OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, MASTER OF SCIENCE IN (M.S.O.T.)

Program accreditation
Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association

Note: Starting summer 2016, the M.S.O.T. program will be replaced with an entry-level occupational therapy doctorate, or O.T.D. The last class of M.S.O.T. students, enrolled in summer 2015, will graduate in December 2017. Students with a bachelor’s degree who meet all prerequisite requirements may apply to the entry-level OTD program from mid-July to December of 2015 and yearly thereon. Prospective students may visit the department’s website (http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/departments/occu/programs/entry-level-otd) for details on the entry-level O.T.D.

Program goal
The primary mission of the Department of Occupational Therapy is the preparation of excellent, innovative, adaptable and responsible occupational therapists as professional leaders for the state, the nation and the world. Our mission represents an integration of the missions of the university and the School of Allied Health Professions. In pursuit of this mission, the department:

1. Prepares students to become client-centered practitioners who utilize up-to-date evidence, theory and technology to facilitate their clients’ health and well-being through the use of occupation
2. Seeds the development of new occupational therapy leaders in research, teaching and service through educational, community and research expectations and opportunities
3. Fosters student commitment to scientific inquiry and professional competence and promotes personal growth, balance and dedication to lifelong learning and service
4. Promotes faculty excellence, collaboration and leadership in teaching, scholarship, research and service that models integrity, competence and evidence-based practice
5. Collaborates with the community through education, consultation and the development of strong linkages with practitioners, clinical educators and the community
6. Interacts dynamically with the OT profession and stakeholders, contributing proactively to the evolution and recognition of the profession and the use of occupation to meet society’s needs for health and quality life

Student learning outcomes
1. Meet foundational requirements: As part of a broad foundation in liberal arts and sciences, including biological, physical, social and behavioral sciences, students will be able to employ logical thinking, critical analysis, clinical reasoning and problem solving to demonstrate oral and written communication skills, innovative use of computer technology, knowledge of human structure and function, awareness of social development and use of statistics to interpret tests and measurements. (Objectives B.1.1-B.1.11 in ACOTE Standards)

2. Basic tenets of occupational therapy: Students will be able to understand and articulate the meaning and impact of occupation, its historical and philosophical significance to the profession, its role as a central construct in OT theory development, its relationship to the promotion of health and wellness and prevention of disease and disability. Recognizing the importance of activity analysis in the process of formulating intervention plans will be an emphasis for student learning. (Objectives B.2.1-B.2.11 in ACOTE Standards)

3. OT theories, models and frames of reference: Students will be able to describe and apply occupational therapy theories and models to these and other theoretical foundations of evaluation and intervention and will demonstrate appreciation for the process of development of theoretical principles. Occupational therapy theories and models covered in the curriculum will include but not be limited to: the model of human occupation sensory integration, biomechanical and rehabilitation models, motor control and movement recovery models. (Objectives B.3.1-B.3.6 in ACOTE Standards)

4. OT screening, evaluation and referral: Students will be able to select appropriate tools, both standardized and nonstandardized, for effective evaluation; analyze psychometric properties of assessment tools; evaluate occupational performance across all areas of occupation; distinguish between roles of occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants; make appropriate client referrals; interpret test results; and document services to assure accountability, reimbursement and need for services. (Objectives B.4.1-B.4.11 in ACOTE Standards)

5. Intervention planning: In accordance with the occupational therapy practice framework, students will learn to develop occupation-based intervention plans and strategies. Intervention planning will be based on information acquired via occupational profiles, evaluation of client factors – body function and structure strengths/weaknesses, performance patterns, contextual issues, activity demands, and performance skills. Students will be able to choose appropriate therapeutic activities, learn the value of therapeutic use of self, modify environments, incorporate assistive technologies, fabricate needed orthotics, and train clients in areas of mobility and transfer, feeding and eating, and activities of daily living. Students will educate clients as needed and safely use superficial thermal and mechanical modalities as preparatory measures to improving occupational performance. (Objectives B.5.1-B.5.28 in ACOTE Standards)

6. Context of service delivery: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the variety of contexts that affect and are affected by occupational therapy service delivery. They will be able to compare and contrast differences in service delivery systems, including health care, education, community and social systems. They will be able to discuss the impact of socioeconomic and political influences on occupational therapy and the need to respond to system changes to create opportunities and avoid pitfalls in education, research and practice. (Objectives B.6.1-B.6.6 in ACOTE Standards)

