

## **Provost's Comprehensive Program Review Report**

**Institution:** Middle Georgia State University

**Academic Program Name:** A.S. in Occupational Therapy

**CIP Code:** 510803

**College or School:** School of Health & Natural Sciences

**Department:** Rehabilitation Science

**Date of Last Internal Review:** 2017

**Outcome of Previous Program Review (brief narrative statement):** N/A no prior comments given by Provost

**Current Date:** 5/18/2022

**Provost Response:** Academic Affairs acknowledges the documented value of the A.S. in Occupational Therapy and applauds the program on its recent self-study and reaccreditation. This legacy associate degree has demonstrated adaptability and resilience during the pandemic. The enrollment, retention, and graduation outcomes are consistent with a viable program responding to external forces. The contribution to the workforce across the region and the program's reputation for quality in their accreditation, teaching, and service positions this program well for future growth and success. This program is a critical access point for the future MSOT program.

**Program Quality and Productivity Improvement Plan:** Following a review of the Chairs Report, the IERB comments, and the Deans appraisal, the Office of the Provost concurs with the findings and supports the documented plan of action.

- *Continue to focus on marketing efforts to support enrollment growth.*
- *Continue efforts to increase graduation rates*

### **Categorical Summation**

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program.

Program MEETS Institution's Criteria

Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.

Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing or a high demand field and thus will be enhanced.

Program PARTIALLY MEETS Institution's Criteria and will be re-evaluated in \_\_\_\_\_.

Program DOES NOT MEET Institution's Criteria

Program will be placed on a monitoring status.

Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.

Program will be deactivated.

Program will be voluntarily terminated.

Other (identify/add text):

Provost or VPAA Signature:

Date:

  
Michael J. Gill

4/1/2022

## Comprehensive Program Review Report

**Academic Program Name:** AS Occupational Therapy

**College or School:** Health & Natural Sciences

**Department:** Rehabilitation Science

**Date of Last Internal Review:** Spring 2017

**Outcome of Previous Program Review (brief narrative statement, if applicable):**

**Current Date:** 4/6/2022

**Executive Summary:** *Provide a summary related to the academic program's quality, viability, and productivity of efforts in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service as appropriate to the institution's mission. If this is the initial review of the program address how the program is/is not meeting the enrollment and credit hour projects contained in the original program proposal. Include a statement of plans for action based on the overall categorical summation contained in the next section.*

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program continues to be a high quality, viable, and productive program. As stated in the university's mission, the OTA program continues to "educate and graduate inspired, lifelong learners whose scholarship and careers enhance the Middle Georgia region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships, and community engagement". According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for OTAs will grow significantly over the next 10 years.

Although there has been a slight decrease in enrollment which may be associated with the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, I am optimistic the trend will rebound to positive enrollment and graduation status prior to the next Comprehensive Program Review timeframe in 2027. A new strategic plan is being implemented that will include (1) creating virtual and informative webinars; (2) establishing relationships with area Health Occupation Students of American (HOSA) high school student groups, and (3)offering tours of our campus facilities in addition to partnering with the efforts of our recruiters from the Office of Admissions. Faculty, staff, and students continue to be committed to learning, scholarship, and service in the Occupational Therapy profession and within their respective communities.

### Categorical Summation

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program.

Program MEETS Institution's Criteria

- Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.
- Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing or a high demand field and thus will be enhanced.

Program DOES NOT MEET Institution's Criteria

- Program will be placed on a monitoring status.
- Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.
- Program will be deactivated.
- Program will be voluntarily terminated.
- Other (identify/add text):

Academic Dean Signature:



Dean of Graduate Studies Signature (when applicable):

Date: 4/6/2022

## IERB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation

Date Reviewed: 03/08/2022

Program Reviewed: A.S. in Occupational Therapy Assistant

<b>Contextual Notes:</b> Summarize any demographic or environmental factors described in the introduction that might significantly impact assessment of the program
<p>Only OTA Program in the southeastern two-thirds of the state.</p> <p>Consistently maintained a perfect accreditation record and outstanding pass-rate on the National Certification Exam in Occupational Therapy.</p> <p>The OTA Program is offered only on the Cochran campus in face-to-face format.</p> <p>Between Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 had a sharp drop in enrollment due to an unusual number of students changing their major after completing one year of the OTA Program. The students stated reasons ranging from loss of interest in OT once they learned more about the profession to family concerns. This resulted in an unusually small cohort completing Level II Fieldwork at the start of the pandemic, but have not seen another drop in retention.</p> <p>Retention rate has increased since Fall 2017, resulting in only a small dip in graduation rates.</p>

