

Occupational Therapy Admissions Guide

Occupational therapy consists of the therapeutic use of everyday life activities with individuals, groups, or populations to address participation and function in roles and situations in the home, school, workplace, or community. 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.

PREREQUISITES:

Each occupational therapy program establishes its own set of prerequisites. Check the websites of the programs in that you are most interested in attending to obtain a current list of undergraduate requirements. Please also note each school's requirements for observational hours and deadlines. ***All prerequisites must be completed prior to applying.***

General Biology:	BSC 114 and BSC 115 lab or BSC 118
Medical Terminology:	HD 203
Anatomy and Physiology:	BSC 215 and 216, or (BSC 400, 424, and 425 if majoring in biology)
Physics:	PH 101 or PH 105
Statistics:	PY 211
Mathematics:	MATH 113
Psychology:	PY 101, PY 352, 358
Social and Behavioral Science:	ANT 101, 102 (Anthropology) or SOC 101 (Sociology)
Professional Writing:	EN 319 Technical Writing
Elective (USA only):	COM 123 Public Speaking PHL 292 Ethics KIN 365 Biomechanics (preferred over physics for some programs)

***All prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of "B" 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

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 "B" or better. They generally want to see competitive test scores and GPAs.

TIMELINE:

Freshman Year: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get to know your prehealth advisors and professors.• Make an advising appointment.• Start taking basic sciences (See chart above).• Think about possible majors (Study what you love).• Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community).• Start shadowing inpatient and outpatient.• Join some student organizations (Pre-OT Society).	Sophomore Year: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue with next sequence of courses.• Stay involved in extracurricular activities (shadowing, volunteer, etc.).• Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations.• Begin research on professional schools, their requirements, and assess your competitiveness.• Investigate GRE preparation options.• Identify programs you are interested in.• BOTTOM LINE: Keep working on the things you established your first year!!
Junior Year: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to a prehealth advisor to narrow program options and assess readiness to apply to programs (Fall).• Register for the GRE (Fall).• Study for the GRE and take it (Spring/Summer).• Identify 3-4 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring).• Complete OTCAS (Spring/Summer).• Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.• Keep working on the things you have established thus far.	Senior Year: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit application(s) if you haven't already (Fall).• Wait to be contacted for interviews from occupational therapy schools.• Continue with activities and professional experiences/shadowing.• Talk with an advisor about Plan B if necessary.• Finish degree requirements.• GRADUATE!

RESOURCES:

Occupational Therapy Central Application Service (OTCAS): www.aota.org/educate/edres/otcas.aspx

GRE Information/Dates: www.ets.org

Office of Health Professions Website: www.prehealth.ua.edu

Baffi-Dugan, C., Cannon, R. E., Bingham, R., & Corder, B. W. (2011). *Health professions admissions guide: Strategy for success*. Champaign, IL: National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions.