Occupational Therapy

Degree Offered

- Master of Occupational Therapy

Introduction

In the fall of 1993, the West Virginia Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a new master’s degree program at WVU, leading to an entry-level master’s degree in occupational therapy. WVU accepted its first students into the professional program in the fall semester of 1996. The academic and fieldwork program requires three years to complete. Prior to application, students are required to complete approximately fifty to fifty-five hours of prerequisite courses, which in most instances will take two years to fulfill.

The Profession of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is a health profession which provides services to people of all ages with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities. The purpose of occupational therapy is to help individuals achieve a maximum level of independence. The focus is on developing the capacity to function in all activities (occupations) of daily life, including self-care, work, and leisure. Hence the name occupational therapy.

Occupational therapy is a health and rehabilitation profession designed to help people regain and build skills that are important for health, well-being, security, and happiness.

Occupational therapists work with people of all ages who, because of physical, developmental, social, or emotional deficits, need specialized assistance in learning skills to enable them to lead independent, productive, and satisfying lives.

Occupational therapists work in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, home health agencies, skilled nursing homes, and private practice.

Accreditation Status

WVU’s Division of Occupational Therapy has been granted accreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, M.D. 20814-3449. ACOTE’s phone number, c/o AOTA, is (301) 652-AOTA. The OT program at WVU was initially awarded accreditation in 1998 and awarded re-accreditation in 2003. The next scheduled onsite visit for accreditation will be in 2013. ACOTE information may be accessed at www.acoteonline.org.

Graduates of the program are able to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy Inc. (NBCOT). For more information, NBCOT can be contacted at (301) 990-7979 or at http://www.nbcot.org. After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an occupational therapist, registered (OTR). Most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note: A felony conviction may impact a graduate’s ability to take the NBCOT examination and/or obtain a state license. For further information on NBCOT’s Character Review Program, interested parties can obtain information from that board or their website.

Note: The following list of prerequisite courses requirements is subject to change without notice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 101</td>
<td>Composition And Rhetoric</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 102</td>
<td>Composition And Rhetoric</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 241</td>
<td>Intro to Human Development</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 281</td>
<td>Intro to Abnormal Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCA 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>or SOCA 105</td>
<td>Introduction to Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 101</td>
<td>General Biology</td>
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<td>&amp; BIOL 103</td>
<td>and General Biology Laboratory</td>
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<td>and General Biology Laboratory</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHYS 101</td>
<td>Introductory Physics `</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSIO 241</td>
<td>Elementary Physiology `</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>or PSIO 441</td>
<td>Mechanisms Body Function</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 211</td>
<td>Elemntry Statistical Inference `</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 100</td>
<td>Principles-Human Communication</td>
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</table>
Level II Fieldwork. Students are financially responsible for transportation, housing, and meal expenses related to clinical assignments. Students in the practice as administered across a wide variety of settings. The professional curriculum includes two off-campus, full-time clinical experiences known as professional year, which begins in the summer, will include courses in basic sciences relevant to the profession and practice of occupational therapy and performance science.

Like many professional programs, the curriculum in the entry-level master’s occupational therapy program is fairly fixed and intense. The first semester includes one three-credit course in each of the following objectives: 3, 5, 8, and 9 plus the one-credit university orientation.

Note: Applicants holding a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution are exempt from the GEC requirement.

Fulfillment of WVU’s General Education Curriculum (GEC) are not covered by the above. Students/applicants must complete all of the WVU General Education and all OT Prerequisite requirements (by June 1) prior to starting the OT Program.

(See the WVU Undergraduate Catalog)

These include one three-credit course in each of the following objectives: 3, 5, 8, and 9 plus the one-credit university orientation.

WVU students must consult the university college prior to enrolling in prerequisite courses. These courses may be taken at any institution which offers equivalent courses. Any questions regarding pre-requisite courses may be directed to the university college, (304) 293-5805, and/or the Division of Occupational Therapy (304) 293-8828. Equivalence may be determined by contacting the Transfer Desk, Admissions Office, West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6009, Morgantown, WV 26506-6009.

Admission Standards

Normally, students apply to the program during their second year of college. They must have a minimum of fifty to fifty-five hours of college credit which includes the prerequisites listed previously. Students who already have a degree in another field are also eligible to apply. All applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum GPA of 3.0, including overall GPA and prerequisite GPA, is normally required (a higher GPA may be necessary given the competitive nature of the program).