Area of Focus	Exemplary Area	Satisfactory Area	Area of Concern	No Evidence	Notes
Enrollment	<i>This program has significantly positive enrollment trends and robust credit hour production</i>	<i>This program has stable or moderately positive enrollment trends and healthy credit hour production</i>	<i>This program has negative enrollment trends and weak credit hour production</i>		Slight decrease in enrollment, due to the purposeful reduction of cohort size. Credit hour production is robust. Enrollment is between 42 and 54 which is not fluctuated too much but it does have a negative 5 year Growth rate of -3.41%. No online enrollment.
Graduation Trends USG benchmark: Bachelor's Degrees: 10 graduates/year  Graduate, Associate's or	<i>Three year rolling average greatly exceeds USG minimum benchmark for degrees conferred</i>	<i>Three year rolling average meets or exceeds USG minimum benchmark for degrees conferred</i>	<i>Three year rolling average does not meet USG minimum benchmark for degrees conferred; the program is "low performing" by USG definition</i>		Slight negative trend over the five year period does not negate the strong graduation numbers in comparison to USG benchmarks.  Decreased significantly in 2020 but doubled in 2021 with a -3.15% 5 year Growth rate.

## IERB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation

<b>Certificates:</b> 5 graduates/year  Programs falling under these benchmarks are designated as "low performing"					
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### **Program Strengths of Note:**

Slightly fluctuating, though consistently strong enrollment numbers over the five year period

Very strong graduation rates consistently

Is the only OTA Program in the southeastern two-thirds of the state. Has consistently maintained a perfect accreditation record and outstanding pass-rate on the National Certification Exam in Occupational Therapy.

This program has a continued history of providing students with work-ready skills when they complete the program.

### **Areas of Concern:**

Enrollment has fluctuated and decreased slightly, due in part to a purposeful reduction in cohort size.

Only offered in Cochran in face-to-face format.

Availability of work-field sites seems to have impacted enrollment in recent years, though not excessively. There may be a need to find more alternatives for the future.

## **IERB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation**

### **Other Comments:**

The program is undergoing a reaccreditation cycle with ACOTE. An action plan is in need to comply with any recommendations or requirements from ACOTE.



## Comprehensive Program Review

FY 2021 – 2022

**Institution:** Middle Georgia State University

**Academic Program:** A.S. in Occupational Therapy Assistant

**School:** School of Health and Natural Sciences

**Department:** Rehabilitation Science

**CIP Code:** 510803

**Date of Last Internal Review:** Spring 2017

**Faculty Completing Report:** Betsy McDaniel

**Current Date:** 1/4/2022

### 5 Year Enrollment by Campus and Graduation Trends

#### Enrollment

Campus	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	5 YR Growth	Fall 2017 compared to Fall 2021 only
Macon							
Cochran	54	44	42	49	47	-3.41%	-13%
Warner Robins							
Dublin							
Eastman							
Online							
Off Campus							
Total	54	44	42	49	47	-3.41%	-13%

## **Graduates**

- For data consistency, the fiscal year is in which the degree was awarded. For examples, fiscal year 2019 includes degrees conferred in Summer 2018, Fall 2018, and Spring 2019.

FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	5 YR Growth	FY17 compared to FY21 only
25	23	20	11	22	-3.15%	-12%

## **Purpose and Mission Alignment**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program supports Middle Georgia State University (MGA) in its mission to educate and graduate inspired, lifelong learners whose scholarship and careers enhance the Middle Georgia region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships, and community engagement. The OTA Program's mission is to deliver an evidence-based health education program that prepares ethical, professional, and culturally competent OTAs who are ready to serve as leaders in our region's rapidly changing health care environment. To ensure our students graduate with the necessary entry-level competencies and professional attitudes required to function as an OTA, the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is designed to:

- Promote analytical, critical, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills
- Promote occupation-based occupational therapy services
- Promote evidenced-based occupational therapy services
- Promote client-centered occupational therapy services
- Promote lifelong learning, cultural competence, ethical decision making, and community and professional involvement as aspects of professional development.

