



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET – 2021- 2022

In the health care profession, the **Occupational Therapy Assistant** supports clients in achieving their maximum level of function following life challenges such as a birth injury, stroke, car accident, mental illness, or other major medical events. Occupational therapy assistants work under the supervision of occupational therapists in various rehabilitation settings in order to improve the quality of life of their clients.

**Job Information:** The most current national salary survey was completed by the US Dept. of Labor in May 2020. The median annual wage of occupational therapy assistants was reported to be **\$61,500**, with a median hourly wage of \$29.5 (New York- \$63.200). Employment of occupational therapy assistants is projected to grow 35% from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the average for all occupations. Please refer to the US Dept. of Labor link below for further information: <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes312011.htm#st>

The *US News and World Report* reported in May 2020 that Occupational Therapy Assistant is now the best paid profession in Health Care support. Please see the following link for more salary, career and job satisfaction information: <http://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/occupational-therapy-assistant>

**The Program:** This two-year Associate in Applied Science Degree is a full or part-time evening and weekend program designed to prepare its graduates to apply for certification and licensure as an occupational therapy assistant and to practice as an entry level generalist. The program teaches its students to develop skills to successfully work in a variety of health care settings including hospitals, rehabilitation centers, schools, mental health facilities, and community centers.

OTA students participate in Medical Missions, are active participants with the state and national professional associations, as well with the program's student professional association- Student Occupational Therapy Assistant Association (SOTA).

### Fieldwork

There are two levels of fieldwork experiences that are required in the program:

- Level I: (Two) 21 hour placements completed during the fall and spring semesters.
- Level II: (Two) 8 -10-week placements after all courses are completed.

**\*\*Fieldwork Level II placements must be successfully completed within 18 months of the completion of all academic course work.**

**Acceptance Criteria** - *To be accepted into the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program on a Full Time or Part Time Basis, a student must:*

- Be admitted to Mercy College as an undergraduate student and have a college-wide ID (CWID) number.
- Submit official transcripts from all high schools and colleges to the Mercy College Admission Office.
- Have a minimum grade point average (**GPA**) of **2.75**
- Place at the English 111 level.
- Complete a personal interview with the OTA Program Director or OTA faculty.
- Complete the OTA Program application and a written on-site essay at the time of the interview.

- Submit a résumé of professional, educational, and volunteer experiences, if appropriate.
- Submit official transcripts from all colleges attended.
- Complete a written plan for completion of remaining pre-requisite courses, using the Prerequisite Checklist to indicate courses taken, courses to be completed along with dates of expected completion.
- Submit **TWO** references on the **required** Mercy College OTA Recommendation Form. Preferably, one recommendation should be from an occupational therapy assistant or an occupational therapist, work supervisor or an instructor of a prerequisite course. Recommendations must be current (not older than 6 months). References must be received by the deadline for admission, via email, or in person (within two weeks from the virtual interview).

#### **Acceptance Procedure:**

1. Prospective students are required to meet with the PACT Advisor for evaluation of transfer credits prior to submitting an application to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.
2. All candidates for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program *must first be admitted into Mercy College*. Perspective students should complete the Application for admissions to Mercy College available online and should indicate Occupational Therapy Assistant as their area of interest.
3. General information regarding eligibility is available online or from the Admissions Office, Mercy College OTA Program website, or the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Office at the Dobbs Ferry Campus.
4. Selected applicants will be invited to interview with representatives of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Admissions Committee at which time an onsite writing essay will be required.
5. Each applicant's records will be presented to the Admission Committee of the program. The final acceptance into the program decision is based on a combination of GPA, references, interview, and written work. Candidates will be notified as to their **acceptance** into the Occupational Therapy Assistant and the dates of mandatory orientation in August. All acceptances will be provisional, based on successful completion of all pre-requisite minimum course requirements.
6. Acceptance may be deferred up to one admission cycle under extenuating circumstances. The student must submit a written request for deferral and supporting documentation to the Program. The Program Director and Admission Committee will review the request and notify the student of the decision.

