

# Doctor of Occupational Therapy



St. Ambrose University began offering entry-level occupational therapy education in 1989, and the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program is the first accredited entry-level doctoral program in Iowa. The curriculum emphasizes occupational justice and participation in occupation for people of all ages and abilities. Students learn in interactive, state-of-the-art labs in the Center for Health Sciences Education (CHSE) along with students in other professional programs within the university. The OTD program also offers outreach services at no cost to clients and health care professionals through Jim's Place, a home demonstration center highlighting innovative, independent living solutions.

**Mission Statement** The St. Ambrose University OTD program develops ethical, innovative and sensitive health professionals engaged in life-long learning who serve as socially responsive individuals dedicated to optimizing the occupational participation of others in a diverse and global society.

**Accreditation** The entry-level doctoral program is accredited 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. Contact ACOTE at 301-652-AOTA, online at [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org). Graduates of the program 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). All states also require licensure to practice and licensure is 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.

**Curriculum** The OTD curriculum is 3 years in length. The first semester provides students with a strong professional foundation as they learn about the domain and process of occupational therapy and the science of the human body. The following semesters emphasize client and environmental factors that impact occupational participation and evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies that promote occupational engagement. Experiential learning focusing on clinical, leadership, and research skills occurs through classroom, laboratory, and field experiences. During the third year, students complete Level II Fieldwork, a Doctoral Capstone Project, and Capstone Experience, which prepare them for practice as innovative entry-level therapists.

**Capstone Project** Students emerge from the OTD program with a strong professional identity and advanced knowledge in an area of interest. Throughout the curriculum, students explore literature and complete research that assists them in developing an individualized



Doctoral Capstone Project that has the potential to inform the profession in a way that supports occupational participation. Capstone Projects allow students to link theory with practice in one of the following areas: practice, research and scholarship, service, administration, leadership, advocacy, education or theory development. Additionally, the Capstone Experience provides students with opportunities to practice skills related to their Capstone Project.

**Field Experience/Capstone Experience** Students complete a variety of field experiences while enrolled in OTD coursework, including 24 weeks of full-time field experience and a 14 week Capstone Experience. Students are responsible for their own transportation, travel, housing and specific health or compliance related costs, and continue to pay tuition while completing their field experiences.

**Tuition Plan/Financial Assistance** OTD students are covered by the One Price Tuition Plan, which makes financial planning easier by ensuring tuition costs remain one rate throughout the normal course of full-time graduate study. Graduate program tuition applies to all three years of the program, even if an undergraduate student with senior status in the first year. Most course fees and some other miscellaneous costs incurred by OTD students are included. Costs for textbooks, fieldwork experiences, room and board and graduation are not included. Contact the OTD program for tuition rate and details. A limited amount of graduate financial aid is available. The Financial Aid Office can provide information on graduate studies loans.

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**Automatic, Conditional Admission for First-Year SAU Students** Incoming first year students at St. Ambrose who intend to pursue an OTD may request automatic, conditional admission into the OTD program if they meet the high school requirements listed below. Students may also request automatic, conditional admission during their first-year at SAU if they meet the first year student requirements listed below.

### High School Admission Requirements

- > Earn an ACT score of 24 or higher/SAT score of 1160 or higher
- > Earn an unweighted high school GPA of 3.5 or higher
- > Complete 20 hours of observation with an OT in at least 2 settings
- > Prepare a personal statement describing interest in OT
- > Submit all required materials by March 1

### First Year Admission Requirements

- > Attain a 3.3 cumulative GPA by the end of second semester of college
- > Complete 20 hours of observation with an OT in 2 or more settings
- > Prepare a personal statement describing interest in OT
- > Submit all required materials by June 1

Once admitted, all students must continue to meet the college requirements listed below to remain qualified for conditional admission. They may begin the OTD program as early as their senior year if all of their prerequisites, general education requirements, and major requirements are complete by the end of their junior year.

### College Requirements

- > Complete 10+ hours of service each year
- > Complete 30 additional hours of observation with an OT
- > Attain a 3.3 cumulative GPA by the end of the second semester of college and maintain it throughout undergraduate studies
- > Complete all prerequisite coursework with a C or higher and maintain a 3.0 prerequisite GPA
- > Complete anatomy and physiology coursework at SAU
- > Actively participate in regular advising visits
- > Participation in Pre-OT Club is strongly recommended and may be required as part of advising process

**Admission for Students Applying as College Juniors, Seniors, or Graduates** Students may apply as early as their junior year and begin the OTD program in their senior year. To be eligible to begin the program as an undergraduate student with senior status, all general education and major required courses must be complete before beginning the OTD program and all admissions criteria met by the admissions deadline.

### Admissions Requirements

- > Submit a complete OTCAS application to the St. Ambrose OTD program using the OTCAS website: [www.otcas.org](http://www.otcas.org). Personal

statements, three letters of reference (one from an OT), and official GRE scores are submitted through OTCAS. Please use Institutional Code 7811 when submitting GRE scores. The application fee is \$140 for the first application and \$60 for each additional program. Application process assistance is available from Customer Service at [otcasinfo@otcas.org](mailto:otcasinfo@otcas.org).

- > Submit proof of 50 hours of observation with an OT in at least two different settings directly to the OT Office. Experiences must be completed in the last five years and be recorded on letterhead, an SAU observation log, or in a direct email from the OT. OT signatures are required. Applicants may receive some credit from employment in an occupational therapy setting with approval from the OTD program.

### Application Deadlines

Applications are accepted annually upon the opening of the OTCAS cycle (usually in July) through December 1 each year or until the class is filled. There is also a September 15 Early Admissions Decision Deadline. Up to 15 applicants may be accepted through this early interview/ decision process. Applicants must submit a complete application and have a minimum 3.4 prerequisite GPA or be a St. Ambrose alum or degree-seeking student.

- > Prospective students may be selected for professional interviews that focus on academic, personal and professional preparedness for graduate studies. During the interview, selected applicants will be required to discuss the personal statement they submitted.
- > Students will be notified of their admission status in writing and must submit an acceptance confirmation and a \$200 acceptance fee.

### Admissions Prerequisites for All Applicants

Eight prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of C or higher, for a combined pre-requisite GPA of 3.0 (4.0 scale).

SUBJECT	SAU EQUIVALENT
Human Anatomy and Physiology I with lab (4 cr) . . . . .	BIOL 230
Human Anatomy and Physiology II with lab (4 cr). . . . .	BIOL 232
Medical Terminology (course/competency 1 cr) . . . . .	HS 250
Lifespan (3 cr). . . . .	PSYC 212
Social Science (3 cr). . . . .	300 level or above
Statistics (3 cr). . . . .	STAT 213
Research Methods (3 cr) . . . . .	PSYC 215
Ethics or Biomedical Ethics (3 cr) . . . . .	PHIL 207/310

### For Further Information

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