

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

The School of Occupational Therapy at Husson University is an entry-level Master's (MS) program and offers multiple entry options for students wanting to become an occupational therapist. Students entering directly from high school apply to the five year BS/MS program while those who already have an undergraduate degree apply to the three year MS-only.

Entry-level BS/MS students have two options for undergraduate majors. They can apply to enroll in the BS Healthcare Administration and Public Health – Occupational Therapy track, or a BS in Psychology-Occupational Therapy track. The first two years of coursework for this track emphasize foundational general education courses and content related to either of the two majors. The third year begins the professional phase of formal Occupational Therapy coursework. Students meeting the progression criteria described below during the first two years are not required to submit an additional application before seamlessly progressing to the professional, Occupational Therapy, phase of study. The BS/MS program awards either a BS in Healthcare Administration and Public Health or a BS in Psychology, after successful completion of four years of study. At the successful completion of the fifth year of study, an MS in Occupational Therapy is awarded.

Students currently enrolled in another major at Husson University can apply to transfer into the program within the first two years of general undergraduate study. Undergraduate students from another institution may also apply to transfer into Husson University during the pre-professional phase. Undergraduate transfer students must meet the same criteria for grades and GPA as students who are enrolled from the first year. If they wish to receive a bachelor's degree, they will need to fulfill the requirements for either the BS in Healthcare Administration and Public Health or the BS in Psychology. If they choose to not receive a bachelor's degree, they would only need to fulfill the requirements for the MS only. It is recommended that undergraduate transfer students fulfill the shadowing recommendation described for first year applicants prior to being admitted to the Occupational Therapy track. Applicants may be admitted to the Healthcare Administration and Public Health major prior to completing these requirements and then apply to transfer into the Occupational Therapy track once these requirements are completed. The number of seats available for transfer students varies from year to year. Please be aware that meeting minimum requirements for application does not guarantee transfer acceptance.

Applicants who have completed a 4-year undergraduate degree in another major from Husson University or from another institution who would like an entry-level degree in occupational therapy are eligible to apply for the MS-only program. Please see the following section of the catalog for information specific to the MS-only graduate program in Occupational Therapy.

## VISION AND MISSION

### VISION STATEMENT:

The school of occupational therapy will serve the occupational needs of the community by educating practitioners who are compassionate, client-centered leaders.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

Husson School of Occupational Therapy prepares confident, clinically-skilled ethical practitioners who engage in client-centered, evidence-based practice. We achieve this through:

- Experiential learning
- Interprofessional collaboration
- Community engagement
- Fostering critical thinking
- Instilling the desire for lifelong learning

## Accreditation

The following statement is from the website ([Policies & Procedures – ACOTE \(acoteonline.org\)](#)) for the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®).

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) is an Associated Advisory Council of the Executive Board of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA®). ACOTE® is recognized as the accrediting agency for occupational therapy education by both the United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). ACOTE is also an active member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA). ACOTE currently accredits all occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs 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 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda Maryland 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA's is (301) 652-6611. The web address for ACOTE is: <https://www.acoteonline.org>. For more information about accreditation please see: <https://www.acoteonline.org>.

## 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 and their phone # is: (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 Criteria (BS Healthcare Administration and Public Health/ MS Occupational Therapy)

For the BS/MS program applicants must meet the following criteria:

- A high school average of 85 (3.0) GPA
- One letter of recommendation

- Successful completion of courses in math and biology; a choice of either chemistry or physics; psychology and anatomy and physiology are recommended but not required
- A written essay, and
- A minimum of 20 hours as a volunteer or “shadowing” a clinician in at least two areas of Occupational Therapy is recommended.

Volunteering or shadowing can be accomplished in a number of ways. Ideally, applicants will actually spend time with an Occupational Therapist to have a better understanding of the rolls and responsibilities of the profession. Alternately, volunteering can be done in a range of settings (medical, educational or recreational) and does not have to be under the supervision of an Occupational Therapist. The goal is to spend time with individuals who require services from the helping professions to better appreciate the experience of working in the field. Please contact the admissions office for additional options to fulfill this recommendation.