#### **Evaluation**

- **Admission is based on a preference for applicants who have a GPA of 3.0 or above.**
- Admission decisions are based on a composite numerical score/ranking of the applicant's GPA, interview, essay and recommendations.
- Decision letters will be mailed to applicants within two weeks from the virtual interview.
- The number of students accepted to the program is limited to a max of 35 students each year.

**Admission to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Mercy College (professional program) is extremely competitive; completion of the application requirements and formal interview does not guarantee admission.**

#### **Exceptions**

- Transfer credit will be granted only for those pre-requisite courses with a grade of C or higher.  
**\*\*Please note: The Anatomy pre-requisite courses must have been taken within the last 5 years.**
- Students who are admitted to the program and have a cumulative GPA less than 3.0 will be admitted on a **conditional** basis.

- All admitted students **must** maintain at least a minimum 2.75 GPA or better within the major courses at the end of their first semester (fulltime students) and in their first two semesters (part-time students). Any student falling below a 2.75 GPA within the major, will need to repeat any/all courses before going into FW II. A faculty review with a remedial plan will be put in place. The plan will identify areas of academic weakness, and results from any competency exams. Remedial plans will be reviewed/approved by the Program Director. Such a plan must have clear objectives with deadlines for achievement.

**Deadlines for application:**

1. **March 31<sup>st</sup> for Fall semester**
  2. **October 31<sup>st</sup> for Spring semester**
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**Why Should I Choose Mercy College's OTA Program?**

**THIS IS THE PREMIER APPLIED ASSOCIATES OF SCIENCE PROGRAM in the metropolitan NEW YORK Area.**

**Designed for the Working Adult**

The program is designed for the adult learner with multiple responsibilities who is seeking a career change or has identified a desire to enter the field of occupational therapy.

**The Evening Schedule on the Dobbs Ferry Campus**

Classes are held three evenings (Mon, Wed, and Thursday) a week from 6:15-9:05 pm and one evening (Tuesday's) from 5:00-9:00 pm. Additionally, there are three full weekend lab days (either scheduled for Saturday or Sunday) each semester.

**The Faculty**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program has doctoral and Master's prepared faculty with expertise in their respective teaching subjects. The faculty is recognized for their achievements in the field of occupational therapy.

**Health Professionals clinical simulation and learning labs**

Mercy College now has an invaluable tool in the 12,000 square-foot Health Professions Clinical Simulation and learning labs. The space consists of several specialized labs designed to simulate different disciplines within health care facility. The labs are inter-professional and are used by many programs in the School of Health and Natural Sciences and are divided into four different areas.

- Clinical skills and Simulation Labs
- Movement Lab
- Health Assessment Lab
- Home Health Lab

## Accreditation Information:



Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education

The Mercy College Occupational Therapy Assistant program is accredited by the [Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education \(ACOTE\)](#) of the [American Occupational Therapy Association \(AOTA\)](#), located 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. ACOTE's phone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA.

Graduates of the Occupational Therapy Assistant program are eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the [National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy \(NBCOT\)](#). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). 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.



For further information on these limitations, you can contact NBCOT at National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, One Bank Street, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20878- (301) 990-7979. Applicants are also encouraged to contact the State Board of Occupational Therapy in the state they anticipate practicing to investigate any limitations.

## Employment Potential

In 2019, 75% of the graduates from the program who sought OTA positions found employment in less than three months of graduation. Many graduates are offered employment at the facilities where they had completed one of their fieldwork experiences.

