



Medical University of South Carolina
151-B Rutledge Avenue
MSC 965
Charleston, SC 29425
843-792-2961
<http://www.musc.edu/chp>

Division of Occupational Therapy
Health Advisors' Handbook

Academic Year
2009-2010

ACADEMIC PROGRAM
Occupational Therapy

Date prepared: June 26, 2009

Program: Occupational Therapy

Degree: Master of Science in Rehabilitation Science - Occupational Therapy

For current detail or changes, see our website: <http://www.musc.edu/chp/ot>

The Profession

There are over 100,000 occupational therapy practitioners in the United States. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is the nationally recognized professional association for occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy. See <http://www.aota.org>. Occupational therapy practitioners are initially certified through the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy. See <http://www.nbcot.org/>. Entry to the field takes place at the post-baccalaureate level for occupational therapists and at the associate degree level for occupational therapy assistants.

Occupational therapy is regulated in all 50 states and three US territories. In the State of South Carolina, licensing information can be obtained by contacting the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, South Carolina, Board of Examiners in Occupational Therapy, PO Box 11329, Columbia, SC 29211; 803.896.4650. See <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/OccupationalTherapy/> . For regulation of occupational therapy in other states, see <http://www.aota.org> .

Occupational therapy is a health profession that helps people participate fully in life. The “occupation” in occupational therapy refers to the way in which people spend their time and energy. Participation in a wide range of human occupations is seen as a health determinant, promoting and adding meaning to life.

Occupational therapists help people throughout the lifespan accomplish their daily living tasks, learn new skills, adapt to permanent losses, fulfill their life roles, and participate fully in life. When people have strokes, sustain injuries, or have chronic mental or physical health problems, occupational therapists help them engage in occupations or everyday activities that are personally meaningful, socially satisfying, and culturally relevant.

Career Options

The major types of work are: clinical work (direct patient care), research, teaching, administration, and consultation.

The employment settings include: schools (K-12), hospitals (emergency, acute, and inpatient rehabilitation), outpatient rehabilitation facilities, community clinics, residential and custodial or long-term care facilities, early intervention programs, home health programs, hospice programs, university clinics, private practice, and community outreach programs.

Employment Outlook

In August 2006, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor reported that employment of occupational therapists will be “much faster than average for all occupations through 2014.” US News and World Report lists occupational therapy as one of the top 25 careers for 2007.

Salary Information

More than 100,000 occupational therapy practitioners are licensed in the U.S. today. The median salary for an occupational therapist is \$60,500 (range \$41,000 to >\$89,000), depending on position, years of experience, degree of education, geographic location and practice setting. A survey of recent graduates of the MUSC occupational therapy graduates indicates that the average starting salary is \$55,600/year (range \$45,000 to \$69,000).

College of Health Professions, Division of Occupational Therapy, Health Advisors Handbook: 2009-2010.

The Program

The Occupational Therapy program offers a graduate, entry-level occupational therapy curriculum which begins each year in late May. The program is full-time, year-round and takes 26 months to complete. The first five semesters are based in Charleston and include classroom, laboratory, and clinical work. The final two semesters are devoted to full-time fieldwork at facilities within South Carolina and throughout the United States.

Accreditation

The MUSC program has been accredited since 1977 by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association. The program was re-accredited for a ten-year period from 2003 to 2013.

Application Procedures

The program commences near the end of May of each year. Applications are available from July 1st of the year prior to the program starting until April 1st of the year classes commence.

The following application deadlines are used:

- Early/Priority Application 15 October
 - Regular Application 15 January
- Regular deadline dates may be extended based on space availability

Applications are available on the MUSC website at <http://www.musc.edu/es>. For questions about the online application process or for a pre-application review of an undergraduate transcript, call the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM) (843) 792-5396. For additional information, contact Dr. Peter Bowman, Director of Admissions for Occupational Therapy Division at (843) 792-3942 or email: rehabadmissions@musc.edu

Application Requirements

Application requirements include:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution (college or university);
- Official and final transcripts of all work completed at other institutions;
- GRE scores, including verbal, quantitative and analytic/writing;
- Two letters of recommendation;
- Thirty volunteer and/or paid hours under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapist.
- Volunteer or work evaluation form

Both in-state and out-of-state applicants are accepted based on academic merit; when merit is equal, preference will be accorded to in-state students.

Program-specific requirements (e.g., clinical observations and specific coursework) are identified in the application materials.

Potential applicants with questions should email: rehabadmissions@musc.edu or contact the Office of Enrollment Management oesadmis@musc.edu or (843) 792-8712.

