



THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY INFORMATION SHEET

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http://www.mercy.edu/acadivisions/healthprofessions/grad/occupational_therapy.cfm

The Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy is a full time 60-credit weekend program. Classes are completed in 20 months and are followed by 24 weeks of full-time clinical fieldwork. Entry into the Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy requires a Bachelor's degree and the completion of prerequisite courses. Students without a Bachelor's degree can apply for a Bachelor's of Health Sciences, which includes prerequisites or pre-professional occupational therapy courses.

Students can apply to the Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy for provisional acceptance beginning each July, up to one year prior to beginning the Graduate Program the following Fall semester. There are 2 application periods. Early admission is from June 15th through August 10th and regular admission is from October 1st through December 10th.

Requirements for Application:

- A Bachelor's degree or a minimum of **90** undergraduate credits (including 48 credits of general education requirements that include Introduction to Sociology). Students with a minimum of **90** undergraduate credits can apply to the Program for provisional acceptance up to one year in advance of entry into the program. **The Bachelor's degree must be completed before beginning the Master's Program.**
- The GPA of the last 30 undergraduate credits must be a minimum of 3.0.
- A realistic plan to complete remaining prerequisite courses before entry into the Program.

Note: Students are required to complete all General and Specific prerequisite courses prior to starting the Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy. GREs are not required. Four (4) of the prerequisites listed below (either General or Specific OT prerequisites) should be completed by application or before admission decision.

General Prerequisites: These courses are the typical prerequisite courses that are required by the majority of occupational therapy programs. Students may transfer these courses from other colleges that are considered equivalent as evaluated by the admissions department.

- General Biology II (BIOL 161 – 4 cr.) ♦ or a General Biology course that includes a vertebrate dissection
- Abnormal Psychology (PSYN 312 – 3 cr.) (offered online)
- Developmental Psychology (PSYN 233 – 3 cr.) – Must cover the entire lifespan (offered online)
- Statistics for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (BHSC 370 – 3 cr.) (offered online)

♦ *Prerequisites for BIOL 161 will be waived for OT students. BIOL 130 and 131, Anatomy and Physiology I and II, together may substitute for BIOL 161. This is recommended for students who need credits toward a Bachelor's degree or for students who do not have a strong undergraduate science background.*

Specific OT Prerequisite Foundation Courses: The courses listed below are typically part of the first year of other occupational therapy programs. Here at Mercy College, we allow students to take these courses as pre-requisites at their own pace (one at a time, part time or full time). This allows the Mercy College Graduate OT Program to spend more time on OT focused content. All of these courses can also be used to fulfill requirements for the Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences (see below).

- Overview of Occupational Therapy Practice* (HLSC 210 – 1 cr.) – OTAs are exempt
- Introduction to Health Professions Literature and Scientific Writing (HLSC 225 – 1 cr.)
Students with Bachelor's degree with a GPA of 3.0 are not required to take this course, but are responsible for knowledge of content.
- Scientific Writing (HLSC 402 – 2 cr.)
Students with Bachelor's degree with a GPA of 3.5 are not required to take this course, but are responsible for knowledge of content.
- Safety Precautions for the Health Care Professional (HLSC 205 – 1 cr.)*
- Group Process for Health Professionals (HLSC 344 – 3 cr.)
- Human Anatomy with Cadaver (BIOL 303 – 4 cr.)*
- Clinical Kinesiology and Applied Physics (HLSC 314 – 4 cr.)*
- Pathology for Rehabilitation (HLSC 302 – 3 cr.)*
- Applied Neuroscience for the Rehabilitation Professional (HLSC 410 – 4 cr.)*
- Introduction to Occupational Therapy (HLSC 420 – 3 cr.) Credits may be reduced for OTAs

♦ *BIOL 131 is a prerequisite for HLSC 302, BIOL 303*

♦ *BIOL 303 is a prerequisite for HLSC 410 and/or co-requisite for HLSC314*

** These courses should be taken at Mercy College, unless special permission is granted.*

Acceptance of transfer credit and exemption criteria for any of the above courses may require passing a competency exam.

