Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) School Admission

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The following courses meet requirements for most OT programs, though individual school requirements may vary. We recommend consulting with schools that interest you regarding additional requirements. Take all required courses during the fall and/or spring semesters at URI (not summer or on-line).

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<tr>
<th>COURSE AREA</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BIOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>One semester of general biology with lab:</td>
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<td>• BIO 101 &amp; 103 Lab (3+1 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ANATOMY &amp; PHYSIOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>Two semester sequence with labs:</td>
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<td>• BIO 220 &amp; 221 Lab (3+1 credits)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• BIO 222 &amp; 223 Lab (3+1 credits)</td>
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<td>(BIO 121 &amp; BIO 242 + 244 Lab (3+1 credits) also satisfy this requirement)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>Three semesters of Psychology coursework:</td>
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<td>• PSY 113 General Psychology (3 credits)</td>
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<td>• PSY 232 Developmental Psychology (3 credits)</td>
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<td>Pre-req. PSY 113</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• PSY 254 Behavior Problems and Personality Disorders (3 credits) Pre-req. PSY113</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES</strong></td>
<td>One semester of Sociology:</td>
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<td>• SOC 100 (3 credits)</td>
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<td>Many schools require additional coursework in the humanities such as:</td>
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<td>• PHL 103 Introduction to Ethics (3 credits)</td>
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<td>• WRT 104 Writing to Inform and Explain (3 credits)</td>
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<td><strong>PHYSICS</strong></td>
<td>One semester of Physics with lab:</td>
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<td>• PHY 111 &amp; 185 lab (3+1 credits)</td>
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<td><strong>STATISTICS</strong></td>
<td>One semester of statistics:</td>
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<td>• STA 308 (4 credits)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pre-req. MTH 107 or MTH 110 or 111 or MTH 131 or MTH 141 or BUS 111 or instructor permission</td>
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<td>OR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• STA 307 (4 credits)</td>
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<td>Pre-req: MTH 107 or 108 or 131 or 141 or instructor permission</td>
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**MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY**

Many programs require a course in Medical Terminology. This course is currently not offered at URI, but is generally offered at CCRI or other institutions (1-3 credits)

**Other Academic Considerations**

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

**Grades:** Schools will expect minimum cumulative and science GPA’s of 3.0 with a C or better in all required courses (minimum grades may be higher for some programs).

**Degree Level:** Entry-level programs at the master’s level and doctoral-level currently exist; however, the AOTA (American Occupational Therapy Association) & ACOTE (Accreditation Council for Occupation Therapy) are considering mandating doctoral-level education for the profession. Depending on timing, deciding to enroll in a master’s-level program may impact a student’s eligibility to sit for the NBCOT certification exam. Potential applicants should stay abreast of potential changes on the AOTA website: https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/entry-level-mandate-doctorate-bachelors.aspx.
EXPERIENTIAL EXPECTATIONS

Work, Volunteering, and Observation Hours

At a minimum, OTD programs expect applicants to possess anywhere between 20-80 hours of observation, work and/or volunteer hours 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

The OT Core Values are consistent with those of other health professions. In planning your pre-OT activities, consider how you will develop and demonstrate the Core Values; the following chart gives examples of different types of activities that can help you do this as you build a variety of other skills and attributes that occupational therapy admissions committees are looking for. The chart is intended as a guide, not a checklist.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

As the population of the United States becomes increasingly diverse, occupational therapists must be able to interact with patients with varied cultural norms as well as a broad range of experiences. Common activities include (but are not limited to):

- Courses or research that focus on minority groups, cross-cultural issues, or social equity/inequality.
- Courses or research on cross-cultural issues in health care or health care inequality.
- Providing direct service through activities such as teaching and tutoring.
- Learning a language other than English.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND COMMUNICATION

Effective OT’s develop trusting partnerships with their patients, who they may see multiple times over a relatively short period of time as compared to other health professions. Common activities include (but are not limited to):

- Working as a course or laboratory teaching assistant.
- Tutoring.
- Mentoring.
- Serving as a Resident Assistant or other peer leadership position.
- Admissions tour guide.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ALTRUISM

Occupational Therapy is an intensive service profession. Moreover, OTs advocate for the health and wellness needs of society; they provide leadership in the community; and they understand how local and global issues impact society and the delivery of occupational therapy. Common activities include (but are not limited to):

- Serving as an officer in a student club or organization.
- Initiating significant group projects within a class or organization.
- Serving as captain of a varsity or club sports team.
- Promotion to a leadership position on a paid job.
- Taking courses or regular reading about health policy issues.
- Participating in community service projects.
- Volunteer teaching or tutoring in the community.
- Assisting individuals with disabilities.
- Volunteering or working for a nonprofit organization domestically or abroad.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Like all the health professions, occupational therapy is based on science and constant assimilation of new knowledge into clinical practice. Activities that require an evidence-based approach to problem solving and a commitment to continually expanding professional knowledge are key to long-term success in the profession. Common activities include (but are not limited to):

- Laboratory “bench” research.
- Clinical research
- Quantitative or qualitative public health research.
- Scholarship in disciplines not related to medicine or science.
- A thesis project

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