

Occupational Therapy Assistant

Program Code:

OA

Academic Area:

Health Sciences

Type:

Associate in Science

Program Statement

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program advances the mission of Bristol Community College by providing an accessible, innovative, and inclusive education that prepares students to navigate and succeed in our ever-changing world. The program prepares generalist, entry-level occupational therapy assistants to practice under the supervision of registered occupational therapists in a variety of health care, home, school, workplace, community, and other settings. The OTA program prepares graduates to help people of all ages with physical, cognitive, psychosocial, sensory, emotional, and other challenges regain, develop, or master everyday skills in order to participate in meaningful occupations and live independent, productive and satisfying lives. The OTA program embraces the institutional values of student success, communication, respect, inclusion and innovation and conducts the program in a supportive community that values professionalism, evidence-based practice and lifelong learning, respects diversity and prepares well-rounded learners for employment.

Program Information

- The Associate of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) consists of 73 credits, including 20 pre-admission credits, 10 credits of General Education courses, and 43 OTA credits. Once admitted into the OTA program, students complete the OTA courses in the required sequence over a period of two academic years.
- This is a hybrid program which means classes are in-person and/or online, and all labs and fieldwork are in person. Classes and labs can be completed in two-three days/week. Fieldwork visits occur on additional days which vary each semester. The 4th semester consists of 16 weeks of full-time fieldwork, typically Monday to Friday. The program is based on the New Bedford campus. An additional 20 hours/week are required to complete readings, lab preparation and assignments. Students typically need to decrease work obligations in order to be successful in the program.
- Students develop academic knowledge, clinical skills, and professional behavior through classroom, online, lab, fieldwork, and off-site learning experiences.
- Computer technology is integrated throughout the OTA program. All OTA courses use online course spaces, which means that all OTA students must have access to a computer that is Internet enabled and have information and computer literacy skills, which include using web browsers and other web applications to locate and appropriately use information provided in an online format. Students should also have the ability to create, edit, save and retrieve documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.
- All applicants should review detailed information about technical requirements, time expectations, accessibility and Online Learning, and how to succeed in an online classroom: Online Learning at Bristol
- Prior to applying, all students should assess their ability to succeed in the online environment by completing the Online Learning Introduction course "Is Online Learning for me?" self assessment. Please be advised the college Learning Management System is moving to Canvas in the summer of 2024. These tools are being revised for Canvas.
- Non-OTA majors may register for OTA 111 Introduction to Occupational Therapy with permission of the program director.



- Once admitted to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, students must complete all OTA courses in the required sequence.
- Students considering transferring into a bachelor's degree program in Occupational Therapy are encouraged to choose HST 111 or HST 112 as electives.
- **PSY 255** Abnormal Psychology, and **PSY 252** Child Development are recommended for those who intend to transfer. However, these courses are not required in the OTA program and are therefore not Financial Aid eligible. Students are encouraged to speak with an Advisor about taking these courses prior to acceptance into the OTA program.
- Many General Education courses are available nights, weekends, Online, and at several of our physical campuses.

After Bristol

- Bristol graduates are recognized as well-prepared entry-level practitioners by the clinical community and employers.
- Graduates have taken positions as Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants in area schools, acute care, rehabilitation and psychiatric hospitals, residential and day habilitation programs, nursing homes, sub-acute rehabilitation, home care and outpatient settings.
- Graduates may transfer to Occupational Therapy programs at senior institutions. Specific prerequisite requirements and transfer credit are determined by the transfer institution.

General Education Competencies

Infused in the college curriculum are the general education competencies of Critical Thinking, Ethical Dimensions, Global and Historical Awareness, Human Expression, Information Literacy, Multicultural and Social Perspectives, Oral Communication, Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning and Discovery, Written Communication. These are met through prerequisite and program course work.