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

A freshman-entry Occupational Therapy student is classified as an undergraduate student for the first four years, and as a graduate student in the fifth year. As a five year program please be aware that as you progress through the program your student status will change and that may have an impact on some forms of financial aid. Please contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) with your specific questions regarding financial aid.

## Academic Progression Policies (BS Healthcare Administration and Public Health/ MS Occupational Therapy)

In order to remain enrolled and progress in the Occupational Therapy program, a student must meet the following requirements:

### Undergraduate students

- If students have less than a 2.0 GPA at the end of their first academic year, they will be required to establish a learning contract for the following semester (including a referral to the Center for Student Success).
- All first and second year coursework must be completed successfully before beginning the professional phase of coursework. Transfer students must also meet this standard.
- All students must attain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of the spring semester of the second academic year in order to begin the professional phase of courses.
- Students transferring into the professional phase (MS only) must also meet the same criteria of a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

## All Occupational Therapy students – Undergraduate and Graduate

- All third year professional courses must be completed successfully with a grade of C+ or better in order to progress to the fourth year.

All fourth 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 fifth year of professional 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 “5th year” in the curriculum. Again, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis but will be the exception rather than an expectation.
- Students in the Occupational Therapy program must obtain at least a “C+” (77%) or better in all Occupational Therapy core courses to remain in the Occupational Therapy program. Transfer students must meet the same criteria of receiving at least a “C+” in all Occupational Therapy core courses.
- A maximum of three courses in total may be repeated, excluding A&P labs. Of those a maximum of two professional level courses may be repeated.
- Attain and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in order to progress each semester in the graduate years (3rd, 4th and 5th) of the program.
- No more than six (6) credits of graduate course work in the “C+” range can be applied toward the Masters degree.
- 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, 2020. 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.
- Prior to being admitted into the professional phase of the Occupational Therapy program students must demonstrate successful completion of a minimum of two full time semesters at a post-secondary institution. Requests for exemption to this policy will be considered on an individual basis.

## 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.

## Prerequisite Pre-professional Courses

The following courses are prerequisite courses for all students and must be completed before the professional phase. All of the following prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of “C+”(77%) or better.

PY 111 General Psychology

SC 221 Anatomy –Physiology I

SL 221 Anatomy – Physiology Lab

- SC 222 Anatomy – Physiology II
- SL 222 Anatomy – Physiology Lab
- SY 201 Principles of Sociology (or)
- SY 222 Cultural Anthropology
- PY 141 Human Growth and Development (Lifespan)
- MS 132 Probability & Statistics

### **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 approximately 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).
- Please note, the School of Occupational Therapy only sends students to Level II sites where a licensed occupational therapist is present to provide supervision. In the event of an international placement students are only sent to sites where the occupational therapist is a graduate of a World Federation of Occupational Therapists approved program.

### **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. Students must achieve a C+ or better. The clinical portion of the Fieldwork Level II is graded according to the "AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation of the Occupational Therapy Student" form.

## **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 who do not meet the essential qualifications as defined below with or without reasonable accommodation may not be able to participate 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 be able to adapt to a physically and emotionally demanding program. Students must exhibit appropriate responses to 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 practice therapeutic techniques which may include physical contact. This will always be closely supervised by faculty and in the context of appropriately professional limits.

• **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 motor 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 be 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 of the occupational therapy curriculum. 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. A two step-Tuberculin series (only the initial year requires a two step procedure and subsequent years require one step) or Tspot blood draw test to document immunity.

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)

g. Annual Influenza vaccination or signed declination form; most clinical sites require proof of vaccination.

h. COVID-19 vaccine and booster or exemption approved through Husson University.

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

C. Personal health insurance (Husson University or private).

D. Fingerprinting with CHRC approval through the 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.

G. SOT Covid-19 Acknowledgement Form and training videos.

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.