

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

Between

**Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania**

And

**St. Bonaventure University**

St. Bonaventure, NY

**This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made effective on the date it is signed by and between St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University.**

- 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:** This Agreement between St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University establishes a 4+2 Baccalaureate/M.S. Arrangement ("the 4+2 Arrangement") and a 3+2 accelerated Baccalaureate/M.S. Arrangement ("the 3+2 Arrangement") to provide a direct path to graduate study in occupational therapy for outstanding Commonwealth University students. Qualified Commonwealth students in the pre-occupational therapy program will enroll in their undergraduate studies at Commonwealth University before entering the first year of graduate study for the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) degree program at St. Bonaventure University. The 3+2 and 4+2 Arrangements support a smooth transition for Commonwealth University undergraduate students into graduate studies at St. Bonaventure University in occupational therapy with the intent of strengthening the quality and breadth of academic programs at both institutions.
- 2. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES/AUTHORITY:**
  - a) St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University designate the person(s) set forth in Sections 4 and 5 as their respective representatives to coordinate and manage the activities under this MOU. The representatives shall provide general oversight and connect pertinent individuals within each institution as needed to discuss this Agreement, changes to the Agreement, and any other topics of interest to either party.
  - b) For students enrolled in the 3+2 Arrangement, the undergraduate degree will be conferred in May by Commonwealth University upon the student's successful completion of 1<sup>st</sup> year graduate courses (Fall and Spring) at St. Bonaventure University.
  - c) Each party in this MOU retains full authority over and reserves the right to make changes in their respective courses, programs, and credential requirements. Each party shall publicize the 3+2 and 4+2 Arrangements in academic materials as appropriate and shall brief students as appropriate. Each party approves of the use of its name by the other party in connection with the other party's publication of the 3+2 or 4+2 Arrangements as

anticipated in this Section 2. Neither party shall otherwise use the name or trademark of the other party without the prior approval of the other party.

- d) St. Bonaventure University shall (in its sole discretion) establish admission criteria, review applications from students recommended by Commonwealth University and communicate directly with applying Commonwealth University students on decisions related to acceptance to the occupational therapy program. Details regarding this process are set forth below.
- e) St. Bonaventure University shall establish its tuition rates and shall collect and retain any tuition remitted for its courses.

### **3. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- a) Commonwealth University agrees to:
  - 1. Subject to administrative discretion, provide courses that meet the prerequisite degree requirements for St. Bonaventure University's Master of Science in Occupational Therapy degree.
  - 2. Designate a person who will serve as coordinator of the joint program at Commonwealth University. The coordinator will:
    - i. Be responsible for promoting the Arrangements to prospective and current students.
    - ii. Keep students and appropriate advisors abreast of current information applicable to the Arrangements. However, it shall be and remain the responsibility of students to ascertain all current and applicable program requirements.
    - iii. Maintain permanent files for Commonwealth University students who intend to apply to the program.
    - iv. Serve as a liaison between Commonwealth University and St. Bonaventure University for any and all issues involved in the Arrangements.
  - 3. For students enrolled in the 3+2 program, confer the baccalaureate degree to students who have successfully completed the first year of professional studies at St. Bonaventure University and have met all degree requirements for Commonwealth University.
- b) St. Bonaventure University agrees to:
  - 1. Designate a person who will serve as coordinator of the program at St. Bonaventure University. The Coordinator will:
    - i. Serve as a liaison between St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University for any and all issues involving the Arrangement.
    - ii. Inform appropriate personnel of the existence of the agreement and encourage them to support it.
    - iii. Determine the specifics of advanced placement for Commonwealth University students who will be entering St. Bonaventure University after having earned the baccalaureate degree.

### **4. PROGRAM DETAILS AND ADMISSIONS:**

#### **a) General Guidelines:**

- 1. St. Bonaventure University will guarantee admission for up to 5 students total, between the 3+2 and 4+2 Arrangements, from Commonwealth University each year who meet admission criteria.

