

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT STUDENTS

Please read the following information about our application process. It will answer several questions for you and will clarify the methods used for accepting students into the program.

Application Procedures and Application Deadline

As soon as you know that you have or expect to complete the required coursework for admission, fill out and submit the enclosed application form. All pre-required courses must be completed with a minimum grade of “C” prior to program admission.

Academic history (GPA) and the number of required general education courses completed by the application deadline are a few of the items considered when choosing qualified applicants for the program. **The application deadline is March 1, 2024.** Notification of program acceptance will be sent to applicants after May 15, 2024. If there are more qualified applicants than space available, applicants will be taken from a waiting list as space becomes available. The date your application is received may be considered as a “tie breaker” in making acceptance decisions. **Application materials become the property of the OTA Department once submitted and will not be returned.**

Submit all official college transcripts with your application. Do ***not*** send them to the OTA Department or the college’s Admissions and Records Office. Only after transcripts have been reviewed for the application process, will they be forwarded to that office. We must have official transcripts for all college coursework (**including CCC**) that is to be considered, including formal evaluation of any transcripts from foreign colleges and universities.

Pre-requisites for Acceptance

To be eligible for consideration you must fulfill each of the criteria listed below. Each specific required course must be completed with a minimum grade of “C”.

- English 101 – Composition I
- Psychology 201 – General Psychology
- Psychology 207 – Child and Adolescent Psychology (or Child Development 101)
- Computer Information Systems 120 – Introduction to Microcomputers
- Occupational Therapy Assistant 106 – Foundations of Human Occupation
- **Minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale**

NOTE: If you plan to apply for admission prior to completing Biology 226 and 227, you also must complete Biology 121 – General Biology, to meet City College Biology Department course requirements.

Increasing Your Chances for Acceptance

The *Wright College Catalog* and the OTA Program brochure both states, “If more candidates apply than the program can accept, the best qualified applicants will be admitted.” When we review your application and transcripts, in addition to the courses listed above, we consider how many of the following general education courses you have completed. Students who have completed some or all the following required courses with a grade of “C” or above may be given preference for admission. The courses are listed in their order of importance when your transcripts are reviewed:

- Biology 226 and 227 – Human Structure and Function I and II
- Psychology 222 – Adult Development and Aging (or Social Services 102 or Child Development 102)
- Sociology 201 – Introduction to Sociology

The more courses you have completed and the better your grades, the greater your chances are of acceptance into the program.

NOTE: If you are accepted into the program and still need to complete any of the four courses listed above, these courses must be taken in the semester sequences listed in the *Wright College Catalog* and the OTA Program brochure. No student can begin the second year of the program without all general education coursework completed.

OTA Program Mission and Goals

The Wright College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program seeks to prepare competent and effective occupational therapy assistant practitioners who value occupation as both a means and an end to quality of living for self and others.

Individuals admitted to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program will examine their own diverse backgrounds to appreciate the relationship of culture on health, access to health services, and to occupational choices. Through the educational process students will gain skills to use technology and seek resources needed for the provision of effective occupational therapy interventions. The program requires students to engage in critical reasoning, analysis, and communication necessary to participate in the occupational therapy process. The program will provide opportunities to explore existing and potential roles in contemporary and emerging arenas of practice.

The program’s goals express the essential concepts and ideas that guide the program’s curriculum in achieving the mission. They address eight key domains of knowledge, skills, and values. These are:

The Impact of Culture

- Appreciate one’s own cultural heritage and consciously consider the impact of culture in all facets of professional endeavor.
- Recognize and consider the relationship of culture on the availability of health services, access to and choice of occupations.

Oral and Written Communication Skills

- Demonstrate oral and written communication that meets professionally established standards.
- Accurately represent the principles and tenets of occupational therapy to a variety of audiences.
- Use language compatible with the concepts of occupation and the principles of occupational therapy.
- Utilize current technologies as resources for obtaining information and apply relevant technology.

Use of Self as an Agent of Change

- Identify one's own talents, abilities and learning needs required to engage in professional roles and to assure continuing professional development.
- Participate professionally as an effective citizen.

