

Brenau University
Ivester College of Health Sciences

School of Occupational Therapy



Practice, Advocacy, Inquiry

Student Handbook

Updated: July 2025

Brenau University
School of Occupational Therapy
Student Handbook

Introduction

This handbook supplements the Brenau University Catalog and outlines policies specific to the School of Occupational Therapy's professional programs. It's a living document, reviewed annually by the SOT Director and SOT Leadership Team. Faculty and students may propose updates as needed, and changes will be shared via Brenau email. All students are expected to follow the policies in the University Catalog, Student Handbook, and this SOT Student Handbook.

Accreditation

The Brenau School of Occupational Therapy entry-level master's degree programs at the Gainesville and North Atlanta/Norcross campuses are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o of AOTA is (301) 652 AOTA and its Web address is www.acoteonline.org. Information about the MSOT program graduates' performance on the national certification examination for the occupational therapist (administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, NBCOT) can be found here: <https://www.nbcot.org/Educators-Folder/SchoolPerformance>.

The Brenau University entry-level occupational therapy doctoral degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is www.acoteonline.org. Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR).

In addition, all states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Brenau University participates in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). This is a voluntary, regional approach to state oversight of postsecondary distance (online) education, and it provides Brenau University approval to offer its distance education programs in other NC-SARA states, found at <https://nc-sara.org/directory>.

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Welcome

Welcome to the School of Occupational Therapy! This handbook will support you on your journey toward becoming an occupational therapist. Inside, you'll find our expectations of you and what you can expect from our community. We're all here to help you grow into the best OT you can be.

Please note that the School of Occupational Therapy may update this handbook or adjust procedures based on special circumstances.

About the School of Occupational Therapy

The School of Occupational Therapy, part of Brenau University's Ivester College of Health Sciences, comprises several components that support students throughout their program. The School of Occupational Therapy's mission unites faculty, staff, and students in preparing occupational therapists who excel in practice, inquiry, and advocacy and are committed to improving the health and participation of individuals and communities.

School of Occupational Therapy History

In August 1995, under the direction of Dr. Helen Ray, then the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Barbara Boyt Schell founded the Department of Occupational Therapy at Brenau University in Gainesville, GA. The first degree offered was a combined BS/MS entry-level occupational therapy, receiving initial accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) in December 1997. Acknowledging the strong curriculum, the program received a 5-year accreditation status—the maximum allowed for new programs. The first cohort graduated in August 1999. The program received reaccreditation in 2003 with a ten-year accreditation status—again, the maximum allowed.

In 2004, ACOTE approved the addition of a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) entry-level degree, which was added for applicants who already had earned bachelor's degrees. In December 2009, ACOTE approved the hybrid (mixed on-ground/online) Evening-Weekend Program (BS/MS and MSOT) on the North Atlanta/Norcross Campus. The program received a 4-year accreditation for reaccreditation to coincide with the next re-accreditation visit for the Gainesville campus program, resulting in all entry-level programs being on the same review cycle. This hybrid program graduated its first class in the summer of 2013.

In 2012, the BS/MS program was replaced with an early admissions to the MSOT program. In December 2011, ACOTE approved this and a hybrid Day MSOT Program was established at the North Atlanta/Norcross site. In 2013, ACOTE recognized the programs with another 10-year reaccreditation. Elevated to the School of Occupational Therapy, admissions now consisted of a new cohorts each

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semester: Fall- Gainesville Day, Spring-North Atlanta/Norcross Hybridized Evening Weekend, and Summer-North Atlanta/Norcross Hybridized Day.

Developed in response to health professions education moving to the doctorate level, the entry-level occupational therapy doctorate (ELOTD) program on the North Atlanta/Norcross campus received Pre-accreditation Status in April 2020. The first ELOTD cohort entered in August 2020 with hybridized class meetings secondary to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. ACOTE awarded the ELOTD program Candidacy Status in April 2022 and completed a successful onsite visit in September 2022; the program was fully accredited in December 2022.

Mission of the School of Occupational Therapy

The School of Occupational Therapy provides graduate education programs preparing students to become occupational therapists who excel in Practice, Inquiry and Advocacy. Building on and continuing the values of liberal education, students are guided to become excellent practitioners in diverse settings; to improve the profession by engaging in practice scholarship; and to provide leadership and advocacy ranging from local to international levels. In conjunction with its educational mission, the School engages with the larger professional and client community to encourage high quality services and to advocate for the health and participation of people, organizations and populations through meaningful occupations.