Prerequisites

<i>Prerequisites</i>	<i>Semester Hours</i>
Human anatomy (<i>must include lab</i>)	4
Human physiology (<i>must include lab</i>)	4
Statistics	3
Lifespan human development	3
Abnormal psychology	3
Sociology/Anthropology	3
Medical Terminology (recommended)	1

Selection Factors

Entrance to the Occupational Therapy graduate degree program is competitive. Offers of admission to the program follow careful review by an Admissions Committee. Depending on the number of applicants and the inherent competitiveness of the application process, there will be variation across individual programs in the final criteria, and weighting of individual factors. The Admissions Committee of the Occupational Therapy academic program will make final decisions regarding admissions.

The Occupational Therapy Admissions Committee gives careful consideration to:

- Cumulative GPA (at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale);
- Science GPA (at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale);
- GRE Scores (at least 25th percentile, preferably 50th percentile);
- CLEP (advanced placement) credit where applicable;
- Letters of recommendation;
- Applicant's personal statement. Factors of interest to the Committee include: the reputation of the applicant's undergraduate college or university; academic or other awards; employment history; extent of volunteer work; achievements in extracurricular activities such as music, art, sports and university or community service; evidence of leadership; bilingualism and travel; and, unique life events involving personal challenges, or ethnic, racial and cultural experiences.

Applicant Statistics

2009 Entering Class, Occupational Therapy

Applied		Offered		Accepted	
Number	102	Number	57	Number	42
In-State	43	In-State	28	In-State	28
Out of State	59	Out of State	29	Out of State	14
Male	7	Male	2	Male	2
Female	95	Female	55	Female	40
Average Age	23.24	Average Age	22.89	Average Age	23.05
Average GPA	3.39	Average GPA	3.60	Average GPA	3.58
Average GRE*	1582	Average GRE*	1633	Average GRE*	1625

* All components included – no breakdown of score given. GRE Analytical Writing scores are converted using the following procedure and added to Verbal and Quantitative scores.

6 = 800	5.5 = 750	5 = 700	4.5 = 650	4 = 600	3.5 = 550
3 = 500	2.5 = 450	2 = 400	1.5 = 350	1 = 300	0.5 = 250
0 = 200					

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Minimum Skills/ Eligibility Requirements for Occupational Therapy Applicants/Students:

Applicants to the program must possess aptitudes, abilities, and skills in the areas of observation, communication, sensory and motor functions, intellectual/cognitive skills, and behavioral/social attributes.

Observational Skills

- Observe and interpret client behavior, movement, and occupational performance
- Observe a client from varying distances and recognize verbal and non-verbal signals

Communication Skills

- Elicit information from clients and/or significant others in a timely manner
- Relate effectively, objectively, and compassionately with clients and/or significant others
- Communicate clearly in speech and writing to clients, significant others, other healthcare professionals, and community and professional groups
- Listen and accurately perceive what is being communicated
- Participate in group meetings
- Complete forms in a timely manner
- Demonstrate computer literacy
- Direct/supervise supportive personnel

Sensory and Motor Functions

- Demonstrate sufficient sensory and motor abilities to elicit information from client assessment
- Demonstrate sufficient strength and balance to transfer, move, and assist clients in occupational performance without injury to the client or self, or the ability to instruct others in performance of these tasks
- Demonstrate gross and fine motor coordination skills necessary to perform therapeutic activities, or the ability to instruct others in performance of these tasks

Intellectual/Cognitive Skills

- Engage in the clinical reasoning process in a timely manner
- Analyze, synthesize, and interpret data from a variety of sources in a timely manner
- Engage in problem solving in an efficient and timely manner
- Engage in evidence-based clinical practice
- Respond to feedback in an appropriate manner

Behavioral/Social Attributes

- Exercise sound judgment
- Follow detailed written and verbal instructions
- Recognize and respond appropriately to individuals of all ages, genders, races, religions, and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds
- Adapt to changing environments
- Demonstrate ethical and legal behavior
- Demonstrate a commitment to life-long learning

These abilities may be accomplished through direct student response, through the use of prosthetic devices, or through personal assistance (e.g. readers, signers, notetakers, etc.) The responsibility for the purchase of prosthetic devices serving a student in meeting the above required abilities remains with the student and/or the agency supporting the student. The university will assist with providing notetakers, readers, signers, and other attending services.

Upon admission, an otherwise qualified student who discloses a disability (with certification) is assured of reasonable accommodation. These accommodations include: opportunities for individual and group counseling; peer counseling; linkages with community services; faculty advisory committees that are aware of disabled students and their needs; career counseling; assistance with job searches and interview skills; and, of course, the more familiar accommodations of extended test-taking time, and other enabling services. Students seeking accommodation initiate their request with the College of Health Professions disability officer in the student life center.
