

Queen's University Occupational Therapy Program

*Evaluation Framework
2019-2024*



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Goals & Purpose

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Program is committed to high quality education, research and service to our communities. The program engages in continuous review and program improvement strategies with a goal of identifying ways of best addressing our mission, as well as the broader mandates laid out in the strategic plans of the School of Rehabilitation Therapy (SRT), the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), and Queen's University.

The Program Development and Evaluation Committee was created by the OT Program in 2012 in order to consolidate and provide direction to our many pre-existing internal evaluation and program development activities. While the Committee is responsible for identifying program development needs and conveying these to the Program Committee and the SRT Academic Council, responsibility for curriculum re-design sits with the OT Curriculum Committee, and final decisions concerning curriculum initiatives are made by the OT Program Committee. Similarly, evaluation evidence concerning the Admissions process is provided to the OT Admissions Committee, with final decisions undertaken by the Program Committee. The Program Committee, in consultation with the SRT Leadership Team also makes decisions concerning broader Program initiatives (e.g. outside partnerships, visiting scholars, application for outside funding, etc.) that could be informed by evaluation findings.

Program Development & Evaluation Committee – Terms of Reference

Membership

Two members of the Occupational Therapy Program appointed by the Occupational Therapy Program Committee; two student representatives, one from each year of the Program, appointed by the Rehab Society; two clinicians appointed by the Occupational Therapy Program Committee; and one community members with a disability appointed by the Occupational Therapy Program. The Chair of the Occupational Therapy Program will be ex-officio member of the Committee.

Functions

- a) Advise the Occupational Therapy Program (Program) in the area of program development and evaluation
- b) At the request of the Program, review and make recommendations on program development and evaluation issues, ensuring that the recommendations are in keeping with: a) the educational vision, mission and goals of the Program; b) the professional accreditation requirements; advancements in professional and education theories, practice and/or trends; and the relevant concerns of stakeholders (e.g., costs); report to the OT Program detailing the review and the recommendations.
- c) Liaise with the Occupational Therapy Program Committee and the Occupational Therapy Program Curriculum Committee when needed to ensure consistency across the Program
- d) Consult with relevant stakeholders and/or experts as needed
- e) Collect and analyze Program evaluation data to provide evidence of meeting Program standards

Reporting

The Occupational Therapy Program Development and Evaluation Committee reports to the Occupational Therapy Program Committee, with a formal report at the October meeting of the Occupational Therapy Program Committee. All evaluation information shared with and by the Committee will be considered confidential, unless otherwise indicated.

Evaluation Stakeholders

The program evaluation process is driven by the needs of a range of stakeholder groups who both contribute to the evaluation process, and benefit from findings. These stakeholders are presented graphically in Figure 1. Internally, the program is comprised of our current and prospective students, as well as our staff and faculty. The latter comprise our full time, tenured faculty, continuing adjunct faculty, as well as our clinical faculty, term adjunct faculty, and the many academic assistants and teaching assistants who contribute to the education program.

