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Occupational Therapy Application Guide

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Introduction

Thank you for considering Utica University for your occupational therapy education. We have been educating OT's since the 1960's and have a nationwide reputation with a network of thousands of OT alumni.

The Occupational Therapy faculty embraces a humanistic, transformative educational approach to your education. Our program is distinctive in its collaborative community alliances that enable faculty and students to meet the needs of society while at the same time developing the professional behaviors and autonomous, critical thinking needed for current practice. We promote a student culture and classroom environment that encourages critical, reflective questioning of preconceptions and the earnest pursuit of accurate, evidence-based and integrated understandings of human wellbeing, occupation and occupational therapy practice.

In response to AOTA's decision to support dual entry degrees into the profession, Utica now offers the

option of master of science or entry level doctorate in occupational therapy. Either degree will allow you to sit for the certification exam to obtain your license to practice.

We use the OTCAS national application system. The graduate admissions office receives a large number of inquiries and applications each year. Before you apply, please read the information in this guide carefully.

The OTCAS Application

The Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS) simplifies the process of applying to occupational therapy programs. You start by selecting the programs you wish to apply to, then you submit one application that includes all necessary materials. Once received by OTCAS, your application and materials go through a verification process before being transmitted to all of your selected programs.

The OTCAS application opens on July 15, 2024 for the Fall 2025 Day and Weekend cohorts.

Utica University's OTCAS deadline is June 1, 2025.

To Learn more about OTCAS and see how to get started please go to:

https://help.liaisonedu.com/OTCAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Starting_Your_OTCAS_Application/Getting_Started_with_Your_OTCAS_Application

Degree Options in Occupational Therapy

Utica now has two degree options:

1. Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT)

This degree level is the minimum required for entry level practice. This accredited program includes five semesters of coursework and fieldwork experiences to prepare you for general practice. Completing this program will provide you with the degree to be eligible to sit for the certification exam and become licensed to practice as a registered occupational therapist.

2. Entry-Level Occupational Therapy Doctor (ELOTD)**

This degree level is optional for practice. This program includes 8 semesters of coursework, fieldwork and a capstone experience to prepare you with general and in-depth knowledge for practice. Completion of this program will also make you eligible to take the certification exam and become licensed for practice.

****NOTE:** The ELOTD program is currently in the pre-accreditation phase with anticipated accreditation in 2025.

Application Requirements

GPA

Graduate applicants to either program in Occupational Therapy must have an overall bachelor's degree with a GPA of 3.2 or higher on a 4.0 scale from a regionally accredited institution. We may consider applicants with an overall GPA of 3.0-3.19 if a candidate has demonstrated strengths in other areas.

Once your OTCAS application is complete and verified, it will automatically calculate your overall GPA.

Prerequisite coursework

Utica University requires the successful completion of eleven prerequisite courses.

The following 11 courses are required for **MSOT** applicants a minimum grade of **C or better**

and for all **ELOTD** applicants **B – or better**:

- A four-hour credit course in Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab or equivalent (i.e. Human Anatomy, Human Physiology)
- A four-hour credit course in Anatomy and Physiology II with Lab or equivalent (i.e. Human Anatomy, Human Physiology)
- An applied anatomy (gross anatomy, neuroanatomy, or equivalent)*
- Kinesiology or Biomechanics
- An Introductory course in Sociology or Anthropology
- General or Introductory Psychology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Lifespan Psychology/Human Development/Developmental Psychology (must cover birth through adult)
- Medical Conditions and Implications/Pathophysiology/a three credit course in Medical Terminology

- Statistics
- Research Methods (psychology or sociology-based)

Prerequisite coursework must be successfully completed by mid-August of the year you would like to enter the program. Coursework may be taken from any regionally accredited community college, college or university. Online coursework from these institutions are acceptable as long as they fulfill the prerequisite requirements.

The following prerequisite courses need to have been taken within seven years of the date of application:

- an applied anatomy*
- Abnormal Psychology
- Research Methods
- Medical Conditions and Implications or Pathophysiology or a three-credit hour course in Medical Terminology

You will need to retake these courses if they are older than seven years.

Please Note: Successfully completing all prerequisites is not a guarantee of admission. Our program is highly competitive and has limited seating.

The Graduate Admissions office will do a prerequisite course review for you. Please email copies of your transcripts (unofficial ones are fine for this purpose) to lcope@utica.edu or jrowe@utica.edu You will then be emailed a transcript review showing missing coursework. If you are selected for an interview, it will be up to you to keep the Graduate Admissions office informed of your prerequisite progress each semester.

You may apply through OTCAS while you complete prerequisite coursework. Taking prerequisite coursework is usually done as a non-matriculated student, so you will most likely not have access to any financial aid and will have to pay for them out of pocket.

Utica University offers Medical Conditions and Implications, A&P 1 and 2 and Research Methods online. Please note that taking prerequisite coursework at UU will not influence admission decisions.

If you find a course you would like to take but are unsure if it meets requirements, please email us a copy of the course description for review. Utica University reserves the right to reject a course that does not meet our prerequisite requirements.

