

Occupational Therapy OTD

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Learn more about the Doctorate of Occupational Therapy.

About the Program

The Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) is an entry-level professional doctorate in occupational therapy. Students entering the OTD program must hold a bachelor's degree prior to the start of the program. As decreed by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), occupational therapists may enter the profession at the master's or doctoral level. Although a doctoral degree is not mandatory, it is believed that the profession will eventually move to the single point of entry doctorate degree as many healthcare disciplines have done. This program is forward thinking, preparing students now at the doctoral level.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 5 years.

Campus Location: Main for in-person instruction, with some learning/instruction online. Experiential-learning labs and fieldwork are done at off-campus clinical and community sites.

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: The degree program must be completed on a full-time basis. The program is designed to be completed in three full years of study. (10 lock-step semesters)

Affiliation(s): Students complete field studies and capstones in various settings depending on the nature of the study.

Ranking: In 2024, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, Temple University's program ranks as the 27th best occupational therapy program out of 198.

Accreditation: The entry-level occupational therapy doctoral degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is www.acoteonline.org. Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, all states require licensure to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Students must complete 24 weeks of Level II fieldwork as well as an individual 14-week capstone experience within 18 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program. The doctoral capstone experience must be started after completion of all coursework and Level II fieldwork as well as completion of preparatory activities defined in 2018 ACOTE OTD Standard D.1.3.

Job Prospects: As of 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 17% growth in occupational therapy until 2030. This is more than double the 8% growth projected for all jobs.

Licensure/Certification: Graduates of the OTD program are eligible to take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination leading to the designation of Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). Additionally, practitioners must abide by specific licensure requirements as determined by individual states. For more information about state licensure, visit the AOTA state licensure webpage.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: OTD coursework is available only to matriculated students.

Financing Opportunities: Financial aid is available to students. For information on financial aid, please contact Student Financial Services at 215-707-2667.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Summer II: March 1

All applicants to the OTD program must apply via the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application Service (OTCAS). The system can be accessed at <https://otcas.liaisoncas.com/>. Applications are processed throughout the year as they are received. Admission to the OTD program is a rolling process such that, beginning in the Fall, applications are reviewed and offers of admission are extended, continuing until the cohort is filled. Thus, it is in the applicant's best interest to apply early to this highly competitive degree program.

Without exception, the March 1 deadline for OTCAS transcript and course verification must be met. If you have questions regarding transcript and course verification, contact OTCAS directly.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From Whom: Applicants to the Occupational Therapy OTD program should include three letters of recommendation. These can be written by professors, academic advisors, teaching assistants, lab instructors, mentors, work supervisors, team coaches and those in similar positions. Letters from family members will not be accepted. Letters from a licensed occupational therapist are welcome but NOT required. Be thoughtful in asking individuals that can include the following:

- A person who has taught or mentored you in a collegiate academic course and can attest to your academic abilities and readiness for doctoral-level work
- A person who can speak to your performance in a work, internship or research setting
- A person who can attest to your commitment to service

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: Required coursework includes:

- Introduction to Sociology or Cultural Anthropology (1000-level course, not a 2000- or 3000-level course)
- Anatomy with lab and Physiology (1000-level course, not 2000- or 3000-level course), which can be taken separately or as a combined sequence (e.g., Anatomy and Physiology I with Anatomy lab, or Anatomy and Physiology II). The lab must include human muscular and skeletal anatomy.
- Abnormal Psychology or Psychopathology
- Developmental Psychology or Lifespan Development, which must include a lifespan perspective of development. Two developmental psychology courses in two different life phases are accepted (either child/youth or adult/older adult).
- Statistics, Biostatistics or Research Methods

We do not accept credit for experiential learning and/or work experience.

Without exception, grades earned in prerequisite courses must be a "B-" or better for consideration in an application. Prerequisites are not required to have been taken while an undergraduate. The courses may be completed at a local community college or any accredited institution of higher education. AP or CLEP courses are not accepted for prerequisites, except for Introduction to Psychology with a score of 4 or higher. Science courses must be 4 credits. Prerequisites may be in progress at the time of the initial application, but must be completed and verified on one's OTCAS application by March 1 of the year for which application is made.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: Completion of a baccalaureate degree in any discipline is not only required but also acceptable for applying to Temple University's Occupational Therapy program as long as the required prerequisites are successfully completed with a grade of "B-" or better. No particular undergraduate program of study is required for occupational therapy.

