

Pre- Occupational Therapy Curriculum

ACOTE, the governing body for Occupational Therapy has advised that beginning July 1, 2027, all entry-level OT positions will require a doctoral degree. SIU no longer recommends the masters track and encourages students to pursue Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) degrees.

Pre-occupational therapy is not a major. The student must choose a major in which to earn a baccalaureate degree. This major must be declared by the end of the freshman year. Transfer students must declare a major by the beginning of their second semester following transfer. Typical majors for pre-occupational therapy include Biological Sciences or Physiology, Psychology, Education, Exercise Science, and Therapeutic Recreation.

Minimum & Recommended Coursework for Illinois Schools

Bolded courses meet the minimum school requirements. Students are strongly recommended also to meet the recommended course requirements. Prerequisite courses must transfer with a B or better. Students must have earned a baccalaureate degree¹ with a minimum GPA of 2.75/4.0 for master's programs and 3.0/4.0 for doctoral programs. Some programs have higher GPA requirements. **DISCLAIMER: Pre-requisites are listed as guidelines only.** Students should contact the Office of Admissions of any schools to which they intend to apply to determine the exact science coursework required.

FIELD OF STUDY	CREDIT HOURS	MINIMUM & RECOMMENDED COURSES
English	6 semester hours	ENGL 101; ENGL 102
Biology³	4 semester hours	BIOL 211 or 213
Physiology¹	2 courses with labs (8 hrs)	PHSL 240A, 240B or PHSL 301 + PHSL 310
Inorganic Chemistry³	2 courses	CHEM 200, 201, 202; CHEM 210, 211, 212² or CHEM 140A, 140B
Psychology	9 semester hours	PSYC 102² (Intro); PSYC 250 (Lifespan Development); PSYC 331 (Abnormal); Recommend: other psychology courses including health (328), child (301), young adult (303); adulthood & aging (304); community, experimental, educational, perceptual; other sociology or anthropology
Allied Health	2 semester hours	AH 105
Mathematics^{2, 3}	9 semester hours	MATH 108, 109² (prerequisites); MATH 150³; MATH 282³
Physics³	8 semester hours	PHYS 203A/B, 253 A/B³
Introduction to Occupational Therapy³	2-3 semester hours	Currently offered at Chicago State, Governor's State, South Suburban College and Wright College.
Other Electives		Recommended: HED 311, 334; PHIL 105

¹Exercise Physiology (KIN 320) will not meet physiology requirement for some programs. ²Required only as pre-requisite for required courses. ³Required for select programs. UIC DOT program requires biology, chemistry, physics, and calculus.

Most programs require the GRE, and a minimum of 40 hours of human service/occupational therapy relevant experience. We recommend these experiences be in different practice settings. It is a good idea to log your hours, activities, and personal reactions.

Doctoral Programs in Occupational Therapy

In Illinois: **Southern Illinois University (DOT only), Elmhurst State, Governor's State University, University of Illinois at Chicago, Midwestern University and Rush University.** Regional programs include: **University of Southern Indiana at Evansville, Rockhurst University, St. Louis University, and Washington University. University of Illinois Chicago** has suspended admissions to its MOT program pending the development of its direct-entry DOT program. **Governor's State University's DOT program** is direct-entry only with a bachelor's of OT accredited by ACOTE. Otherwise, a Masters of OT or a current state occupational therapy license are required, in addition to other requirements. See Governor's State website for more information. **Elmhurst University** requires statistics (MATH 282 or equivalent). KIN 320 (Exercise Physiology) not accepted. **Chicago State University** requires Intro to Anthropology or Sociology, Statistics.