

Pre-Occupational Therapy



Students at Illinois Wesleyan who are interested in occupational therapy choose a major in their primary field of interest while also working to complete courses required by occupational therapy graduate programs. Many majors are suitable, although psychology is an especially good choice because of the overlap between the psychology major's requirements and the course prerequisites for many occupational therapy programs.

Why Pre-Occupational Therapy at Illinois Wesleyan?

- It is important for pre-occupational therapy (OT) students to build their scientific literacy. At Illinois Wesleyan, students receive exemplary preparation in the natural and social sciences. Along with challenging coursework and highly personalized instruction from well-qualified faculty, students can extend their scientific learning by pursuing research under the supervision of Ph.D. professors.
- Pre-OT students also need to develop their applied and interpersonal skills. At Illinois Wesleyan, students receive support from the Hart Career Center in obtaining observation and internship experiences. Furthermore, students can complete OT-related internships for academic credit, working in community settings for 12–15 hours a week while completing related academic work under faculty supervision.
- Illinois Wesleyan has a 3-2 program with Washington University in St. Louis, which has one of the nation's top-ranked OT programs. Students who pursue this program: (a) complete all their major and general education courses in three years at IWU, (b) apply for the 3-2 program during their junior year, (c) complete two additional years at Washington University and (d) graduate with a bachelor's degree from IWU and a master's degree from Washington University.
Although admittance to IWU does not guarantee acceptance into the 3-2 OT program, IWU students who have successfully completed the prerequisite requirements have had an excellent rate of acceptance.
- Illinois Wesleyan's Study Abroad Office is adept at placing students in international programs. Thus, pre-OT students who also wish to study abroad will find support on campus for achieving this goal.

Common Prerequisites for OT Graduate Programs

Courses

Human Anatomy & Physiology
Abnormal Psychology
Developmental Psychology
Statistics
Additional Natural or Social Science Courses
English Composition (Gateway)

Additional Prerequisites

OT observation hours
GRE exam (usually taken the summer or fall before applying)

Internships, volunteering and/or work experience in related settings are highly recommended.

Pre-OT students at Illinois Wesleyan can volunteer or intern in a wide variety of appropriate settings, such as special education settings, nursing homes, OT clinics, addiction recovery centers and homeless shelters.



“ Illinois Wesleyan students are regularly accepted into some of the top OT programs in the country. Pre-OT students at IWU benefit from the University’s

- Pre-OT students will find additional key resources on campus, including a student OT club and a pre-OT advisor. The pre-OT advisor is available to all students in seeking additional guidance as they prepare for a career in occupational therapy.

Applying to Occupational Therapy Programs

Preparing for graduate education in OT requires substantial independence and initiative on the part of the interested student — in part because there is no universal set of prerequisites for admission into OT programs. Historically, OT master’s programs had the same prerequisite courses as medical and physical therapy programs. While some still require this substantial science background, many do not. Some of the most frequently required prerequisites are listed on the previous page.

Students planning to apply to OT programs must individually:

- identify the schools to which they will apply;
- obtain information about specific prerequisites from each of those schools;
- plan how to meet those requirements during their time at IWU;
- submit their applications, usually by the December prior to the year in which they want to begin their OT program.

The website of the American Occupational Therapy Association (www.aota.org) provides a wealth of information for pre-OT students, including a list of accredited OT programs. The website of the Washington University OT program provides specifics for students interested in the 3-2 option (www.ot.wustl.edu).

Students interested in receiving personalized guidance are welcome to meet with the pre-OT advisor, Dr. Linda Kunce, during office hours (posted each semester on the campus intranet).

rigorous science education, excellent internship opportunities and vibrant liberal arts education — all of which combine to help students develop intellectual, interpersonal, and personal qualities essential to their success as future OT professionals. In addition, pre-OT students at IWU will find a relatively small but supportive community of like-minded students, a pre-OT advisor available to provide additional guidance, career center staff ready to help them locate meaningful applied experiences and alumni in OT schools and positions around the country who are eager to serve as contacts and mentors.”

Dr. Linda Kunce

Pre-Occupational Therapy Advisor



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www.iwu.edu/majors/pre-occupational-therapy.html