Supplemental Essay: The education and practice of occupational therapists demand a great deal of mental flexibility, creativity, teamwork and service to others. Temple OT has a curriculum specifically designed to integrate these aspects into our surrounding community to support student learning and service to our community. Details for the supplemental essay can be found at <https://otcas.liasons.com/>.

Standardized Test Scores:

MAT or GRE: Not required.

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 100
- IELTS Academic: 7.0
- PTE Academic: 68
- Duolingo: 110

Laptop: All incoming students in the College of Public Health are required to have a laptop. Academic programs in the college are technology intensive. They incorporate statistical and database analyses; utilize specialized tools for athletic training, kinesiology and physical therapy; stream audio and video for communication sciences; facilitate online interactive counseling for social work; and foster clinical experiences and online assessments. The laptop requirement enables the College of Public Health to improve opportunities for active learning and provide greater access to specialized software and required tools in and out of the classroom, better preparing students for the workforce. Learn more about device specifications and suggested vendors. Students can use excess financial aid (i.e., funds that are reimbursed after all tuition and fees are paid) to meet student needs, including the purchase of a laptop. Scholarships may also provide funding.

Clearance Requirements: Students attending Temple University College of Public Health are required to submit to Temple University Student Health Services proof of immunizations and proof of immunity for MMR, Varicella and hepatitis B, proof of being fully vaccinated to COVID-19, TB screening, and a physical exam prior to matriculation. Annually, an influenza vaccine is required, some affiliates may also require annual TB screening and urine drug screenings. Students who are in fully on-line programs with no in person class or practicum experience can request a waiver for the above health requirements.

Prematriculation Requirements: All students who attend programs, which have a clinical / practicum / field education experience, will be required to purchase access to EXXAT APPROVE compliance module. This module is to order, store and maintain compliance documents, it is required for participation in a learning experience at an affiliate site.

Students who attend CPH programs which have a clinical / practicum / field education experience which are completed at affiliate sites both on and off the Temple University campus, are required to comply with minimum standard compliance metrics which include the above health requirements in addition to a national criminal background check, Act 33/34 clearances in the state of Pennsylvania, FBI fingerprinting through DHS or DoE. FBI fingerprints is a national check, which can be performed through any of the 50 states.

The results of these requirements may limit and potentially eliminate placement options for the student, thus resulting in their inability to meet graduation requirements. Additionally, conviction of a misdemeanor, felony, or felonious or illegal act may prevent the individual from becoming credentialed and/or licensed to practice depending on the field of study.

In addition to the above, students who attend the Occupational Therapy Doctorate program are required to show proof of health insurance annually, and proof of current American Heart Association CPR certification for Healthcare Professionals.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required to Earn the Degree: 116

Required Courses:

| Year 1 | | Credit Hours |
|---------------------|---|--------------|
| Summer II | | |
| OTHR 5002 | Theoretical Perspectives of Occupation | 2 |
| OTHR 5005 | Neuroscience Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 4 |
| OTHR 8002 | Clinical Skills I: Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| Credit Hours | | 8 |
| Fall | | |
| OTHR 5001 | Developmental Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| OTHR 5008 | Kinesiology Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 4 |
| OTHR 5013 | Medical Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 3 |
| OTHR 5014 | Person-Environment Dynamics in Occupation | 1 |
| OTHR 5019 | Theoretical Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| OTHR 5151 | Research I: Evidence-Based Practice in Occupational Therapy | 3 |
| OTHR 8003 | Clinical Skills II: Fundamentals of Practice | 2 |
| Credit Hours | | 17 |
| Spring | | |
| OTHR 5003 | Group Dynamics in Occupational Therapy | 3 |
| OTHR 5105 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Children & Youth | 5 |
| OTHR 5152 | Research II: Design and Methodologies in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| OTHR 5185 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Fieldwork IA | 1 |
| OTHR 5222 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Adults and Older Adults | 5 |
| Credit Hours | | 16 |
| Year 2 | | |
| Summer I | | |
| OTHR 5161 | Occupational Therapy Service Delivery & Management | 3 |
| OTHR 5219 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Community and Social Participation | 3 |
| OTHR 5285 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Fieldwork IB | 1 |
| Credit Hours | | 7 |
| Fall | | |
| HRPR 8985 | Teaching in Higher Education: Health Professions | 3 |
| OTHR 5104 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Mental Health | 5 |
| OTHR 5221 | Health & Wellness in the Community | 3 |
| OTHR 5286 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Fieldwork IC | 1 |