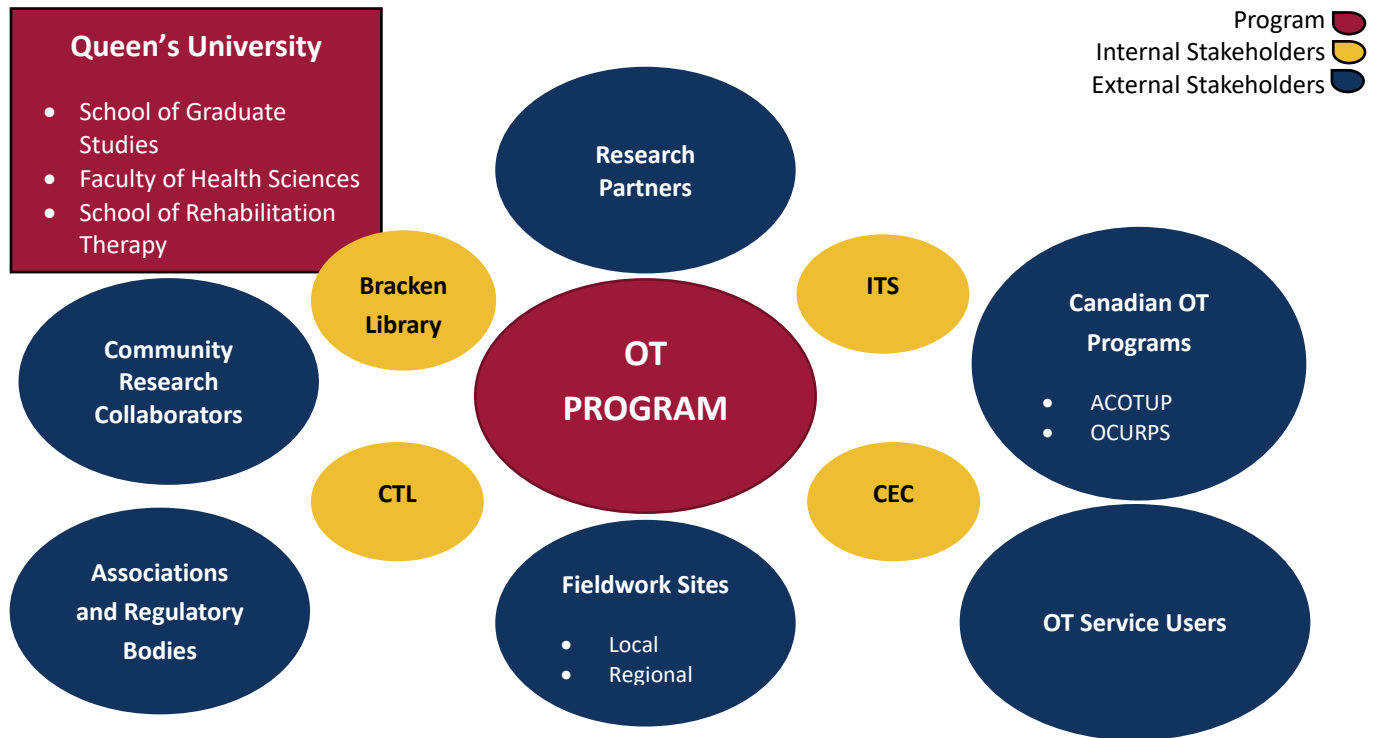
The OT Program sits within and shares resources with the other research and professional programs in the SRT. In addition, the program must meet the standards and requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and the FHS. Students benefit from a wide range of services provided through Queen's University, and thus our interests are closely linked to the departments and divisions that provide those services.

A wide range of external stakeholders are critical to the success of the OT program, providing important resources and supports, and also serving as beneficiaries of the OT program.

It is incumbent on the evaluation framework to consider all stakeholders, and to ensure that data collection and analysis activities are sensitive to their needs and contributions. It is for this reason that several key stakeholder groups are represented on the Program Development and Evaluation Committee:

- Students (first year, graduating year)
- OT Faculty
- Occupational therapists from our catchment area (serving as both educators and proxy employers)
- Persons with a Disability
- Outside organizations (via Ex Officio membership of the Associate Director (OT) who sits on external committees.

Figure 1 – Stakeholder Map



Evaluation Plan Overview

Program development activities are guided by our primary activities as an academic community: admissions, education and scholarly activity. This section summarizes the primary program objectives in each of these areas.

This evaluation plan is developed in accordance with the Program Evaluation Standards developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, a coalition of major professional associations in the United States and Canada concerned with the quality of evaluation. The Canadian Evaluation Society adopted these standards in January 2012 as a guiding framework. The standards, and how they have been considered relative to our evaluation practices, are as follows:

- **Utility** requires that evaluation is conducted in partnership with stakeholders, collects relevant and timely data, and promotes self-reflection and change. Our Program Development & Evaluation Committee is constituted to include community stakeholders, including OT practitioners and a representative with a disability. Importantly, students are part of the committee, and are active participants in data collection, review and reflection. The Committee operates according to an annual schedule that ensures timely data collection and feedback. Survey questions have been cross-matched with those asked by the Physical Therapy program to allow for comparison across programs and to help build sound program logic. While building in replication and consistency, we also work with our stakeholders to ensure that targeted annual goals are identified each year.
- **Feasibility** is concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of the evaluation. It requires that the evaluation is responsive to program needs, and that resources needed for the evaluation are sufficient and appropriately used. Given the demands of the evaluation process, we have sought to improve efficiency

through standardizing processes, including established data analysis protocols. We have also ensured budget allocations to ensure that adequate, skilled external assistance can be sourced to help with routine tasks. We continue to build data management and analysis structures that will make our annual processes highly efficient and reliable.

- **Propriety** ensures that the evaluation is conducted in a proper, fair, legal and just manner. We have secured ethical clearance for our internal evaluation activities, and are attentive to security and anonymity issues associated with data collection, analysis and storage. In reporting, we attempt to balance the need for transparency with respect for the work and privacy rights of our instructors, students, and community.
- **Accuracy** standards are intended to increase the degree to which results can be trusted in the decision making process. This is accomplished by the use of tested questions in our surveys, ensuring that students and others involved in the data collection process are adequately prepared for their roles, and bringing the expertise of faculty members and skilled assistants into the analysis process. Evaluation processes are well tested, and knowledge is built over time to look for patterns and change over time.
- **Accountability** is achieved through the adoption of a committee with mixed skills and perspectives, and through two way communication with our students and clinical community in particular. Annual reporting is done of all findings. What follows are the core objectives for program development and evaluation in each of our primary activities.

Recruitment & Admissions

The OT program admits students through the School of Graduate Studies. Application are made through the Ontario (ORPAS) in Guelph, ON, and collaborative monitoring of this application process is done along with other programs in Ontario. The screening and review process begins in the School of Graduate Studies, and subsequently is internally managed with oversight by the OT Admissions Committee, and with the support of the Admissions and Accommodations Coordinator. Recruitment strategy and outreach activities are also within the purview of that Committee.

Objectives

- Maintain a steady state or increase in the average GPA of applicants year over year
- Ensure that the number of applicants annually meets or exceeds Ontario figures
- Strive for an increasingly large number of high quality students in the program, as evidenced by successful program completion and successful completion of the CAOT certification exam on the first attempt

Teaching & Learning

Teaching and learning activities and curriculum change are guided by the Occupational Therapy Curriculum Committee. The following objectives are central to our mission of providing excellence in education and ensuring that the program meets the needs of our major stakeholders.

Objectives

- Provide quality learning experiences through:
 - a sequenced and pedagogically sound curriculum that maximizes individual student knowledge outcomes relative to the Canadian Practice Profile
 - a curriculum that is professionally relevant and responsive to changes in the practice environment

- creating a dynamic and progressive, integrated and inquiry-based curriculum that is organized under 5 over-arching themes
 - create and nurture a team learning environment
 - provide learning experiences that foster professional behaviours that demonstrate curiosity and innovation, leadership, critical thinking, strong professional identity, integrity and a commitment to occupational justice
- Ensure fieldwork learning opportunities support skill development and student competency for practice

Scholarship

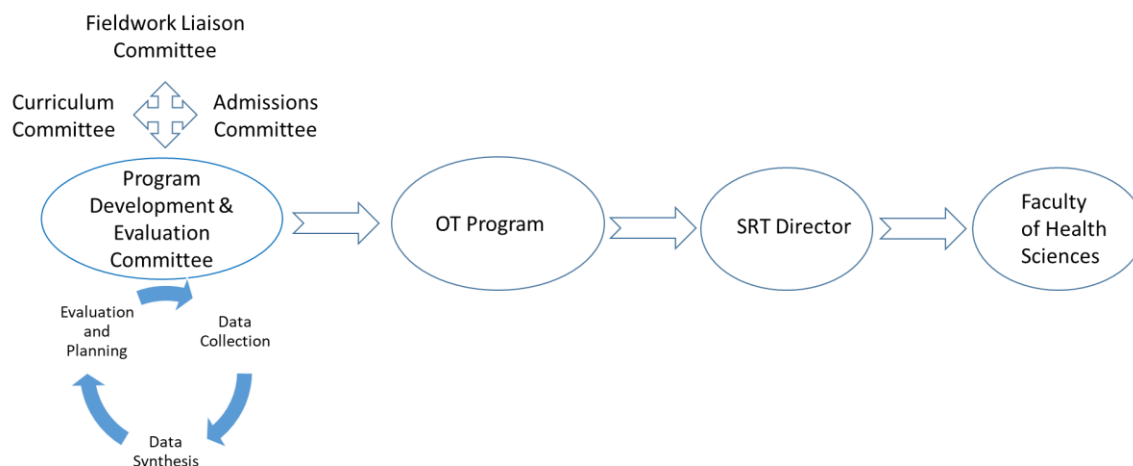
Excellence in scholarship is a key priority of the OT Program, and impacts our admissions success, the educational opportunities provided to our students, and the profile of the Program overall.