Recommendations for Success

Students are advised to complete most general and elective courses prior to beginning OTA program courses. OTA classes, labs, and clinical fieldwork require attendance two to three days per week in Semester 1, 2, and 3 and 40+ hours/week in Semester 4. Fieldwork placements may include days, evenings and/or weekends. Students typically need to decrease work obligations as program requirements increase.

Program Outcomes 2022-2024

The total number of graduates from the Bristol Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program during the three-year period 2022- 2024 was 42, with an overall graduation rate of 80%. Program results (certification exam pass rates) from the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®) can be found online at School Performance (nbcot.org). <https://www.nbcot.org/Educators-Folder/SchoolPerformance>

Graduation Year	Students Entering	Students Graduating	Graduation Rate
2022	14 (Fall 2020)	10	79%
2023	18 (Fall 2021)	13	72%



2024	10 (Fall 2022)	10	78%
Total 3-year	42	34	80%

Admission Process and Requirements

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program is a competitive-entry program with selective admission requirements. A limited number of students are admitted. Meeting minimal requirements places the applicant in the selection pool but does not guarantee admission. In order to be considered minimally qualified, applicants must submit their application, all supporting documents and fulfill the following criteria by the priority application deadline of February 1:

1. Complete the following pre-admission courses with a B- or higher:

- BIO 233: Human Anatomy and Physiology I or BIO 234: Human Anatomy and Physiology II or equivalent. BIO 233 and BIO 234 are prerequisites to OTA 121 and OTA 125
- COM 104: Fundamentals of Public Speaking or equivalent
- ENG 101: Composition I: College Writing
- ENG 102: Composition II: Writing About Literature
- HLT 101: Medical Language Module I or HLT 102: Medical Language Module II or equivalent
- MTH 119: Fundamental Statistics
- PSY 101: General Psychology or equivalent

NOTE: Students must complete all science courses required for admission within 5 years of the priority application deadline for the program. In addition, applicants must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher in the aforementioned pre-admission courses. A grade of B- in all pre-requisite courses results in a 2.7 GPA which makes the applicant ineligible for application to the program. It is suggested that grades higher than a B- be earned to be a competitive candidate.

2. Attend one mandatory Health Science Information Session during the year prior to anticipated admission. Applicants are advised to preregister well in advance as seating is limited.

Transcripts from attendance at other regionally accredited colleges or universities may be required with submission of your admissions application. Please refer to the Admissions page within this catalog for further information. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your application not being reviewed for the program to which you applied.

Applicants are advised to apply well in advance of the priority application deadline.

Applicants are also invited to learn more about the career by exploring the American Occupational Therapy Association's website, and observing the following videos about occupational therapy practice:

- He can be a dad in every way he wants to be
- Together we set a goal to dance
- He is thriving
- NBC's The Today Show Shares Family Story
- What is Occupational Therapy? Three Wounded Warriors Explain

Requirements Upon Admission

Grade Requirements and Timelines

Once enrolled in the OTA program, students are required to complete all courses in the four semesters of instruction in the required sequence in order to integrate theoretical and clinical education.

Students must receive a minimum grade of "C" (75) in both the lecture and lab sections in all required occupational therapy assistant (OTA) courses. Failure to earn a C (75) or better will result in program probation. Failure of two courses will result in program dismissal. Students who fail two courses will not be readmitted to the program. Students who are passing and withdraw or do not complete an OTA course may reapply to the program only once. Readmission is not guaranteed and is on a space available basis. The readmission decision is based on the recommendations of the faculty and department chair. Students must resume OTA coursework within one year of the date of withdrawal. Students must successfully complete all required coursework, clinical and program objectives and competencies within four years of initial acceptance into the OTA program in order to graduate. Level II fieldwork must be completed within 12 months of completion of the OTA academic coursework.

