

Occupational Therapy School Admission—Masters or Doctorate

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The following courses meet requirements for most OT masters *and* doctoral programs. For both program types, individual school requirements may vary. Consult with schools that interest you regarding their specific requirements. As much as possible, take all required courses during the fall and/or spring semesters at URI (avoid summer or on-line courses).

STATISTICS

One semester of statistics:

- STA 307 (4 cr.)

OR

- STA 308 (4 cr.)

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

Two semester sequence with labs:

- BIO 220 & 221 Lab (3+1 cr.)
- BIO 222 & 223 Lab (3+1 cr.)

(BIO 121 & BIO 242 + 244 Lab (3+1 credits) also satisfy this requirement)

PSYCHOLOGY

Three semesters of Psychology coursework:

- PSY 113 General Psychology (3 cr.)
- PSY 232 Developmental Psychology (3 cr.)
- PSY 254 Behavior Problems and Personality Disorders (3 credits)

SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES

One semester of Sociology:

- SOC 100 (3 cr.)

Many schools require additional coursework in the humanities such as:

- PHL 212 Ethics (3 cr.)
- WRT 104 Writing to Inform and Explain (3 cr.)

PHYSICS

One semester of Physics with lab:

- PHY 111 & 185 lab (3+1 cr.)

BIOLOGY

One semester of general biology with lab:

BIO 101 or 110 & 103 Lab (3+1 cr.)

OTHER LESS COMMON REQUIREMENTS

Medical Terminology: This course is currently not offered at URI, but is generally offered at CCRI and other institutions (1-3 credits)

Chemistry: CHM 103 & 105 Lab (3+1 cr.) or CHM 101 & 102 Lab (3+1 cr.)

Neuroscience or Neuroanatomy: NEU 101 (3 cr.). Neuroscience lab may also be required by a small number of schools, which is not offered at URI.

Additional Academic Considerations

Test scores: Many OT programs require the GRE with scores at the 50th percentile or above in each section.

Grades: OT programs have minimum required GPAs, often 3.0 with grades of B, C, or higher in all required courses for admission.

Degree Level: The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) state that both master's and doctoral-level programs adequately prepare graduates to be entry-level practitioners. Additionally, there is currently *no mandate* that all OT training transition from masters to doctoral level.

EXPERIENTIAL EXPECTATIONS

Work, Volunteering, and Observation Hours

At a minimum, OT programs expect applicants to possess 100 or more hours of observation, work, and/or volunteer experience in an occupational therapy setting. Experience in multiple settings is generally required and could include:

- Skilled nursing facilities
- Rehabilitation hospitals
- Early intervention programs
- Community health centers
- Mental health facilities

Professionalism & Core Values

The OT profession has seven core values that guide their professional practice and interactions with others:

- Altruism
- Equality
- Freedom
- Justice
- Dignity
- Prudence
- Truth

For more information go to:

https://research.aota.org/ajot/article/74/Supplement_3/7413410005p1/6691/AOTA-2020-Occupational-Therapy-Code-of-Ethics

You can develop skills and abilities related to the Core Values through a wide variety of work and activities. Pre-OT students (and pre-health students in general) have participated in the following activities. We have broken these up into categories that roughly correspond to the Core Values and to what admission committees are looking for.

Note that this chart is intended to provide some examples and is not a checklist:

OT/HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE

- OT shadowing/observing-multiple settings
- Internship for credit in an OT or other care-giving setting
- Volunteer or paid work assisting people with disabilities
- Research assistant-undergraduate, any department or lab
- Regular exercise (for personal wellness)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SERVICE

- Camp counselor
- Refugee resettlement volunteer
- Best Buddies volunteer
- Women's shelter volunteer
- Crisis counselor with text line
- Food bank/pantry volunteer
- Habitat for Humanity
- Homeless shelter volunteer

LEADERSHIP AND/OR CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

- Undergraduate teaching assistant in a URI course
- Campus Club member or officer
- Pre-health ambassador
- Resident assistant in URI residence halls
- Student pre-health club officer and/or member
- Varsity athletics
- Club sports

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER—ACADEMIC OR EXTRACURRICULAR

- Honors program, including an honors project
- Orientation leader
- Peer tutoring, Academic Enhancement Center
- Cross-cultural, e.g., study abroad, courses or research related to culture and health or other cultures in general, learning a foreign language, Seeds of Success, Women in STEM