

Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

What are the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio Educational Student Learning Outcomes of the MOT Program?

Upon completion of the program, the student will demonstrate the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary for competent practice. The graduate student will:

1. Apply theoretical and empirical knowledge from the basic, behavioral, social, and occupational therapy sciences in planning and implementing occupational therapy practice. Advocate for clients, families and the profession through employment as an OT.
2. Communicate clearly and effectively in professional situations, using appropriate modes of expression, documentation and interpersonal interaction.
3. Implement professional and scientific inquiry, methodology, and scholarly writing.
4. Participate and contribute in the planning, development, and implementation of state of the art clinical practice.
5. Demonstrate competencies in the complex, collaborative and changing health care, educational, and community environments.
6. Display cultural competence in meeting the occupational performance needs of diverse populations.
7. Provide occupational therapy services within the framework of legal, ethical, and professional standards.

Is the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio MOT program accredited?

- Yes. Graduates of the Master of Occupational Therapy program are eligible to take the national certification exam administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be a Registered Occupational Therapist (OTR). Certification is necessary for licensure in most states.
- The Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program is accredited through the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). For further information about the accreditation process contact: American Occupational Therapy Association at: www.aota.org

When does the Occupational Therapy program begin?

- Orientation for new students is typically in early May and classes start the following week.

How many applicants do you accept a year?

- Forty candidates are accepted once a year.

Do you interview candidates for your program and what is the format?

- Yes. Individual and group interviews are conducted for the most competitive applicants to the MOT program. Typically about 80 invited students are interviewed each year. Interview dates typically take place in December and January. The class size is anticipated to be 40 students.

What characteristics would make me a competitive candidate for admission?

- We look for well-rounded individuals. A history of academic success, service to the community and/or to others, health care experience, Occupational Therapy shadowing, strong motivation to be an OT, excellent critical thinking skills, writing skills and interpersonal skills are examples of characteristics of what we look for in applicants.

How important is a candidates' GPA in getting an interview and how do I make myself more competitive?

- A minimum Prerequisite GPA of a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required for eligibility of review. All required courses must be passed with a grade of "C" or better. As with other universities or colleges, higher GPA's make a more competitive candidate. The goal is for candidates to be competitive and academically prepared to successfully handle the demands of the MOT program curriculum.
- However, the admissions committee does not base its decision solely on grade point averages. It evaluates the application packet holistically. Therefore, the quality and quantity of academic preparation, strong letters of recommendation, Occupational Therapy shadowing experience, community service activities, leadership evidence, and awards are all a part of the holistic evaluation process.

When must prerequisites be completed?

- All prerequisites must be completed by December prior to the year of entry. No prerequisites or bachelor's degree requirements can be "in progress" in the spring semester of the year of program entry. No exceptions.

Does it matter when prerequisite courses were taken? For example, do you accept courses taken over 10 years ago?

- We do not have an expiration date for our prerequisite courses. However, students are responsible for being prepared for the MOT academic curriculum.

Does it matter if I take my prerequisite courses at a two-year college instead of a four-year university?

- The GPA is calculated the same way, whether it was taken at a community college or a four-year university. No preference is given to courses taken at either institution. We understand the cost of education and want you to have as many options as possible in obtaining the prerequisite courses required for our programs. Please note that some required courses may not be offered at two-year colleges due to the academic level of the curriculum.

What course can I take if my institution does not offer courses in "Human Anatomy" and "Human Physiology?"

- If a combined Human Anatomy & Physiology course is taken, applicants must complete *both* Anatomy & Physiology I and Anatomy & Physiology II with the appropriate laboratories. Neither Anatomy & Physiology I nor II, alone, satisfies the Anatomy and Physiology requirements.

Do you accept CLEP or AP courses for prerequisites?

- We accept this type of credit as long as your courses have been recognized by your undergraduate institution and the credit is recorded on your college/university transcript.

Can I have courses in progress when I apply?

- Yes, you may have prerequisite courses and/or bachelor's degree course requirements in-progress until December prior to the year of program entry. All prerequisite coursework and the completion of your bachelor's degree are required in December prior to the year of program entry. No exceptions.

Is it beneficial to have Occupational Therapy Shadowing experience prior to the application to the MOT program?

- Yes, a *minimum* of 40 hours of hands-on shadowing or observation experience with a licensed Occupational Therapist is required prior to submitting the OTCAS application. (See the [MOT Admission Requirements](#) for additional information.)