Objectives

- Maintain an environment through which faculty and student research is well supported in terms of key resources (time, space, funding)
- Foster collaborative scholarship that engages stakeholder communities (e.g. practitioners, community organizations and other institutions)
- Ensure integration of faculty research into the academic curriculum through classroom activities and student engagement in the research process
- Maintain robust levels of faculty and student grant success and/or scholarly output

Evaluation Procedures

The program collects data through a number of sources and procedures throughout the year. These are summarized in the table in Appendix A, and represented graphically below. The rationale for this data collection is particular to program needs and opportunities through which we can obtain sound, valid data. The plan also includes a mix of process (formative) and outcome (summative) data.



There are several key program areas on which evaluation activities focus. Curricular issues are a component of many of these. In this section, we report on activities undertaken by the Program Development and Evaluation Committee; in the next section, we will address more focused formative strategies undertaken specifically by the Curriculum Committee.

Required Departmental Performance Metrics

The Occupational Therapy Program reports through the Director annually to the Faculty of Health Sciences on a number of metrics that are common across academic units. Each of these is considered summative data, and contributes to institutional tracking of general trends that must be reported by the Faculty of Health Sciences to the Provost for the “X Matrix” that is then amalgamated with data for the entire University. For the OT Program, these metrics are selected components of our larger evaluation strategy, but do allow us to track important performance indicators year-over-year as high-level indicators of program health in the areas of curriculum quality and the health of faculty scholarship. Statistics on faculty productivity demonstrate the overall health of the unit as a scholarly and creative entity that demonstrates leadership in the rehabilitation field.

Indicator	Evaluation Type	Information Relevance
Student satisfaction ratings	Summative	Single metric reporting perceptions of a single cohort at program completion. High-level indicator, when considered year over year, of overall curriculum perceptions by our primary stakeholders and addresses the University’s focus on the student learning experience.
Licensure exam results	Summative	Overall pass rate provides high-level view that may inform admissions and curricular design decisions.
Percentage of tenured/tenure track faculty publishing at least 3 papers per year	Summative	Basic metric indicating level of research engagement of faculty.
Percentage of tenured/tenure-track faculty having at least 2 externally funded projects as PI or Co-PI	Summative	Basic metric indicating level of research leadership and engagement of faculty;
Percentage of journal articles published by tenured/tenure track faculty that include one or more international authors	Summative	Informs notion of research prominence of faculty, and provides the University with a metric of internationalization and international reputation

Table 1. Basic indicators and their relevance to the OT Program

Recruitment & Admissions

Our evaluation efforts in this area are intended to inform a high-resource, high importance activity of the Occupational Therapy Program – student recruitment and admissions. Historically, the goals of this area of work, and hence of our evaluation process in this area, have been as follows:

- An efficient and effective process of recruitment, applicant screening, and selection
- The number of applicants meets or exceeds Ontario figures
- A steady state or increase in the average GPA of entering students year over year
- An increasingly large number of high quality students in the program, as evidenced by successful program completion and successful completion of the CAOT certification exam on the first attempt

These metrics have been seen as reflective not only of the success of our recruitment efforts, but also of the reputation of the Program. Table 2 reflects more specifically how these data are used for program planning.