Ethical Practice – Ethical Practitioner

- Recognize and articulate ethical challenges and generate reasoned, timely and effective strategies for responding appropriately.

The Occupational Therapy Process

- Demonstrate competence in the delivery of occupational therapy services that utilize the occupational therapy process as a professional framework.
- Generate and employ interventions that consider established professional intervention principles.
- Select intervention strategies and approaches that are informed by current knowledge of the occupational therapy profession and of related disciplines.
- Develop a basic structure for outcomes assessment of occupational therapy services.

The Collaborative Practitioner

- Demonstrate competence in inter and intra-disciplinary collaboration in all aspects of the occupational therapy process.

Understanding Practice Settings – the Multi-skilled Practitioner

- Frame the knowledge base and skills of the occupational therapy assistant for a variety of practice settings.
- Recognize health service needs in a variety of models and systems and consider viable roles for occupational therapy practitioners.

Learning and Teaching Processes

- Identify one's own learning styles and needs, and generate strategies for effective, self-directed learning.
- Deliver occupational therapy services and interventions that meet the needs of a variety of target populations.

To accomplish the mission and goals the program is designed to provide the necessary professional skills, progressive maturity, and the intellectual, social, and emotional values necessary to develop an informed and trustworthy member of a healthcare team.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the AAS degree program in occupational therapy assistant, the graduate will be able to:

- Appreciate the meanings and impact of culture for self as an individual and professional, relate it to occupational choices and opportunities, and to access to healthcare.
- Use oral, written, and technology-based communication with consumers, consumer groups, peers, other professionals, and parties of interest.
- Assume responsible, caring, and proactive roles as an effective healthcare professional.
- Recognize and articulate ethical challenges and generate reasoned, timely and effective strategies for responding appropriately.
- Engage in the safe and effective application of the occupational therapy process to occupational therapy consumers and special populations.
- Demonstrate competence in inter and intra-disciplinary collaboration in all aspects of the occupational therapy process.
- Possess the knowledge and skills needed to practice as an occupational therapy assistant in a variety of healthcare delivery models, systems, and settings.
- Recognize the need for continuing professional development through participation in continuing education activities.
- Possess the knowledge, skills, and credentials necessary for entry-level practice as an occupational therapy assistant.

Consumer/patient Care Experiences at Affiliate Healthcare Sites

Throughout the program each student will spend time at several different fieldwork affiliate sites as part of his or her studies. The costs of travel to and from each site are the responsibility of the student. Students are assigned to fieldwork sites based on educational considerations and site reservations available to the program. The OTA Program's Academic Fieldwork Education Coordinator makes assignments to sites. Students have no final say regarding fieldwork assignments.

Students are considered guests while assigned to any institution. The affiliation agreement between Wright College and the fieldwork education site gives each site the right to refuse to permit any student to be on its premises for any number of valid reasons. The college and OTA program cannot force any institution to accept any student. Students are guaranteed a fieldwork site assignment if they comply with the rules and regulations of the program and Wright College. A student who is suspended for breach of professional conduct may not be accepted back at the institution to which he or she was assigned. Further, no guarantee is made that any other institution will agree to accept the student. Should this circumstance occur, the student would have to withdraw from the OTA Program.

Drug Screening

Fieldwork education, the time spent in direct occupational therapy services with consumers, may begin during the fall semester well after the student has begun the program. For any student to be assigned to a site to obtain this vital fieldwork experience, an agreement must be in place between the site and Wright College. Some sites may require drug screening *prior* to the start of a student's fieldwork experience. This screening may become part of the necessary physical examination. The approximate cost of drug screening can run up to \$200.00 and would be the financial responsibility of the student. You will receive further information about this if it becomes a fieldwork site requirement.

