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**NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM**

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**Sponsoring Institution(s):** Jefferson College

**Program Title:** Occupational Therapy Assistant

**Degree/Certificate:** Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant

**Delivery Site(s):** Jefferson College Main Campus

**Options:** Not Applicable

**CIP Classification:** 51.0803

**Implementation Date:** Spring, 2012

**Cooperative Partners:** None

**Expected Date of First Graduation:** Fall, 2013

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Dr. Joyce A. Banjac  
 Vice President, Chief Academic Officer  
 Jefferson College

*Joyce A. Banjac 9/19/11*  
 Signature Date

**Contact Person for Additional Information:**

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 Occupational Therapy Program Director

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(Attached is a Summary of Need, Duplication and Collaboration, Program Structure, Financial Projections, Program Characteristics and Performance Goals, and Student Enrollment Projections.)



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**1. NEED:**

**A. Student Demand**

- i. The total estimated enrollment for the first five years of the program for full-time and part-time students are as follows.

Year 1	2012-2013	24
Year 2	2013-2014	48
Year 3	2014-2015	48
Year 4	2015-2016	48
Year 5	2016-2017	48

Please see FORM SE estimated enrollment.

- ii. Will enrollment be capped in the future?  
The enrollment for the Occupational Therapy Program is capped at 24 students per class. This enrollment limit is due to laboratory and clinical space availability, as well as maintaining reasonable faculty to student ratios.

**B. Market Demand**

Current local and regional market analyses reveal the need for trained health care providers. Lower wages and unemployment in several local regions, many of which are rural counties, will benefit from access to a rich pool of formally trained Occupational Therapy Assistants. Local access to this degree program answers the direct needs of the citizens and fills an employer identified gap within a 3 region radius and the state. MERIC's (Missouri Economic Research and Information Center) Unemployment Statistics for December 2010 show the St. Louis Region Summary unemployment rate at 9.4% with Jefferson County showing 10% unemployment and Franklin County 10.6%. The Southeast Region Summary unemployment rate is reported as 9.5% with Ste. Genevieve County at 10% unemployment and St. Francois County showing 11.2% unemployment. In the Central Region Crawford County and Washington County show the highest unemployment rates at 12% and 14.2% respectively. Jefferson College would draw OTA program candidates from the St. Louis, Southeast, and Central regions in Missouri.

The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education was charged by Senate Bill 101 (RETC 1995) to develop a four-pronged "Blueprint" for Missouri higher education establishing a new role for community colleges in Missouri and established the Regional Technical Education Councils (RTEC's). The blueprint is noted as a "revolutionary shift in coordination of delivery of postsecondary technical education in the state to community colleges" (para 1&2).



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The new plan addresses shortages of high-skill/high-wage technicians for Missouri jobs, shortages of advanced technical associate degree programs after high school, and limited geographic access to technical programs beyond high school (Results for Missourians, para. 4).

“This new mandate for community colleges establishes two-year institutions as the most forceful and effective participant in Missouri’s higher education community” (para 3). RTEC reports, “Nearly 85 percent of technical certificate and associate degree program graduates find immediate employment in their field of training [with] impressive average starting salaries after one or two years of education and training” (Return on investments so far, para 9).

Governor Nixon (2011) praised community colleges in his State of the State address. The Governor highlighted community colleges' role in preparing students for employment, saying, “To compete for 21<sup>st</sup> Century jobs, we need a highly skilled and well-trained workforce. Our Training for Tomorrow and Caring for Missourians initiatives are preparing thousands more workers for the careers of tomorrow. We've invested millions in training workers to meet the growing demand in fields like computer technology, clean energy, automatic technology, and health care (State of the State, para.86).”

The A.A.S. in Occupational Therapy Assistant program at Jefferson College will provide cost effective local educational access to the public in rural and economically depressed areas. The degree provides regional Missourians with technical skills to increase career opportunities and viability for employment boosting local economies. This is exceptionally true for Occupational Therapy Assistants who will have a variety of traditional practice setting, as well as nationally identified AOTA emerging practice area to choose from when entering the workforce. Both High School and returning students, graduating from Jefferson College’s Occupational Therapy Assistants program will be able to find employment close to home, stimulating the region’s economy and keeping the workforce local. OTA’s earn an average wage of \$45,352 annually.

