

DATE: July 26, 2012

SUBJECT: New Academic Program
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The proposed Doctoral program in Occupational Therapy (OTD) is a clinical program focused on training occupational therapy practitioners to address the rehabilitation and long term care needs of regional residents. The OTD is an emerging credential for Occupational Therapists, and this proposed program will provide essential instruction in a field that has, in recent years, experienced rapid growth.

The proposed program will equip students with a significant amount of practical experience, integrate the academic outcomes espoused by the accrediting body, and also provide a foundation of research and scholarly practices for students to build on throughout their career in occupational therapy.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE: August 2013

1.1.20A MISSION: The proposed program supports the UTC mission of “meeting the diverse needs of the region”, and is aligned with the vision and mission of the UTC College of Health, Education, and Professional Studies. Additionally, the program is in full compliance with the UTC Strategic Plan, particularly the priority area of leveraging partnerships to enhance education.

The OTD is in alignment with the goals outlined in the THEC 2010-15 Public Agenda for Higher Education, specifically the focus on strengthening Tennessee’s Knowledge Economy and increasing the number of doctoral degrees awarded to the state’s citizens.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: The program curriculum is directly linked with the standards required by the American Occupational Therapy Association, and provides a general foundation of occupational therapy knowledge while also providing some opportunity to specialize (e.g., pediatrics).

The curriculum consists of 117 credit hours, with students completing the program in three years of study. Each year includes didactic courses focused on building a strong foundation in anatomical and therapeutic theory, as well as clinical instruction carried out in a field environment.

All OTD students are required to complete and defend experiential internship focusing on an area of emphasis. The internship occurs during the final semester of study. All course work, clinical experiences and defense of the experiential internship must be completed within ten years.

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Applicants must meet admission requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and the program. Program admission requires a bachelor’s degree; a minimum 3.0 overall undergraduate GPA; three letters of recommendations and completion of the Occupational Therapy Centralized Application.

Projected Program Enrollment and Productivity

All students in the program will attend full-time, completing the degree in three years. OTD programs generally have a very low attrition rate; this proposal forecasts an attrition rate of less than 10%.

Year	Full-Time Headcount	Part-Time Headcount	Total FTE	Graduates
1	24	0	24	0
2	48	0	48	0
3	72	0	72	21
4	72	0	72	21
5	72	0	72	21

1.1.20D FACULTY: The OTD program will result in creation of a full time program director position, responsible for the administration of the program, hiring of additional faculty, and progress towards accreditation. At full implementation, the OTD program will employ five full-time faculty members. In the initial years of operation, the strong curricular overlap with the existing Physical Therapy program will allow for a lower number of faculty. Additionally, students in the program will benefit from clinical faculty on staff at local hospitals and rehabilitation centers.

1.1.20E LIBRARY RESOURCES: The T. Carter and Margaret Rawlings Lupton Library support all UTC academic programs. Students will have access to a broad array of library resources, as well as the medical libraries of Erlanger Health System and Memorial Health Care System.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: This program will result in creation of a new department within the already existing College of Health, Education and Professional Studies. The Department will be led by a Program Director that reports directly to the Dean.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: Students will have access to a wide range of support resources, including advising support from the Program Director, clinical assistance from fieldwork facilities, and research skills assistance from library personnel. OTD admissions will be further supported by ensuring that undergraduate students enrolled at UTC are advised by pre-professional advisors in order to ensure all pre-requisite requirements are satisfied.

1.1.20H FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: Some additional space will be required for implantation of this program, and the costs for acquiring such space are included in the program budget. Much of this space will be contiguous to the existing Physical

Therapy facilities. The program will also have substantial facility resources available at nearby Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation.

1.1.20I NEED AND DEMAND: According to the U.S Department of Labor, the current demand for occupational therapists exceeds the number of projected OT graduates. This deficit of qualified therapists is only expected to grow with the continued aging of large portion of America's Baby Boom generation and the rising survival rates of trauma victims.

UTC's Center for Applied Social Research surveyed students, occupational therapists and employers to determine demand for the program. The local area surrounding UTC also demonstrated a specific demand for qualified Occupational Therapists, with 80% of local OT respondents indicating a need for an OTD and 71% of potential employers also concurring with the establishment of this program.

1.1.20J NO UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION: The proposed program will be the only OTD program in operation at a public institution in Tennessee.

1.1.20K COOPERATING INSTITUTIONS: Clinical resource partnerships will be developed with numerous healthcare organizations for students' clinical fieldwork experiences.

1.120L DIVERSITY AND ACCESS: Attracting a diverse group of students to this program is a stated goal of the proposal. Additionally, funds are available from both the Office of Equity and Diversity and the Dean's office to award scholarships to students from diverse backgrounds.

1.1.20M ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION: This program is eligible for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. The accreditation process consists of three stages: developing status, Letter of Review, and on-site evaluation. UTC has already completed an early Letter of Intent, and will complete and Application for Developing Program Status in late 2012 or early 2013. Full accreditation is hoped for by the end of 2014.

In addition to these steps, internal review and evaluation of the program will occur every two years. This evaluation consists of both quantitative and qualitative components and will assess faculty effectiveness, student satisfaction, job placement and performance and other areas that depict the health and quality of the program.

1.1.200 EXTERNAL JUDGMENT: External review of the proposed program was carried out during an institution site visit on May 21-22, 2012. Dr. Brenda Coppard, Associate Dean, School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, Creighton University, and Dr. Julie Thomas, Professor of Occupation Therapy, University of Toledo, served as the external evaluators.

Dr. Coppard and Dr. Thomas made a joint recommendation for the approval of the UTC OTD program, stating: "The proposed Doctor of Occupational Therapy program is an exciting development for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and for occupational therapy education nationally."

1.1.20P COST/BENEFIT: The proposed doctoral program will be funded through campus reallocations and additional tuition revenues generated by the program. Additional support comes from the Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation for \$50,000 annually for five years.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following program approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved proposal. At the end of this period, the campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation and other metrics set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. If benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. If additional time is needed and requested by the governing board, the Commission may choose to extend the monitoring period.