What is an Occupational Therapist (OT)?

An Occupational Therapist is a health care provider who treats patients with injuries, illnesses, or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. They help these patients develop, recover, and improve the skills needed for daily living and working. The following is a brief guide to pre-Occupational Therapy requirements while here at UA:

Pre-Requisites:

Note: Each Occupational Therapist School Establishes its own set of prerequisites. Check the websites of the schools in that you are most interested to obtain a current list of undergraduate requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Biology</td>
<td>BSC 114 and BSC 115 lab or BSC 118</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology</td>
<td>BSC 215 &amp; 216, or (BSC 400, 424, &amp; 425 if majoring in biology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>PH 101 or 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Chemistry</td>
<td>CH 101 or CH 117</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>PY 211, BSC 380, or ST 260</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>MATH 112 and MATH 113</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>PY 101, 352, 358</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>CS 102</td>
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*All prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of “C-” or higher.

Exam and GPA:

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is a standardized examination that consists of four multiple-choice sections that cover basic mathematics and reading comprehension skills. The GRE is designed to measure general academic ability. Typically, students take the GRE about one calendar year prior to their intended date of matriculation to professional school. The GRE is a nationally standardized test, similar to the ACT and SAT. A GRE score is good for three years at most schools, so taking the test in
the spring of junior year does not necessarily mean that you must enter your Occupational Therapy program right after college graduation. Average scores are:

REVISED: A combined score of 290 for most Alabama schools
OLD: 500 on Verbal and 500 on Quantitative (minimum 1000)

**Grade Point Average (GPA):** Minimum GPA requirements vary from program to program, but MOST programs have a minimum 3.0 GPA requirement. In addition, most programs require that all prerequisite courses must be passed with a “C” or better. They generally want to see competitive test scores and GPAs.

**TIMELINE:**

**Freshman Year:**
- Connect with the Health Professions Advising Office
- Start taking basic sciences (See chart above)
- Think about possible majors (Study what you love)
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community)
- Join some student organizations (Pre-OT Society)

**Sophomore Year:**
- Continue with next sequence of courses
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations
- Visit Health Professions Office to begin to assess competitiveness
- BOTTOM LINE: Keep working on the things you established your first year!!

**Junior Year:**
- Identify OT programs you are interested in (Fall semester)
- Talk to Health Professions Advising Office about competitiveness (Fall semester)
- Register for GRE (Fall Semester)
- Study for GRE and take GRE (Spring Semester)
- Identify 3 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring Semester)
- Complete Application (OTCAS) (Spring Semester-Summer)
- Keep working on the things you have established thus far

**Senior Year:**
- Submit Application (OTCAS) if you haven’t already (Fall semester)
- Wait to be contacted for interview
- Finish degree requirements
- Continue with activities
- Talk with HPAO about Plan B if necessary
- Graduate

**RESOURCES:**

Occupational Therapy Central Application Service (OTCAS):
GRE Information/Dates: [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)
UA Health Professions Website: [www.prehealth.ua.edu](http://www.prehealth.ua.edu)