



**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** Sarah S. Benson *Sarah S. Benson*  
**SUBJECT:** Roberts Wesleyan College—Master Plan Amendment for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (O.T.D.) Program in Occupational Therapy  
**DATE:** April 29, 2021

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Decision (Consent)**

Should the Board of Regents approve a Master Plan Amendment for Roberts Wesleyan College to offer an O.T.D. program in Occupational Therapy?

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute and regulation.

**Proposed Handling**

This question will come before the Full Board at its May 2021 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

**Procedural History**

Approval of a Master Plan Amendment by the Board of Regents is required by section 237 of Education Law. This would be the institution's first doctoral program in the disciplinary area of health professions.

**Background Information**

Roberts Wesleyan College requested approval to offer an O.T.D. program in Occupational Therapy. The purpose of the program is to prepare entry-level occupational therapists who will be spiritually mature, service-oriented practitioners that will transform health, well-being, and quality of life for all persons, groups, and populations.

The proposed program consists of 111 credit hours and can be completed in three years of full-time study. This program was designed to meet the 2018 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) educational standards for entry-level doctoral programs. This program will prepare students for successful completion of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) exam and for licensure in New York State (NYS). The program include 87 credits of didactic courses and 24 credits (38 weeks) of level II Fieldwork and Capstone experiences. Didactic courses include study in the following areas: Anatomy & Kinesiology; Pathophysiology, Neuroscience, Occupational Engagement; Occupational Justice, Psychosocial Occupational Performance, Leaders & Managers, Emerging Practice, Entrepreneurship, Professional Development, Technology & Innovation, O.T.D. Educators, Competency, Research Methods, and Professional Transitions.

The admission requirements for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program in Occupational Therapy are as follows: submit an application to Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS) with three letters of reference; hold a bachelor's degree in the sciences or any major and meet prerequisite requirements; provide documentation of 30 hours of clinical observation or work in an occupational therapy setting; and conduct an onsite interview. Prerequisites include: Anatomy & Physiology (I & II with labs), Introductory Biology, Lifespan/Human Development, Anthropology or Sociology, Abnormal Psychology, and Statistics. Research Methods and Medical Terminology are also highly recommended. Projected enrollment is 28-32 students each year.

The College has committed resources for the creation of three O.T.D. training and two classroom areas to include an activities-of-daily-living (ADL) lab with two adjoining lecture rooms, assistive technology, and pediatric lab spaces. This program will also utilize facilities within the Crothers Science and Nursing Center (Simulation Center with ADL apartment, nursing clinical lab, anatomy & physiology/cadaver lab). To date the College has secured clinical affiliation memoranda of understanding (MOU) and letters of intent representing 42 field sites in New York and 228 in other states for Level II fieldwork. The settings include acute-rehab, community/outpatient/day habilitation, homecare, school, vocational/worksites, long-term residential, and other subacute rehabilitation across the lifespan.

A full-time Program Director and an Academic Fieldwork Coordinator have been hired. The College plans to hire two additional full-time faculty members before for the projected launch year (fall 2021), two additional full-time faculty in year two of the program (fall 2022), and another full-time faculty member in year three.

Staff members from the Department reviewed the application materials. In addition, as part of the review process, staff members participated in a virtual peer review site visit in April 2020. Based upon the findings of the review, it is determined that the proposed program meets the standards of registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

To determine potential impact on current programs and resources, a canvass of degree-granting institutions in the Finger Lakes Region and all degree-granting Colleges and Universities offering programs leading to licensure as an Occupational Therapist was conducted. No objections were received.

### **Related Regents Item**

As the O.T.D. award represents Roberts Wesleyan College's first use of this degree title, a charter amendment item will be presented before the Full Board at its May 2021 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a Master Plan Amendment to authorize Roberts Wesleyan College to offer the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (O.T.D.) program in Occupational Therapy. This amendment will be effective until May 31, 2022, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case Master Plan Amendment shall be without term.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

If the Board of Regents approves the Master Plan Amendment, the Department will register the proposed program, and the school will proceed to enroll students.