

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT)

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT)

Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD)



PROFESSION OVERVIEW

Occupational therapists (MOT, MSOT, DOT) are licensed healthcare professionals who use everyday activities to help patients recover, improve, or maintain skills needed for daily living and work. They treat patients of all ages with injuries, illnesses, or disabilities.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM (depending on specialty)

- **Master's Program:** Two-three years
- **Doctoral Program:** Typically three - five years

*IWU offers a 3-2 program with Washington University (St. Louis); students graduate with both a bachelor's and master's degree. See the pre-OT advisor for additional information.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Most Occupational Therapy (OT) programs have similar prerequisite courses, which are listed below. However, requirements vary by school. Check each program's website and refer to the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) database at [The American Occupational Therapy Association \(AOTA\) website](https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx); <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx> for the most current information.

***It is the applicant's responsibility to verify all prerequisite courses, requirements, and application deadlines for each school they plan to apply to.**

Human Anatomy/Physiology	BIOL 107/108
Developmental Psychology	PSYC 252 or PSYC 253
Abnormal Psychology	PSYC 251
Statistics	PSYC 227 or SOC 227
Life Science	PSYC 213 or any BIOL course > 200
Social Science	Any psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science course
Medical Terminology	Students often take this course online over summer

***ALL first year Biology students are required to complete Biol 101/102 instead of Biol 107/108**

KEY COMPONENTS OF A COMPETITIVE OT SCHOOL APPLICATION

Occupational therapy programs seek well-rounded applicants with strong academic preparation, hands-on experience, and personal attributes that align with the values of the profession. The following list outlines common criteria considered during the admissions process. For data on program prerequisites and admissions trends, refer to the AOTA program directory at <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx>.

- **Empathy and genuine motivation to understand and work with people with disabilities**
- **Strong work ethic, dependable and mature judgement**
- **Leadership/Engagement**
- **Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds, differing in age, ethnicity and income, etc.**
- **Research**
- **Flexibility, patience and interest in helping others**

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Your timeline for applying to Occupational Therapy school should reflect your readiness: academically, personally, and professionally. While some students apply in the summer before their senior year to start OT school right after graduation, others benefit from a more flexible timeline.

Students today are often waiting a year or more after graduation before applying to a health professions school. Taking a gap year and applying in their senior year does not put students at a disadvantage. Applicants may use that time to gain clinical exposure, develop professional skills, clarify their goals, and shore up weaker areas on their application.

For more information, visit [Make the Most of Your Gap Year](#).



APPLICATION SERVICE

The **Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS)** is the centralized application service used by most U.S. occupational therapy programs. Applicants submit one primary application through OTCAS, which is then distributed to participating schools.

Please note that timelines and deadlines vary by program. Visit <http://otcas.liasoncas.org/> for critical dates and always verify deadlines with each individual OT school.

STANDARDIZED TEST

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is commonly required for admission to many occupational therapy programs, although some schools have made it optional. Students typically take the GRE after completing undergraduate coursework. The exam is computer-based, offered year-round, and takes approximately 4 hours to complete. Score reports are typically available 10-15 days after the exam date.

For test dates, registration, and preparation resources, visit www.ets.org/gre.

The GRE consists of the following three sections:

- **VERBAL REASONING (130-170)**
- **QUANTITATIVE REASONING (130-170)**
- **ANALYTICAL WRITING (0-6)**

The following resources can provide you with more information regarding the GRE

- **Educational Testing Service (ETS):** Official test information, registration, and preparation materials - www.ets.org/gre
- **Magoosh GRE:** Free and paid video lessons, practice questions, and study schedules - www.magoosh.com/gre
- **Khan Academy (non-GRE-specific):** Helpful for reviewing math, reading, and analytical writing concepts - www.khanacademy.org
- **Manhattan Prep & Kaplan:** Full-length practice tests and paid prep books/courses
- **ETS POWERPREP Practice Tests:** Official fee-based practice tests that simulate the real exam environment

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) <https://www.aota.org>
- Exploring Health Careers <https://explorehealthcareers.org/>
- Occupational Therapy Education Schools: <https://acoteonline.org/schools/>



Don't forget to check out **Handshake!**

Handshake is your one-stop source for internship and job postings, campus recruiting, career fairs, and career center resources. Once you're on the login page, enter your iwu.edu email address and click next. If you are already in the system, then you can just select "IWU Single Sign-on" and enter your IWU net-ID and password.

Please visit www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake for more information on Handshake.