Students with a Bachelor's Degree

Students who have already earned a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university must complete all of the prerequisite courses before beginning the graduate program. General prerequisite courses, listed above, may be accepted as transfer. Students who complete a minimum of 30 credits or more of prerequisite courses at Mercy College are eligible to apply for a second Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences as described below. If a student does not pursue a second bachelor's degree, they may register as a "Special Matriculate". Students within this category must complete prerequisite courses within 1 academic year with a minimum of 6 credits per semester. This allows a student to be eligible to apply for financial aid. Another option is to register as a non-matriculated student. Non-matriculated students cannot apply for financial aid but may take the pre-requisites at a slower rate.

Students without a Bachelor's Degree

All of the Occupational Therapy prerequisite courses can be used to fulfill the requirements for the Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences. To be eligible for the Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences, students must complete a minimum of 30 undergraduate credits at Mercy College. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required for progression into the Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy. The following sequence is recommended for students who meet application criteria and plan to complete remaining courses within a year (full time schedule). Prerequisite courses may also be taken on a part time schedule. However, once students apply to the program, they need to present a plan to complete remaining prerequisite courses and undergraduate requirements within one year. Students with a minimum of 90 undergraduate credits can apply to the Occupational Therapy Master's Program for provisional acceptance up to one year in advance of entry into the program. The Bachelor's degree must be completed prior to progression into the Master's Program. Students who have extensive work or life experience may be eligible to apply for life achievement credits for elective courses for this degree.

Program Application Components:

- A. Applications are accepted for consideration of **early admission between June 15th and August 10th**, one year prior to the fall for which the student would begin the occupational therapy program. During early admission, up to a maximum of 70% of the spots in the program may be filled. **Regular admission applications will be accepted between October 1st and December 10th**. If places remain in the program after January 20th, when all admission decisions have been made, applications will continue to be accepted on a first come basis until all places in the program have been filled. **A maximum of thirty (30) students will be accepted.**
- B. Students who have not completed 4 pre-requisites at the time of applications will have their admission decision deferred until they have completed a minimum of 4 pre-requisites. The grades from pre-requisites courses will be considered in the admission decision process.
- C. Three references on the Mercy College Occupational Therapy Recommendation Form must be submitted (one from an occupational therapist or work supervisor, one from faculty of a prerequisite course, and one professional reference). The recommendations must be recent (**not over six months old**). Each reference should be in sealed envelopes with the reference's signature over the seal.
- D. A two-page typewritten personal goal statement regarding why the applicant has chosen occupational therapy as a career must be submitted.
- E. A current resume of professional and educational experiences must be submitted.
- F. Official transcripts from all colleges attended must be submitted.
- G. A plan for completing the remaining prerequisite courses prior to beginning the Occupational Therapy Program (maximum of one-year period) must be submitted.
- H. All qualified applicants will be invited to attend an evening roundtable discussion with Program faculty. The early decision discussion will be held on **Thursday, September 13, 2007 at 4:00 pm**. The regular decision discussion will be held on **Wednesday, December 5, 2007 at 4:00 pm**. This will be an opportunity for applicants to ask questions about the program and for faculty to become acquainted with applicants who have not taken a class taught by the OT Program faculty.

Schedule an appointment with a representative of the Occupational Therapy Program to learn more about our program and the occupational therapy profession. An Occupational Therapy advisor will review your unofficial transcripts and will make a personal program plan for completing prerequisite courses. A telephone appointment may be scheduled for students who live at a distance. We strongly recommend that you talk with an Occupational Therapy advisor before taking prerequisite courses. Information about our weekend Master of Science Program in Occupational Therapy may be obtained by contacting the Occupational Therapy Program at (914) 674-7822 or (914) 674-7815 or by email at otprogram@mercy.edu. We also invite you to visit our Web site at http://www.mercy.edu/acadivisions/healthprofessions/grad/occupational_therapy.cfm.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY CHOOSE MERCY'S PROGRAM?