2. Commonwealth University's Pre-OT Program Committee will serve as a nomination committee that will interview, identify, and nominate potential students each year who may fit the established criteria for entry to the occupational therapy program at St. Bonaventure after their junior year (4+2 Arrangement), or after their sophomore year (3+2 track).
3. Commonwealth University has no obligation to nominate a student or students to St. Bonaventure University's occupational therapy program, even if a student fulfills the criteria. The Pre-OT Program Committee may choose not to nominate any students in a given year or may nominate fewer students than would be allowable by this Agreement.

**b) Admissions Policies and Criteria:**

1. Commonwealth University students must complete a standard application to the MSOT program through St. Bonaventure University's internal website at <https://www.sbu.edu/academics/occupational-therapy> by December 1st of their senior year for 4+2 candidates, and December 1<sup>st</sup> of their junior year for 3+2 candidates. Applications must include three letters of reference from Commonwealth faculty members, licensed occupational therapists (OT) and/or work managers.
2. Students will apply as first-year graduate students.
3. Commonwealth students in the 4+2 program must complete a bachelor's degree and provide an official degree-bearing transcript to the St. Bonaventure University Office of Graduate Admission by the time the MSOT program begins at the end of August of the respective academic year.
4. Commonwealth students in both 4+2 and 3+2 programs must have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 at the time of their application to the MSOT program.
5. Commonwealth students must have an overall grade point average greater than or equal to 3.0 in all prerequisite courses<sup>1</sup> with no grade lower than a C in these courses. AP and CLEP courses do not qualify. *Appendix A* identifies Commonwealth University equivalent coursework that satisfies the prerequisite undergraduate coursework required for admission to the MSOT program.

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<sup>1</sup> Prerequisite courses include Anatomy & Physiology I with lab (4 credit hours); Anatomy & Physiology II with lab (4 credit hours); General Physics or Kinesiology (3 credit hours); General Psychology (3 credit hours); Abnormal/Maladaptive Psychology (3 credit hours); Developmental Psychology (3 credit hours); Sociology or Anthropology (3 credit hours); The prerequisite course work is listed at <https://www.sbu.edu/academics/occupational-therapy/admission-criteria>

6. Once enrolled at St. Bonaventure University, Commonwealth University students must adhere to, and their continued enrollment will be subject to, the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the Occupational Therapy Program, including but not limited to its academic standing requirements for graduate students.
7. Coordinating contacts for consultation regarding admissions, academic preparation and student mentoring at each institution are as follows:

**St. Bonaventure University Contact:** Danielle Schmidt, Director of Graduate Admissions, St. Bonaventure University, 3261 West State Road, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778, (716) 375-2021, [dschmidt@sbu.edu](mailto:dschmidt@sbu.edu)

**St. Bonaventure University Contact:** Suzanne Marasco, Ed.D., MS, OTR/L, Assistant Director, Assistant Professor, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, Department of Occupational Therapy, DePerro School of Health Professions, St. Bonaventure University, 3261 West State Road, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778, (716) 375-2623, [smarasco@sbu.edu](mailto:smarasco@sbu.edu)

**Commonwealth University Contact:** Eric Lippincott, PhD, PT, LAT, ATC, Professor, Department of Biological and Health Sciences, Commonwealth University of PA, 410 N. Fairview Street, Lock Haven, PA 17745, (570) 484-2781, [elippinc@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:elippinc@commonwealthu.edu)

- c) **Tuition:** The MSOT program is full-time and 23 months in length (five semesters). Tuition and fees while attending St. Bonaventure University will be charged at its prevailing rate. Commonwealth University students will be eligible to apply for federal student loans to cover the cost of education.

5. **INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:** The following persons will provide general oversight and serve as the primary point of contacts at St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University and will communicate mainly by email and phone:

**Commonwealth University Primary Point of Contact:**

Michelle Kiec  
Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Commonwealth University  
400 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
570-389-4308  
[mkiec@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:mkiec@commonwealthu.edu)

**St. Bonaventure University Primary Point of Contact:**

David Hilmey  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
St. Bonaventure University

3261 West State Road  
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778  
Phone: 716.375.2603  
Email: [dhilmey@sbu.edu](mailto:dhilmey@sbu.edu)