Jefferson College’s OTA, A.A.S program will also lay the foundations in general education such as math, reading, and English, in accordance with the Missouri Community College Association’s (MCCA) College Readiness Standards and the Missouri Department of Higher Education's Curriculum Alignment Initiative. Students graduating from the Jefferson College OTA program will have increased options to advance their future personal and occupational goals.

Gail Fisher, M.P.A., O.T.R. /L.; Mary Keehn, P.T., M.S., D.P.T. (2009) Presented *Workforce Trends in Occupational & Physical Therapy* at the Academy Health 2009 Annual Research Meeting in Chicago. The researchers report using “A mixed methods study which included telephone interviews of a national sample of 40 key informants/stakeholders. The interviews covered perspectives on the shifts in supply of and demand for occupational and physical therapists and therapy assistants, impact of a supply shortage and future growth areas as well as possible constraints.”

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In their presentation of current workforce trends, the Fisher and Keehn (2009) state:

A shortage of occupational therapy and physical therapy practitioners exists. The shortage exists as a result of both increased demand and reduced supply. The shortage has developed in the past several years, following a period of a surplus of practitioners between 1998 and 2002. There is a reduced supply of new graduates, resulting from a significant drop in the applicant pool in the period that began in approximately 1999 and reached its low point in 2002...Demand has increased due to increased numbers of older adults needing services to maximize functional independence and rising numbers of children on the autism spectrum. There are many negative impacts of the therapist shortage for both therapy recipients and practitioners. Barriers to increasing supply to meet demand include the shortage of faculty, restrictions on the entrance of foreign trained therapists, and the lack of federal funding for educational program expansion. While the shortage of therapists has not gained as much attention as the shortage of nurses, it is growing and is expected to worsen due to the reduced number of programs and enrollment capacity. This shortage has had the greatest negative impact on acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and home health agencies, but also affects schools and outpatient clinics (p 162-163).

The original study by Fisher and Keehn in (2007) for the Midwest Center for Health Workforce Studies sites that although the shortage affects all geographic regions and practice settings, respondents also indicated that Occupational Therapy Assistant personnel shortages were more severe in rural areas than in urban or suburban areas (p 162-163).

The Missouri Hospital Association's (MHA, 2010) *2010 Annual Workforce Report*, which includes data collected from surveys conducted of 139 Missouri Hospitals with additional hospitals in the Missouri-Illinois bi-state area and the Kansas City area, report continued job vacancies and anticipated workforce shortages to include *therapies*. They report *Health Care Provides an Economic Anchor* with hospital payroll and benefits totaling \$7.1 billion, with room for expansion according to the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) who is projecting the healthcare industry to expand significantly in the next few years. Additionally the MHA's *2010 Annual Workforce Survey Results* for employee vacancy in Missouri's Central, Southeast, and St. Louis regions for Occupational Therapy were a cumulative 20.7% in 2009. (MHA, 2010)

MERIC also lists Occupational Therapy Assistants as one of *Missouri's Hot Jobs 2008-2018* with average annual wages of \$45,352. MERIC's *Education and Training Needs for Missouri's Workforce 2011*, reports "an adequately trained workforce is essential for successful economic development" with the job growth rate for individuals with associate degrees at 1.24 percent ranked third highest in the state, just below Master's degrees at 1.4 percent and doctoral degrees at 2.3 percent.