- Innovative weekend program
- Hands on experiences within the clinic and classroom
- Small class size and a supportive learning environment
- Nationally recognized faculty
- Excellent employer ratings of graduates
- Reputation of the program and Mercy's graduates in clinical settings

IN WHAT SEQUENCE SHOULD SCIENCE COURSES BE TAKEN?

Only two science courses can be taken simultaneously. BIOL 161 General Biology II, (or approved General Biology courses, including BIOL 130 and 131 Anatomy and Physiology I and II, with a vertebrate dissection), is the first science course that should be taken because it is a prerequisite for HLSC 302 Pathology for Rehabilitation, and BIOL 303 Anatomy with Cadaver. HLSC 314 Clinical Kinesiology and Applied Physics, should ideally be taken the semester following BIOL 303 Anatomy with Cadaver, or as a co-requisite to BIOL 303. The remaining science prerequisite is HLSC 410 Applied Neuroscience for the Rehabilitation Professional. Students can take this course simultaneously with HLSC 314 Clinical Kinesiology and Applied Physics.

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY FOR ENTRY INTO THE SEPTEMBER 2008 CLASS?

Applications for entry into the Graduate OT program for September, 2008 may be submitted beginning July 1, 2007. Early admissions applications will be accepted between June 15th and August 10th. Regular admissions applications will be accepted between October 1st and December 10th. In the 2005-2006 admissions period, 85% of the 2006 class slots were filled by January 1st. Selection became extremely competitive after that date. Students are encouraged to submit their applications early.

WHAT IS THE ADMISSION DECISION BASED ON?

The final admission decision is based upon a combination of your grade point average, presentation during the interview, letters of recommendation and written essays. Students with incomplete prerequisite courses are admitted on the condition that they complete the remaining prerequisite courses at *Mercy College* with a grade of C or better and a minimum GPA of 3.0. All prerequisite courses must be completed prior to entering the Program.

IS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE REQUIRED? Volunteer experience is encouraged, but not required. The Overview of Occupational Therapy Practice course is required, and will help students gain an appreciation of the scope of occupational therapy practice, as well as the diversity of clients and disabilities encountered in the profession. This course has been developed to help students learn more about a career in occupational therapy, and is designed to prepare students to enter the Mercy College Graduate Occupational Therapy Program.

IS THE PROGRAM CONSIDERED TO BE PART-TIME?

No. Although courses are scheduled on weekends, the program involves a full-time graduate load of 9 to 11 credits per semester or 30 credits per year (total = 60 credits). Students are not allowed to take a reduced credit load because the courses on each weekend are designed to be taken simultaneously.

WHEN ARE COURSES HELD?

The graduate courses are generally scheduled every other weekend. See the last page for the curriculum sequence and schedule. Prerequisite courses are offered on the weekends and/or evenings.

ARE ALL COURSES HELD AT THE DOBBS FERRY CAMPUS?

The Occupational Therapy Program is offered at the Dobbs Ferry campus only. Classes are held in Hudson Hall. In the first year of the program, students attend some class sessions held at Blythedale Children's Hospital, New York Presbyterian Hospital in White Plains and Burke Rehabilitation Center. In the second year of the program, students attend some class sessions at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, Kings Harbor Multicare Center and Pascack Valley Hospital.

WHAT ARE THE WEEKENDS LIKE?

The weekend format is an intense learning experience. The amount of information covered in one weekend is equivalent to that covered in 4-5 classes in a traditional program. The weekend involves a mixture of lecture and discussion, small group problem solving, and active hands-on practice. Several clinicians, with expertise in a particular area of practice, are usually scheduled to make guest presentations during each weekend.

CAN I SPEAK WITH STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM TO GAIN THEIR PERSPECTIVE?

Yes. Many of our current students and alumni have volunteered to speak to prospective students about our program. Please call or email the Occupational Therapy Program advisor (otprogram@mercy.edu) for the student/alumni contact sheet.

WHAT TYPE OF STUDENT IS WELL-SUITED FOR A WEEKEND PROGRAM?