## Academic Advancement Potential

Graduates of the program have the opportunity to advance their education at Mercy College by pursuing a Bachelor's degree. After completing a bachelor's degree, graduates who meet the criteria can apply to the Mercy College Master's Degree Program in OT.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

**Q.** Where can I obtain more information about the program?

**A)** Call the OTA Program directly at 914-674-7833

- E-mail the program at: [otaprogram@mercy.edu](mailto:otaprogram@mercy.edu)
- Mercy College web-site link –<https://www.mercy.edu/degrees-programs/aas-occupational-therapy-assistant>

**Q.** How can I apply to the OTA Program?

**A)** After being admitted to Mercy College, contact the OTA Program regarding the application and interview procedure. Deadlines are March 31 for Fall semester and October 31 for Spring semester admission. Interviews are held in October (for Spring semester) and March (for Fall semester).

**Q.** What is the admission decision based on?

**A)** The final decision is based on a composite scoring and then ranking of your grade point average, presentation during the interview, letters of recommendation, and on-site essay.

**Q.** How long is the Program?

**A)** It depends on your situation, regarding previous degrees and/or transfer credits. The program can take as long as 2+ years to finish the coursework if a student does not have any previous college credits. After the coursework is completed, there are two full-time 8 to 10-week fieldwork experiences.

**Q.** Is there a national board exam required?

**A)** Upon completion of all courses/fieldwork, students will be eligible to sit for The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam (as an OTA).

**\*\*Licensure requirements vary from state-to-state.**

**SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR THE CURRICULUM SEQUENCE AND A LISTING OF ALL REQUIRED COURSES.**

## Curriculum Sequence and Required Courses \* New for AY 2021-2022

### General Education Requirements:

BIOL 130	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	3 credits
BIOL 130A	Human Anatomy & Physiology I Lab	1 credit
<i>BIOL 131</i>	<i>Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology II</i>	<i>3 credits</i>
<i>BIOL 131A</i>	<i>Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology II Lab</i>	<i>1 credit</i>
ENGL 111	Written English & Literature Studies I	3 credits
ENGL 112	Written English & Literature Studies II	3 credits
MATH 116	College Algebra	3 credits
PSYN 101	Intro. to Psychology	3 credits
SPCM 110	Oral Communications	3 credits
SOCL 101	Intro. to Sociology	3 credits
General Education Requirements.....		<b><u>26 credits</u></b>

\* Anatomy pre-requisite courses must have been taken within the last five years.

### Health Science Requirements:

HLSC 205	Standard Safety Precautions for the Healthcare Professions	1 credit
HLSC 210	Overview of OT Practice	1 credit
HLSC 225	Intro. To Health Professions Literature & Scientific Writing	1 credit
Health Science Requirements.....		<b><u>3 credits</u></b>
Total Requirements.....		<b><u>29 credits</u></b>

### Major Concentration Courses - Occupational Therapy Assistant:

#### Fall

OCTR 201	OT Practice for the Assistant: An Overview	3 credits
OCTR 204	OT Practice for the Assistant: Medical Conditions	3 credits
OCTR 203	OT Practice for the Assistant: Therapeutic Modalities I	3 credits
OCTR 260	OT Practice for the Assistant: Childhood & Adolescence	6 credits
OCTR 260A*	OT Practice for the Assistant: Level I Fieldwork	1 credit

\*The course builds upon the material learned in OCTR 260

#### Spring

OCTR 218	OT Practice for the Assistant: Interaction Skills	3 credits
OCTR 206	OT Practice for the Assistant: Therapeutic Modalities II	3 credits
OCTR 207	OT Practice for the Assistant: Synopsis	3 credits
OCTR 214	OT Practice for the Assistant: Adulthood & Maturity	6 credits
OCTR 214A*	OT Practice for the Assistant: Level I Fieldwork	1 credit

\*The course builds upon the material learned in OCTR 214

#### Fieldwork Level II (after all coursework is completed):

OCTR 209	OT Practice for the Assistant: Advanced Clinical Education I	3 credits
OCTR 210	OT Practice for the Assistant: Advanced Clinical Education II	3 credits
<i>OCTR 211</i>	<i>Professional Development Seminar</i>	<i>1 credit</i>

Major Concentration: OTA.....**39 credits**

**Total Credits for Degree Completion .....68 credits**