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|---------------------------|--|------------|
| OTHR 8104 | Clinical Skills III: Specialty Skills in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| Credit Hours | | 14 |
| Spring | | |
| HRPR 8987 | Teaching in Higher Education Practicum | 3 |
| OTHR 5123 | Occupational Therapy Practice: Assistive Technology | 4 |
| OTHR 8105 | Clinical Skills IV: Professional Reasoning in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| OTHR 8107 | International Health Perspectives in Occupational Therapy | 2 |
| OTHR 8286 | Doctoral Capstone in Occupational Therapy I: Topic Development | 2 |
| Credit Hours | | 13 |
| Year 3 | | |
| Summer I | | |
| OTHR 5287 | Intensive Occupational Therapy Practice: Fieldwork IIA | 9 |
| OTHR 8287 | Doctoral Capstone in Occupational Therapy II: Capstone Site and Project Proposal | 3 |
| Credit Hours | | 12 |
| Fall | | |
| OTHR 5288 | Intensive Occupational Therapy Practice: Fieldwork IIB | 9 |
| Credit Hours | | 9 |
| Spring | | |
| OTHR 8288 | Doctoral Capstone in Occupational Therapy III: Capstone Experience | 9 |
| OTHR 8289 | Doctoral Capstone in Occupational Therapy IV: Implementation and Evaluation | 3 |
| Credit Hours | | 12 |
| Year 4 | | |
| Summer I | | |
| HRPR 5001 | Current and Emerging Issues in Public Health and Health Professions ¹ | 0 |
| OTHR 8206 | Clinical Skills V: Clinical Leadership | 2 |
| OTHR 8208 | Professional Portfolio in Occupational Therapy | 3 |
| OTHR 8291 | Doctoral Capstone in Occupational Therapy V: Analysis and Dissemination | 3 |
| Credit Hours | | 8 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 116 |

¹ This common College Core course is required of all incoming graduate students in the College of Public Health. It is available completely online and designed such that students can complete the modules at their own pace over the course of their degree program.

Minimum Grade to be Earned for All Required Courses: B-. Students receiving a C+ or lower are not permitted to progress into the next semester. A student must take a leave of absence and return the following year to retake a course that received a C+ or lower.

Culminating Events:

Intensive Fieldwork Practica:

Students may be required to travel up to 90 minutes from their place of residence to a Level I or II clinical site.

Level I: Students participate in a variety of Level I fieldwork experiences that are largely local. However, opportunities do exist for international Level I field experiences.

Level II: Two 12-week supervised full-time fieldwork experiences are required for degree completion. Level II fieldwork is completed upon completion of all academic courses. Students are assigned to Level II fieldwork either locally or in another state. No international Level II fieldwork experiences are available.

Doctoral Capstone Project and Experience:

The doctoral capstone series is interwoven throughout the curriculum to ensure students build foundational knowledge in the critical consumption of evidence and research, understanding of translation and production of research, and the importance of assessment and dissemination of outcomes. Through the capstone course series, students learn to develop, implement and assess a culminating project that encourages further development of clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program policy and development, advocacy or education.

The capstone is designed to ensure students attain in-depth knowledge and skill in their interest area while supporting Temple's clinical and community partners throughout the 14-week experience.

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Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/occupational-therapy-dot-hp-othr-dot>

Department Information:

Programs in Occupational Therapy
201 Mitten Hall
1913 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122-6004
otprogram@temple.edu
215-204-4391

Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://otcas.liaisoncas.com/>

Department Contacts:

Admissions:
CPH Office of Admissions
cph@temple.edu
215-204-5200