

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (GRAD)

Contact Information

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

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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

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.

OCSC 994. Doctoral Research and Dissertation. 3 Credits.

Doctoral dissertation in occupational science.