



Occupational Therapy Curriculum Design / Structure

The domain of occupational therapy is broad in scope, and includes knowledge and beliefs about human beings, about environments, and about the nature of occupation. Much of the foundational knowledge important in the domain of occupational therapy is addressed through the basic requirement for a baccalaureate degree, which includes a broad spectrum of liberal arts coursework coupled with specific major and related coursework. In addition, specific pre-requisite course requirements include:

On the Nature of Humans:

- Human Anatomy and Physiology, I and II (8 credits)
- General Psychology (3 credits)
- Human Development (life-span) (3 credits)
- Abnormal Psychology (3 credits)
- Gross (musculoskeletal) Anatomy (3-4 credits)
- Neuroanatomy/Neurophysiology (3-4 credits)

On the Nature of Environments:

- Anthropology or Sociology (with a multicultural theme) (3 credits)
- Physics or Physical Science (including the laws of mechanics) (3 credits)

In addition, other skills are needed for successful engagement in graduate study, so additional courses required for admission to the program include:

- Statistics
- Research (survey or foundations course in health care or behavioral science)
- English (including writing)

The required coursework in the degree program extends the focus on the domain of occupational therapy through exploration of the nature of occupation (which includes concepts about humans, environments, specific conditions, and about the human/environment interaction), and covers the process of occupational therapy: the roles, skills, and functions of the occupational therapist in a variety of service delivery contexts. Occupation- and client-centered, theory-driven, evidence-based practice is the focus of program instruction.

The program follows a developmental process model consistent with the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (AOTA, 2014). Courses are presented in sequence, with early courses providing a foundation for following courses. As a general rule, foundational work focuses on the domain of occupational therapy; focus progresses to occupational therapy processes, then explores various roles of occupational therapists and considers context of delivery systems and client populations.

The following courses (presented in sequence) are required:

Fall, Year 1:

- OTH 6002 Occupational Therapy History and Foundations
- OTH 6751C Occupational Therapy Research
- OTH 6536C Occupational Performance Issues I
- OTH 6605C Occupational Performance Issues II
- OTH 6415C Human Motion in Activity

Spring, Year 1:

- OTH 6226C Evaluation of Occupational Performance Issues I
- OTH 6235C Occupational Therapy Interventions I
- OTH 6523C Practice with Children
- OTH 6018 Professional Practice
- OTH 6840 Level I Fieldwork A
- OTH 6325C Practice in Behavioral Health

Summer, Year 1:

- OTH 6707 Management and Supervision in Occupational Therapy
- OTH 6026C Group Process and Management
- OTH 6009 Theory in Occupational Therapy
- OTH 6973C Project Implementation
- OTH6854 Level I Fieldwork B

Fall, Year 2:

- OTH 6436C Adult Upper Extremity Rehabilitation
- OTH 6910 Directed Study
- OTH 6106C Technology in Practice
- OTH 6725 Community Practice Seminar
- OTH 6855 Level I Fieldwork C

Spring and Summer, Year 2:

- OTH 6845 Level II Fieldwork A
- OTH 6846 Level II Fieldwork B

The first semester coursework focuses on further specific foundational knowledge, but begins introducing concepts regarding occupational therapy process, roles, and context. These foundational courses all support learning in subsequent courses.

Second semester courses primarily focus on occupational therapy processes, including evaluation, intervention planning and implementation, documentation, and outcomes assessment. Topics within the courses may also venture into issues of role and/or context. Level IA fieldwork allows students to observe occupational therapy processes in context, and to practice some of the skills they have developed in class.

In the third semester, students continue with process topics, but many more role- and context-relevant topics are addressed. Their skills with group process are enhanced and they have exposure to both group leadership and psycho-social fieldwork (Level IB fieldwork).

The fourth (last didactic) semester focuses primarily on role and context topics (Community Practice Seminar and Level IC Fieldwork), though two of the courses (Management and Supervision, and Technology in Practice) also incorporate some domain and significant elements of process within them.

Level II fieldwork (fifth semester) provides the capstone experience in which students pull together information to apply it in the practice context, and to develop fully into the professional role.