**An applied anatomy course can be gross anatomy, neuroanatomy or a specialized biology-based course that focuses on human anatomy above A&P 1 and 2. Utica University offers gross anatomy over seven Saturdays during fall semesters. Neuroanatomy and kinesiology are offered over seven weekends during spring semesters. Because these courses have limited seating, contact graduate admissions if you are*

interested in taking them or if you are looking for alternatives.

Advanced Placement, Transfer of Credit and Credit for Experiential Learning

Advanced placement and transfer of credit is evaluated and determined at the pre-professional phase only. The OT graduate program does not give credit for experiential learning.

Recommendations

Two personal recommendations are required (one from a currently practicing occupational therapist and one from an academic professor). These will be done through the OTCAS application.

Observation Hours

Utica University is currently not requiring observation hours. While not a requirement, observation hours are **highly recommended**.

We understand it is often a challenge for prospective applicants to obtain observation hours at many facilities. We **encourage** applicants to observe in a minimum of two different OT settings to get a better understanding of the possibilities within the profession.

There are online observation modules available for a fee if interested in learning more about the profession. This is one option, however--- not a requirement.

<https://www.committobettering.com/students1>

Technology Requirements:

As an online learner, you'll need regular access to an internet-connected computer—your own or a public access one, such as at your local library. If possible, we recommend purchasing a laptop to increase your flexibility to learn on the go. For the highest quality and most reliable learning experience, we recommend broadband internet access (LAN/Cable/DSL). [You will need to find an internet provider in your area.](#)

You must all own MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, which are available in the Microsoft Office package. You should DISABLE your popup blocker, and install the most up-to-date version of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Completing a distance learning course requires the student to be familiar with email, a World Wide Web browser, and word processing. While students need not be computer experts, basic computer skills are important and required.

International Applicants

Utica University welcomes OTCAS applications from qualified international students. If you are an

international applicant, contact graduate admissions before starting an OTCAS application.

Note to International Students---Tests of English language proficiency such as TOEFL or IELTS are required if English is not your first language -- UC requires a TOEFL score of 525 written, 195 computer based or 69-70 internet-based. For IELTS, the minimum score is 5.5.

Candidate Selection

OTCAS applicants will be reviewed by graduate admissions once they are verified. Unverified applications cannot be reviewed. Please track your application through OTCAS to ensure that there are no processing issues that are holding up verification. Note: Graduate admissions does not have access to your completed application until it is verified.

Selected candidates who meet Utica University admissions requirements or are in the process of doing so will be contacted by OT faculty members to set up a virtual interview meeting.

Day Program

The Utica University Occupational Therapy program day cohort option is a traditional Monday-Friday program that runs five straight semesters for the MSOT and 8 semesters for the ELOTD. These includes summers between the academic years that are reserved for fieldwork experiences and coursework.

The day program starts at the end of August.

OT Weekend at UU

Utica University is only one of fifteen schools in North America that also offers a weekend cohort MS OT option. The weekend option takes five straight semesters (including one summer) for MSOT and 8 semesters for ELOTD and is completed in the same time frame as the traditional day option.

Classes for OT Weekend usually start in mid-August.

OT Weekend at UU is entering its third decade. It offers career changers and COTA's the opportunity to become OT's while they continue to work at their current jobs. It is limited to 24 seats per cohort.

*Typical OT Weekend Classes are held on Friday, Saturday & Sunday **on ground and online (synchronous).***

Classes are very concentrated and require a great deal of personal academic discipline and independent learning in order to be successful. ***Please carefully consider your learning style and time management skills when considering this option.***

Housing for OT Weekend

At this time, the university does not offer on-campus housing for OT Weekend. Local hotels (Holiday

Inn, Days Inn, etc) offer special discounted rates to weekend OT students. Many OTW students share rooms or Air BNB's to reduce costs.

Master of Science

This program is a total of 69 credits over 5 semesters including Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Academic Requirements and Course Sequence (69 Credit Hours)

First Year

First Semester (19 credit hours)

- OCT 505 - Theoretical Basis of Occupational Therapy (3)
- OCT 506 - Human Occupations (3)
- OCT 525 - Fundamentals of Transformative Learning (2)
- OCT 526 - Case-Informed Discussion: Adolescents and Young Adults (2) •
- OCT 543 - Fieldwork Level IA Prep (0)
- OCT 551 - Fieldwork Level IC: Impact of Social Context on Practice (1)
- OCT 553 - Fieldwork Level IA (1)
- OCT 571 - Occupational Performance: Adolescents and Young Adults (0,4) •
- OCT 573 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy Practice I (2)
- IPE 504 – Interprofessional Practice (1)

Second Semester (17 credit hours)

- OCT 521 - Documentation in Practice (1)
- OCT 527 - Case-Informed Discussion: Adults (2)
- OCT 549 - Research Seminar I (1)
- OCT 552 - Fieldwork Level IC: Psychosocial Factors Influencing Occupations (2)
- OCT 561 - Professional Roles: Development (3)
- OCT 567 - Fieldwork Level IIA Preparation (0)
- OCT 568 - Occupational Therapy Research Analysis and Integration (2) •
- OCT 572 - Occupational Performance: Adults (0,4)
- OCT 574 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy II (2)