Indicator	Evaluation Type	Information Relevance
Efficiency of application screening process as indicated by number of files screened, time required for reviews, and challenges encountered in the process	Formative, Informal	Informs the nature of the process, our collaborative work with the School of Graduate Studies
Number of applicants % of total OT ORPAS applications	Summative; examined year-over year to track trends	Speaks to effectiveness of recruitment efforts; Speaks to overall reputational issues.
GPA's of entering students	Formative	Helps inform # of admissions offers to be made, avoid over-enrolment Rough metric as to the competitiveness of the students recruited.
CAOT results	Formative Summative	Data are retrospectively analyzed to look for indicators in admissions data that help inform the screening process Overall rate of first time success a general metric of program success, particularly over the years of curricular revision

Table 2. Recruitment and Admissions Planning and Evaluation Strategies

In the past, the evaluation had included tracking of different student demographics – but this practice was discontinued due to our recognition that the data did not inform process (e.g. we were not undertaking any strategies to recruit males, students of different cultural groups, etc.) so it was informational only. In the past 2 years, we have consulted at the Faculty and University level on Indigenous student recruitment, aligning with the Faculty and University's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action. In the Fall of 2018, an Indigenous Admissions Policy was

developed by the Admissions Committee and approved by the OT Program. This policy reserves 3 seats annually for Indigenous applicants, and allows for broader consideration of applicant achievement and circumstances. Indigenous recruitment takes place through partnerships with the campus Indigenous student centre, and the Faculty of Health Sciences Indigenous recruitment officer. Information for Indigenous applicants is available on the OT Program website and the ORPAS application portal. Additionally, the Admissions Coordinator is the chair of a provincial admissions working group which is undertaking an Indigenous recruitment review of rehabilitation programs in Ontario, beginning in 2019.

Indicators of Student Satisfaction

Students, as our primary stakeholders, are an important source of input to the program. The Occupational Therapy Program employs a number of formative evaluation components to enhance curricular development in both academic and fieldwork learning. These strategies, outlined in Table 3, are part of either regular committee processes or our cyclical data collection efforts.

Indicator	Evaluation Type	Information Relevance
Class representative input to OT program committee	Formative	Students provide monthly input on program planning issues during regular monthly meetings, proactively ensuring a student voice as changes unfold, and also responding to the existing program structures.
University Survey of Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT)	Formative	Course evaluation data (quantitative and qualitative) are provided to instructors to inform course development. Quantitative data is provided to the Associate Director (OT) to assist in faculty mentoring.
Student Focus Groups	Formative	Immediate feedback on the lived experience of curriculum changes.
Student Exit Survey	Formative	Provides student perspective concerning curriculum content and perceived readiness for practice in all practice areas.

Table 3. Indicators of Student Satisfaction

Although not conducted during every cycle, 2nd year student representatives on the Program Development and Evaluation Committee have, in the past two years, conducted focus groups with their peers to gain feedback on the revised curriculum, as it was unfolding. This information has been extremely beneficial as the newly positioned or created courses were in their first few iterations. The value of student-student dialogue suggests that this may be a useful vehicle for addressing other evaluation questions in future.

Indicators of Student Learning

Evaluation data sources in this area comprise a combination of objective and subjective measures that explore student outcomes in terms of competency development. The ultimate goal in this area is to move exclusively to objective competency-based assessment. Focused studies are underway in the areas of fieldwork and client-centred communication to better understand the developmental aspects, origins and trajectories of the essential competencies and how these should be evaluated at different points in the program.

Indicator	Evaluation Type	Information Relevance
Student 1-year Post Graduation Survey	Summative	Reports on student employment outcomes, as well as reflections on curriculum that are informed by actual practice experience.
Preceptor Surveys	Formative	Regular surveys collect preceptor comments on student fieldwork performance, which can help inform curriculum decisions
	Summative	Surveys in the past two years that tapped specific areas of student strength and weakness relative to past students were used to provide evaluative feedback on our curriculum changes.
National Certification Exam Results	Summative	Overall rate of first time success a general metric of program success, particularly over the years of curricular revision.
	Formative	Results relative to particular sections of the exam matrix inform curriculum design.

