

## Occupational Therapy Profession Educational Planning Guide

For University of Illinois Chicago, Midwestern, Governors State, and University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

Occupational therapists help patients improve their ability to perform tasks in living and working environments. They work with individuals who suffer from a mentally, physically, developmentally, or emotionally disabling condition. Occupational therapists use treatments to develop, recover, or maintain the daily living and work skills of their patients. The therapist helps clients not only to improve their basic motor functions and reasoning abilities, but also to compensate for permanent loss of function. The goal is to help clients have independent, productive, and satisfying lives.

Occupational therapists help clients to perform all types of activities, from using a computer to caring for daily needs such as dressing, cooking, and eating. Physical exercises may be used to increase strength and dexterity, while other activities may be chosen to improve visual acuity or the ability to discern patterns. Occupational therapists also use computer programs to help clients improve decision-making, abstract-reasoning, problem-solving, and perceptual skills, as well as memory, sequencing, and coordination—all of which are important for independent living.

Occupational therapists must be licensed, requiring a master's degree in occupational therapy, 6 months of supervised fieldwork, and passing scores on national and State examinations. A bachelor's degree must be completed before a student can begin an Occupational Therapy master's degree program. There is no requirement that the bachelor's degree be in a specific major, but students should be sure to incorporate the required master's program course prerequisites into their undergraduate curriculum (see program specific information below).

Employment is expected to grow much faster than average and job opportunities should be good, especially for therapists treating the elderly. The median annual wage of occupational therapists was \$83,200 in May 2017. Employment of occupational therapists is expected to increase 24 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Occupational therapy will continue to be an important part of treatment for people with various illnesses and disabilities, such as Alzheimer's disease, cerebral palsy, autism, or the loss of a limb. (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor)

**The following is a list of area schools that offer Master of Science degree programs in Occupational Therapy. Some of the required course prerequisites for these programs may be taken at CLC.**

### UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO

*M.S. in Occupational Therapy* -23 month full time program (73 semester hours required for graduation)

Website: <http://www.ahs.uic.edu/ot/>

#### M.S. Program Admission Requirements:

- Fall 2018 admitted a class of 46 students
- A baccalaureate degree completed by time of entry
- GPA of at least 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours earned for the baccalaureate degree (average admitted GPA is 3.7)
- Submission of GRE scores. The minimum recommended score is 150 for each the verbal and quantitative sections, and at least a 4 out of 6 on the writing assessment. There is no minimum score required.
- Personal statement and curriculum vitae
- Three letters of recommendation
- Obtain and maintain Professional Rescuer or CPR Level C/Health Care Provider certification of the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross before enrollment in courses (not required at time of application)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Grayslake Counseling Center/A-124, 543-2060

Transfer Guides can be viewed online at <http://www.clcillinois.edu/transerinfo>

- A specific number of hours of observation or volunteer work are not required; however, it is recommended that applicants have at least 50 hours of experience with an occupational therapist, ideally in at least 2 different practice settings prior to application. Many applicants have over 200 hours of OT observation or volunteer experience
- A baccalaureate degree and completion of the following course prerequisites with a grade of 'C' or above by time of entry with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 for prerequisites:
  1. One course in anthropology or sociology or social psychology (ANT 121 or SOC 121 or PSY 225)
  2. Child Psychology or Child Development (PSY 222)
  3. Abnormal Psychology (PSY 223)
  4. Statistics (MTH 222)
  5. One course in human physiology with laboratory, covering all structures and functions of the body (minimum of four semester hours); and one course in human anatomy with laboratory for a minimum of 4 semester hours (laboratory with 30 hours of human cadaver lab study required). A two-course sequence in human anatomy and physiology is acceptable if it includes the cadaver laboratory (equivalent to KN 251 and 252). For students who have difficulty obtaining a cadaver laboratory experience of 30 hours prior to enrollment at UIC, the occupational therapy department provides a special 30 hour OT cadaver lab in the spring of the first year of occupational therapy coursework.
  6. Medical Terminology recommended.

