

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) or Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD)



ILLINOIS WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY
HART CAREER CENTER

PROFESSION OVERVIEW

Occupational therapists (OTs) treat injured, ill, or disabled patients through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. They help these patients develop, recover, improve, as well as maintain the skills needed for daily living and working. The clients they serve range in age from infants to the elderly.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

- **Master's Program:** Two-three years
- **Doctoral Program:** Typically three - five years

*IWU offers a 3-2 program with Washington University (St. Louis); students graduate with both a bachelor's and master's degree. See the pre-OT advisor for additional information.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Below are IWU courses that satisfy the most common prerequisites since the prerequisites for Occupational Therapy schools **vary greatly**. A student's best resource for finding program-specific requirements is **The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)** website; <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx>

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the applicant to know the exact requirements and deadlines for each school to which they apply.

- **Human Anatomy/Physiology** BIOL 107/108
- **Developmental Psychology** PSYC 252 or PSYC 253
- **Abnormal Psychology** PSYC 251
- **Statistics** PSYC 227 or SOC 227
- **(Add'l) Life Science** PSYC 213 or any BIOL course > 200
- **(Add'l) Social Science** Any psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science course
- **Medical Terminology** Students often take this course online over summer

VALUED CHARACTERISTICS IN PROFESSION

- Empathy and genuine motivation to understand and work with people with disabilities

- Strong work ethic, dependable and mature judgement

- Leadership/Engagement

- Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds, differing in age, ethnicity and income, etc.

- Research

- Flexibility, patience and interest in helping others



APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application timeline is unique depending on when you are prepared and ready to pursue dental school. If you plan to apply directly after graduating from IWU, you will want to complete the prerequisite courses by the end of your junior year and apply during the summer before senior year. If you choose to take a gap year, you should complete your prerequisites by the end of your senior year and then apply the summer after graduation OR when you are ready.

Students today are often waiting a year or more after graduation before applying to a health professions school. This does not put the applicant at a disadvantage. Many programs look favorably upon applicants who have taken an extra year or two to mature and gain work experience, and who can make a better decision regarding a career in a health profession; see **"Make the Most of Your Gap Year"** (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/making-most-your-gap-year/>).

APPLICATION SERVICE

Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS); <http://otcas.liasoncas.org/> outlines critical dates for the application cycle; check with the application service and specific OT schools of interest for deadlines.

STANDARDIZED TEST

Typically, the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is required to apply to Occupational Therapy School. The exam is offered year-round at computer-based test centers. The test consists of three sections: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning and Analytic Writing. The test takes about 4 hours to complete. The scaled score for the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning sections ranges from 130-170, and the Analytical Writing scaled score section ranges from 0-6. Unofficial scores are received 10-15 days after the exam.

You can find more information regarding the GRE, including free and low-cost preparation materials, at www.ets.org/gre.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) <https://www.aota.org>
- Exploring Health Careers <https://explorehealthcareers.org/>



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Please visit www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake for more information on Handshake.