DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE

Office
Enrollment Services Center 245, 410-704-2762
Admissions Coordinator: Linthicum 110, 410-704-2653

Programs of the Department
The practice of occupational therapy is the therapeutic use of everyday life activities (occupations) with individuals or groups for the purpose of participation in roles and situations in home, school, workplace, community, and other settings. Occupational therapy services are provided to those who have or are at risk for developing an illness, injury, disease, disability or activity limitation. Occupational therapy addresses the physical, psychosocial, cognitive, sensory and other aspects of performance in a variety of contexts to support engagement in everyday life activities that affect health, well-being and quality of life (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2004).

The Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science currently offers a Combined B.S./M.S. Program with a Bachelor's Degree in Occupation and Well-being combined with a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy. Applicants who have an earned Bachelor's Degree are not eligible to apply for the Combined B.S./M.S. program but may be eligible to apply to the Professional Master's Degree program.

The Occupational Therapy Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) located at:
4720 Montgomery Lane
P.O. Box 31220
Bethesda, MD 20824-1220
ACOTE's phone number c/o AOTA is 301-652-AOTA.

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, most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT certification examination. (Persons convicted of felonies may be unable to sit for the certification examination and should inquire in advance of program entry regarding eligibility.)

Occupational therapy is a profession that demands its practitioners have clinical competencies as well as academic knowledge. In addition to satisfactory completion of course work, students must demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors and skills prior to beginning clinical/fieldwork experiences. Students must possess a minimum of 3.00 GPA in order to enroll in OCTL 435/OCTL 436 and enter the graduate portion of the Combined B.S./M.S. Program. In the event that students do not demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors and/or skills and/or do not have satisfactory academic performance in one or more required courses, recommendations for remedial courses of action will be made in accordance with department policy.

Students are expected to be aware of and adhere to the AOTA (Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics, and Ethics Standards (2010)). Violation of the standards is cause for disciplinary action which may include dismissal from the programs offered by the Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science.

The department also offers a Master of Science degree in Occupational Therapy and a Doctor of Occupational Science (Sc.D.). For further information, consult the Graduate Catalog.

Program and Fieldwork Requirements
Initial Health and Insurance Requirements
Contracts with fieldwork facilities require that students in placements show proof of current health insurance and documentation of current health status. The findings of the health examination will not necessarily exclude students from placement. Students must present evidence of current health insurance, a recent health examination (including documentation of results of titers for immunization of measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella), a speech and hearing screening, results of a PPD test, and results of a Hepatitis B titer or sign a declination form for the vaccine. Failure to comply will prevent registration.

Speech and Hearing Screening
Speech and hearing screening is offered free of charge through the Towson University Speech, Language and Hearing Center each term. Only one initial screening is required. Failure to comply will prevent registration.

Annual Health Requirements
Students must present evidence of current health insurance and results of PPD test annually.

CPR Courses and First Aid
Certification for adult, infant and child CPR is required prior to beginning the program. Proof of annual CPR certification is required during enrollment in the major. Online courses are not accepted. It is highly recommended that students complete a standard course in first aid.

Criminal Background Check
Students may be required to obtain a criminal background check and a drug screening if required by the fieldwork site. This can occur for any Level I or Level II fieldwork experience. The student is responsible for this expense.

Damaged or Missing Equipment, Assessments or Other Resources
Students are responsible for covering replacement costs for any items that are found to be damaged or missing due to their actions.

Second Bachelor’s Degree
This is not an option for the Combined B.S./M.S. program.

Occupational Therapy Assistants
Occupational therapy assistants may ask to have courses taken in fulfillment of their degree reviewed to determine if any of these courses may substitute for required 200-level courses in the Combined B.S./M.S. program of study at Towson University. Students who wish to be
considered for this option must notify the department in writing of their request and must provide course descriptions and transcript for review.

**Professional Master’s Degree Program**

This Master of Science in Occupational Therapy is designed for individuals with bachelor’s degrees in other fields who are interested in becoming occupational therapists. For further information, consult the Graduate Catalog.

**Doctor of Science in Occupational Science (Sc.D.)**

The applied doctoral degree in Occupational Science prepares graduates to teach, influence policy, and engage in applied research. Occupational science is the scientific study of human occupation related to the purposeful and meaningful activities that comprise everyday life - experiences. The main emphasis of this interdisciplinary doctoral program is to advance education, research and service that promote occupational engagement, social and occupational justice, and health and well-being of persons, organizations and populations by applying knowledge gained through the promoted study of occupational science.