Criminal Background Check/Felony Convictions/Misdemeanors

The State of Illinois has implemented Public Act No. 89-197, the Health Care Worker Background Check Act. This law requires a criminal background check on all applicants applying for jobs with direct patient/consumer contact. Part of the employment process will include a criminal background investigation for felony convictions. Individuals with a felony conviction in their background may not be eligible for employment. This law also requires a background check for students in the occupational therapy assistant program who will be engaging in direct patient/consumer services at some fieldwork education sites; an updated criminal background check will be required each year one is in the OTA program. If you have a misdemeanor or have been convicted of a felony, contact the program director as soon as possible to determine how this law may affect you. A student who is denied admission to a fieldwork education site because of a failed criminal background check will be required to withdraw from the program.

In addition to the State of Illinois required criminal background check, the application to sit for the Certification Examination for Occupational Therapy Assistants, sponsored by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT), requires exam applicants to indicate if they have a history of a felony conviction. NBCOT will investigate any positive responses and holds the right to determine an exam candidate's eligibility to sit for the exam and be awarded certification.

Functional Abilities Expected of Candidates Admitted to the Wright College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

Occupational therapy assistant students work in a variety of medical and non-medical settings. Occupational therapy recipients include patients, clients, consumers, children, adults, and older adults. In academic and clinical preparation for occupational therapy practice, students must demonstrate the following non-academic abilities:

Observation: The student must be able to observe demonstrations in the classroom, in laboratory sessions, and while participating in fieldwork education; use audio-visual equipment and materials. The student must gather information through observation, including but not limited to facial expression, non-verbal communication, quality of movement, and performance of functional tasks done with or without prescribed equipment.

Communication: The student must be able to obtain information through interviewing therapy recipients, and be able to describe movement, both verbally and in documentable formats, posture, mood, functional performance, and behavior. The student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with therapy recipients and their family member care providers, both individually and in groups. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with all members of the therapy recipient's healthcare team and with members of the educational program.

Motor: The student must be able to elicit information from therapy recipients by palpation (feeling bony landmarks, joint articulations, muscles, and tendons), movement of limbs, manipulation of testing and therapy equipment. The student must be able to provide direct occupational therapy and emergency treatment to individuals. Direct treatment includes such activities as transferring individuals to and from wheelchairs, fabricating splints, handling tools and materials associated with therapeutic activities, and assisting therapy recipients in activities of daily living. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of occupational therapy assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation and application of pressure to stop bleeding. A student must be able to ensure the safety of self and others in emergency situations such as fire.

Intellectual-conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities: A student must be able to use and apply the above abilities for problem-solving and clinical reasoning, both critical skills for all occupational therapy personnel. The student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data concerning therapy recipients, and develop and implement an appropriate occupational therapy treatment plan, and modify, revise, or terminate it in response to recipient changes as assessed.

Behavioral and Social Attributes: The student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the delivery of occupational therapy services; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with therapy recipients, family members, care givers, and staff. Students must be able to learn to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, to take initiative, to be resourceful, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical problems of many therapy recipients, and of working in multiple job sites with multiple job expectations. Students must also tolerate taxing workloads and function effectively under a variety of stressful circumstances.

Academic Performance: The student must obtain information from lecture, labs, audiovisual materials, distance communication systems, and written materials. The student must take essay and/or objective style examinations, complete papers, deliver presentations, and perform required lab practice and practical exams, and actively participate in group learning experiences.

Clinical/Fieldwork Performance: The student must be able to accept supervisory direction from one or more clinical/fieldwork supervisors and modify behavior in response to supervision in a timely and respectful manner. The student must possess the self-management skills needed to budget time effectively, organize and schedule job responsibilities, and maintain regular attendance.

Non-discrimination

Wright College and the Wright College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program do not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, handicap, age, sex, sexual orientation, or marital status in admission and participation in its educational programs, college activities and services, or in its employment practices. The college does not tolerate sexual harassment by or of its students or employees. Inquiries regarding compliance with state or federal non-discrimination requirements and/or sexual harassment may be directed to the Wright College Dean of Student Services. In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Wright College wishes to make every effort to facilitate learning by those persons broadly defined as handicapped or disabled. Students who believe they will need assistance to participate in coursework should notify the Access Center, Room A245.