- Minimum of sixty hours of volunteer experience with a licensed occupational therapist (Students should contact the Division of Occupational Therapy to determine the type of experience required. Students should keep a record of dates/hours, locations, and name of supervising occupational therapist. Forms to record volunteer experience can be found online at http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/som/ot.)

- Two recommendations are also required: one from an occupational therapist who supervised the volunteer/work experience and the other from a college/university professor who has recently taught the applicant. These recommendation forms are included in the application packet.

- Completion of all prerequisite courses by the end of the semester of application (normally, second semester of sophomore year) is required.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Those students applying to the OT Program in the November 15, 2013 through February 15, 2014 application period will not be considered in the application review process if they are taking more than ten credit hours of OT prerequisite coursework in the 2014 Spring semester. For example, applicants may take one four-credit-hour OT prerequisite course plus two three-credit-hour OT prerequisite courses which total ten credits of OT prerequisite coursework. On the other hand, applicants may not be taking any combination of OT prerequisite courses which totals more than ten credit hours; for example, an applicant taking two four-credit-hour OT prerequisite courses plus one three-credit-hour OT prerequisite course would be taking a total of eleven credit-hours of OT prerequisites in the Spring 2014 semester and would not be considered for admission into the OT Program. This requirement does not apply to courses which are not OT prerequisite courses; students may take as many non-OT prerequisite courses as they choose. Students are strongly urged to contact the Division of OT for clarification or if they have any questions on this requirement.

- For those students applying in the November 15, 2014 through February 15, 2015 application period, all but a maximum of two OT prerequisite courses must be fully completed by close of the application period (typically February 15). Thus, applicants who are taking three or more OT prerequisite courses in the Spring 2015 semester will not be considered for acceptance into the OT Program. Applicants must plan on taking no more than two OT prerequisite courses in the 2015 Spring semester prior to the 2015 summer start of the Program for which they are applying. This requirement does not apply to WVU non-OT prerequisite general education (GEC) course requirements. Note: Courses with a required lab, including those courses that have labs with a separate course number, may be considered one course for purposes of this requirement, i.e., a course plus its lab equal one course. Students are strongly urged to contact the Division of OT for clarification or if they have any questions on this requirement.

Application forms are available online on the program homepage at www.hsc.wvu.edu/som/ot. Questions regarding application materials may be directed to The Division of OT at (304) 293-8828 or to the OT Program Academic Advisor at (304) 293-1690. Application materials are traditionally available November 15 through February 15. The deadline for submission of application materials is typically February 15. The official deadline will be posted on the occupational therapy website and printed in the admissions packet.

Course information for the master of occupational therapy degree can be found on the following website: http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/som/ot.

What to Expect

Like many professional programs, the curriculum in the entry-level master’s occupational therapy program is fairly fixed and intense. The first professional year, which begins in the summer, will include courses in basic sciences relevant to the profession and practice of occupational therapy and introductory professional courses. The second and third professional years will deal more specifically with training in occupational therapy theory and practice as administered across a wide variety of settings. The professional curriculum includes two off-campus, full-time clinical experiences known as Level II Fieldwork. Students are financially responsible for transportation, housing, and meal expenses related to clinical assignments. Students in the
program are required to participate in the School of Medicine's laptop computer purchase lease-to-own program, which provides each student with a state-of-the-art computer that contains course and program-relevant software.

Students in the OT Program must complete all didactic coursework and all fieldwork within a period of five years after commencing the occupational therapy program. Furthermore, all Level II Fieldwork must be completed within eighteen months following completion of academic coursework while remaining within the five-year time frame.

Faculty
Chair
• Randy P. McCombie - Ph.D., OTR/L (Loyola University of Chicago)
  Chair, Program Director - Associate Professor
Associate Professors
• Anne Cronin - Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA (University of Florida)
  Associate Professor
• Stephen D. Wheeler - Ph.D., OTR/L (Virginia Commonwealth University)
  Associate Professor
Assistant Professors
• Amanda Acord-Vira - M.O.T., OTR/L (West Virginia University)
  Assistant Professor
• Amanda Kessler - M.S., OTR/L (West Virginia University)
  Assistant Professor - Fieldwork Coordinator
• Amy Burt - M.O.T., OTR/L (University of Pittsburgh)
  Assistant Professor
• Donna Colaianni - Ph.D., OTR/L (Duquesne University)
  Assistant Professor
• Diana Davis - M.A., OTR/L (West Virginia University)
  Assistant Professor
• Garth Graebe - M.O.T., OTR/L (West Virginia University)
  Assistant Professor