School of Occupational Therapy Statement of Belonging

The Brenau School of Occupational Therapy is committed to providing an inclusive, respectful, supportive, and welcoming environment for all. We appreciate and respect the distinctive backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences that each individual brings to our occupational therapy community. Our programs promote cultural humility, sensitivity, and social responsibility and urge students, faculty, and staff to examine their biases and assumptions critically. Our goal is to equip our students with the skills to effectively collaborate with individuals from diverse communities and advocate for social justice and equality in the classroom, the workplace, the healthcare system, and beyond. Our community embraces individuals of all identities, including, but not limited to, race, gender, sexuality, and religion.

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Administration

Brenau University

Dr. Jim Eck, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Ivester College of Health Sciences

Dr. Gale Starich, Dean

Dr. Heather Ross, Assistant Dean

School of Occupational Therapy

Dr. Charles Shadle, Director

Professor Celeste Alexander, Lead Academic Fieldwork Manager

Dr. Chanequa Bailey-Keown, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, Norcross Campus

Dr. Shana Finks, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, Gainesville Campus

Dr. Kathleen Graham, Curriculum Coordinator

Dr. Marsey Devoto, OTD Capstone Coordinator

Dr. Nancy Fowler, SOT Admissions Counselor

Faculty & Staff

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Professional Organizations, Student Organizations, and Honor Societies

An essential part of becoming a professional is recognizing that membership in professional organizations is critical to individual professional development and success. Our students have several opportunities to experience professional organizations through student memberships. These include memberships in state and national occupational therapy associations and campus-based student-led organizations, including merit and service-based organizations.

Professional Organizations

[Georgia Occupational Therapy Association Student Membership \(GOTA\)](#)

Cost: Visit GOTA website for information

Benefits of Membership:

- Access to the members' only section of GOTA website that includes issues regarding various practice areas
- Access to the online listserv via email, unlimited access to the on-line membership directory
- Immediate ability to find OT practitioners in GA using the OT Locator
- Access to the Job board for posting or researching available positions

[American Occupational Therapy Association Student Membership \(AOTA\)](#)

Cost: Visit AOTA website for information

Benefits of Membership:

- Essential, everyday practice guidance
- Digital access to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process
- digital access to OT Practice magazine and The American Journal of Occupational Therapy (AJOT), SIS Quarterly Practice Connections,
- member savings of 30% on AOTA's NBCOT® Exam Prep—the most comprehensive and effective prep program on the market,
- and special student rates to AOTA INSPIRE | Annual Conference and Expo.

Upon beginning their program, the SOT requires all students to join the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and a state occupational therapy association of their choosing, i.e., the Georgia Occupational Therapy Association (GOTA) for Georgia residents; students who reside permanently in other states may elect to join those state's organizations. Students must maintain membership in national and state organizations throughout their program, including Level II Fieldwork experiences. You will submit proof of membership as graded assignments in OT 603: Foundations of Practice and OT 711: Research Seminar.

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Student Organizations

Brenau Occupational Therapy Student Association (BOTSA)

Cost: \$40 one-time

Faculty Advisers:

Gainesville: Dr. Shana Finks & Dr. Freddie Kennedy

Norcross: TBA

The Brenau Occupational Therapy Student Association (BOTSA) is a student-led organization for those enrolled in the School of Occupational Therapy. BOTSA's mission is to foster fellowship, promote occupational therapy, and support professional growth through service, education, and community engagement. BOTSA provides academic and professional development opportunities through networking, service projects, and fundraising initiatives. Members participate in community outreach, attend occupational therapy-related events, and collaborate with national and state OT associations. The Gainesville Day, ELOTD, and Norcross Weekend programs branch into individual BOTSA groups with separate officers and finances and often cross-program to achieve the mission of fostering fellowship. Membership in BOTSA is a requirement of all School of Occupational Therapy students.

Benefits of Membership:

- Connect with peers and professionals in the occupational therapy field,
- Gain leadership experience through officer positions and participate in community service projects,
- Attend conferences and professional development events,
- Opportunity to earn graduation honor cords.

[Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity \(COTAD\)](#)

Faculty Adviser: Dr. Kay Graham

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) empowers occupational therapy leaders to engage in a practice that increases justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI), anti-racism, and anti-oppression for a transformative occupational therapy profession. COTAD organizes opportunities for students to network with professionals, partner with organizations, participate in educational experiences, and share resources to address the issues of systematic racism and oppression, occupational injustice, health care inequity, and structure, policies, and norms that perpetuate race-based advantage in health care, education, and society at large. COTAD provides a safe space for the students to address these issues while opening a gateway to learn, grow, and educate one another about their cultures, religions, and backgrounds while on their journey to becoming occupational therapists.

Benefits of Membership:

- Access to members-only COTAD educational and training materials, including recordings of past upcoming events, and early-bird registration for limited-capacity events,

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- Submit articles or have your work featured in COTAD communications, including the member newsletter,
- Apply to the COTAD Mentorship Program and networking opportunities with like-minded professionals.

Honor Societies

[Pi Theta Epsilon \(ΦΘΕ\), Occupational Therapy National Honor Society](#)

Beta Xi (ΒΞ) Chapter

Faculty Adviser: Dr. Frederica Kennedy

Eligibility for membership in this Honor Society is determined after a student's first semester of their first year in the program. Eligibility is based on academic achievement and requires a student to rank in the top 35% of their cohort by GPA. After receiving an invitation to apply, eligible students must then submit an example of their scholarly work for review by the Chapter Officers.

The mission of PTE is to support the practice of occupational sciences and the practice of authentic occupational therapy by promoting research, leadership, and scholarly activities by its members. The purpose of PTE is to recognize and encourage scholastic excellence of occupational therapy students and contribute to the advancement of the field of OT.

Benefits of Membership:

- Access to exclusive scholarships and awards,
- Professional education and networking opportunities,
- Subscription to OTJR: Occupational Therapy Journal of Research,
- Graduation honor cords and lapel pin.

[The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi \(ΦΚΦ\)](#)

Chapter 301

Contact Person: Brandi Worsham, bworsham@brenau.edu

Founded in 1897, Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest and most prestigious all-discipline honor society. The society promotes lifelong learning, leadership, and service through scholarships, career resources, and networking opportunities. In the fall semester, membership invitations are offered only to top-performing students—juniors ranking in the top 7.5% and seniors and graduate students in the top 10% of their class. Faculty, staff, and alumni who have made significant scholarly contributions may also be nominated.

Benefits of Membership:

- Scholarships & grants; over \$1 million awarded annually for study abroad, graduate fellowships, and research,
- Access to job boards, résumé critiques, and professional connections,

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- Exclusive Discounts; savings on test prep, insurance, technology, and travel,
- Publications & Resources – Access to Phi Kappa Phi Forum and leadership programs,
- Graduation honor cords and lapel pin.

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Graduate Student Advisory Council

The SOT Student Advisory Council's Purpose:

This council seeks to support the mission of the SOT by communicating students' needs and concerns and acting as a liaison between cohorts, faculty, and staff. The council relays updates and announcements within the SOT and the university to their cohorts. This council seeks to foster positive relationships between the cohorts and the faculty and staff to enhance the overall quality and integrity of the program while cultivating a positive student experience.

Council Structure:

Up to two (2) representatives from each cohort will be selected by the end of their first semester in the program. Representatives can be either self-nominated or by their peers; a vote is then held. The Site Coordinator has final approval of the representatives.

Representative Term:

Representatives serve the entirety of their program; however, they can step down anytime, and the cohort/Site Coordinator can choose a new representative.

Representative responsibilities:

- Attends council meetings held once a semester, meets with Site Coordinator and cohort as needed
- Gathers cohort feedback in advance of site coordinator and council meetings
- Relay the university and SOT information to the cohort as needed
- Advocate for your cohort for overall program concerns or needs

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School of Occupational Therapy Program Tracks

The SOT offers the MSOT at two locations and the ELOTD at one location:

- Gainesville Day MSOT - requires 6 semesters to complete
- Norcross Hybrid Weekend MSOT - requires 7 semesters to complete
- Norcross Day ELOTD - requires 9 semesters to complete

All programs are cohort programs. All are full-time, and students can expect to devote 30-50 hours each week to class meetings, fieldwork, course related activities, and assignments regardless of the program track selected.