Third Semester - Summer (6 credit hours)

- OCT 654 - Fieldwork Level IIA (6) (May/June through July/August, 12 weeks @ 40

hrs/wk)

Second Year

First Semester (17 credit hours)

- OCT 601 - Occupational Performance: Children (0,4)
- OCT 604 - Case-Informed Discussion: Children (2)
- OCT 605 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy III (2)
- OCT 622 - Writing for the Profession (2)
- OCT 623 - Fieldwork Level IB Preparation (0)
- OCT 633 - Fieldwork Level 1B (1)
- OCT 637 - Occupational Therapy Manager (3)
- OCT 649 - Research Seminar II (1)
- OCT 668 - OT Research Dissemination (2)

Second Semester (10 credit hours)

- OCT 602 Synthesis: Occupation-based Practice with Children
- OCT 615 Synthesis: Theory into Practice
- OCT 651 - Fieldwork Level IIB Preparation (0)
- OCT 656 - Fieldwork Level IIB (6)

Students will graduate with a Master's degree in May following successful completion of second-year courses and being eligible to sit for the certification exam.

Entry Level OTD program

This program is a total of 105 credits over 8 semesters. In addition to fieldwork level I and II experiences, the ELOTD also requires a capstone project and 14-week full time capstone experience.

Program Curriculum

Academic Requirements and Course Sequence (105 Credit Hours)

First Year

First Semester (19 credit hours)

- OCT 505 - Theoretical Basis of Occupational Therapy (3)
- OCT 506 - Human Occupations (3)
- OCT 525 - Fundamentals of Transformative Learning (2)
- OCT 526 - Case-Informed Discussion: Adolescents and Young Adults (2) •
- OCT 543 - Fieldwork Level IA Prep (0)
- OCT 551 - Fieldwork Level IC: Impact of Social Context on Practice (1)
- OCT 553 - Fieldwork Level IA (1)
- OCT 571 - Occupational Performance: Adolescents and Young Adults (0,4) •
- OCT 573 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy Practice I (2)
- IPE 504 – Interprofessional Practice (1)

Second Semester (17 credit hours)

- OCT 521 - Documentation in Practice (1)
- OCT 527 - Case-Informed Discussion: Adults (2)
- OCT 549 - Research Seminar I (1)
- OCT 552 - Fieldwork Level IC: Psychosocial Factors Influencing Occupations (2)
- OCT 561 - Professional Roles: Development (3)
- OCT 567 - Fieldwork Level IIA Preparation (0)
- OCT 568 - Occupational Therapy Research Analysis and Integration (2) •
- OCT 572 - Occupational Performance: Adults (0,4)
- OCT 574 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy II (2)

Third Semester - Summer (6 credit hours)

- OCT 654 - Fieldwork Level IIA (6) (May/June through July/August, 12 weeks @ 40 hrs/wk)

Second Year

First Semester (17 credit hours)

- OCT 601 - Occupational Performance: Children (0,4)
- OCT 604 - Case-Informed Discussion: Children (2)
- OCT 605 - Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy III (2)
- OCT 622 - Writing for the Profession (2)

OCT 623 - Fieldwork Level IB Preparation (0)
OCT 633 - Fieldwork Level 1B (1)
OCT 637 - Occupational Therapy Manager (3)
OCT 649 - Research Seminar II (1)
OCT 668 - OT Research Dissemination (2)

Second Semester (14 credit hours)

OCT 608 Foundations in Occupational Science (3)

OCT 651 - Fieldwork Level IIB Preparation (0)
OCT 656 - Fieldwork Level IIB (6)
OCT 688 – Capstone Project I: Becoming an Agent of Change (2)
OCT 736 Best Practice in Emerging Practice for Children and Adolescents(3)

Third semester (12 credits)

HCA521 – Health Care Systems: Continuum of Care (3)

OCT698 – Capstone Project II: Project Exploration & Proposal Development (3)
OCT735 – Best-Practice with Persons, Groups & Populations (3)
OCT745 – Advanced Theory and Theory Development (3)

Third Year

First semester (12 credits):

BUS611 and BUS612 -Principles and Practices of Leadership (1.5/1.5)
OCT755 – Advocacy for Groups and Populations (3)
OCT765 – Educator (3)
OCT721 – Capstone Project III: Project Proposal Defense and Experiential Component Preparation (3)

Second semester (8 credits):

OCT788 – Capstone Project IV: Experiential Component and Project Dissemination– 14 week,

full-time experience (8)

Students will graduate with a doctoral degree in May following successful completion of third-year courses and be eligible to sit for the certification exam

The Utica University Occupational Therapy program has been approved by the New York State Education Department. It is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is 301-652-6611 x2042. AOTA can be reached at 800- SAY-AOTA (800-729-2682) or local calls: 301- 652-2682; Fax: 240-762-5150. The ACOTE website is www.acoteonline.org ; AOTA's website is <https://www.aota.org>

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