Applying to Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Degree Programs

Application Information

UTSA does not offer advanced degrees in occupational therapy studies. However, students are able to take pre-requisite coursework while completing any major at UTSA. Students are encouraged to take coursework in the basic sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities to prepare for their master of occupational therapy degree. Students should choose a major of their interest and purposefully take coursework in preparation for their application to the program of their choice.

A common timeline for students attending OT school is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTSA</th>
<th>MOT School</th>
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<td>FR</td>
<td>SO</td>
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This timeline is subject to change based on student competitiveness and readiness to apply.

Applicants use the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application Service (OTCAS) to apply to the program of their choice. For students seeking the UT Health Science Center San Antonio’s (UTHSCSA) program, the application deadline is November 1st for May entry in the following year.

Admission to MOT programs is increasingly competitive and is often determined on a holistic basis. UTHSCSA’s criteria include the following:

- Successful completion of pre-requisite coursework (with at least a ‘C’ or better.) Minimum GPA for pre-requisites is a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Applicants must complete their Bachelor’s degree no later than the Fall semester prior to matriculation to the OT program at UTHSCSA.
- Minimum of 40 hours of observation, volunteer or employment under the general supervision of a licensed Occupational Therapist. Hours must be documented.
- Two reference letters.
- Supplemental Applications for OTCAS.
- Official Transcripts for each school attended.
- Highly qualified candidates are invited for interviews.

More information related to UTHSCSA admissions can be found on their website at: http://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/health-professions/programs/master-occupational-therapy

UT Health Science Center Occupational Therapy Pre-requisites

- BIO 2053 & BIO 2051: Anatomy & Physio I & Lab
- BIO 2063 & BIO 2061: Anatomy & Physio II & Lab
- PHY 1603: Algebra-based Physics I
- KIN 3323 OR KIN 3103 OR KIN 4403: Biomechanics, Motor Development, or Motor Learning
- PSY 1013: Introduction to Psychology
- PSY 2513: Abnormal Psychology
- PSY 2503: Developmental Psychology
- SOC 1013 OR ANT 1013: Intro to Sociology or Intro to Anthropology
- STA 1053 OR PSY 2073: Statistics
- Medical Terminology (1 credit hour)

While the above courses are required pre-requisites, prospective OT applicants should take coursework to aid them in their future profession. Some of these courses could include:

- COM 2113: Public Speaking
- COU 3103: Helping Skills
- HTH 2413 or SOC 1043: Introduction to Public Health
- HTH 3503: Theories of Health Behavior
- HTH 3543: Growth and Development
- HTH 3563: Child and Adolescent Health Promotion
- HTH 4503: Human Disease and Epidemiology
- KIN 3453: Fitness Programming and Exercise Prescription
- SOC 3203: Gerontology
- SOC 4683: Health Disparities
- SPN 2513: Spanish for Health Careers
- PHI 2123 or PHI 3213: Ethics
- PSY 3113: Motivation and Emotion
- PSY 3153: Sensation and Perception
- PSY 4253: Psychology of Health

Please note: these courses may have pre-requisites. Consult with an academic advisor about your course selection.
Shadowing/Volunteering/On-Campus Involvement

Admission to occupational therapy programs is becoming increasingly holistic. As such, students are strongly encouraged to participate in health care-related activities, community service and on-campus leadership experiences. Experience in these areas contributes to a students understanding of and commitment to the occupational therapy field and facilitates personal development prior to the application process.

Ways to get involved:

- UHPO keeps a list of volunteer opportunities in the San Antonio area in our office and on our website, located here: http://www.utsa.edu/healthprofessions/volunteer.html.
- UTSA student organizations participate in service and OT-related activities. Information about getting involved on-campus can be found on RowdyLink: https://utsa.collegiatelink.net/.
- Students are encouraged to volunteer or shadow occupational therapists in various settings to gain an understanding of the profession.
- Pre-OT students are encouraged to apply for leadership roles in their community and/or on-campus to develop necessary communication and teamwork skills.
- Attend UTSA’s Health Professions Day, held each February, to meet with representatives from various OT schools.

OT Fast Facts and Helpful Websites

- There are 8 MOT programs and one Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) Program in the state of Texas. To learn more about these programs, you can visit their online sites at www.texasotjobs.us.
- Additional information about Texas OT programs and the OT profession can be found on the Texas Occupational Therapy Association (TOTA) website, www.tota.org.
- Most MOT programs accept no more than 45 students per year. However, some select even fewer students.
- The American Occupational Therapy Association provides resources about the occupational therapy profession and out-of-state OT programs via their website at www.aota.org.
- To further explore the career of occupational therapy, visit www.explorehc.org.
- Each OT program requires OT shadowing, but the hours vary by school. Please view each school’s website to determine the number of required hours and the specific paperwork required by each school.

Other Helpful Skills for OT

While coursework and academic achievement are important for an OT candidate, students should strive to hone skills in other areas. Some skills prospective OTs should develop are:

- Communication Skills
- Compassion
- Flexibility
- Interpersonal Skills
- Writing Skills
- Patience
- Problem-Solving Skills
- Creativity

In addition, prospective Occupational Therapy candidates should engage in as many OT-related experiences as possible. Although each school has a minimum required number of hours, students with more exposure are better prepared for their interviews, their OT school experience and their future career as an OT.