How do I obtain Occupational Therapy shadowing hours?

- Take a HIPAA class so that you can tell prospective practitioners that you are HIPAA compliant.
- Volunteer to work in any capacity in an office, clinic, or facility where OT's are employed. In the course of your volunteer work, you might become acquainted with an OT who may be willing to let you shadow separate from your volunteer time.
- Approach smaller practices or rural practices where they might be more amenable to having someone shadow.

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- If you are affiliated with the military, try to find a military OT to shadow. OT's are typically on staff at military medical facilities.
- Contact your local, regional or state OT chapter for insight and guidance. Ask to attend one of their meetings and personally seek out an OT to shadow.

Does it matter what my undergraduate degree is in?

- The subject matter your undergraduate studies do not play a role in the admissions process. We encourage students to pursue an academic degree which is of their interest.
- Some examples of what other students have majored in at the undergraduate level include biology, kinesiology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, liberal arts and anatomy.

What are the steps to apply?

- The MOT program requires one online application through the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application Service (OTCAS). For full information and instructions to complete all steps required to officially apply, please refer to the [MOT Admission Requirements](#).
- For additional information and instructions from OTCAS, please see their website at: <https://portal.otcas.org/>

When does the application cycle open and close?

- The application period typically opens August 1st and closes on November 1st. For the 2015 application cycle it has not been announced yet by the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application Service (OTCAS). Please see their website as these updates become available at: <https://portal.otcas.org/>
- The application period closes on November 1st, but please review OTCAS's website for full deadline details.
- We encourage all applicants to plan accordingly and APPLY EARLY in the application cycle, but to ensure a quality application review the OTCAS's "Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions" section for instructions on the OTCAS website above.

How do I strengthen my application?

- We evaluate the entire applicant, not just their prerequisite GPA alone. Consider in your non-academic time to include community service and activities that demonstrate a commitment to helping people.
- Get hands-on health care experience: volunteer, observe, or shadow Occupational Therapists to learn more about the profession and develop a concept of how they practice.
- A variety of observation or shadowing hours with an Occupational Therapist is more important than the number of hours (beyond the minimum of 40 hours required to apply.) For example, an applicant with 100 hours of Occupational Therapy observation in a variety of settings (geriatrics, pediatrics, inpatient, outpatient, neuro rehab, etc.) may be stronger than an applicant who has 400 hours at one clinic.
- Plan accordingly for your academic goal-setting with your GPA and grades, especially your prerequisite GPA and earn high marks in all college coursework.
- If possible, have two different Occupational Therapists write your recommendation letters (if appropriate.)
- Review our website and become familiar with our program. Be able to tell us how you would be a good match for our program.
- Learn a second language, if you already know a second language, improve your language skills. Consider learning medical Spanish.
- For additional resources, please see the "Additional Occupational Therapy Resources" section below.

How does the program calculate GPA for admission requirements?

- We calculate your prerequisite GPA. For an applicant to be eligible for application review the prerequisite GPA must be a *minimum* of a 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

If I re-take a course, how does this affect my prerequisite GPA?

- If an applicant re-takes a prerequisite course, the program will use the higher grade in calculating the prerequisite GPA.

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- We encourage all students to know where they stand regarding their GPA for planning and goal-setting purposes. Please utilize the unofficial GPA calculator tool on our website (*coming soon*) to assist you with your projected GPA calculations. All official GPA calculations will take place after you have officially applied to the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio Master of Occupational Therapy program.

Is the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) required?

- No. We do not require taking the GRE or another standardized examination to be eligible to apply to the Occupational Therapy program.

If I am re-applying, what do I need to do?

- Students will be required to send in all new materials, transcripts, OTCAS application, supplemental application, etc. Records of past applicants are not kept on file at UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Is the program a full-time program or can it be taken part-time?

- The program is a full-time program. There are no part-time options.

Where do I send my application materials?

- Send ALL application materials, including transcripts, to OTCAS. Please see the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio [MOT Admission Requirements](#) for full instructions.

Where else can I get tips on applying?

- We hold Occupational Therapy [Open House Workshops](#) typically in late spring through early fall leading up to the application cycle deadline. Questions will be answered at these workshops including tips on how to apply and recommendations to strengthen your application will be shared.
- Videos of the workshops are typically posted online after the event at <http://uthscsa.edu/shp/welcome.asp> if you are unable to attend in person. To attend a workshop, you must RSVP in advance. The event is free and recommended for prospective applicants who are within two years applying.
- Please note that the Occupational Therapy Department does an annual review of the required admission requirements. Be sure to check our website for updated requirements information and plan accordingly for the application cycle which you anticipate applying for. We recommend annual attendance to the Open House Workshop event in case there are changes in the application process from year to year.

