

Ozarks Technical Community College
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Frequently Asked Questions



What can I do to improve my chance of admission?

These requirements must be met in order for a student to be admitted:

- Submit application on time (before 4:00 p.m. on April 15)
- Submit a complete application
- Meet minimum GPA requirement



What is the required GPA for admission to the program?

Students must have a minimum 2.5 GPA *in pre-requisite courses* in order for the application to be considered.



How do I calculate my pre-requisite GPA?

To find the pre-requisite GPA, take the number of credit hours TIMES (X) the following letter grade score (A=4, B=3, C=2,). Grades of D or F will not be accepted as having met the pre-requisite. Calculate the total for all pre-requisite courses and divide by the total number of credit hours possible.



The following are not required for admission but are suggestions for improving your knowledge of the OT profession and chance for success in the OTA Program. Applicants should plan to COMMUNICATE this knowledge in the application and interview processes.

- Shadow an occupational therapy practitioner in several settings (nursing home, schools, hospitals, outpatient centers). Contact any facility, ask for the OT department, and they will be able to tell you their shadowing procedures.
- Obtain a job in a healthcare environment
- Visit www.aota.org and read about the profession
- Read journals or magazines such as OT practice, Advance for OT, or the American Journal of Occupational Therapy
- Do volunteer work or participate in health-related activities outside of school
- Take college coursework in related areas such as: adult and child development, geriatrics, computers, medical terminology, study skills, biology, psychology, or education



What if I haven't had any previous experience in healthcare?

Students come to the OTA Program with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Some have years of experience and some have none at all. Both types of students can be successful. However, the more a student understands the profession, the more satisfied one will be with the choice to pursue an occupational therapy assistant degree.



Which classes do I need to take before I apply?

The course sequence, including pre-requisites, is included in the admissions packet or on the OTC website. Students may pick up a packet from the Allied Health Office in Lincoln Hall or call 447-8954 to request a packet.

There are 6 pre-requisite courses which MUST be completed prior to admission starting April 2011: ENG 101, MTH 110, PSY 130, BCS 120, COM 100, PLS 101



Since the admission deadline is April 15, can I take courses in the spring or summer and still be admitted for the fall?

In order to be eligible for the OTA Program, all students must:

1) Be finished with all pre-requisite courses prior to the admission deadline.

or

2) Be enrolled in remaining pre-requisite courses during the spring semester in which application is made.

If a student is enrolled in pre-requisite courses on April 15, they may submit an application. Students enrolled in spring courses will be scored using their midterm grade during the admission process. If enrolled in spring coursework, students must provide proof of midterm grades when submitting their application packet. If a student is admitted while taking classes in the spring, the admission will be contingent on the student receiving a “C” or better in that course.

If a student still has remaining pre-requisite courses to finish in the summer after the April deadline, he/she will not be eligible for admission until the following year.



How many times can I repeat a course to improve my GPA?

The Allied Health Department allows a course to be repeated twice. If a prospective OTA student cannot achieve a “C” or better in a pre-requisite course on the second attempt, the course would not be counted in the application scoring process and the student would become ineligible for admission to the OTA Program. Please see the OTC Student Handbook for repeat procedures.



What if I took classes several years ago and want to apply to the OTA Program?

The program accepts most pre-requisite coursework as eligible to meet requirements, even if it was taken several years ago. Students must have a “C” or better in all pre-requisite coursework.

EXCEPTION: Student must take Anatomy and Physiology within the last 5 years before application is made. If a student is applying for admission in 2012 and took A&P in 2006, he/she will have to repeat the course to be eligible for admission.



Do I need my transcripts sent to OTC?

All college transcripts need to be sent to OTC prior to applying for the OTA Program. High school transcripts will be needed by Allied Health if a student has less than 20 credit hours of college courses.



How many applicants do you have?

In 2011, the program had 70 applicants.



How many students are accepted into the program?

There are 20 positions available for the program each fall.



What are the criteria for acceptance?

Students receive admission scores for:

*Academics: 60%

- Pre-requisite GPA (6 pre-requisite courses ONLY)
- Prior OTA Coursework at OTC/Prior OTA coursework at different college

*References: 10%

*Biographical Essay: 10%

*Interview: 20%

*Students will also receive additional points for the following:

- Having a prior college degree (Points are pro-rated for level of degree)
- Attending one group advising session during the fall or spring prior to admission
Group advising sessions are listed on the OTC website at <http://www.otc.edu/programs/alliedhealth.php>.



Who should I use as my references?

Students should request references from people who are able to speak to the criteria on the reference form. Scoring for references is based on the points assigned to the different qualities of the applicant (found on the back of the reference form). Students do not receive extra points for additional letters sent to the committee.



Do I get credit for applying in previous years? Do I get credit if I was an alternate last year?

There is no credit given for previous applications or for previous alternate status.



What is the application timeline? (The timeline provided is tentative and may vary slightly as needs and schedules change).

- April 15—Application Deadline
- End of April —Files reviewed by Program Coordinator/Faculty
- 1st week of May—Letters regarding regret/acceptance for interviews mailed
- Week after finals in May (date selected by committee)—Interviews
- End of May—Letters of acceptance/alternates/regret sent
- 2nd to 3rd week of June—OTA Orientation Day (Tentative)



If I'm not accepted, can I apply again?

There is no limit to the number of times a student can apply for the OTA Program. If a student is not accepted, he/she should contact the Allied Health office at 447-8954 to activate the application for the next year. OTA applications will be good for one year from the date of the first application. After one year, students will need to reapply for admission. Students are free to update any of their application materials from a previous year, if they feel it is necessary.



I don't want to do anything else but be an OTA. What if I don't get in the first time?

Because there are usually more applicants than open positions, the program faculty encourages all students to reflect on his or her long term goals when applying. As members of the admissions committee, we want to maintain an unbiased review of all applicants but here are some ideas of how to proceed if you aren't admitted:

- Retake courses to achieve a higher GPA (if possible and desirable to do so)
- Take a year off to work and reapply the next year
- Continue taking coursework which supports the profession of OT or work toward an additional degree until the next admission period
- Review your application file for areas where materials could have been more thorough. (i.e. Did you use references who could speak to your skills? Did you communicate your experiences in your biographical essay? Did you speak specifically and confidently in the interview?)
- Take steps to improve your skills or update application materials. Remember, there are over 3 times as many applicants as there are positions. You must set yourself apart from the other applicants by submitting your best application! Now is the time to put your best foot forward, and help us see why you are choosing this profession.