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### C. Societal Need

It is widely recognized that disparities in health status and the availability of health and social services exist in the United States. The Trans-National Institutes of Health (NIH) Work Group on Health Disparities defined the term *health disparities* as “the difference in the incidence, prevalence, morbidity, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups” (NIH, 1999). As noted by the NIH Work Group, experts assert that “health disparities arise from a complex combination of social and economic factors, the physical environments, cultural beliefs and values, educational level, personal behaviors, and genetic susceptibilities” (NIH, 1999). Occupational therapy is well positioned to intervene with individuals and communities to limit the effects of health disparities on participation in meaningful occupations because of practitioners’ knowledge and skills in evaluating and intervening with persons who face physical, social, emotional, or cultural challenges to participation. Further, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) supports advocacy to increase access to health services for persons in need, and efforts to lessen or eliminate health disparities are consistent with the Core Values and the Code of Ethics for the profession of Occupational Therapy. (*AOTA’s Societal Statement on Health Disparities, American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2006 60, 679.*)

With this in mind we consider the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics projections that, “the employment of Occupational Therapists is expected to increase by 26 percent between 2008 and 2018, much faster than the average for all occupations. The increasing elderly population will drive growth in the demand for occupational therapy services.” (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition) The *Job Outlook* for OT also states that hospitals will be employing large numbers of OT staff to fill needs of acutely ill inpatients and outpatient rehabilitation programs. Also they predict employment growth in schools as a result of federal funding appropriated for services to disabled students. The Bureau reports on job opportunities now and for the future:

Job opportunities should be good for licensed occupational therapists in all settings, particularly in acute hospital, rehabilitation, and orthopedic settings because the elderly receive most of their treatment in these settings. Occupational Therapists with specialized knowledge in a treatment area also will have increased job prospects. Driver rehabilitation, training for the elderly, and ergonomic consulting are emerging practice areas for occupational therapy (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition).

This program is also listed on the DESE website as a “HOT JOB” for 2006-2016. With the continuing rise in healthcare costs, OTA prepared individuals offer more economical yet effective treatment options.

It is the mission of the Jefferson College Occupational Therapy Assistant program to serve our communities by implementing service projects, promoting health, and preparing a knowledgeable and competent local Occupational Therapy Assistant workforce to fill employment gaps and provide needed services in local and rural communities.

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**D. Methodology for Identified Market and Societal Need**

Research was conducted utilizing the following: DOL, Missouri Department of Economic Development, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Workforce Investment Board studies, American Occupational Therapy Association, National Institutes of Health, regional healthcare providers, regional hospitals and employers relative to workforce development.

**2. DUPLICATION AND COLLABORATION:**

There is currently only one other accredited A.A.S. in Occupational Therapy Assistant degree program serving the 3 Missouri Regions that Jefferson College will serve.

**3. FORM PS:**

**PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

**Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant**

**A. Total credits required for graduation: 82-84**

**B. Residency Requirements:**

Course/Program Fees are assessed based on residency status.

**C. General Education: Total Credits: 33-35**

The applied science degree requires a general education component which consists of college-level (non-remedial) coursework or its equivalent, including all relevant prerequisites, in each of the following curricular areas:

<b><u>Communications/Humanities</u></b>		<b><u>6 Hours</u></b>
ENG 101 English Composition I	(3)	
SPD 105 Oral Communications	(3)	
<b><u>Health</u></b>		<b><u>3 Hours</u></b>
BIT 122 Medical Terminology	(3)	
<b><u>Social /Behavioral Science</u></b>		<b><u>6 Hours</u></b>
PSY 101 General Psychology	(3)	
PSY 205 Human Development	*(3)	
PSY 225 Abnormal Psychology	*(3)	

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PSC 102 US & MO Government & Constitution (3)  
 Or HST 103 History I (3)

**Mathematics and or Natural Sciences** **6 Hours**

BIO 211 Human Anatomy and Physiology I \*(4)  
 BIO 212 Human Anatomy and Physiology II \*(4) **3 Hours**

**Computer Literacy**

CIS 133 Microcomputer Software Applications \*(3)

**First Year Experience** **1-3 Hours**

COL 101 Introduction to College (1)  
 Or GUD 136 Mastering the College Experience (3)

