GRADUATE PROGRAM IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

The graduate, MS-only, option is available for students who have already completed and possess an undergraduate degree in another field of study. This is a three-year graduate program leading to a Master of Science (MS) degree in Occupational Therapy. Graduate students do not need to meet the undergraduate general education requirements as they already have an undergraduate degree. They must, however, still meet the required pre-requisite courses. Graduate students must also meet the same criteria for grades and GPA as all other students in the occupational therapy program.

MISSION STATEMENT AND EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The mission of the Husson University School of Occupational Therapy is to prepare generalist practitioners who engage in client-centered contemporary practice and scholarship. We achieve this professional preparation by focusing on the following educational goals:

Goal 1. Provide a learning environment that ensures the development of professional and personal leadership skills and values grounded in ethics and self-reflection;

Goal 2. Promote best professional practice by developing students’ appreciation of health, wellness and meaningful participation in life through occupational engagement within and across diverse contexts and environments; and

Goal 3. Foster the development of evidence-based critical thinking and clinical reasoning in support of life-long learning.

ACCREDITATION

The following statement is from the website (http://www.aota.org/education-careers/accreditation.aspx) for the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA®).

Accreditation has been a stated function of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA® (http://www.aota.org)) since 1923. AOTA’s Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) is recognized as the accrediting agency for occupational therapy education by both the United States Department of Education (USDE (http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg7.html#health)) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA (http://www.chea.org)). ACOTE is also an active member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA (http://www.aspa-usa.org/our-members)). ACOTE currently accredits 409 occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs (https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx) in the United States and its territories.

The School of Occupational Therapy at Husson University was initially accredited in 2003 and has been continuously accredited by ACOTE since then. The next accreditation review will occur in the academic year 2025/2026.

Additional information about AOTA can be obtained on the AOTA webpage (http://www.aota.org/). AOTA and ACOTE can be contacted at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda Maryland 20824-3449. ACOTE’s telephone number c/o AOTA’s is (301) 652 6611. The web address for ACOTE is: WWW.ACOTEONLINE.ORG (http://www.acoteonline.org). For more information about accreditation please see: http://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Accreditation/Overview.aspx.

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

Once students graduate with the MS in Occupational Therapy, they are eligible to take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination. Their address is: One Bank Street, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20878, (301) 990 7979. After successful completion of this exam, you will be an Occupational Therapist Registered (OTR). All states require licensure in order to practice, however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT examination. Please be aware that a felony conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to sit for the NBCOT examination or attain state licensure.

Admission to the M.S. in Occupational Therapy

Applicants who have completed a 4-year undergraduate baccalaureate degree in another major and/or from another institution who would like an entry-level degree in occupational therapy may apply for the MS-only program. The Office of Graduate Admissions coordinates admission to the MS-only. Because MS only students already have an undergraduate degree they do not need to meet the general education requirements offered in the first two years of our program, but must meet pre-requisite courses listed below. The admissions requirements for this option include a bachelor’s degree in a related or non-related field with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0. In addition all of the following pre-requisite course work must be completed with a grade of C+ or better prior to application to the M.S. in Occupational Therapy program:

- General Psychology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Statistics
- Research Design
- Principles of Sociology or Cultural Anthropology
- Anatomy and Physiology - 8 credits (6 in course work; 2 in lab)
- Human Growth and Development (must be lifespan)

As with the BS applicants the program requires 20 hours of volunteering or “shadowing” an Occupational Therapist in at least two specialty areas of Occupational Therapy.

Applications for admission to the fall semester are due by May 1st and notice of acceptance will be sent by June 30th. The School of Occupational Therapy action on applications is acceptance, waiting list, or rejection; at this time conditional acceptance is not an option.

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required for application. All students in the School of Occupational Therapy must possess the essential skills and behaviors required of a professional therapist. Therefore, all occupational therapy students must possess the essential qualifications, referred to as Technical Standards, listed at the end of this document to meet admission, progression, and graduation requirements. Your application to this program indicates that you have read the Technical Standards and are qualified to meet them.

