

Occupational Therapy

Students must earn a bachelor's degree prior to entering an OT program. There is no preferred major. Former students have earned degrees in Family Studies and Human Services, Food Science, Kinesiology, Life Science, Nutrition, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology and many others. Pre-requisites will vary from school to school.

Prerequisite Courses

The following is a list of courses that may fulfill regional OT school requirements. Students are responsible for knowing and completing the requirements of their major and those of the OT programs to which they plan to apply.

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| ANTH 204 | Cultural Anthropology | 3 | ___ |
| or SOCIO 211 | Sociology | 3 | ___ |
| BIOL 198 | Principles of Biology | 4 | ___ |
| BIOL 441/442 | Human Body I & II | 8 | ___ |
| or KIN 360 | Anatomy & Physiology | 8 | ___ |
| CHM 210 | Chemistry I | 4 | ___ |
| CLSCS 105 | Medical Terminology | 2 | ___ |
| HDFS 110 | Human Development | 3 | ___ |
| or PSYCH 520 | Lifespan of Personality Dev. | 3 | ___ |
| KIN 220 | Biobehavioral Basis of Exercise | 4 | ___ |
| PHILO 130 | Moral Philosophy | 3 | ___ |
| or PHILO 365 | Medical Ethics | 3 | ___ |
| PHYS 113 | Physics I | 4 | ___ |
| PSYCH 110 | Psychology | 3 | ___ |
| PSYCH 505 | Abnormal Psychology | 3 | ___ |
| STAT 325 | Statistics | 3 | ___ |

Other courses to consider

The following courses may be of interest to pre-OT students. These are based upon recommendations from OT schools as well as feedback from former students. This list is not exhaustive.

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|--------------|--------------------------------------|---|-----|
| AMETH 160 | American Ethnic Studies | 3 | ___ |
| ART 103 | Jewelry Design for non-majors | 3 | ___ |
| BIOL 330 | Public Health Biology | 3 | ___ |
| COMM322 | Interpersonal Communication | 3 | ___ |
| COMM 480 | Intercultural Communication | 3 | ___ |
| EDSP 415 | Manual Comm (Sign Language) | 3 | ___ |
| HDFS 415 | Intro to Child Life | 3 | ___ |
| GERON 315 | Gerontology | 3 | ___ |
| FNDH 400 | Human Nutrition | 3 | ___ |
| HIST 534 | Social History of Medicine | 3 | ___ |
| HORT 525 | Horticulture for Special Populations | 3 | ___ |
| MUSIC 510 | Survey of Music Therapy | 3 | ___ |
| PSYCH 370 | Brain and Behavior | 3 | ___ |
| PSYCH 470 | Psychobiology | 3 | ___ |
| SOCWK 320 | Dynamics Working w/ Older Adults | 3 | ___ |
| SPAN 101/102 | Spanish I or II (or higher) | 5 | ___ |
| RRES 200 | First Aid and CPR/AED | 1 | ___ |
| THTRE 665 | Drama Therapy w/ special pop | 3 | ___ |

K-State Pre-OT Club: An opportunity to meet other pre-OT students and to become involved both professionally and socially while keeping up to date on requirements and admissions policies. The club is active with monthly meetings featuring admissions officers from professional schools, community service agencies, occupational therapists, as well as question and answer sessions with former Kansas State OT students.

Eligibility Criteria & Application Information

Many OT programs require a minimum grade point average to even be considered. GPA's minimums range from 3.0 – 3.3 but a competitive GPA is at or above 3.5. It is advisable to maintain a GPA higher than the stated minimum.

Beyond grades, there are additional factors professional schools consider when evaluating an application for admission. These include work experiences with special populations, time spent shadowing as well as volunteer activities. Additionally, recommendation letters, the personal statement and the development of leadership skills are non-quantifiable characteristics which provide insight into a student's desire to be an OT.

Students apply to professional school through the Centralized Application Service for Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS.) Most, if not all, OT schools will require a supplemental application. Both the OTCAS and the supplemental documents must be submitted in order for your application to be considered complete. Individual deadlines are determined by the Occupational Therapy programs, NOT by OTCAS.

Because pre-requisites change and admissions deadlines vary students must review the webpages of the schools of most interest to them. Professional schools welcome contact from a prospective student. Students are responsible for knowing and completing the requirements of their major and those of the OT programs to which they plan to apply.

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is required at many OT programs. Results from the GRE are used to standardize academic ability for candidates who apply from all types of institutions and from all over the country. The exam also provides some assurance a student is capable of passing the licensing exam after completion of graduate school.

Also consider a career as an [occupational therapy assistant](#) (OTA). “The employment outlook for occupational therapy assistants is bright—the Bureau of Labor Statistics states that “employment of occupational therapy assistants....is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2022,” with employment expected to increase by 41% or more” (aota.org/Education-Careers).

Regional Occupational Therapy Programs

Some remain Master level programs and others moved to the Doctorate

[Colorado State University Occupational Therapy](#): Fort Collins, CO

[Creighton University](#): Omaha, NE

[Maryville University](#): St. Louis, MO

[Rockhurst University](#): Kansas City, MO

[Saint Louis University](#): St. Louis MO

[St. Ambrose University](#): Davenport, IA

[University of Central Arkansas](#): Conway, AR

[University of Kansas Medical Center](#): Kansas City, KS

[University of Missouri](#): Columbia, MO

[University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center](#): Oklahoma City, OK

[Washington University](#): St. Louis, MO

Helpful Tips:

- 1) Shadow multiple occupational therapists in a variety of settings as many schools *require* observation hours.
- 2) Find volunteer or employment working directly with people who have special needs.
- 3) Journal both of these experiences.
- 4) Cultivate relationships with faculty so they can write strong letters of recommendation.
- 5) Join the pre-OT club or other student organization of interest to you and take on a leadership role.
- 6) Regularly meet with the pre-OT advisor and the advisor in your major.
- 7) Seek out academic support like tutoring and study groups.
- 8) Visit OT schools to evaluate their program and to ask questions of their admissions officers.
- 9) Apply early in the application cycle. Do not wait until the published deadline.

Important websites:

[American Occupational Therapy Association](http://www.aota.org/): <http://www.aota.org/>

[Centralized Application Service for Occupational Therapy](https://portal.otcas.org/): <https://portal.otcas.org/>

[Explore Health Careers](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org): www.explorehealthcareers.org

[Graduate Record Exam \(GRE\)](http://www.ets.org/gre): <http://www.ets.org/gre>

[Konza United Way Volunteer Directory](http://www.konzaunitedway.org/): <http://www.konzaunitedway.org/>

[HandsOn K-State](http://www.k-state.edu/leadership/programs/handson/index.html): <http://www.k-state.edu/leadership/programs/handson/index.html>

[National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy](http://www.nbcot.org/): <http://www.nbcot.org/>

[Pre-Health Professions](http://artsci.k-state.edu/student-resources/pre-health/): <http://artsci.k-state.edu/student-resources/pre-health/>

[World Federation of Occupational Therapists](http://www.wfot.org/): <http://www.wfot.org/>

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Kansas State Pre-Occupational Therapy Advisor
College of Arts and Sciences
Gayla Adams-Wright
Health Professions Advising Office
107 Calvin Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-1011
785-532-6904
gayla@ksu.edu