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Fieldwork and The Center for Productive Living

Fieldwork is an integral part of the SOT educational process. The intent is to provide you with opportunities to work with clients across their lifespans and to expose you to a variety of medical, educational, and community settings in which occupational therapy occurs. In addition to numerous settings outside of Brenau, a student's placement may occur in the Brenau Center for Productive Living. In this setting, students provide services to underserved populations, such as those without medical insurance or for whom no services are available in the community. There are a range of field activities, including:

- Course-based outings to selected field sites
- Level I Fieldwork involves weekly assigned time in a designated setting. These activities provide real-time opportunities to practice your developing skills.
- Level II Fieldwork, which is a full-time extensive experience providing service delivery under the supervision of a credentialed occupational therapist.

Because there are several procedures and regulations associated with Fieldwork, a separate section of the handbook covers this topic. You will be supported in your fieldwork placements by the Fieldwork Coordinators in both Gainesville and North Atlanta/Norcross locations.

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Textbooks

We know textbooks are expensive; however, many are used across the program and as professional references once in the field. Each semester, you will receive a textbook list with the following designations: **Core, Required, and Recommended**. Using your schedule on Campus Web, you can also access the university bookstore and find this list. Some texts have proven unfriendly in their online or digital format; we use the hard copy version in those instances, and a notation will appear on your text list. Direct all questions regarding textbook editions and formats to your course instructor.

Textbook Designations

Core texts form a vital part of each student's professional library. While we understand the financial investment involved, you need to keep each core text throughout your program and also to use for your preparation for the national exam. Some the core texts are listed as *All SOT Courses*. These will be used in multiple courses throughout the program.

Required texts are necessary for the indicated course(s);

Recommended texts provide supplemental information.

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Fieldwork

The Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) defines fieldwork education as *“a crucial part of professional preparation.....and is designed to promote professional reasoning and reflective practice, transmit the values and beliefs of ethical practice, and develop professionalism and competence in career responsibilities.”* (ACOTE, 2023)

Fieldwork education is an integral part of the School of Occupational Therapy (SOT) programs. All fieldwork experiences integrate classroom education with occupational therapy practice in the community. During both Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences students learn to practice and refine their skills in communication, observation, evaluation and treatment. Students begin to define their future roles as occupational therapy practitioners by building the self-confidence and clinical expertise necessary to meet the challenging demands of this profession.

In line with SOT mission and curriculum designs, fieldwork experiences align with classroom learning to promote values and actions that represent the highest levels of professional leadership, advocacy, and social consciousness. The mission and curriculum design also support the SOT program goals of developing ethical practitioners to meet the current and future needs of the community. Accordingly, students are exposed to a variety of diverse settings to increase their knowledge of occupational therapy and the healthcare arena.

The ACOTE fieldwork education standards require successful completion of Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences for all students as part of obtaining a degree in occupational therapy (ACOTE, 2023). The Brenau Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) is responsible for the development, planning and implementation of integrated and sustained fieldwork experiences. Supervision of these experiences occurs with the collaboration and support of the Brenau AFWC, licensed occupational therapists and other qualified professionals within the community.

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MSOT Scholarly Project

MSOT students will work in small groups with a Scholarly Project Advisor over the course of three semesters to:

1. Explore the literature around a topic
2. Establish a focused project need or problem to explore that requires some form of data analysis
3. Present results/findings via a professional poster to faculty and students
4. Complete a related scholarly product such as an education module, a manuscript, etc.

For more information and guidelines, please go to:

[Brenau University School of Occupational Therapy Scholarly Project Guidelines](#)

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ELOTD Capstone Experience & Project

The ELOTD capstone is an experience and project that allows a student to gain in-depth exposure and knowledge in the following areas of occupational therapy: clinical skills, research skills, administration, program development and evaluation, policy development, advocacy, education or leadership. The doctoral capstone includes a 14-week capstone experience and a capstone project. The capstone project demonstrates the synthesis and application of the student's in-depth knowledge and experience they have gained.

For more information and guidelines, please review the [Doctoral Capstone Project and Experience Manual](#)

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General Program Information

Confidentiality of Student Information - FERPA

During a student's professional association with the SOT, faculty and staff handle all confidential information obtained per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. After a signed information release is received, faculty and staff may share select information to support student learning, professional development, and with Clinical Fieldwork Educators. All student work is kept confidential within the faculty. Faculty may not share sensitive materials such as journal entries or seminar discussions without the student's approval.