Financial Aid

Please contact the Office of Financial Aid with your specific questions regarding financial aid. Students in the MS-only are classified as graduate students for the three years of study.
Progression policy (MS in Occupational Therapy)

Graduate

- Attain and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in order to progress each semester in the graduate program (1st, 2nd, and 3rd years).
- No more than six (6) credits of graduate course work in the "C+" range can be applied toward the Masters degree.

All Occupational Therapy students – Undergraduate and Graduate

- All first year professional courses must be completed successfully with a grade of C+ or better in order to progress to the second year. All second year professional courses must be completed successfully with a grade of C+ or better in order to progress to Fieldwork Level II clinical experiences and to the third year of professional courses. This includes a letter grade of “Pass” for all Level I Fieldwork courses.
- Students are expected to be full-time during the professional phase of the program. Under exceptional circumstances students may petition to be part-time. If the request is granted by the Faculty there is a prescribed sequence of courses students must take. Part-time students must complete the professional phase within 5 years of starting the professional phase whether they started as full time or part time students. All students must enroll full-time in the final graduate year, known as the “3rd year” in the curriculum. Again, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis but will be the exception rather than an expectation.
- A maximum of two professional level courses may be repeated.
- Grade deficiencies should be removed during the subsequent semester or during Summer/Winter/May sessions whenever possible. For programmatic purposes, successfully repeating a course does not negate the original grade.
- Students must demonstrate professional behaviors as outlined in the Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards, 2015. Professional behaviors are considered for progression in the program and students may be dismissed from the program for violating the policy regardless of academic standing.

Course Repeat Policy

Students must repeat any core course in which they do not achieve a grade of 77% or better the first time they are enrolled in the course. When a course is repeated, a grade of “B” (83%) is required in order to progress. A student who receives less than “B” (83%) the second time they take a core course may be dismissed from the OT program. Any withdrawal grade is considered an enrollment in the course.

Credit Hours

A) The credit hour translation used by the School of Occupational Therapy Program is consistent with the Carnegie Classification.

One (1) credit hour =

- 1 lecture hour
- 2 lab hours
- 2 seminar hours
- 13 hours of community service with assignments

B) Fieldwork requirements are reflected as:

- There are three Level I Fieldwork experiences consisting of 40 hours of experiential learning in combination with didactic coursework; each Level I Fieldwork is 1 credit hour.
- As dictated by the AOTA accrediting body, ACOTE, Level II Fieldwork requires a minimum of 24 weeks full-time placement for occupational therapy students. Typically, this is accomplished in two, 12 week placements. Each 12 week Level II Fieldwork placement is 6 credit hours for a total minimum of 12 credits hours of Fieldwork Level II. (ACOTE Standard C.1.13)

Grading Policies

- The system of evaluating a student’s achievement at Husson University in academic courses is by letter grade, with grade point values based upon an earned credit unit (see Husson University Catalog Academic Policies section – Grading system).
- Fieldwork I is evaluated using the Maine Occupational Therapy Educators Alliance (MOTEA) – Evaluation form. Fieldwork Level II achievement is graded according to the “AOTA Fieldwork Evaluation for the Occupational Therapist” form (page 46).

Technical Standards for the School of Occupational Therapy

Introduction

The technical standards listed below are minimal technical requirements for admission to, promotion within, and graduation from this entry-level professional program. The requirements are grouped into emotional, cognitive, social, communication, physical and health/safety requirements.

Occupational therapists work with people to improve their ability to function in a variety of environmental contexts. Occupational therapy education requires not only the acquisition of academic knowledge but also technical skills, professional attitudes and professional behaviors. Before program completion, graduates must acquire a broad base of knowledge and skills required to be safe and competent clinicians. In order to accomplish this goal, students must demonstrate key functions in a relatively independent manner. In addition, in order to participate fully in the program students are required to travel to settings in the community that may have unpredictable environments. Students with sensory and/or motor limitations may be unable to perform as an occupational therapy student.

Emotional Requirements

The student must have sufficient emotional stability to perform under stress produced by both academic study and the necessity of performing occupational therapy in simulated and real client/patient situations while being observed by faculty, peers, fieldwork educators, and others. Students need to have the endurance to adapt to a physically and emotionally demanding program. Students must tolerate moderate personal stress levels to achieve success while adhering to the professional standards and requirements of the program.

