

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (GRAD)

Contact Information

Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
<http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/ocsci>

Ruth A. Humphry, Director

The Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy in the Department of Allied Health Sciences offers two graduate programs: a master of science (M.S.) degree with a major in occupational therapy and a doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in occupational science. The M.S. in occupational therapy program is a two-year program designed for individuals with a baccalaureate degree in a field other than occupational therapy. It is an entry-level program for individuals who wish to become occupational therapists. The Ph.D. program in occupational science accepts applicants with an earned master's degree in occupational therapy or a related field (see admission requirements below). The doctoral program prepares individuals who wish to pursue academic careers that could include teaching, research, and other scholarly activities related to occupational science and occupational therapy.

Requirements for Admission into the M.S. Program in Occupational Therapy

1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
2. Submission of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores from the Educational Testing Service
3. Academic record that demonstrates potential to do work at the graduate level
4. Completion of the occupational therapy supplemental application

The M.S. program has the following prerequisites. There are eight total prerequisite courses, four of which are fixed (core body of knowledge) and four of which come from a flexible and diverse menu of categories. All prerequisites except the occupation course must be taken for credit in an accredited academic institution of higher learning.

Fixed Prerequisites

1. Human anatomy with a laboratory¹
2. Human physiology¹
3. Abnormal psychology
4. Introductory statistics

¹ a two-semester sequence of combined anatomy and physiology; parts I and II may be substituted for separate courses.

Flexible Prerequisites

1. Human/individual behavior (for example, developmental psychology, child development, adulthood and aging, cognitive psychology, neuropsychology)
2. Modes of reasoning (for example, philosophy and ethics, statistics or data analysis [beyond the introductory course], religion, literature taught in a foreign language, research design or method of inquiry in a social science)

3. Study of social relationships, institutions, and systems (for example, linguistics, cultural/social anthropology, sociology, public health, public policy, leisure studies, social work, political science, minority studies)
4. Occupation: Complete a course in either an academic or community-based setting that requires the skills of your body as well as your mind. The occupation prerequisite must have the following characteristics:
 - new learning/challenge (not something you already do or know how to do)
 - formal (structured) learning context, but does not have to be a "for credit" course
 - at least once a week for a minimum of six weeks
 - social context (other learners present in person; online courses are not accepted)
 - results in an end product or performance
 - learners must be active (not just recipients of information)
 - course content is not designed to be used to benefit, teach, or communicate with others

Examples include creative writing, poetry writing, studio art class, woodworking, jewelry making, theater, dance, music, and some sports.

The master of science program requires a minimum of 63 semester credit hours. The program is 24 months in length and includes substantial field work experience.

Occupational therapy courses are available only to graduate students enrolled in the M.S. program at the University.

Requirements for Admission into the Ph.D. Program in Occupational Science

The Ph.D. program in occupational science accepts academically qualified applicants who have completed master degrees in occupational therapy, relevant social and behavioral sciences, or related health fields. Applicants receive a thorough review for evidence of potential success in a doctoral program in The Graduate School at UNC–Chapel Hill. In order to achieve closely mentored research experiences, only applicants with expressed interests consistent with existing programs of research and scholarly work of the faculty are admitted. Final selection among qualified applicants will be based on an interview with core faculty members in the Ph.D. program in occupational science. Review the UNC–Chapel Hill Web site for information about applying to The Graduate School. In addition to the formal application to The Graduate School, the following information is required:

1. Copies of all undergraduate and graduate transcripts
2. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (taken within the last five years)
3. Results of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language, if applicable)
4. A reflective essay detailing personal and professional goals relevant to the pursuit of a Ph.D. in occupational science at UNC–Chapel Hill and
5. Three letters of recommendation from individuals who support the applicant's potential as an educator and scholar

The Ph.D. program requires a minimum of 45 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree. This course of study covers four domains:

1. Occupational science
2. An interdisciplinary cognate area that complements occupational science
3. Research design and methodology
4. Competencies for an academic career

All graduates must complete a doctoral dissertation in occupational science. Students are also expected to reach satisfactory competence in teaching and research as determined by their career goals.

With approval from the instructor, occupational science courses are open to graduate students interested in

1. The study of people engaged in everyday activities in different situations and
2. How various experiences in an activity or patterns of engagement influence development, health, and quality of life across the lifespan.

Following the faculty member's name is a section number that students should use when registering for independent studies, reading, research, and thesis and dissertation courses with that particular professor.