Can I work while going to the MOT program?

- The Occupational Therapy program is a full-time endeavor. Although employment should not impact the coursework or class attendance, we recommend that students plan accordingly with their time-management skills, financial management, study time, and personal balance to ensure academic success.

What does the MOT course schedule look like?

- All courses are only offered on week days during normal business hours. No evening, weekend, or distance learning courses are offered.

How can I find out if the prerequisite courses I took at my college/university meet the required prerequisites?

- Please refer to the [MOT Prerequisite Equivalency Chart](#) for additional information. If you have additional questions for a course, it is best to email us at SHPwelcome@uthscsa.edu and include: Name, contact information, program of interest, prerequisite you have a question regarding, course name, number, institution and credit hours (semester).
- Please note that each year the department reviews their admission requirements for accreditation purposes. Therefore, it is important to check the UT Health Science Center San Antonio School of Health Professions website for all updated information, deadlines and requirements.
- If you have additional needs, please contact the School of Health Professions Office of Admissions and Special Programs and make an appointment to have an advisor evaluate your course work. See contact information below.

I noticed on the Admission Requirements Checklist MOT program that prerequisite hour requirements are listed in semester credit hours. What if I attended an institution which awarded college credit in quarter hours instead of semester credit hours?

- Semester credit hours and quarter hours are not the same equivalent credit hours. Please refer to the quarter hour to semester hour equivalency chart below. If your quarter hours do not equate to the required semester credit hours, you will be missing the prerequisite requirement hours. (See next page for chart.)

Quarter Hours	Semester Credit Hours Equivalent
1	0.67
2	1.33
3	2.0
4	2.67
5	3.33
6	4.0
7	4.67
8	5.33
9	6.0
10	6.67

How many applications are received and how competitive is acceptance?

- UT Health Science Center at San Antonio receives a large volume of completed applications annually. Total numbers of applications varies per year. See the chart below for the entering 2014 MOT class statistics. Applicants are welcome regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability.

What are the average statistics of admitted students?

- Although it varies per year, please see the entering 2014 MOT class statistics below.

Number of Applicants in 2014	343
Class Size	40
Average Number of Shadowing Hours	150
Average Number of Community Service Hours	40
Prerequisite GPA	3.0-4.0 GPA, Average – 3.6 GPA
Age of Incoming Class	22-38, Average Age - 26

Why is a criminal background check required?

- Criminal background checks are done after at the phase after an applicant has been selected after their interview for an initial offer to the MOT program. Please note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or to attain state licensure.
- If you have a felony conviction, you may not be able to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) and you may not be able to attain a state licensure as an occupational therapist. You may contact NBCOT for the state licensure board for further information about this.

How can I ensure a successful application submission?

- Plan early and accordingly for the OTCAS and UT Health Science Center San Antonio listed application deadlines and document submissions.
- It is recommended that students apply and complete their OTCAS application before they submit their payment of the non-refundable supplemental application fee.

If I have questions about the application process, who should I contact?

- The first step for advice about the application process is the School of Health Professions Admissions Office at 210-567-6220; Toll-free 1-866-802-6288; Fax 210-567-6230; or email at SHPwelcome@uthscsa.edu. The program also offers Open House application workshops. Please visit the [Open House Workshop](#) page on the School of Health Professions Admissions website to look for these workshops.

Where can I get additional information?

- School of Health Professions Office of Admissions and Special Programs: shpwelcome@uthscsa.edu or 210-567-6220/Toll-free 1-866-802-6288
- Additional information about the Master of Occupational Therapy program: otdept@uthscsa.edu or 210-567-8880
- Questions regarding OTCAS application process and procedures: see the [OTCAS](#) website
Note: Please do not call or email OTCAS until you have read their online instructions
otcasinfo@otcas.org or 617-612-2860
- Additional information regarding application procedures contact the: UT Health Science Center at San Antonio Registrar's Office: registrars@uthscsa.edu or 210-567-2621

Additional Occupational Therapy Resources:

- American Occupational Therapy Association: www.aota.org
- Texas Occupational Therapy Association: www.tota.org
- National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy: www.nbcot.org
- Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners: www.ptot.texas.gov/page/home