

Occupational Therapy Assistant



Accredited by

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
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Program Description

The Associate in Applied Science degree program in Occupational Therapy Assistant prepares graduates to obtain New York State licensure and to take the National Certification Board for Occupational Therapy exam* to become Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTA). Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants work under the supervision of, and in collaboration with, Registered Occupational Therapists (OTR). Occupational therapy practitioners provide service to children, adults and seniors whose abilities to engage in their occupations (tasks) of living are impaired by physical injury or illness, developmental delays, the aging process or psychological and social disability.

The COTA's responsibilities include providing purposeful and meaningful activity to restore lost or impaired physical, cognitive and psychological skills; development and use of assistive technology; adapting home, play and work environments and activities to ensure successful and safe performance. The COTA may design adapted toys and games for a child with physical limitations; provide handwriting adaptations for students within a school setting to enhance their learning process; evaluate and design home adaptations to enhance independence in self-care activities such as feeding, bathing, shaving, cooking and dressing; encourage the elderly client to participate in leisure activities and to maintain personal independence.

The primary focus of the curriculum is on the development of critical thinking and clinical problem-solving skills, and on essential elements in designing and applying therapeutic interventions for the clients served by COTAs. The program includes classroom instruction, laboratory and community-based fieldwork rotations. Occupational therapy assistant courses are offered once each year. Courses must be taken in the sequence in which they are offered. A minimum grade of C is required in all occupational therapy assistant courses. The course of study may be pursued on a part-time basis. All program requirements must be completed within six consecutive semesters from the time of enrollment in the first OTA course. Individualized part-time schedules can be developed between the student and the OTA faculty advisor.

**Graduates of the OTA program are required to apply for NBCOT® certification. Candidates applying for the Certification Examination must notify the NBCOT's Qualifications Review Committee (QRC) if they have ever been charged with or convicted of a felony. A felony conviction may prevent the candidate from taking the examination. Please consult the department chair if this may be an issue in successfully pursuing a career in occupational therapy.*

Program Outcomes

Students will:

- learn problem-solving and clinical reasoning
- build on knowledge, practice skills, theory and critical thinking applications
- apply these multiple skills and insights to adapt to and cope in this novel and diverse world
- think and act with flexibility, to think "outside the box"
- welcome change and growth in themselves, their clients and the organizations they serve

Admission Criteria

Academic Requirements:

- High school diploma or HSE
- Eligible to take ENG 101 (Freshman English I)
- Eligible to take MAT 101 (Elementary Algebra) or have successfully completed MAT 020 (Fundamentals of Algebra)
- Completed High School AP Biology (score of 3, 4, or 5) or a passing grade in the Biology CLEP examination; or Introduction to Biology or Anatomy & Physiology 1 with a grade of 2.0 or better (within 5 years of program entry)
- Students must attain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.4

Department-Specific Requirements:

- Watch assigned videos of Occupation Therapy in three different practice settings, including Physical Disabilities, Pediatric/ Developmental, and Mental Health. Write a reflection paragraph on each setting. The required Pre-Admission Observation Form

must be completed to document observations. (Pre-admission observation forms are available online at: www.sunyorange.edu/admissions/healthforms.shtml)

- Interview with Department Chair and selected OTA faculty, a group problem-solving activity and related essay
- Attendance at a pre-admission orientation (includes interview, problem solving activity and discussion). At this orientation, students will receive and sign off on information pertaining to health forms, drug testing, and criminal record policies. Dates for pre-admission orientation are posted on Admissions and OTA Dept. websites.

Note: Admission to this program is selective. In addition to an application to the College, students must apply for acceptance into this program through the Admissions office. Consideration for admission is based on the completion of all mandatory academic and departmental-specific requirements, highest combination of CGPA and credits completed towards the degree, and seat availability. All requirements must be completed and an eligibility form must be submitted to the Admissions Office before February 1 in order for a student to be considered for acceptance into this program for the Fall semester.

Transfer Options

While the A.A.S. is a degree leads to immediate job placement upon graduation and successful completion of the National Certification exam, SUNY Orange has special relationships with weekend college programs for transfer to a B.S./M.S. degree at:

- Dominican College
- Mercy College

Your Career Coach

Career opportunities exist in the following areas:

- hospitals, inpatient and outpatient mental health facilities
- rehabilitation centers and skilled nursing facilities
- schools, developmental disabilities service sites
- home and community health agencies
- accessibility and home modification specialists
- assistive technology specialists
- health and wellness centers
- advancement to OTR

[Explore careers with Career Coach](#)

Occupational Therapy Assistant Gateway Courses:

Course sequences for Occupational Therapy Assistant have been thoughtfully developed to include all necessary gateway courses and key electives, and to meet all accrediting standards.

First Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
ENG 101	Freshman English 1	P	3
OTA 105	OTA Skills Practice Lab	P, C	1.5
PSY 111	Introduction to Psychology		3
BIO 111	Anatomy and Physiology 1	P	4
OTA 101	Fund. of Occupational Therapy 1	P, C, P/C	3
OTA 103	Occupational Performance 1	P, C, P/C	1
OTA 107	Principles of OT in Geriatrics and Gerontology	P/C	2
	Total Semester Credits		17.5

Milestones

During this semester, students should:

- Meet with OTA advisor and faculty for a one-on-one session

Second Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
ENG 102	Freshman English 2	P	3
PSY 220	Developmental Psychology	P	3
BIO 112	Anatomy and Physiology 2	P	4
OTA 102	Fund. of Occupational Therapy 2	P, C, P/C	3
OTA 104	Occupational Performance 2	P, C, P/C	1
OTA 106	Medical Conditions	P, C, P/C	3

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
	Total Semester Credits		17

Milestones**During this semester, students should:**

- Register for classes
- Meet with OTA advisor and faculty one-on-one for professional behavior assessment meetings

Third Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
PSY 230	Abnormal Psychology		3
OTA 110	Intro to Assistive Technology		3
OTA 201	Principles of OT in Pediatrics and Developmental Disabilities	P, C, P/C	3
OTA 203	Clinical Reasoning Skills	P, C, P/C	1
OTA 205	Principles of Occupational Therapy in Mental Health	P, C, P/C	3
OTA 207	Principles of Occupational Therapy in Physical Disabilities	P, C, P/C	3
OTA 209	Documentation in Occupational Therapy	P, C, P/C	1.5
PED 155	CPR		1
	Total Semester Credits		18.5

Milestones**During this semester, students should:**

- Prepare for fieldwork
- Register for classes

Fourth Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
OTA 217	Clinical Practice 1	P	7.5
OTA 218	Clinical Practice 2	P	7.5
	Total Semester Credits		15

Milestones**During this semester, students should:**

- Participate in fieldwork: two eight week internships-with two workshops at college
- Apply for graduation
- Apply for NYS license
- Apply and prepare to take the national certification exam
- Attend pinning ceremony

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS: 68