will be returned to the student ungraded with the above-described late penalty applied until acceptable revised work is submitted.

### **Unauthorized Collaboration**

Students are expected to complete assigned work independently unless specific exemption is made by the instructor. When there is evidence of unauthorized collaboration, the maximum number of earned points for the assignment may be divided among the number of students involved.

## Challenging a Grade

Students wishing to challenge a grade on an assignment or test question should do so in writing at least 24 hours following the receipt of the grade and within one week of receipt of the grade, and must include written evidence/support for a grade change. The 24-hour minimum delay allows for time to process and reflect on feedback.

Students wishing to challenge a final course grade should follow the published [School of Health Professions Final Grade Appeal Policy](#). This policy establishes timelines and procedures for student to appeal grades first to the course instructor, and second to the chair/director. The OT Program Policy allows for a third level of appeal to the Program Professional Standards Committee in the event that the grade would result in the student receiving a grade below the required C+ (see below policies related to failing course grades).

Every effort will be made by the Program to resolve grade appeals that impact student progression prior to the start of the next term/semester. In the event that an active grade appeal remains in process at the start of the following term/semester, the student will be allowed to progress with the understanding that they will be withdrawn from classes if the appeal is not successful.

## Incomplete Grades

Because courses are sequential and build upon each other, incomplete grades will be given only under extraordinary circumstances and if the work completed to date is of passing quality (77% or higher). An incomplete may be requested only once during the course of the OTD Program.

In accordance with University policy, an incomplete grade given in any term may become a failing grade if the work is not completed within three weeks after the end of the final examination period for that term, or by the time agreed to in writing between the instructor and student. Requests for extension of time to resolve an incomplete (I) grade will be approved only when the instructor is satisfied that circumstances prompting the request justify waiving this three-week policy. Instructors must inform the Registrar's Office if a change needs to be made to the original incomplete extension date.

## Failing Course Grade

Students who do not achieve the required passing grade of C+ or better in a course must prepare and submit a remediation plan to the Professional Standards Committee; the committee will review the plan and make a recommendation to the Program Director to:

- A. Place the student on probation and grant a leave of absence/suspension until the course is offered the next year;

or

- B. Dismiss the student from the Program/University.

Students will be granted probation/leave of absence for academic reasons one time only related to coursework (Level II fieldwork is excluded from this limit). Any course, including Level II fieldwork, may be repeated only once. Students who fail two courses during one term may be dismissed.

## Professional Behaviors

Professional behavior expectations are communicated to students within the C policies of the student handbook as well as within the [SHP Policy for Professional Behavior](#).

Faculty and staff assess professional behaviors informally in every interaction to ensure that students are prepared to represent themselves, the Occupational Therapy Program, the School of Health Professions, Concordia University, and the profession of occupational therapy well. Students are also expected to adhere to the AOTA Code of Ethics and other ethical/behavioral standards represented within the profession.

Faculty and staff approach the inculturation of students into the professional expectations of the profession using a mentoring approach. That being said, because professional behaviors are often related to challenges within the academic and clinical setting, all concerns regarding professional behaviors are documented in order to establish patterns that may require remediation.

Specific professional behavior concerns will be addressed sequentially using the recommended pattern of:

1. Coach/counsel: Educate the student on the professional expectation.
2. Verbal warning: Remind the student of the professional expectation and inform of need to modify future behavior to avoid continued intervention.
3. Written warning: Provide written documentation of professional behavior concerns and previous action taken. Student, faculty/staff initiating warning, and program director sign document, which is stored in student's academic file within the department. Refusal of student to sign written warning does not prohibit continued intervention.
4. Referral to Professional Standards Committee.

A pattern of concerns across multiple standards of professionalism may indicate the need to escalate remediation. Faculty/staff reserve the right to bypass the above multiple step process for egregious concerns, particularly related to behaviors that create an unsafe situation, ethical violations, HIPAA violations, or academic integrity violations.

## Probation

Probation can occur for one of three reasons:

- Cumulative GPA below 3.0;
- Grade of C or below in a course with probation/leave of absence granted; or
- Professional behavior concerns.

Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will have the following two consecutive terms to bring their cumulative GPA to 3.0. If that GPA is not achieved, the student will be dismissed from the Program/University.

Students who receive a grade of C or below in a course and are granted probation/leave of absence will continue on probation through the end of their returning term.

Any student on academic probation will be required to remediate any individual assignment/test scores below a B- (80%) with the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to request a remediation meeting with the appropriate instructor within 72 hours of grade entry. Failure to initiate remediation meetings or participate in remediation will be factored into consideration for continuation in the program. Remediation provides an opportunity for the student to review and

develop competency with missed content; remediation does not change the initial earned grade on the assignment/test.

Failure to pass all courses during the probationary term with a C+ or better or achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the conclusion of the probationary term will result in dismissal from the program with no opportunity to reapply.

Students may be brought before the Professional Standards Committee for behavior that violates professional standards and ethics. Probation due to professional behaviors requires a remediation plan; the term of the remediation plan/probation will be dictated by the seriousness of the issue(s). Failure to follow the remediation plan will result in dismissal from the program with no opportunity to reapply.

A schedule of regular faculty advising will be recommended for any student on probation and will be outlined on the individual student learning contract. Failure to participate in faculty advising will be factored into consideration for continuation in the program.

Student's previous academic and professional conduct, including any previous probationary requirements, will be factored into consideration for continuation in the program. Unless otherwise specified within policies, students may have only one academic probation and one professionalism probation during the duration of the program.

Per the [School of Health Professions Academic Probation](#) policy, if a student believes that the Department did not follow policy the student may appeal to the Dean in writing. The Dean will have five (5) business days to respond in writing to the student. Dean's decision is final.

### **Conditional Admission**

Students who were admitted under a conditional admission status begin the program on probation and must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0 the first term to achieve good academic standing. They will be required to remediate any individual assignment/test scores below a B- (80%) with the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to request a remediation meeting with the appropriate instructor within 72 hours of grade entry. Failure to initiate remediation meetings or participate in remediation will be factored into consideration for continuation in the program. Remediation provides an opportunity for the student to review and develop competency with missed content; remediation does not change the initial earned grade on the assignment/test.

A successfully cleared conditional admission probationary status shall not count against a student who experiences a later academic probation.

### **Leave of Absence/Suspension**

Students may request a leave of absence of one year from the program for personal reasons or be granted an academic leave of absence/suspension following a failed course at the recommendation of the Professional Standards Committee. A leave of absence/suspension forfeits the lock on tuition rates granted at the start of the program and results in a delay in completion/graduation; it may also impact financial aid status. Only one leave of absence will be granted during the course of the program.

Students requesting a leave of absence should inform their faculty advisor and refer to the [School of Health Professions Leave of Absence Policy](#) and/or [Medical Leave of Absence Policy](#). All students returning from a leave of absence (for any reason) are required to submit a statement for

review by the Professional Standards Committee who will make a recommendation to the program director regarding the student's return.

## **Dismissal**

Dismissal from the Program/University may occur under the following circumstances:

- Student fails one course and does not submit a remediation plan that indicates accurate identification of behaviors and strategies necessary to benefit from probation/repeat of course.
- Student fails more than one course in a term.
- Student fails a second attempt at Level II fieldwork.
- Student fails to achieve a 3.0 GPA within the probationary period after being placed on probation.
- Student demonstrates egregious lack of adherence to professional behaviors and/or ethics warranting immediate dismissal.
- Student fails to meet the requirements of the remediation plan while under probation related to professional behaviors.

Students dismissed from the Program are not eligible to reapply.

Per the [School of Health Professions Academic Dismissal Policy](#), if the department recommends dismissal, then the decision will be reviewed by the Interprofessional Review Board (IPRB). The IPRB may choose to meet with the student to obtain further information. The IPRB can uphold or overturn the dismissal based on the department policies. The IPRB will have ten (10) business days to respond in writing to the student.

If a student believes the department or IPRB did not follow policy the student may appeal to the Dean in writing. The Dean will have five (5) business days to respond in writing to the student. The Dean's decision is final.

## **Graduation Requirements**

Concordia University confers the doctoral occupational therapy degree on a student of good character who has met the following requirements:

1. Accumulated a cumulative minimum grade point average of 3.00 for all academic credit earned at Concordia University.
2. Satisfied all program-specific requirements including:
  - a. All didactic coursework;
  - b. 24 weeks of Level II fieldwork; and
  - c. 14-week doctoral capstone experience culminating in dissemination of the capstone project.
3. Met all financial obligations to the University.
4. Each candidate for graduation must complete a Graduation Application online by the assigned deadline, prior to commencement; a fee is assessed for all graduates, whether or not they attend commencement.

## **Completion in a Timely Manner**

In order to ensure completion of the program in a timely manner, Level II fieldwork (OT 8111, OT 8211) and the doctoral capstone experience/project/dissemination (OT 9319, OT 9329) must be completed within 24 months of completion of didactic coursework.