

Dear Parents:

We are delighted for your interest in ECU Occupational Therapy Department’s *Driving and Community Mobility Bootcamp* for autistic teens and young adults. As you may know, we had successful Bootcamps almost every summer since 2015 and continually improve in evaluation and intervention processes.

Here are some things you need to know. First, we know it is vitality important to meet and evaluate candidates for the *Bootcamp* beforehand encouraging them to participate. Second, we have a pretty good sense of who will benefit from the *Bootcamp* and have recently determined that participants should be at least 16 years old to fully benefit. And finally, we can only accept a limited number of individuals due to space, equipment, and assignment of students.

In addition to serving the needs of autistic individuals in our community and state, the *Bootcamp* is a student-driven activity for their occupational therapy education, specifically in research. Thus, it is important to understand that the Bootcamp participant and/or parent will need to sign consent forms prior to any testing and/or intervention. The IRB ensures that our research is reasonable and ethical for our participants and all confidential information remains safe and secure.

This year marks a change in the structure and timing of the Bootcamp. As of 2025, the Bootcamp will the first full week in August from Monday to Friday. We will have a “graduation event” on Friday late afternoon, around 5:30 pm EST. Please fill out the application found on the website and return it to Dr. Dickerson at dickersona@ecu.edu.

All individuals who complete an application will be contacted for an evaluation. Although applications can be submitted at any time, we don’t start the process of contacting applicants until late April or early May when it is time to schedule evaluations, which will occur in May or June. Each year varies, but we typically have more applicants than we can support. After the evaluations are completed, the team will meet and determine – based on the evaluation results – who will be participants by mid-July. We apologize in advance if your child is not accepted. Primarily we are limited by resources, finances, time, and space. We are currently looking for funding or grant opportunities, so if you have any knowledge or have connections, please let us know.

Thank you for your interest and please contact me with further questions. Dr. Anne Dickerson, PhD, OTR/L, SCDCM, FAOTA, FGSA

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