Cost of Attending and Completing the OTA Program

The total cost of attending and completing the OTA program (73 credits) is as follows:

2023-2024 Tuition and Fees

- In State (\$277 per credit) \$20,221
- Out of state (\$483 per credit) \$35,259;

Additional college fees:

- \$10 Application fee; \$35 for non-residents
- \$50 Registration deposit (applied to the total semester charge)
- \$37 per semester Student Support Fee (included in total above)
- \$9/credit Instructional Support Fee (included in total above)

Additional costs for the OTA program are approximately \$1,440 per year. This includes but is not limited to:

- \$156 - Student membership in American Occupational Therapy Association
- \$70 - CPR certification
- ~\$30 - one fieldwork shirt and name tag
- ~\$40 - Lab supplies
- ~\$20 - Program pin
- ~\$70 - Attendance at one professional conference and three meetings
- ~\$400 - Fieldwork-related costs, including travel, supplies and site-specific requirements such as fingerprinting or National Background Check
- ~\$2,000, books and subscriptions.

All students must be enrolled in a health insurance plan. Students can use their own plan or purchase the college plan, which is \$5770 for Fall and Spring semesters combined. All costs are subject to change. Please refer to the Tuition & Fees page of our website for the most up-to-date information.

Fieldwork Affiliations

Transportation to the fieldwork sites is the student's responsibility. Students need to have reliable transportation and should be prepared to travel an hour or more from campus. Students are advised to decrease outside work obligations in the first three semesters, then discontinue work during full-time fieldwork affiliations in the fourth semester. Fieldwork hours may extend into evenings and weekends and extend beyond the academic year. The availability of clinical affiliations depends on the ability of area healthcare providers to accept students. In some cases, affiliations will be completed in a fifth semester.

Health Requirements

Accepted applicants must comply with the Bristol Community College's Health Services requirements. This includes an annual physical examination, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B vaccination and titre and varicella (chicken pox) immunization or titre within the last 12 months. Covid-19 vaccination and boosters are required to complete the program. If under the age of 21 you must also be tested for meningitis. A two-step TB test and flu shot is required each year. Students who decline having a flu shot may not be able to complete the program's clinical fieldwork requirements. Students must be certified by the American Heart Association in CPR (Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers). Students are required to maintain CPR certification and health insurance throughout their enrollment. A ten-panel random drug screen is required upon entrance, each academic year, and/or at random. If there is a need for any re-testing, the fee is paid by the student.

Please be advised that despite Massachusetts law which permits the use of medical marijuana and the possession, use, distribution and cultivation of marijuana in limited amounts, any possession, use, distribution or cultivation of marijuana remains prohibited under college policy pursuant to Federal law. Further, any student who tests positive for marijuana will be ineligible for clinical placement. Please refer to the College's Student Handbook for the College's complete Marijuana Policy.

Additional Requirements

Upon admission to the OTA Program, students will be required to attend a program information meeting. Physical examination and CPR certification must be completed prior to the start of classes or students will not be able to attend clinical fieldwork, which will prevent completion of program objectives.

Upon admission to the program and at regular intervals during the program, all students must undergo a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check and a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check. These checks are required due to potential unsupervised contact with children, the disabled, or the elderly during clinical experiences. The College is authorized by the Commonwealth's Department of Criminal Justice to access CORI records. Sex Offender checks shall be performed pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 6, Sections 178C-178P. A positive CORI/SORI check may prevent students from participating in clinical assignments in contracted health facilities and prevent students from completing the program objectives. Students found to have certain criminal convictions or pending criminal actions will be presumed ineligible for clinical placement. Students may be responsible to pay the cost of finger printing at specific clinical sites. For more information regarding the College's CORI/SORI check process, please contact the Department Chair.

The Massachusetts Board of Allied Health Professionals requires licensure applicants to report any history of felonies or misdemeanors and may deny licensure to those applicants. Further information is available from the MA Board of Allied Health regarding guidelines for applicants with criminal records call (617) 701-8605 or email at alliedhealth@mass.gov.



The Disciplinary Action Committee of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) requires a criminal background check of all applicants and may refuse to administer the certification exam, and/or deny certification to any individual charged with or convicted of a felony. For further information, contact NBCOT, One Bank Street, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878; (301) 990-7979.