The OTA Program further supports MGA's mission through our vision: "Through extraordinary education, we are preparing individual students who are capable of transforming their communities as they maximize health, well-being, and quality of life for all people and populations by promoting participation in everyday living. MGA occupational therapy assistants will be widely recognized and respected OT practitioners who provide competent, ethical, client-centered, innovative, and evidence based occupational therapy services."

## **Program Age, Method of Delivery, and Changes**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program began in 1994 with the full support of what was then Middle Georgia College and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. At that time, there was only one other OTA Program in the state. Thus, Georgia had an urgent

need for qualified Occupational Therapy Practitioners, especially in the rural areas of the state. At this time, there are 3 additional OTA programs in Georgia, two in the northern part of the state and one southwest of MGA. However, MGA's OTA Program continues to attract students from all over the state and is the only OTA Program in the southeastern two-thirds of the state. For almost 30 years, the OTA Program at MGA has been educating and graduating occupational therapy assistants of the highest caliber who are highly valued by their employers. The OTA Program has consistently maintained a perfect accreditation record and outstanding pass-rate on the National Certification Exam in Occupational Therapy. The OTA Program is offered only on the Cochran campus in face-to-face format.

The OTA Program has not experienced any significant changes related to curriculum or delivery since the last review, however it has experienced some environmental changes. In 2017, the Department of Occupational Therapy was renamed the Department of Rehabilitation Science, which now houses the new B.S. in Rehabilitation Science, the A.S. in OTA (OTA Program), and the developing M.S. in Occupational Therapy (MSOT). The development of the MSOT Program will offer OTA graduates the opportunity to continue their education at the graduate level and further their careers as occupational therapists by taking advantage of this opportunity to bridge from the associate to the master's level.

The OTA Program has also been relocated to Dillard Hall on the Cochran campus. A portion of Dillard Hall was renovated for School of Health and Natural Science programs and the OTA Program began offering classes in the new location in January 2021. The new spaces are state-of-the art and allow the OTA Program to offer all courses and labs in one building on campus. This change represents a significant benefit to OTA students who now have more opportunities to participate in interdisciplinary experiences with the nursing, rehab science, and biology students who are also in the same building.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 affected the OTA Program's ability to place students on fieldwork (clinical rotations), since many OTAs work in skilled nursing facilities which were closed to the public and students for over a year. Other facilities also reduced or restricted student access to patients. Due to the limitations this placed on our ability to find a variety of fieldwork settings for each student in compliance with our accreditation standards, the OTA Program made the decision to reduce our admissions from 30 to 25 for the duration of the pandemic.

## **Accreditation**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at MGA is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at: 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD

20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is 301.652.6611 and the web address is [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org).

## Benchmarks of Progress

**Enrollment:** Overall, the OTA Program is a robust degree program at MGA. Enrollment has decreased slightly, which is mostly due to our need to decrease cohort size to accommodate our fieldwork sites. Between Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 we had a sharp drop in enrollment due to an unusual number of students changing their major after completing one year of the OTA Program. The students in the cohort stated reasons ranging from loss of interest in OT once they learned more about the profession to family concerns. This resulted in an unusually small cohort completing Level II Fieldwork at the start of the pandemic, but we have not seen another drop in retention.

**Graduation:** Our graduation rate is reflective of our enrollment since students complete the program as a cohort. The graduating class of 2020 was the smallest class the program has seen in many years and reflects the students who chose not to continue in the program for personal reasons. Although we decreased our cohort size from 30 to 25 since Fall 2020, our retention rate has actually increased since Fall 2017, resulting in only a small dip in graduation rates. Since the OTA Program admission process uses a set rubric to determine the most qualified applicants, this increase in retention could indicate that smaller cohort size results in students who are more prepared to be successful and/or that a smaller faculty: student ratio supports strong learning outcomes.

