

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM
Wednesday, April 9, 2003 @ 4:00 P.M.
West Campus, OTA Daily Living Lab.

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Tedrick, COTA @ VA Hospital, Kathy Curless, OTR @ Northwest Texas Hospital, Jennifer Hawley, OTR @ Progressive Step, Judy Massie, MA @ Amarillo College, Kimberly Cagle, Linda Peacy, Omar Santos - Student Representatives.

EX-OFFICIO'S PRESENT: Ginny Gass, Linda Wheeler, Marianne Jones, Bill Crawford.

- I. Call to Order – Mr. Tedrick, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.
- II. Minutes – The minutes of the May, 8, 2002, meeting were approved as written.
- III. OTA Business - Program Information – Currently there are 4 students in the freshman class and 4 students in the sophomore class. Of the 4 freshman, 2 are from Amarillo and 2 are from other areas of Texas, who came here specifically for the OTA program. With the status of state funding for education being so critical, program with low enrollments are being scrutinized ... closing a program, while a last resort, could still be an option. Declining enrollments led Texas Tech to close their OTA programs in Amarillo and Odessa. Here are some of the options that were discussed:
 - i. “Turn things around” ... increase enrollments (a 2 year window for this).
 - ii. “Mothball the program” ... put everything on hold; facilities, equipment, etc. In the meantime, recruit and enlist for the re-opening of the program (a 3 year window for this).
 - iii. Close the program. The closest OTA program to Amarillo is Roswell, NM and the closest Texas program is San Antonio. When a program is closed, it is closed and facilities, equipment, and supplies are reallocated to other sites/programs.

Linda Wheeler has already resigned, accepting a position as an OTA with a Rehab facility. While a full-time person cannot be hired to replace Linda's position, part-time slots would be filled. Mr. Crawford urged OT facilities to write letters of support to Dr. Byrd, emphasizing the need for AC to continue as a training site for OTA's. There was much discussion about the availability of jobs, both locally, statewide and nationally. Ms. Gass has a job board in the Allied Health Building loaded with employers saying, “Send us your students.” It was also discussed, everyone involved in recruitment, can aid by giving potential students Ginny's name, phone,

e-mail address and offer to send them materials from the program. Encourage student to see Ms. Gass about doing some observation/job shadowing...so they understand the variety of skills the OTA has mastered.

Advisory members, Kathy Curless and David Tedrick, made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Hawley, to endorse and support the OTA program, due to the demand for COTA's in the community. All other voting members were in favor.

- IV. Adjournment – Being not further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Minutes of the meeting were written and submitted by Kim Lacey, Administrative Assistant, on April 9, 2003.