- 6. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION:** This Agreement will be effective on the date it is signed by both institutions and will be valid for an initial period of **five years**. Upon expiration of the five years, the MOU will be subject to renewal upon written consent of both parties. Additions and changes to this MOU may be made at any time with the written agreement of both St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University. Students enrolled in the program who maintain continuous registration will not be affected by any changes in the provisions of this Agreement. Either party may withdraw from this MOU upon 90 days written notice to the other institution. Termination must be from authorized officials of each institution. Except to the extent required by (i) law or regulatory bodies, or (ii) necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of participating students, termination of this MOU shall not affect students already accepted into the 3+2 or 4+2 Arrangement under the terms of this MOU. These students shall be allowed to complete the 3+2 or 4+2 Arrangement under the terms outlined herein.
- 7. MISCELLANEOUS:**
- a) **Independent Contractors:** St. Bonaventure University and Commonwealth University shall be independent contractors and not partners, joint ventures, principal and agent, or any other similar relationship. Neither institution shall have, or hold itself out as having, the power or authority to bind or create liability for the other by its negligent or intentional act or omission.
  - b) **Confidentiality:** The institutions may exchange information that could be confidential and not (a) generally known to the public, (b) already known, through legal means, to the party receiving the information, or (c) legally obtained from a third party. Each institution agrees to use the other's confidential information solely for the purpose contemplated by this Agreement and not to disclose such confidential information to any person or entity other than as necessary for such purposes or as required to be disclosed by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, administrative body or governmental body, or by subpoena, summons or legal process, or by law, rule or regulation.
  - c) **FERPA:** In course of dealings between the parties, and in accordance with the Gramm-Leach Bliley Act (and the Federal Trade Commission's implementing regulations) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, each party represents, warrants and covenants that it is capable of maintaining appropriate safeguards for non-public personal financial information, student education records, and other protected information ("Protected Information") relating to students to which all parties involved in this Agreement will be provided access to. Protected Information shall be held in confidence and may only be used or accessed for the purposes set out in this Agreement or as required to be disclosed by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, administrative body, or governmental body, or by subpoena, summons or legal process, or by law, rule or regulation. Each party will protect such Protected Information in accordance with generally accepted commercial standards and no less rigorously than it protects its own

confidential information.

- d) **Execution:** This MOU sets forth the entire agreement between the parties regarding the subject matter herein. The MOU may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall be an original but all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument. The Parties agree to accept electronic, .pdf and facsimile signatures as original signatures. No waiver shall be effective unless in writing, signed by the waiving party. This MOU may only be amended by a written instrument signed by both institutions.

**APPROVAL:** All parties identified below agree to the provisions and terms of this MOU.

**APPROVED:**

**St Bonaventure University**

Name: Anna Addonisio  
Title: Vice President for Finance and Administration

Signature: Anna Addonisio

Date: 3/18/25

**Commonwealth University**

Name: Bashar Hanna  
Title: President

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Michelle Kiec  
Title: Provost

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PASSHE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Legal Counsel

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix A

St. Bonaventure University  
Commonwealth University 3+2, 4+2  
Baccalaureate/M.S. Arrangements

<b>St. Bonaventure University M.S., Occupational Therapy Program</b>			
<b>St. Bonaventure University Prerequisite</b>	<b>Commonwealth University (CU) Course Equivalent: CU students must have an overall 3.0 GPA, with no grade lower than a C</b>		
	<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
<b>Anatomy &amp; Physiology I with Lab</b>	BIOL180 or HLSC120	Anatomy Physiology 1	4
<b>Anatomy &amp; Physiology II with Lab</b>	BIOL181 or HLSC120	Anatomy Physiology 2	4
<b>General Physics or Kinesiology</b>	PHYS208	Introductory Physics 1	4
<b>General Psychology</b>	PSYC100	Introduction to Psychology	3
<b>Abnormal/Maladaptive Psychology</b>	PSYC335	Psychology Disorders	3
<b>Developmental Psychology</b>	PSYC212	Lifespan Development	3
<b>Sociology or Anthropology</b>	SOC101 or ANTH101	Introduction to Sociology or Introduction to Anthropology	3