Occupational Therapy, Entry-Level OTD (Professional Program)

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Administration:
Head of the Department, Interim: Kelly Tappenden
Director of the Entry-level OTD: Elizabeth Peterson

Program Code:
20GF5999EOTD (Entry-Level OTD)

Applications for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy: Entry-level are being accepted. The entry-level OTD degree is for students who have a bachelor’s degree in another subject. This program prepares students to be eligible for a national certification examination and for practice as an occupational therapist.

The entry-level OTD program has been granted Candidacy Status by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education® (ACOTE®) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) located at: 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200 North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929 (301) 652-AOTA www.acoteonline.org

The pre-accreditation review process leading to accreditation of the entry-level OTD program is underway. Accreditation of the entry-level OTD program is anticipated in December of 2024, pending successful review by ACOTE®. The program must complete an onsite evaluation, and be granted Accreditation Status before its graduates 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, all states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

The entry-level Doctor of Occupational Therapy is a professional clinical doctorate degree program. Detailed information on the entry-level OTD program, including admissions requirements, is available on the Department of Occupational Therapy’s entry-level OTD website. Applications for this program must be submitted through the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application System (OTCAS). The applications are then forwarded and processed through the Department of Occupational Therapy. Entry-level OTD applicants must also complete a UIC professional student application to be considered for admission.

The entry-level OTD program at UIC includes eight terms (33 months) of didactic and clinical education that includes lecture-discussion courses, laboratory-discussion classes, seminars, six fieldwork experiences, a capstone experience, and a capstone project.

Time limits for completion of program elements are as follows:

a. All elements of the program must be completed within 6 years.

b. Students must start Fieldwork Level II within 12 months of completing its prerequisites.

c. Fieldwork Level II (24 weeks, total) must be completed within 24 months after it begins.

d. An individual 14-week capstone experience must be completed within 24 months after it begins.

e. The doctoral capstone experience must be started after completion of all course work, prerequisite course work, and Fieldwork Level II as well as completion of preparatory activities defined in 2018 ACOTE OTD Standard D.1.3.

f. Leaves of absence beyond one year are not routinely considered.

Two PhD programs are available to students who wish to complete advanced preparation for research. These programs are in the areas of Disability Studies and Kinesiology and Nutrition. Please refer to the Disability Studies section of the graduate catalog for a description of the PhD in Disability Studies and the Kinesiology and Nutrition section for that program.

The Department of Occupational Therapy also offers a postprofessional Doctor of Occupational Therapy (P-OTD) degree that prepares students to fulfill roles as advanced practitioners, educators, and leaders or managers. Postprofessional OTD students must already be certified occupational therapists. More information on the P-OTD program can be found on the Department of Occupational Therapy’s postprofessional OTD website.