The program is well suited for the adult learner who is motivated, self-directed and takes charge of his/her own learning. A weekend program requires strong self-initiation and the ability to organize, structure and manage one's time efficiently. A great deal of independent learning is necessary between classes to keep up with the coursework. Strong library database search skills are a prerequisite for success. The program also incorporates a problem-based learning approach where students work within groups to investigate and explore different clinical issues within the context of case scenarios; this requires the ability to work successfully as a team player.

DO STUDENTS WORK FULL-TIME?

It is recommended that students work a maximum of 25 hours per week. The program involves a full-time graduate course load, even though classes are scheduled on weekends. Students are required to attend Fieldwork Level I sites 7-8 weekdays each fall and spring semester (see fieldwork requirements).

WHAT ARE THE FIELDWORK REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM?

Students are required to spend one weekday in an assigned clinic for approximately 7-8 weeks during each fall and spring semester. In addition, the equivalents of two 3-month full-time, unpaid, fieldwork experiences are required (total 24 weeks). They are usually done at the completion of coursework. Modifications of the Level II fieldwork experiences, such as one part time (i.e., 3 day a week schedule) or placement in 3 practice sites (e.g., 12 weeks in physical disabilities, 8 weeks in pediatrics, and 8 weeks in mental health) may be possible depending on a student's grade point average, work schedule and availability of fieldwork sites with contracts with Mercy College. Part time fieldwork experiences will lengthen the time needed to complete the program but for some students offer the opportunity to balance educational requirements with work or family responsibilities. Specialty or 3rd affiliations are offered in focused areas such as hand rehabilitation or pediatric early intervention after the student completes the basic fieldwork experiences. Every attempt will be made to assign the student to placements that are sequentially scheduled. In some circumstances, students may have a 1-3 month break between fieldwork experiences. The fieldwork experiences are arranged through the Associate Director of Clinical Education, and are generally scheduled during the week, not the weekend. NOTE: Some fieldwork assignments may be a distance from the student's home, thus requiring significant travel and/or the need for housing accommodations. Students are responsible for the cost of travel and accommodations. Every attempt will be made to schedule fieldwork within commutable distance from your home. All fieldwork requirements must be completed within 24 months of the completion of coursework.

IS A MASTER'S THESIS REQUIRED?

A research project is required. Students work in small groups with faculty and/or experienced clinicians in collaborative research teams. Many of the projects are clinically oriented and continue from one year to the next. Students may sign up for an ongoing project or propose an independent project. Students meet with their teams monthly throughout the second year. Approximately 10 hours of independent work is required per month; depending on the project, this may include data collection in a clinic.

ARE THERE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE?

Students accepted into the Graduate OT Program are eligible to apply for scholarships with the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). These scholarships award 1 year of full tuition with an agreement for a minimum of 24 months employment with the NYCDOE upon graduation. Students interested in receiving information and an application should call the NYCDOE Office of Related and Contractual Services at 212-374-1081. Some health care facilities offer scholarships that require employment agreements upon graduation. The American Occupational Therapy Association also offers scholarships; information may be obtained by calling (301) 652-2682. Mercy College also offers graduate assistantships to eligible students. These assistantships provide full tuition in exchange for a weekly work commitment. In addition, the Mercy College OT Program frequently has scholarship funds available for distribution from private foundations and governmental grants.

HOW DO I GET INFORMATION ON FINDING A VOLUNTEER OR PAID JOB IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

Visit the Career Development Center in Room 110 at the Dobbs Ferry Campus and ask about the Cooperative Education Program. With the help of a counselor, you can locate a position in an occupational therapy setting and earn 3-6 credits in a related Cooperative Education course. Contact Patience Chipamaunga at (914) 674-7660. The Occupational Therapy Program also has a list of facilities where you can volunteer (email otprogram@mercy.edu).

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL EXPENSES THAT I WILL INCUR?