Table 4. Indicators of Student Learning

Evaluation Reporting

The overall goal in reporting is to convey results of our evaluation activities to key stakeholders – the internal committees that rely on this knowledge to inform decision making, faculty and university administrators, and our students and local community. In line with the Program Evaluation Standards, we also seek to process findings in a timely manner while addressing confidentiality, security and usability standards.

Results from the various data collection strategies are processed internally, and presented to the full Program Development Committee during its bi-annual meetings. The Program Development &

Evaluation Committee produces a report each year that reports on specific goals that were targeted for that year, and summarizes the standard and ad hoc data collection results. This report, along with some global recommendations, is presented to the OT Program Committee (including its other sub-committees) as well as the SRT Academic Council. The Committee then reflects on the findings, and based on input from the other committees, determines suitable goals for the next year. This cyclical process ensures that the evaluation process remains relevant and responsive.

In addition to formal reporting, the Committee frequently provides results as they emerge to relevant stakeholders. Thus, if results of any formative or summative element suggests the need for immediate attention to process, the information will be discussed at the Program meeting, or with the chair of the appropriate sub-committee. Similarly, information related to the required department metrics is pulled each Spring in response to reports the Dean and Vice Deans make to the Provost.

Appendix A – Summary of OT Program Evaluation Data & Sources

Indicator	Performance Level	Source
Applications data (e.g. number of applicants; GPAs of applicants)	Outcome	Program records
Admissions data (e.g. number of acceptances); GPAs of incoming class)	Outcome	Program records
University Survey of Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT) (student course evaluations)	Process; course quality	Students
Student representative participation in Program and Evaluation committees and reports to OT faculty	Process; course quality	Students
Curriculum review (faculty reflection on course at end of each term; twice yearly faculty retreat to discuss outcomes across courses, develop curriculum, etc.)	Process; instructional approaches; curriculum content/integrity	Faculty members
Student exit survey	Process (student summary reactions concerning curriculum, readiness for practice)	Students
Student 1 year post survey	Outcome (reflections on curriculum; jobs held, professional positions, etc.)	Students
CAOT certification exam results	Outcome; student knowledge	CAOT
Fieldwork Supervisor Survey	Outcome; student performance in final fieldwork experience	Fieldwork preceptors for OT 877
Competency Based Fieldwork Evaluation (CBFE)	Process; student performance and skill acquisition	Fieldwork preceptors
Student fieldwork evaluation	Process; student evaluation of quality of fieldwork opportunity	Students
Fieldwork Liaison Committee (SRT)	Process: Fieldwork coordinator input to program on fieldwork development, changes needed in curriculum, etc.	Fieldwork preceptors
Student and Preceptor Award Nominations	Process: student and preceptor performance	Students and Fieldwork Preceptors

Appendix B – Evaluation Timeline

Component	Timing	Time of Year
Program Development & Evaluation Committee Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each academic term 	October/May
Individual Course USAT evaluations by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected in the last or second last class of each course Results tabulated by the university administration; returned to the course instructor approximately 6 weeks following the end of the course to the faculty member responsible for that course Program Associate Director and School Director are notified of the results during the Annual Faculty Performance appraisal process in February 	Ongoing
Graduating student exit surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailed out in October of each year (within 2-3 months after graduation of each cohort) and received and tabulated for review at the following Spring Retreat. 	October
One year post graduation survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailed out in October of each year (within 12-14 months after graduation of each cohort) and received and tabulated for review at the following Spring Retreat. 	October
National Certification Exam Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed annually 	January
Preceptor survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailed out in summer/fall of each year (after completion of Field Work Level III) 	Ongoing through late June – early September
Preceptor Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based focus groups led by clinical leads Reported to Fieldwork Liaison Committee 	April - June
Admissions process & data reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process review throughout Winter term Analysis of admissions numbers and class composition Additional processes likely as new Committee becomes operational 	May July
Student led focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final academic term 	Mid- to late-March