For more in-depth information on FERPA, visit the official government website:

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa>

Academic Advising

Upon entering an SOT program, students receive a faculty advisor to support them throughout their program. Academic advisors offer guidance and mentorship related to academic progress and professional development.

Advising is a collaborative partnership. We expect students to monitor their own progress and take the initiative to schedule regular meetings. Students should also expect advisors to be accessible, provide support, and help them achieve their academic and career goals. Communication between students and advisors should occur at least once each semester.

Establishing a personal connection with an advisor from the start is highly encouraged in an era of online systems and self-registration. In the SOT, students are first advised by the admissions counselor before completing their initial registration and are then assigned to a faculty advisor. Once assigned to your faculty advisor, it is recommended that you meet with them to begin building this vital relationship.

Ethics

Ethical practice is the cornerstone of professional practice. Faculty and staff expect students in an SOT program to abide by all the University's ethical guidelines and those that guide the profession, such as the American Occupational Therapy Standards of Ethics. These standards are introduced at the program's beginning and reiterated on all course syllabi.

Academic Honesty

The School of Occupational Therapy upholds Brenau University's academic and intellectual integrity standards, as described in the Academic Honesty Policy and the Brenau Honor Code.

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Acts of academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated within the SOT. For further information about academic honesty and related procedures, refer to Brenau University's academic honesty policy in the university catalog.

Brenau Honor Code

I promise to uphold the Brenau University honor code and expectations of civility in the student handbook by refraining from every form of dishonesty, cheating, and impropriety in university life. I will strive to create a spirit of honesty and honor. Failure to do so is considered a breach of trust toward the faculty, staff, and student body. I accept this commitment as a personal responsibility to refrain from and to report all forms of dishonesty, cheating, and misconduct.

Professional Behaviors

Demonstrating professional behaviors is an essential element of student preparation for participation in a professional career. We expect our students to exhibit professional behaviors necessary for occupational therapy practice. The following are examples of professional behaviors expected of all students in the program.

1. Attendance
 - a. Arrive to class on time.
 - b. Come back from breaks on time.
 - c. Do not gather personal items or pack up items until the class is over.
 - d. Notify course instructors of all absences according to the School of OT and University class attendance policy included in the course syllabus.
2. Respect for faculty and professionals
 - a. Address faculty and professionals by their official titles (Dr., Professor, Mr., Mrs., or Ms.) unless the individual indicates to students that he or she has another preference.
 - b. Use formal titles when emailing faculty and professionals in all emails, texts, and telephone conversations.
3. Demonstrate active listening and learning
 - a. Do not text, message, use a laptop or tablet (except for note-taking), or talk to peers while someone is presenting.
 - b. Attend to course instructors, peer speakers, and guest speakers.
 - c. Come to class prepared with reading and assignments completed.
4. Monitor personal learning and take steps to identify resources for learning needs.
5. Demonstrate professional grooming, hygiene, and dress for classes, class activities, and fieldwork experiences as described by the course instructors and fieldwork educators.

***A maximum of 5 points** may be deducted from a student's final course grade if there is a failure to meet the SOT minimum standards for professional behavior.

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Courtesy

Your behavior as a student parallels your performance as a professional. Therefore, all interactions while representing the SOT and Brenau University must remain courteous, professional, and situationally appropriate.

Infants, Children, and Pets

To support a focused learning environment, infants, children, and pets are not permitted in class. If you experience a childcare issue, please contact the course instructor to inform them if you'll be late or unable to attend. Please refer to university policy SDE-GP-200-12 for more information about children on campus.

Registered Service Animals

As the ADA outlines, service animals are any animals individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of people with disabilities. Examples of work or tasks include but are not limited to guiding people who are blind or have low vision, alerting people who are deaf or hard of hearing, pulling a wheelchair, alerting or protecting a person during a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with post-traumatic stress disorder during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties (Rule 391-1-9-.01 ADA Act).

Please follow all university guidelines before bringing the service animal into the classroom. University Policy AA-ACS-100-01.

Emotional Support Animals

Emotional Support Animals are not the same as trained and registered Service Animals. For your ESA to accompany you to class, your pet must be a registered ESA, and you must go through the Office of Accessibility Services to have your ESA approved as an accommodation per the university's guidelines University Policy AA-ACS-100-01.