Cognitive Requirements
The student must exhibit cognitive skills necessary for problem solving, clinical reasoning, and judgment. Students must integrate a variety of material with increasing complexity presented throughout the curriculum including presentations, class discussions, client/patient interviews/evaluations, and readings from textbooks, journals and medical records. Students must be able to identify and respond accurately to factual information as well as subtle non-verbal cues of mood, temperament, and gestures provided by others. Students must be attentive and be able to focus during class and field experiences to fully participate in the learning environment.

Social Requirements

The student must have appropriate social skills for forming and maintaining relationships with a variety of people including faculty, peers, fieldwork educators, clients/patients and their families/significant others. Students must demonstrate the ability to participate as an effective group member. Flexibility and maturity in all interactions is required for this program. Verbal and non-verbal communication and interactions must be respectful, civil and professional in manner, demeanor and tone.

Communication Requirements

Students must be able to communicate in written and oral English with faculty, peers and clients in the classroom, clinical settings and community. Communication skills include oral speech, reading and writing in order to be able to complete written and oral assignments. Students must be able to communicate in English effectively and sensitively with patients.

Physical Requirements

Each student must be willing to submit to screening, examination and therapeutic treatment by student partners, of either gender, to participate in laboratory aspects of the curriculum. Students must be able to stand/sit long periods of time. Many procedures require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses. For this reason, students must have manual dexterity including function of wrists, hands, fingers, and arms in order to have the ability to engage in procedures involving grasping, manipulating, pushing, pulling, holding, extending, and rotation.

· Motor

Students must have sufficient motor function to obtain information from patients/clients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other standardized and non-standardized evaluative procedures. They must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general occupational therapy, including the strength to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, lift and transfer patients, and be able to stand/sit long periods of time. Many procedures require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses. For this reason, students must have manual dexterity including function of wrists, hands, fingers, and arms in order to have the ability to engage in procedures involving grasping, manipulating, pushing, pulling, holding, extending, and rotation.

· Speech

Ability to speak clearly in order to communicate with faculty, peers, fieldwork educators, clients/patients, physicians, and others; need to be understood on the telephone.

· Vision

The student must able to observe demonstrations and participate in laboratory aspects of the curriculum. Students must be able to observe patients and obtain relevant, meaningful assessment information from this observation. As such, students must have visual perception, which includes depth and acuity. They must also be able to read documents such as medical records, textbooks, and computer screens.

· Hearing

Sufficient to accurately hear on the telephone, discriminate sounds in the environment for safety, communicate with people, listen and assess through the stethoscope to discriminate sounds. It is possible to use compensatory aides and assistive technology such as hearing aids.

· Touch

Ability to palpate both superficially and deeply for tasks such as discrimination of tactile sensations and facilitation of body movements.

Health and Safety Requirements

Students must display good self-awareness of personal health practices and hygiene. They must understand the importance of good personal health habits and the prevention of disease/infection. They must display an awareness of personal issues and report any that would potentially interfere with their ability to competently care for others.

Students must complete the requirements listed below by mid-term of the first semester of the professional phase. All of these requirements must be kept up-to-date throughout the professional phase of the program and throughout Level II Fieldwork. The list below is a minimal list; more detailed and specific information will be provided to you as you approach the professional phase of your education to assure compliance with these requirements.

A. Immunizations:

a. Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)

b. Polio series

c. 2 step-Tuberculin series (only the initial year requires a 2 step procedure and subsequent years require one step)

d. Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) booster (every 10 years),

e. Varicella titer (determined through a blood draw as having had chicken pox is not sufficient to avoid getting it again, a titer assures a level of protection)

f. Hepatitis B series – must be started by September of the first semester of the professional phase (they are administered over a span of several months)

B. Current CPR Certification for children and adults: (American Red Cross or American Heart Association approved) It must be for the healthcare provider.

C. Personal Health Insurance (Husson University or private)

D. Fingerprinting (through Maine State Department of Education)
E. Criminal Background check to be provided by an approved source to be identified by the School of Occupational Therapy; we are currently using Castle Branch.

F. E-Learning (HIPAA, OSHA) Modules on Castle Branch.

It is the policy of Husson University, School of Occupational Therapy to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified students with a disability so they can meet these essential requirements in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act of 1990. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable will be determined on an individual basis.