If prerequisites were completed more than 3 years prior to beginning occupational therapy course work, it is highly recommended that the applicant review a current text prior to enrollment so he or she has up-to-date knowledge. If prerequisites were completed more than 8 years ago, it is recommended that the applicant retake the course(s) or complete an intensive self-study prior to enrollment.

### **MIDWESTERN**

*M.S. in Occupational Therapy*- Two and a half year full time program; 132.5 quarter hours required.

Website: <http://www.midwestern.edu/course-catalog-home/glendale-az-campus-/college-of-health-sciences/occupational-therapy-program/admissions.html>

#### **M.S. Program Admission Requirements:**

- A baccalaureate degree completed by time of entry
- GPA of at least at 2.75
- Submission of GRE scores
- Complete interview process (by invitation only)
- Have completed a first aid course within three years prior to enrollment
- Present evidence of current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Level C/Health Care Provider or Basic Life Support of the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross.
- Reflect a people/service orientation through community service or extracurricular activities
- Pass a criminal background check
- Completion of the following course prerequisites w/grade of 'C' or higher: grades of C- are not acceptable (check with a Midwestern representative for CLC course equivalencies)
  1. Human Anatomy (must be completed within the last 5 years); lab with cadaver experience is highly recommended
  2. Human Physiology
  3. Statistics
  4. Human development (Lifespan Development)
  5. Abnormal psychology
  6. Social & Behavioral Science
  7. Additional courses in psychology, sociology, ethics, anthropology, logic, art, music or drama are recommended as part of the undergraduate preparation for OT.

**GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY**

*M.S. in Occupational Therapy* – 100 credit hours required

Website:

[http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges\\_and\\_Programs/College\\_of\\_Health\\_and\\_Human\\_Services/Department\\_of\\_Occupational\\_Therapy/Master\\_of\\_Occupational\\_Therapy\\_Program/](http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges_and_Programs/College_of_Health_and_Human_Services/Department_of_Occupational_Therapy/Master_of_Occupational_Therapy_Program/)

M.S. Program Admission Requirements:

- A baccalaureate degree
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 and minimum prerequisite courses GPA of 3.0
- Apply via OTCAS system
- GRE is a prerequisite
- 3 Letter of recommendation: one from college professor; one from health care professional, preferably an occupational therapist and one additional.
- Completion of the following course prerequisites (check with a Governors State representative for CLC course equivalencies)-
  - 1) Social and Behavioral Sciences (9 semester-credits total) to include General Psychology (3 credits), Abnormal Psychology (3 credits). The following courses are strongly recommended: developmental psychology or other related sociology or anthropology courses.
  - 2) Natural Sciences (16 credit-hours) to include 4 credits of general physics with lab; 8 credits of anatomy and physiology with lab; 4 credits of general chemistry I with lab
  - 3) Medical Terminology (1 credit)
  - 4) Orientation to Occupational Therapy (2 credits)
  - 5) Survey of Research or Statistics course (3 credits)

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE**

*M.S. in Occupational Therapy Program* - 69 semester hours in 28 months. The curriculum includes six months of full-time field work which can be local or national (based on a student's needs and preferences).

Website: <https://catalog.uwm.edu/health-sciences/occupational-science-technology/occupational-therapy-ms/>

Admission Requirements:

- GPA of at least 3.0, based on all transfer courses taken including courses that have been repeated
- Submission of GRE scores taken within the last 5 years.
- Completion of the following professional study prerequisites w/grade of 'C' or higher (check with a UWM advisor for CLC course equivalencies)-
  1. Anatomy & Physiology I and II - BIO 244 & 245
  2. Intro to Psychology - PSY 121
  3. Human Life Cycle – PSY 220
  4. Statistics in the Health Professions - MTH 222
  5. Natural Science Course with Lab taken from Physics, Biology, or Chemistry.

**This transfer guide is designed to assist students with their academic planning. Every effort is made to maintain accurate information; however, this information is subject to frequent change. Students should contact the member institution to keep informed of changes, as final responsibility for verifying information rests with the student.**