

Preparation for Admission to Occupational Therapy Programs

Most accredited programs in occupational therapy (OT) lead to master's degrees. Requirements described here include prerequisite courses typically required by occupational therapy schools such as the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) and the University of Tennessee at Memphis (UT). Other OT programs have similar requirements, but you should study the specific prerequisites for the schools to which you plan to apply. The prerequisite courses are usually completed in 2 to 3 years at DSU (depending on the number of credit hours required by the occupational therapy school). After completion of 3 years at occupational therapy school, you receive a master's degree in occupational therapy.

	Courses	Credit	Notes
General Education Requirements			
English Composition	ENG 101 and ENG 102 or 103	6	Two semesters of English composition
Communication Studies	COM 101	3	Public speaking
Humanities and Fine Arts	Choose 3 courses from: history, literature, foreign language, journalism, philosophy, art or music appreciation, or theater.	9	Because literature, fine arts, and history are required for all DSU majors, most students should select courses that will count toward a DSU degree in case they decide to stay at DSU until graduation. See the current DSU Bulletin for details on general education courses.
Social/behavioral science	SOC 101 (UT), ANT 101 (UT) plus one from: ECO 210 or 211, GEO 201 or 303, PHI 201, PSC 103 or 201.	6-9	For UMMC, two courses are required, chosen from anthropology, economics, political science, sociology, or additional psychology. (If psychology courses are used for this section, they must be in addition to those specifically required in the psychology section below). For UT, three social science courses are required and must include sociology and anthropology. The specific social science courses listed satisfy DSU general education requirements and are recommended for students considering completing a degree before enrolling in OT school (See <i>Bulletin</i> for course descriptions).
24-27			
Science and other Requirements			
Mathematics	MAT 104/105 or MAT 106 MAT 300 or PSY 331	6-9	College algebra and trigonometry. Precalculus (MAT 106) can substitute for MAT 104/105. Although not specifically required for professional school, trigonometry (or precalculus) is a prerequisite for physics.
Chemistry, physics	CHE 101, 103; PHY 221, 233	8-9	One semester each of general chemistry and physics with laboratories.
Biology	BIO 100, 101, 230/231 BIO 329 (UT)	12-19	Principles of biology I and II, plus both semesters of anatomy and physiology. UT also requires medical terminology (BIO 329).
Psychology	PSY 101, PSY 307 plus 302 (UT) or 313 (UMMC)	9-12	General psychology, developmental psychology (or growth and development) plus abnormal psychology (UT) or adolescent psychology (UMMC). To fulfill prerequisites of both UMMC and UT, take all four courses.
Computer applications	CIS 205	3	UT requires a computer applications course. UMMC does not, but computer proficiency is a necessary skill for any student considering a career in the health professions.
38-52			
Recommended Electives			
Add additional electives to bring your credit hour total to at least the required minimum (72 for UMMC, 90 for UT). Recommended electives include: Spanish, advanced science courses, medical terminology, additional psychology courses, and activity-based art courses. Consider courses that meet the prerequisites of other health related programs to which you may also wish to apply (especially physical therapy). Consider taking courses which meet the requirements for the DSU biology degree. You may decide to complete a bachelor's degree before attending OT school.			

Additional Notes:

- The occupational therapy program at UMMC begins each May. The program at UT begins each January.
- UMMC application deadline is usually January 15th, but check their website for the current deadline.
- Enrollment in upper-level BIO courses (BIO 200 and above) requires that you have "Full Admission" status, which means that you have completed BIO 100, BIO 101, CHE 101 and CHE 103 with no grades below C. Consult the University Bulletin or the Division of Biological and Physical Sciences web site for more information.
- Observation time: UMMC requires 16 hours in a minimum of two occupational therapy clinical departments. UT does not specify a minimum number of hours, but expects applicants to verify that they have done volunteer or observation in OT. It is important that the applicant has visited a variety of settings and observed occupational therapists who work with children and adults representing different age groups and develops a commanding knowledge of the profession.
- Observation hours are only accepted from January to December of the application year. You must submit a verification form for observation hours by application deadline. The form for this purpose is available from the UMMC SHRP website.
- Credit for physical education, military science, dogmatic religion, vocational courses, and science courses designed for non-science majors may not be counted toward the prerequisites for professional school.
- UT requires submitting a score for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) Writing Assessment.
- The stated minimum grade point average for admission to this program is 2.75 (UMMC) or 2.5 (UT). To be competitive, you need a GPA significantly higher than this minimum-at least 3.0. The average GPA of students who are accepted is higher still. All grades, including failing grades and grades of repeated courses, are used to calculate your GPA for the purpose of admission. A minimum grade of C is required in each course accepted for prerequisite credit.
- For more information on occupational therapy programs, visit web sites of the schools you plan to apply to, such as UMMC at <http://shrp.umc.edu/OT> and UT at <http://www.uthsc.edu/allied/ot>
- Also see our frequently asked questions (FAQ) at:
<http://www.doctortee.com/dsu/tiftickjian/faqs/ot-faq.html>
- **IMPORTANT:** Application to health professional schools is very competitive. Completion of the minimum requirements will not ensure admission. Admission decisions are based on policies established by the professional school's faculty and admission committee. Successful applicants typically have GPAs and other qualifications well in excess of stated minimums. Talk to your advisor for more information on what is realistically needed to have a good chance of getting into your desired professional school.