Professors

Grace Baranek (10), Autism and Related Developmental Disorders, Sensory Features Impacting Daily Life Activities, Early Detection and Intervention

Ruth Humphry (4), Parents and Infants during Shared Activities, Family-Centered Services and Young Children with Developmental Disabilities

Clinical Professors

Susan Coppola (9), Aging, Fieldwork, Interprofessional Education, International Practice

Jenny Womack, Aging, Community-Based Practice, Physical Rehabilitation, Assistive Technology, Universal Design and Environmental Modifications

Associate Professor

Brian Boyd, Behavioral Interventions for Preschool-Aged Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Clinical Associate Professors

Nancy Bagatell, Adolescents and Adults with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities: Independent Living and Community Participation

Lauren Holahan, School-Based Occupational Therapy

Linn Wakeford, Occupation-Centered Services for Infants and Preschoolers with Developmental Delay

Assistant Professor

Antoine Bailliard, Social Justice, Migration, Mental Health

Clinical Assistant Professors

Emily Kertcher, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Pediatrics, Transition and Postsecondary Education

Raheleh Tschoepe, Physical Rehabilitation, Spinal Cord Injury and Other Neurologic Rehabilitation, Seating and Positioning, Community Reintegration

Professor Emerita

Cathy Nielson

Associate Professors Emeritae

Virginia Dickie

Jane Rourk

OCCT (Occupational Therapy)

Graduate-level Courses

OCCT 704. Research in Occupational Science and Therapy. 3 Credits.

Examination of research approaches and issues within occupational science and occupational therapy. Development of skills in writing research proposals and applying research results to insure evidence-based practice.

OCCT 718. Musculoskeletal Dimensions of Occupational Performance. 4 Credits.

An in-depth review of musculoskeletal anatomy and kinesiology. Application is stressed as related to anatomical, physiological, and biomechanical dimensions of movement and occupational performance.

OCCT 720. Neuroscience: Processes Supporting Occupation. 3 Credits.

Neurophysiological processes contributing to functional abilities. Study of CNS related to observed behaviors, affect, and higher cognitive components of function.

OCCT 720A. Fieldwork II. 6 Credits.

Direct experience with clients/patients in varied service treatment settings. Experience will include adult disabilities.

OCCT 720B. Fieldwork II. 6 Credits.

Direct experience with clients/patients in varied service treatment settings. Experience will include adult disabilities.

OCCT 722. Biomedical and Phenomenological Perspectives on Illness and Disability. 4 Credits.

The biomedical and phenomenological aspects are presented and contrasted, using medical literature and personal narratives. Emphasis on humanistic values, biomedical information, and investigative reasoning for effective occupation-centered practice.

OCCT 725. Human Capacities: Body Structures and Functions I. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the structures, functions, and processes of the human body that support participation. Mental and sensory processing, digestion, reproduction, endocrine, and immune responses that support occupation are explored.

OCCT 726. Human Capacities: Body Structures and Functions II. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the structures, functions, and processes of the human body that support participation. The focus is on motor and somatosensory capacities and the structures related to those functions.

OCCT 727. Perspectives on Disability and Health I. 2 Credits.

An exploration of the biological and phenomenological aspects of specific mental and physical health conditions that may be experienced by children, adolescents, and young adults.

OCCT 728. Perspectives on Disability and Health II. 2 Credits.

This course addresses the biological and phenomenological aspects of specific mental and physical health conditions that may be experienced by adults.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 727.

OCCT 729. Perspectives on Disability and Health III. 2 Credits.

Complex health conditions and changes affecting older adults' capacity to engage in meaningful occupations. Biomedical and narrative perspectives.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 727.

OCCT 736. Occupational Therapy Practice Environments. 2 Credits.

Overview of OT practice settings, professional organizations, and regulatory bodies. Factors influencing practice, including legislation, reimbursement, documentation, and culture of communities. Ethics, confidentiality, self-awareness, teamwork, and professionalism in practical settings.

OCCT 738. Political, Administrative, and Financial Contexts of Service Delivery. 3 Credits.

Exploration of public policies and regulations, administrative systems and skills, reimbursement, and financial aspects of traditional service delivery system.

OCCT 748. Fundamentals of Occupation-Centered Practice. 4 Credits.

In-depth examination of core principles and methods involved in comprehensive occupational analysis, assessment of occupational performance and therapeutic occupation across practice areas.

OCCT 750. Occupations, Adaptation, and Technology I. 5 Credits.

Problem-orientation approach to assessment, treatment planning, and use of clinical reasoning to develop intervention strategies. Remediative, compensatory, and adaptive approaches to physical and psychosocial dysfunction are explored through case studies.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 726 and 748.

OCCT 751. Older Adults: Occupations, Adaptation, and Technology II. 2-3 Credits.

A problem-based learning approach to the occupational therapy clinical reasoning process; assessments, interventions, and adaptations for older adults.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 826 and 748.

OCCT 755. Foundations of Occupational Therapy Practice. 3 Credits.

Introduction of core foundations for occupation-centered occupational therapy practice. Students learn fundamentals of professional communication and behavior, therapeutic use of self, clinical reasoning, activity analysis, theory, and evidence-based practice.

OCCT 756. Therapeutic Processes I. 3 Credits.

Occupational therapy majors only. This course focuses on occupational therapy practice with children, adolescents, and young adults who have disabilities or health problems that inhibit occupational performance and/or social participation, across a variety of situations.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 755 and 765L.

OCCT 757. Therapeutic Processes II. 3 Credits.

A focus on occupational therapy practice with adults that have physical and/or mental health conditions that impact their participation in occupations.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 727.

OCCT 765L. Foundations of Occupational Therapy Practice Lab. 2 Credits.

