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**Division of Occupational Therapy**  
***Health Advisors' Handbook***

**Academic Year**  
**2019-2020**

***ACADEMIC PROGRAM***

**Occupational Therapy Doctorate**

**Date prepared: August 5, 2019**

## **Program: Occupational Therapy**

**Degree:** Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)

**For current detail or changes, see our website:** [chp.musc.edu/ot](http://chp.musc.edu/ot)

### **The Profession**

There are over 114,600 occupational therapy practitioners in the United States. It is growing much faster than average as compared to other professions. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) <<http://www.aota.org>> is the nationally recognized professional association for occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy. Occupational therapy practitioners are initially certified through the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy <<http://www.nbcot.org/>>. Entry to the profession 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 Occupational Therapy (SCBOT), PO Box 11329, Columbia, SC 29211, (803) 896-4650 <<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/OccupationalTherapy/>>. For regulation of occupational therapy in other states, visit the AOTA webpage at <<http://www.aota.org>>.

Occupational therapy is a health profession that helps people, populations, and communities 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 which promotes and adds meaning to life.

Occupational therapists help people throughout the lifespan accomplish their activities of daily living, 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. 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 2014, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor reported that employment of occupational therapists will be “much faster than average and is projected to grow 27 percent from 2014 to 2024.” US News and World Report lists occupational therapy in 23rd place in its 100 best jobs of 2019.

### **Salary Information**

More than 114,600 occupational therapy practitioners are licensed in the U.S. today. The median salary for an occupational therapist is \$81,910, depending on position, years of experience, degree of education, geographic location and practice setting. A survey of recent graduates of the MUSC occupational therapy program indicates that the average starting salary is \$60,000/year (range \$50,000 to \$70,000).

## **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 9 semesters to complete. The first five semesters are based in Charleston and include classroom, laboratory, and clinical work. Two semesters are devoted to full-time fieldwork at facilities within South Carolina and throughout the United States. The final semester is focused on the completion of an experiential doctorate project.

## **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 most recent accreditation was approved for the maximum 10 year approval, in August 2013. MUSC is currently seeking accreditation for the transition to an occupational therapy doctorate clinical program.

## **Application Procedures**

The program commences near the end of May of each year. Applications are available from July 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to the program starting until November 15th of the year prior to the classes commencing. The following is the only application deadline:

- **November 15**

Applications are online only at <<https://education.musc.edu/admissions/ready-to-apply/apply-now/doctor-of-occupational-therapy>> For questions about the online application process or for a pre-application review of an undergraduate transcript, call the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM) at (843) 792-5396. For additional information, contact Dr. Cristina Smith, Director of Admissions for the Occupational Therapy Division at (843) 792-0701 or email: [smithcris@musc.edu](mailto:smithcris@musc.edu)

## **Application Requirements**

To be considered for admission to the Occupational Therapy Program, applicants must:

1. Have a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree from an accredited college or university by the time of matriculation. A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required for consideration.
2. Submit official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Applicants should strive for GRE scores in the 60th percentile or above on each section to be competitive.
3. Submit a reference (on specific reference form) from an occupational therapist after completion of a minimum of at least 30 hours volunteer or work experience in an OT setting.
4. Submit two references (on specific reference form) from a professor or advisor familiar with your academic ability and accomplishments.

Both in-state and out-of-state applicants are accepted based on academic merit and other factors that are important for a future occupational therapist. A profile of life activities is used to assist in ascertaining this.

Program-specific requirements (e.g., clinical observations and specific coursework) are identified in the application materials. A limited number of students will be offered an interview for admission.

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

<b>Prerequisites</b>	<b>Semester Hours</b>
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

Anatomy and Physiology I and II can fulfill the separate Anatomy and Physiology requirements. Anatomy and Physiology prerequisites need to be rigorous classroom based courses, not taken online or with open book testing, and must be from an accredited institution.

*\* We do not allow advanced placement, transfer of credit, or credit for experiential learning.*

### **Selection Factors**

Entrance to the Occupational Therapy graduate degree program is competitive. Offers of admission follow careful review by an Admissions Committee. Depending on the number of applicants and the competitiveness of the applicant pool, there will be variation across individual programs in the criteria and weighting of individual factors. Applicants receive additional profile points for unique life and service experiences including AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, or military service. The Admissions Committee of the Occupational Therapy 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)
- Prerequisite GPA (at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale)
- GRE Scores (at least 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, preferably 60<sup>th</sup> percentile);
- References of recommendation
- Profile of life experience activities
- Log of Occupational Therapy related experience
- Resume
- 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, and/or sports; university or community service; evidence of leadership; bilingualism and travel; unique life events involving personal challenges; and experience with diverse communities.
- Interviews will only be offered to applicants who meet the criteria from the above factors.**

### **Applicant Statistics**

#### **2019 Entering Class Occupational Therapy**

<b>Applied</b>		<b>Offered</b>		<b>Entering Students</b>	
Number	294	Number	65	Number	49
In-State	76	In-State	26	In-State	24
Out of State	218	Out of State	39	Out of State	25
Male	17	Male	4	Male	3
Female	277	Female	61	Female	46
Average Age	22.96	Average Age	22.88	Average Age	23.10
Average Cum GPA	3.59	Average Cum GPA	3.66	Average Cum GPA	3.62
Aver Pre-Req GPA	3.58	Aver Pre-Req GPA	3.69	Aver Pre-Req GPA	3.68
Average GRE %ile	49	Average GRE %ile	54	Average GRE %ile	52