## Action Plan

The OTA Program is currently in a reaccreditation cycle with ACOTE and successfully submitted a self-study in November 2021. During the self-study process, classes and assignments were reviewed and revised to better reflect new ACOTE standards. Program processes were also reviewed, and changes made as needed. The program will complete the on-site evaluation for reaccreditation in late February, early March 2022 and will develop an action plan to comply with any recommendations or requirements from ACOTE. The program is also implementing needed changes or updates to program processes, policies, course content, and assignments as identified in the self-study process.

## Trends and Market Forces Impacting Program Demand

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment of occupational therapy assistants is projected to grow 34% from 2020 to 2030, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. The need for rehabilitation professionals and healthcare professionals (OTAs included) has been on a continued upward trajectory over the past several years. This

trajectory has been in part due to the increasing age of the baby boomer population and the increased need for medical and rehabilitation services. Also, the impact that covid-19 has had on the population will most likely further skew that upward trend.

**M E M O R A N D U M**

**February 11, 2022**

**To:** Dr. Laura Thomason, Credentialing Officer; Dr. David Jenks, Provost; Mrs. Jennifer Jones, Operations Manager, Office of the Provost; Mr. Christopher Tsavatewa, Director of Institutional Effectiveness; Dr. Kevin Cantwell, Special Assistant to the President and IAL, SACSCOC

**CC:** Pam Booker, Executive Director, Human Resources

**From:** Betsy McDaniel

**Re:** Re-Credentialing of faculty members CPR Year 2021-2022 School of Health and Natural Sciences, Department Rehabilitation Science

**Academic Year 2021-2022 Roster**

Instructor Last, First Name	MGA ID (983)	Full-Time or Part-Time
Sisa, Jessica		Full-Time
McDaniel, Betsy		Full-Time
O'Neal, Stacey		Full-Time
Gray, Lauren		Full-Time
Baker, Adrian		Full-Time
Holmes, Whitney		Part-Time
Allen, Bianca		Part-Time
Pipkin, Jessica		Part-Time
Swartz, Traci		Full-Time
Riggs, Emily		Full-Time
Teemer, Janistres	--	Part-Time

Recognizing that qualified, effective faculty members are essential to the execution of Middle Georgia State University's mission and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic program, each academic program will undergo faculty re-credentialing and review during their calendared comprehensive program review year.

As of AY22, the above faculty members in the Department of NAME, School of NAME, hold adequate credentials and/or qualifications for meeting program goals and objectives and the student learning outcomes of the courses assigned.

This memo serves as an attestation that department leadership has:

1. Reviewed MGA's Faculty Handbook and Appendix 1: Faculty Credentialing Guidelines (Approved and Updated 4/2/21)
2. Reviewed MGA's historical faculty rosters (Fall 2019 to Spring 2022)
3. Reviewed each individual faculty member's file
4. Updated the file as appropriate to reflect any changes

5. Secured or updated any documents needed to authenticate credentials and/or qualifications (e.g., transcripts, licensure certificates, etc.)
6. Discussed with the faculty member any changes in their course credentialing status
7. Reviewed faculty credentialing records and changes with the institution's Faculty Credentialing Officer as needed

In signing this memo, the department and school leadership attest that all rostered faculty referenced above hold appropriate credentials and/or qualifications that are justified and documented, and submit them for review to MGA's Faculty Credentialing Officer.

*Note: while faculty re-credentialing occurs in conjunction with the CPR cycle (3 years for new programs and 5 years for existing programs), department leadership are required to maintain documentation of appropriate credentials and/or qualifications annually as captured by the faculty roster, to account for changes in course assignment or new qualifications secured between CPR cycles.*

Department Chair: Betsy McDonald  
Date: 2/9/2022

Dean: Jessica L. Jones  
Date: 2/9/2022

In signing this memo, Faculty Credentialing Officer affirms that the above-referenced faculty hold appropriate credentials and/or qualifications and that those credentials are justified and documented per MGA policy and procedure. A copy of this memo shall be included in the file of each referenced faculty member.

Faculty Credentialing Officer: Laura Ellsworth  
Date: 04/15/2022

1. Note: Appendix 1: Department XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Faculty Roster (Fall 2019 to Spring 2022)