School Dress Code

Neat casual attire is appropriate for class. Pajamas and bedroom slippers are never suitable for class. When representing the university and/or the SOT in public or with prospective students, your appearance is critical in developing trust and maintaining appropriate therapeutic and professional relationships. Therefore, for labs, practicals, clinical visits, field trips, visits to community sites, and any other instances where you may have contact with the general public, the following attire is required: Your Brenau Polo shirt neatly tucked in, full-length khaki pants, and your Brenau student nametag. Undergarments cannot be exposed when taking any position (i.e., bras when leaning over or

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undergarments when stooping or crouching); please wear a belt if needed to avoid this. In most medical settings, closed-toed shoes are recommended or required; clean running shoes or sneakers are most suitable.

Personal cellphones

No personal cell phones or devices should be in classrooms, labs, or fieldwork without the permission of the faculty. If a student is allowed by faculty to use such a device, it must be on silent or vibrate only. When leaving voice messages on another person's phone, remember that this may be people's first exposure to you. Please make sure that you portray yourself professionally. For example, do not use "ringback tones" when a caller waits for you to answer.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Students are prohibited from using alcohol or illegal drugs in any clinical setting. Faculty may require drug or alcohol testing if there is reasonable suspicion, such as impaired physical appearance, unsteady behavior, or inability to perform safely. Refusal to comply or a positive result for alcohol, illegal substances, or non-prescribed medications may result in dismissal from the program. Testing costs are the student's responsibility.

Attendance & Missed Work

The School of Occupational Therapy (SOT) maintains a strict attendance policy due to the professional and competency-based nature of the program. Absences and tardiness can significantly affect students' ability to meet course objectives and demonstrate required skills. In some cases, the instruction will not be repeated.

We expect students to attend all classes, labs, and fieldwork sessions. Students should plan to be available through the end of each semester; until all exams are over and fieldwork has been completed. Students should avoid scheduling travel, weddings, or major life events during the academic terms.

Faculty approve absences in alignment with university policy. **Excused absences include:**

- Acute illness or injury
- Death in the immediate family
- Significant family crisis
- University-sponsored events
- Major religious holidays

All other absences are unexcused. Faculty may set stricter policies in individual course syllabi. Students are responsible for all missed content and assignments.

If a student must miss class, they must notify each instructor directly, not the administrative staff:

- **Planned absences:** at least two (2) school days in advance

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- **Illness:** at least 1 hour before class/lab/fieldwork
- **Acceptable contact methods:** email, voicemail, phone call, text, or handwritten note.

Messages must include:

- Student's name
- Reason for absence, tardiness, or early departure
- Class or lab with date and time
- Plan for making up missed work

Students must also notify their Fieldwork Educator and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for fieldwork absences.

Students should proactively meet with their advisor or instructor to develop a support plan if personal circumstances affect academic performance.

Gainesville Day and ELOTD Program Attendance

Students who miss more than 20 percent of the scheduled class sessions may be removed from the class with a failing grade due to non-attendance and non-participation.

Norcross Weekend Program Attendance

Due to the limited number of on-ground class sessions, students who miss more than one (1) class period or the equivalent (which is four (4) hours) may be at risk of receiving a failing grade due to non-attendance and non-participation.

SOT Grading Scale

Grading criteria will be outlined in each course syllabus and reviewed at the start of the course. Unless stated otherwise, the grading scale is:

90 – 100	=	A
80 – 89	=	B
75 – 79	=	C
69 – 74	=	D
< 69	=	F

Note that the grading scale is adjusted to reflect SOT standards. A minimum of 75% (C) or better is required to pass a graded course; a minimum of 80% (B) is required to pass a Pass/Fail course.

Whenever students receive a failing grade on an assignment to calculate their final course grade, they must meet with the instructor to reflect on the situation and develop an improvement plan.

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Grievances

Students are to address grievances regarding assignment grades with individual course instructors. Grievances regarding final course grades or other issues within the SOT are handled following SOT policy CHS-OT-100-15.

Degree Completion, Transcripts, State Exams & Licensure Applications

Faculty submit final course grades by the deadlines set by the registrar's office. Students must have all required coursework, including fieldwork and Capstone experiences, graded before transcripts can reflect program completion.

The registrar posts your degree to CAMPUSWEB once confirming that the student has met all degree requirements.

Students may request official transcripts for NBCOT exam applications or state licensure through this link:
[Request a Transcript](#)

State licensure boards review applications on a rolling basis.

