

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (MAOT/OTD)



Occupational Therapy is the art and science of helping people do meaningful day-to-day activities that are important to their well-being. OT's make it possible for people who face physical, cognitive, or mental health changes to participate more fully in their lives. OT's can work in a variety of settings, including schools, clinics, hospitals, community centers, and wellness resorts. They can also own and operate their own businesses. They are well trained to work with a diversity of age groups, and work collaboratively and holistically with other health practitioners, like physical therapists, to assist their patients' development.

Common occupational therapy interventions may include assessing a client's home and environment, helping children with disabilities participate fully in school, giving recommendations for adaptive equipment use, educating families and caregivers, and helping to support patients recovering from injury.

A master's degree is required to practice. Most programs for Entry-Level Masters (MOT) and Entry-Level Doctorates (OTD) are 2-3 years long. OTDs are becoming increasingly more common as a requirement to practice occupational therapy. Students should research diligently into the requirements of each program they wish to enter. Only a handful of programs require students to take the GRE. The national organization, **American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)**, is a helpful resource in learning about the field of occupational therapy. Both master's and doctoral programs in OT typically require 24 weeks of supervised fieldwork to gain clinical experience. For licensing, students must graduate from an ACOTE-accredited program, and pass the **NBCOT certification** exam.

As an undergraduate pre-OT student, it is important to carefully review the prerequisite course requirements of all programs of interest as they vary. In addition to the coursework, students must have diverse, well-rounded experiential learning in a variety of health care and community settings to illustrate knowledge of and familiarity with the profession.

We encourage you to meet with a Pre-Health Advisor at least once a semester to ensure satisfactory progress towards your goals!

## DID YOU KNOW?

- A science major is not required. Students should choose a major based on their interests and an area that they find exciting, which at the same time, will keep them academically competitive.
- OT 250 Intro to Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy (4 units) is highly recommended for anyone exploring the field.
- All pre-health courses must be taken for a letter grade with a "B" or higher. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.
- Competitive applicants will have 40 hours of in-person, direct occupational therapy-related experience or observation.
- **OTCAS** is the centralized application service. Portal opens in July.
- Some programs require pre-requisite courses to be taken within 7 years of matriculation.
- There are about 167 Entry-Level Masters and 90 OTD programs nationwide.

## COMMON CORE COURSES

Students are responsible for verifying the prerequisite coursework and policies of the schools to which they plan to apply.

Course	# of semesters	USC Course(s)
<b>Mathematics</b>	1 Statistics course	MATH 208x, or MATH 114, or PSYC 274g, or HP 340, or HP 350, or BUAD 310
<b>English / Writing</b>	2 courses	WRIT 150 and WRIT 340
<b>Anatomy</b>	1 course with lab	HBIO 301L or OT 260
<b>Physiology</b>	1 course Refer to individual school for lab requirement as it varies	With lab: BISC 307L or HBIO 420L  Without lab: OT 261
<b>Abnormal Psychology</b>	1 course	PSYC 360
<b>Developmental / Lifespan Psychology</b>	1 course	OT 251 or EDUC 589, or PSYC 336 with PSYC 337
<b>Sociology</b>	1 course is generally required in Introductory Sociology or Social/Cultural Anthropology	SOCI 200g, or ANTH 201, or OT 250
<b>Medical Terminology</b>	1 course	OT 200