**D. Major Education**

**Occupational Therapy Assistant 49 Credit Hours**

OTA 125	Biomechanical Basis of Performance	(3)
OTA 100	Foundations of Occupational Therapy	(3)
OTA 110	Physical Dysfunction in Occupational Therapy	(3)
OTA 105	Health Conditions	(1)
OTA 111	Physical Dysfunction Performance Skills	(2)
OTA 120	Professional Practice and Management I	(1)
OTA 130	Psychosocial Occupational Therapy	(3)
OTA 145	Applied Neurology	(2)
OTA 131	Psychosocial Performance Skills	(2)
OTA 140	Professional Practice and Management II	(1)
OTA 150	Level I Fieldwork	(2)
OTA 210	Pediatric Occupational Therapy	(3)
OTA 211	Pediatric Performance Skills	(2)
OTA 225	Assistive Technology and Adaptation	(2)
OTA 220	Professional Practice & Management III	(1)
OTA 245	Environments & Occupational Performance	(3)
OTA 150	Level I Fieldwork A	(2)
OTA 160	Level I Fieldwork B	(2)
OTA 270	Fieldwork Seminar	(1)

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OTA 250	Level II Fieldwork A	(6)
OTA 260	Level II Fieldwork B	(6)

**E. Free Elective Credits**

There are no electives in the associate degree.

<u>General Education</u>	<u>33-35</u>
<u>Core OTA and Support Areas</u>	<u>49</u>
<b><u>Total Hours:</u></b>	<b><u>82-84</u></b>

\* Designates Courses with prerequisites.

**4. FORM FP:**



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## 5. FORM PC and PG:

### **PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS**

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Jefferson College

Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant

March 2011

#### **Student Preparation**

- Students will be required to complete all pre-requisite courses with a grade of "C" or better and their cumulative GPA must be 2.5 or higher.
- Students must take the HESI-a2 Assessment prior to being eligible for application to the program and receive a score of 75% or better.
- Students will be required to complete 4 hours of observation of occupational therapy services and submit an essay prior to acceptance into the program. No other special admissions procedures exist.

#### **Faculty Characteristics**

- Normal faculty requirements exist for those teaching in the program. Any full time faculty or adjunct faculty instructor will meet all Jefferson College requirements and all ACOTE (Accreditation Counsel for Occupational Therapy Education) requirements for continued accreditation.
- It is estimated that 80% of the credit hours will be assigned to full time faculty.
- One full time faculty Program Director will be assigned to be responsible for coordination, program success, and quality assurance. This director will be a full time faculty Jefferson College Faculty employee.
- Faculty will be encouraged to utilize alternative delivery and instructional methods for courses in these programs. For example, web-based courses and distance learning opportunities will be utilized when possible. In addition, faculty will be encouraged to become members of the Missouri the Association for Career and Technical Education. Occupational Therapy Assistant program faculty will also be required to participate in continuing and career education in addition to creation and updating of an annual Faculty Development Plan to maintain National Occupational Therapy Association accreditation and institutional requirements.
- In addition to the Program Director, the program plans to hire one full time faculty position to assume the role of Academic Fieldwork coordinator with teaching responsibility to equal 50% of the time at the location where the program is offered. In addition, the program plans to hire two (2) additional adjunct faculty who will share additional responsibilities related to student advisement, fieldwork administration, supervision, committee work, program planning, evaluation, recruitment, and marketing activities.

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- The Program Director and faculty will possess the academic and experiential qualifications and backgrounds as identified in ACOTE standards with descriptions of roles and responsibilities that meet program objectives and policies of the institution.
- The program plans to identify the full time position being advertised as that of the academic fieldwork coordinator/faculty position. This individual will be specifically responsible for the program's compliance with the fieldwork requirements of the ACOTE standards. This individual will be a licensed or credentialed Occupational Therapist or Occupational Therapy Assistant and will meet the requirements of the ACOTE standards.
- The faculty will include only currently licensed or credentialed Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants and must submit proof of educational background and credentials in the application stage of the hiring process prior to being eligible for the interview with Human Resources, and the Search Committee.
- By July 1, 2012, the Occupational Therapy Assistant full time faculty will hold a minimum of a baccalaureate degree.
- The faculty chosen for the Occupational Therapy Assistant program will have documented expertise and background experience in their area(s) of teaching responsibility with knowledge of the content delivery method.
- The Occupational Therapy Assistant faculty will be sufficient in number and possess the expertise necessary to ensure appropriate curriculum design, content delivery, and program evaluation.
- Faculty responsibilities will be in compliance with and consistent with the mission of the institution and will meet the needs of the Occupational Therapy Assistant program and curriculum in maintaining quality programming.
- The faculty–student ratio will be 1:24 for lecture and 1:12 for labs in order to meet curriculum objectives for laboratory and lecture courses, comply with accepted practices of the institution for similar programs, and ensure student and consumer safety.