The faculty attempts to select books that can be used during several semesters, and during your first year of practice. Books for the first semester cost approximately \$400 dollars. During other semesters the average is \$300. There are additional expenses related to the fieldwork component of the Program: students must have their immunization titer values taken, (can be as high as \$300), an annual physical, and TB test. Professional malpractice insurance, (less than \$40 dollars/year), is required, as is an annual CPR certification course. Some fieldwork sites may require a background check and fingerprints (approximately \$80).

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL SKILLS THAT ARE RECOMMENDED PRIOR TO ENTERING THE PROGRAM?

Yes. Due to the number of written assignments required throughout the program, students need to demonstrate proficiency in writing. In addition, computer experience in word processing, knowledge of the Internet, and an e-mail address are helpful. Familiarity with the Library Computer Search system, Medline and Psych Abstracts are necessary to complete assignments. The college library system can be accessed through a home computer equipped with a modem. Students may contact instructors through e-mail. CPR certification is required before beginning fieldwork.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT STUDENTS DURING THE PROGRAM?

The college provides tutors for the Occupational Therapy Program through the Tutoring Center. In addition, the Writing Lab offers assistance with writing assignments and with developing and giving presentations. Throughout the program, the faculty may schedule review sessions.

IS THE PROGRAM ACCREDITED?

The Occupational Therapy Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, P.O. Box 31220, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220. ACOTE's phone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA; email is www.aota.org. Graduates of the Occupational Therapy Program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination of the occupational therapist administered by the National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure. When you apply to sit for the certification examination with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT), you will be asked to answer questions related to the topic of felonies. For further information on these limitations, you can contact NBCOT at: National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, 800 S. Frederick Avenue, Suite 200, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-4150 or via telephone at (301) 990-7979.

Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy Curriculum Sequence

FIRST YEAR

FALL SEMESTER (Friday 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)		
OCTR500	Models in Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OCTR505	Childhood and Occupational Therapy Practice	5
OCTR506	Level 1 Fieldwork in Pediatrics	1
OCTR507	Problem Based Learning in Pediatrics	1
OCTR503	Applied Research	1
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SPRING SEMESTER (Friday 6:00 - 8:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)		
OCTR510	Adolescence and Occupational Therapy Practice	5
OCTR511	Level 1 Fieldwork with Adolescent Clients	1
OCTR512	Problem Based Learning in Adolescent Health	1
OCTR515	Occupational Therapy Assessment & Treatment I - Peds and Adolescence	3
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SUMMER SEMESTER (Saturdays and Sundays 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.)		
OCTR516	Occupational Therapy Assessment & Treatment II - Assistive Technology	3
OCTR517	Occupational Therapy Assessment & Treatment III – Splinting	1
OCTR525	Quantitative & Qualitative Research Methods for Occupational Therapy	3
OCTR600	Clinical Research Colloquium I	2

SECOND YEAR

FALL SEMESTER (Friday 6:00 - 8:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)		
OCTR605	Adulthood and Occupational Therapy Practice	5
OCTR606	Level 1 Fieldwork in Adult Physical Disabilities	1
OCTR607	Problem Based Learning in Adult Health	1
OCTR610	Occupational Therapy Assessment & Treatment IV - Adults	3
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SPRING SEMESTER (Friday 6:00 - 8:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)		
OCTR601	Clinical Research Colloquium II (meets once a month throughout the 2nd year)	1
OCTR615	Geriatrics and Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OCTR616	Level 1 Fieldwork with Older Adult Clients	1
OCTR617	Problem Based Learning in Adolescent Health	1
OCTR619	Occupational Therapy Assessment & Treatment V – Cognition & Occupation	2
OCTR620	Occupational Therapy Management & Leadership	3
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SUMMER SEMESTER (hours arranged at Fieldwork Site)		
OCTR623	Clinical Education II - first placement	4
OCTR602	Clinical Research Colloquium III	1
OCTR625	Clinical Education II – second placement	4
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FALL SEMESTER (hours arranged at Fieldwork Site)		
OCTR626	Clinical Education II – Continuation (for students whose fieldwork extends into the fall semester)	0

Total of 60 Credits