Essential Functions

Students must be able to perform the essential functions of an OTA with or without accommodations as defined by the professional standards and functions outlined in the program handbook. Students will be asked to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) attesting to their ability to perform these tasks.

Accreditation

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's phone number C/O AOTA is 301.652.6611. The website is www.acoteonline.org and email is accred@aota.org

Certification and Licensure

Graduates of the program are eligible to sit for the National Certification Examination for the Occupational Therapy Assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the graduate will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). All states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination and evidence of good moral character. A criminal record may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification and/or attain state licensure.

Preadmission Courses

Preadmission courses must be completed at time of application with grades of B- or better.

Course #	Title	Credits
	BIO 233 or BIO 234	4
COM 104	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3
ENG 101	Composition I: College Writing	3
ENG 102	Composition II: Writing about Literature	3
	HLT 101 or HLT 102	1
MTH 119	Fundamental Statistics	3
PSY 101	General Psychology	3

Degree Requirements



General Courses

Course #	Title	Credits
BIO 233	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
BIO 234	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
COM 104	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3
ENG 101	Composition I: College Writing	3
ENG 102	Composition II: Writing about Literature	3
	HLT 101 or HLT 102	1
MTH 119	Fundamental Statistics	3
PSY 101	General Psychology	3
SOC 101	Principles of Sociology	3

Elective Courses

HST 111 or HST 112 recommended for transfer.

Course #	Title	Credits
	Global and Historic Awareness Elective	3

Program Courses

Course #	Title	Credits
OTA 111	Introduction to Occupational Therapy	4
OTA 117	Psychosocial Performance	4
OTA 121	Cognitive and Sensorimotor Performance	4
OTA 125	Movement in Human Performance	3
OTA 127	Psychosocial Therapeutic Modalities	4
OTA 233	Common Conditions of Physical Dysfunction	4
OTA 235	Professional Practice Skills	4
OTA 237	Developmental/Pediatric OT Practice	4
OTA 241	Level II Occupational Therapy Clinical Practice - A	5
OTA 243	Level II Occupational Therapy Clinical Practice - B	5
OTA 244	Seminar in Occupational Therapy	2

Required Course Sequence - Fall Semester 1

BIO 234 and SOC 101 must be completed prior to (preferred) or during the first semester.

Course #	Title	Credits
OTA 111	Introduction to Occupational Therapy	4
OTA 117	Psychosocial Performance	4
BIO 234	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
SOC 101	Principles of Sociology	3



Required Course Sequence - Spring Semester 2

Course #	Title	Credits
OTA 121	Cognitive and Sensorimotor Performance	4
OTA 125	Movement in Human Performance	3
OTA 127	Psychosocial Therapeutic Modalities	4
	Global and Historic Awareness Elective	3

Recommended Course Sequence - Summer

Consider taking any remaining General Education courses to lighten semester load.

Required Course Sequence - Fall Semester 3

Course #	Title	Credits
OTA 233	Common Conditions of Physical Dysfunction	4
OTA 235	Professional Practice Skills	4
OTA 237	Developmental/Pediatric OT Practice	4

Required Course Sequence - Spring Semester 4

Course #	Title	Credits
OTA 241	Level II Occupational Therapy Clinical Practice - A	5
OTA 243	Level II Occupational Therapy Clinical Practice - B	5
OTA 244	Seminar in Occupational Therapy	2
Total credits:		73

Category Descriptions

BIO 233 or BIO 234

Credits: 4

Course #	Title	Credits
BIO 233	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
BIO 234	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4

HLT 101 or HLT 102

Credits: 1

MAA 101 or HLT 106 can be substituted for HLT 101 or HLT 102.

Choose one of the following:



Course #	Title	Credits
HLT 101	Medical Language Module I	1
HLT 102	Medical Language Module II	1

Global and Historic Awareness Elective

Credits: 3

Choose one Global and Historic Awareness elective.