#### **Enrollment Projections**

- It is estimated that by the end of five years the number of student full time faculty majoring in the program will be 48.
- It is estimated that the percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years will 48.

#### **Student and Program Outcomes**

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- At the end of two years, the number of graduates per annum will be 24. At the end of three years, 48 students will be enrolled in the program. At the end of five years, the number of graduates per annum will be 24.
- Program graduates will receive an A.A.S. Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant and be eligible to sit for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Certification exam. If passed, students will receive special certification. It is estimated that 90% of students sitting for the exams will pass and receive this certification.
- It is estimated that 90% of students from the program will be placed in related fields. Eight percent will be placed in unrelated fields. It is estimated that 0% will be unemployed.
- It is estimated that 2% of the enrollees will transfer to another program upon participation in this program.

#### **Program Accreditation**

Jefferson College is currently seeking accreditation from an outside accrediting body. It is anticipated that the program will be accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education by August 2013.

#### **Alumni and Employer Survey**

The college does annual alumni surveys and satisfaction of completers of the Occupational Therapy Assistant program will be addressed in the survey. It is estimated that 98% of the students surveyed annually will indicate that they are satisfied with the program and feel they are strongly prepared for employment in this field.

- Employers will be surveyed, as students perform their clinical affiliations and after graduation when they enter the workforce. It is hoped that 95% of the businesses receiving employees from the training program will be satisfied with the graduates.

#### **Other Relevant Information**

##### **a. General Oversight**

General oversight for this program will rest with the Career and Technical Education Division Dean and Division Chair.

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**b. Faculty Qualifications**

Any instructor in the program will meet the same qualifications as on-campus instructors. OTA program faculty will also be required to participate in continuing and career education in addition to creation and updating of an annual Faculty Development Plan to maintain National Occupational Therapy Association accreditation and institutional requirements.

**c. Support Services**

Successfully getting through college requires skill and a sense of direction. At times, students may need help along the way to satisfy the demands that college and a busy life place on them. Student Support Services - Project SUCCESS can help students develop excellent academic skills and acquire a sense of direction that will allow them to achieve their educational goals at Jefferson College and beyond.

Student Support Services is a federally funded TRIO program providing:

- Academic Assistance
- Personal Support
- Career Counseling
- Transfer Counseling
- Financial Guidance
- Cultural Enrichment

All services are free to eligible students. Eligibility guidelines include:

- 1) Low income, and/or
- 2) First generation college students, and/or
- 3) Students with a documented disability.

Project SUCCESS staff is committed to helping students graduate and/or transfer from Jefferson College. Appointments are available to students at all locations.

All full-time, degree-seeking students are assigned appropriate academic advisors to assist in long-term academic decision making as well as current course selection. Many academic advisors are faculty members who specialize in advising students majoring in the fields they teach.

Currently enrolled students are encouraged to schedule an appointment to meet with their assigned advisor.

New students are required to make an advising appointment.

After being admitted to Jefferson College, an advisor will assist the student in registering for classes during a one-on-one appointment. New students are required to complete the First Year Experience requirement by enrolling in COL101, Introduction to College: Strategies for Success, or GUD136, Mastering the College Experience.

**d. Disability Support Services**

Students with disabilities can utilize support services offered by Disability Support Services by registering with the program coordinator. Students must provide documentation of their disability from a qualified professional in a timely manner to receive accommodations. An Assistive Technology Center is available for students who require adaptive technology and/or additional resources.

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**6. FORM SE:**

<b>STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS YEAR</b>	<b>Year 1 2011-2012</b>	<b>Year 2 2012-2013</b>	<b>Year 3 2013-2014</b>	<b>Year 4 2014-2015</b>	<b>Year 5 2015-2016</b>
<b>FULL-TIME</b>	24	48	48	48	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	24	48	48	48	48

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