Provides opportunities for students to practice and begin developing key clinical skills in observation, analysis, interpersonal interactions/communication, documentation, and applying concepts related to theory-based and evidence-based practice.

OCCT 766L. Therapeutic Processes Lab I. 2 Credits.

Occupational therapy majors only. Provides opportunities for students to practice and begin developing key clinical skills in assessment, intervention planning, intervention strategies, and documentation in practice with children, adolescents, and young adults.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 755 and 765L.

OCCT 767L. Therapeutic Processes Lab II. 1 Credit.

This applied lab addresses the content and technical skills of practice with adults who encounter occupational therapy due to various life and health conditions.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 766L.

OCCT 770. Occupational Science. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the philosophical tenets of occupational science and their application to occupational therapy. The course highlights the multiplicity of interconnected factors which generate participation in occupational situations.

OCCT 771. Life Course I: Early Years. 2 Credits.

Changing capacities for engagement with occupations and occupational opportunities during childhood, adolescents, and early adulthood.

OCCT 772. Life Course II: Adulthood. 1 Credit.

Examination of the patterns of participation through occupational engagement with families, communities, workplace, and other social structures in the middle years of the life course.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 771.

OCCT 773. Life course III: Older Adults. 3 Credits.

Changing capacities for engagement with occupations and occupational opportunities during older adulthood. Strategies for compensation and adaptation.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 771, 772.

OCCT 781. Environments and Technologies. 2 Credits.

Occupational therapy majors only. Exploration of environmental dimensions of performance. Learn to use assistive and rehabilitation technologies in practice. Students assess situational impact on performance, modify the environment for therapeutic effect, and utilize technology.

OCCT 826. Occupational and Environmental Transformations I. 3 Credits.

Investigation of continuity/discontinuity in pattern, function, and meaning of occupations from early adulthood through old age. Analysis of individual differences in occupational performance within family, SES, and cultural contexts.

OCCT 828. Occupational and Environmental Transformations II. 3 Credits.

Age-related changes in occupational performance from infancy through adolescence. Developmental contextualism used to frame intrinsic changes and environmental influences.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 826.

OCCT 836. Community Level OT Practice. 3 Credits.

This course develops the students' understanding of social systems, how they function, and are perpetuated through everyday practices. Students partner with community entities to identify strengths, resources, and service gaps and develop a response.

Requisites: Prerequisites, OCCT 727, 728, 757.

OCCT 837. Professional Development and Transition to Practice. 2 Credits.

Professional understanding and skills to assess practice context, plan programs, and management of profession interpersonal relationship for collaboration and service delivery.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 736.

OCCT 896. Independent Study: Occupational Therapy and Science. 1-15 Credits.

Elective. Independent study to pursue specific interests and topics. Faculty supervision. May be repeated for credit.

OCCT 990. Applied Research Seminar I. 1 Credit.

Applied Research Seminar with particular focus on the application of the scientific process to address an identified clinical problem.

Requisites: Prerequisite, OCCT 704.

OCCT 992. Master's Applied Research Experience. 3 Credits.

Collaborative research projects in occupational science or occupational therapy. Emphasis on data collection, analysis, and professional communications of research findings.

OCCT 993. Master's Research and Thesis. 3 Credits.

Permission of the department.

Repeat rules: May be repeated for credit.

OCSC 994. Doctoral Research and Dissertation. 3 Credits.

Doctoral dissertation in occupational science.

OCSC (Occupational Science)

Graduate-level Courses

OCSC 826. Occupational and Environmental Transformations I: Adulthood. 3 Credits.

Investigation of continuity/discontinuity in pattern, function, and meaning of occupations from early adulthood through old age. Analysis of individual differences in occupational performance within family, SES, and cultural contexts.

OCSC 828. Occupational and Environmental Transformations II: Childhood. 3 Credits.

Study of age-related change process shaping everyday activities from infancy through adolescents within family, SES, and cultural contexts.

OCSC 842. Historical Evolution of Occupational Therapy and Science. 3 Credits.

The historical analysis of occupational therapy and occupational science centers upon questions of philosophical foundations, knowledge development, division of labor, and professionalism within health care.

OCSC 844. Research Theory and Methodology in Occupational Science and Therapy. 3 Credits.

Investigation of different underlying philosophical dispositions found in occupational science and therapy and the associated methodologies guiding the study of people engaged in occupations. Applied examples of research design.

OCSC 845. Conceptual Introduction to Occupational Science. 3 Credits.

Deconstruction of the original precepts of occupational science while examining several works from other disciplines. Study of early and recent trends and critiques of occupational science to develop an assessment of the state of the discipline and future directions.

OCSC 855. Action Theories. 3 Credits.

A reading and discussion of major theories of action from various disciplines. Works read will also entail associated issues such as identity, place, culture, and social relations.

OCSC 890. Seminar on Special Topics in Occupational Science. 3 Credits.

Discussion and critical evaluation of philosophy, theory, and scientific issues associated with the study of people's activities in the context of their everyday lives. Topics differ each semester.

OCSC 896. Independent Study in Occupational Science. 3 Credits.

Independent study to pursue specific interests and topics under faculty supervision.