The doctoral degree requires the completion of at least 90 units beyond a bachelor’s degree. For more information, consult the Graduate Catalog or Program Director Beth Merryman at bmerryman@towson.edu or 410-704-2762.

**Major in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science**

- Combined B.S./M.S. Program with a Bachelor’s Degree in Occupation and Well-being (http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/health-professions/occupational-therapy-occupational-science/combined-bs-ms-occupational-therapy)

**Pre-Admission Advising**

Admission to the university does not guarantee admission to the Occupational Therapy major. At students’ request, occupational therapy and occupational science faculty and administrative staff will advise candidates about the nature of the profession, the national certification examination, and the occupational therapy curriculum prior to admission. Applicants are encouraged to contact the department to request a Pre-Occupational Therapy adviser.

**Application Criteria**

Application materials for the Occupational Therapy Program may be obtained from the College of Health Professions (CHP) admissions coordinator. All application materials must be submitted to the admissions coordinator with a postmark no later than March 1. All students applying for admission to the Combined B.S./M.S. Occupational Therapy Program at Towson University must meet the following criteria:

1. Applicants must have applied to Towson University for fall admission by February 1.
2. Applicants must have completed a minimum of 13 units in college courses, excluding developmental courses, by the end of the fall term preceding screening.
3. The following pre-requisite courses or their equivalents must be completed by December 31:
   a. BIOL 190 (must be completed by end of fall term preceding screening) or BIOL 221/BIOL 221L (must have been taken within the last five years).
   b. Two of the following three courses: PSYC 101, SOCI 101, ENGL 102.
     - All of these courses must be completed by the end of the spring term in which screening takes place with a grade equivalent of B (3.00) or higher. AP exam scores may be used in lieu of course grades. However, scores must be equivalent to the grade requirement of a B (3.00) or higher, and the courses must be posted on the TU transcript. Applicants with lower test scores must take the course and achieve a grade equivalent of B (3.00) or higher to be considered for screening. Applicants with such test scores must contact the CHP admissions coordinator for specific information.
4. Applicants must have completed an approved Medical Terminology Course from an accredited two- or four-year institution with a grade of 3.00 or a pass grade (for courses taken pass/fail) prior to first term in the program.
5. Applicants must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 by the end of the fall term preceding screening for admission to the program.
6. Applicants must submit the following documents in one packet postmarked by March 1:
   a. Official transcripts that include course work taken through the fall term preceding application to the program at institutions other than Towson University.
   b. A completed Human Service Activity Verification Form, which provides evidence of completion of at least 30 hours of work and/or volunteer experience in a human service activity. This work or volunteer experience must have involved direct contact with people with disabilities, illness or other disadvantages. Examples include work/volunteer experience with clients in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities, senior centers, drug rehabilitation programs, programs for the homeless, camps, etc.
   c. A typewritten application essay following the guidelines provided by the department.
   d. Three reference forms completed by appropriate individuals and submitted in accordance with application requirements.
7. Applicants must have a completed Prerequisite Checklist with the Admissions Coordinator on file by March 1. In addition, applicants who wish to have courses not listed on this form approved as equivalent to major courses in this program of study must submit a written request for approval of these courses.
8. A minimum of 23 units meeting Core Curriculum requirements must have been completed prior to beginning the first term of the Occupational Therapy Program.

Applicants with units more than 10 years old may petition (in writing by March 1) to have these units excluded from calculation of the GPA if they have successfully completed 14 or more units within the past two years. These 14 units must include either BIOL 190 or BIOL 221/BIOL 221L (or their equivalent). When this option is approved, all units more than 10 years old are excluded from GPA computation, with the exception of grades for PSYC 101, SOCI 101 and ENGL 102. If applicants wish old screening course grade(s) to be omitted, they must have retaken the screening course(s) within the past 10 years. If a petition regarding omission of these grades is not received by the application deadline, all courses more than 10 years old will be used in computation of the GPA.
**Application Process**

Admissions Coordinator is available to assist with application process at 410-704-2653 or otadmissions@towson.edu.

Screening for admission is based on a review of student’s GPA, admission essay, letters of recommendation and required volunteer experience.

**Screening**

Screening will occur in June for applicants who have complete files.

The department’s Admissions Committee will evaluate all completed applications based upon GPAs, essays and references. The top candidates from this pool of applicants will be selected for admission.

Selection of the top candidates will be completed by June 15. A waiting list will be developed consisting of applicants from the original pool who were not accepted but wish to remain on the waiting list for classes beginning that fall term. The top candidate on that list will be notified if a place becomes available in the class. If that candidate cannot accept the place, the next candidate will be notified. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the drop-add period in the fall and will not carry over into the next year.