The Registrar's Office handles all degree verifications and transcripts. Contact: registrar@brenau.edu

Note: The School of Occupational Therapy does not complete license verification forms or NBCOT Academic Credential Verification Forms (ACVF).

Professional Credits for Practice

After completing their SOT program, graduates can sit for the national certification examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After passing this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist Registered (OTR). All states in the USA require licensure to practice occupational therapy. Receiving a state license is based in part on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Graduates who wish to practice outside the USA must meet the requirements of the country where they intend to practice. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

There are circumstances in which NBCOT and State Licensing Boards have the right to refuse occupational therapy certification and/or licensure to any individual regardless of their educational credentials. Please refer to NBCOT.org/Character Review information and specific state licensure guidelines for this information.

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University Information & Student Resources

Intranet

The Brenau [Intranet](#) is your central hub for university resources. From here, you can access tools like CampusWEB, Canvas, email, and more—all in one place. Be sure to set up E2Campus alerts for emergency and weather updates. Explore the Intranet and get familiar with its tabs and quick links, including academic support services, the library, financial aid, registration tools, and more.

Security and School Closings

For emergency procedures, go to the Campus Security section on the Brenau Intranet under the Resources tab. Sign up for e2Campus alerts to receive real-time updates about emergencies, weather closings, and other urgent announcements.

Graduate Writing Services

Find the Writing Center under Student Services on the Intranet. It offers support for writing strong, graduate-level papers.

Center for Health & Well-Being

Brenau's Center for Health and Well-being offers holistic physical, mental, and emotional care to all enrolled students and employees. Check the clinic's website or call for hours of operation as they vary by semester; same-day appointments may be available by calling 770-534-6135. Counseling services, including individual and group sessions, are free and confidential for students. Additional resources in the Gainesville community complement on-campus services. Access more information under the Student Services tab on the Intranet.

Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (BCCPS)

The Brenau Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (BCCPS) offers a variety of support for students, including individual counseling, family and couples counseling, child therapy, and psychological assessments. They also provide stress management and group therapy. Located in both Gainesville and Norcross, the center is dedicated to helping students navigate personal and academic challenges. All services are offered at a reduced rate for students and their families during their enrollment.

Other Fees & Expenses

Support with Fees

If a student cannot comply with required fees and/or deadlines for any reason the student must notify their advisor promptly for assistance with potential financial support resources.

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Financial Aid

Financial Aid is available from several sources. Students are encouraged to research all options via the library, the internet, AOTA, and other sources. You must begin your financial aid paperwork early and keep in close contact with your financial assistance advisor. Be persistent with your follow-up, and maintain accurate records and copies of all correspondence and other documentation. Refer to the university catalog for application information and deadlines.

Lab and Course Fees

Lab/Course Fees are assigned as needed to cover materials such as supplies, assessments, and NBCOT resources. All lab/course fees apply to your student account after registration.

Scholarly Product & Capstone Project Expenses

Scholarly product & capstone project expenses typically range from \$100-300 per team member, which includes costs associated with conducting the research. Depending upon the delivery method chosen by the product/project chair, there may be costs for creating or printing posters, presentations, or binding the finished product.

Graduation Fees

Graduation Fees are posted by the Registrar and listed in the university catalog. Graduation fees are separate from the cost of regalia and your cap and gown.

NBCOT Certification Examination Fee

The NBCOT Certification Examination fee can range between \$600-700. Upon completing your SOT degree, you can sit for the NBCOT, which includes academic and fieldwork components. NBCOT sets the fees.

Special Fees and Expenses

In addition to the standard university tuition and fees, students are responsible for additional expenses that may include but are not limited to student ID card, fieldwork, lab fees, textbooks, required certifications, examinations, liability insurance, health insurance, parking, transportation and memberships needed to complete their SOT program.

Laptop Requirements

All students need a personal laptop that meets the minimum specifications outlined by Brenau University's Information Technology department. These requirements ensure compatibility with university systems, including Canvas, video/audio streaming, and data processing software. The Microsoft Office

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Suite is the standard used across all courses; we expect students to have compatible software installed. A Technology Fee is charged each semester to support IT services; details are available in the University Catalog. Students should refer to the official IT requirements page for specific hardware and software guidelines: Student Computer Requirements.

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Brenau University, ICHS, & SOT Policies

Follow this link to access all current policies: [Brenau Policies & Procedures](#)