7. OT management: Students will be able to describe and demonstrate how practice settings affect service delivery and management of services; awareness of how federal and state laws guide service delivery; understanding of the requirements for licensing and certification, documentation, and reimbursement; and the essential nature of competency-based procedures for legal and ethical supervision of personnel and fieldwork students. Understanding of program needs, service delivery, optional and effective staffing procedures will be discussed. (Objectives B.7.1-B.7.10 in ACOTE Standards)

8. Understanding and consuming research: Students will be able to articulate the importance of knowledge development for the profession; locate, critique and interpret research evidence; apply research literature to practice; use basic statistics and qualitative
research methods; demonstrate knowledge of the research process; and implement some aspect of research methodology. Discussion of grant writing, proposal development, research dissemination, and translation and research report writing will be included. (Objectives B.8.1-B.8.9 in ACOTE Standards)

9. Professional ethics: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the American OT Association’s code of ethics; the importance of membership in professional organizations; the value of supporting and educating other professions about OT; the importance of ongoing professional development; the threat and avoidance of liability issues; conflict resolution; contractual service provision; and ethical supervision. (Objectives B.9.1-B.9.13 in ACOTE Standards)

10. Fieldwork: Through a carefully coordinated process of fieldwork, students will be able to apply concepts learned in the classroom to practice settings under careful supervision of trained and qualified occupational therapy practitioners. Gradation of time spent, responsibilities and expectations placed on students will be provided through assignment, first to fieldwork level 1 and then to fieldwork level 2 experiences across a wide range of settings and practice areas. Upon completion of all fieldwork requirements, students will be prepared to take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy examination, thereby qualifying them for state licensure and practice of occupational therapy at the entry level. (Objectives B.10.1-B.1.22 in ACOTE Standards)

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.graduate.vcu.edu) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reggs)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master’s or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student’s graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student’s faculty regarding the student’s academic achievements and the student’s readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reggs/grad/candidacy)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reggs/grad/graduation-info)

Other information

Student manual distributed to new students every June during orientation.

All graduates of an occupational therapy program are required to take the national certification examination to become a registered occupational therapist and use the credentials OTR. The national certifying organization for occupational therapy is the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy. Other licensure or certification requirements have been established by all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. Most licensure requirements include board certification as a registered occupational therapist. Some licensure or certification agencies consider individuals convicted of a felony ineligible for licensure or certification. For specific information, prospective students should contact the licensure or certification agency for occupational therapy.

Apply online at graduate.admissions.vcu.edu (http://www.graduate.admissions.vcu.edu).

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Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree:</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry:</th>
<th>Deadline dates:</th>
<th>Test requirements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.S.O.T.</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Dec 1 (OTCAS and VCU graduate applications)</td>
<td>GRE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-
study/admission-requirements), applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university
2. A minimum grade-point average in all college courses of 2.7 (based on a 4.0 system)
3. A minimum grade-point average in prerequisite courses of 3.0. (without rounding)
4. A one-page, “value-added” essay submitted as a PDF file to otentrylevel@vcu.edu
5. An official report of GRE scores to VCU (Institution Code 5570)
6. An Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service application (https://portal.otcas.org) including these items:
   a. A personal statement that addresses:
      i. Why applicant is selecting OT as a career
      ii. How a master’s degree in OT relates to immediate and long-term professional goals
      iii. How the applicant’s personal, educational and professional background will help achieve these goals
   b. Evidence of completion of a minimum of 30 observation hours in one or more settings under the supervision of a licensed OTR or COTA
   c. Three letters of recommendation (One letter from an occupational therapist is preferred, but it is not essential.)
   d. Ten prerequisite (http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/departments/occu/programs/entry-level-otd/prerequisite-courses) courses (30-32 semester credit hours)

7. For non-native English-speaking applicants, regardless of immigration status, a Test of English as a Foreign Language iBT score of greater than 102, a TOEFL CBT score of greater than 253, a TOEFL PBT score of greater than 610 or an International English Language Testing System score of greater than 6.5

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### Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info), students must complete all School of Allied Health Professions requirements and successfully complete 82 credit hours consisting of 60 credit hours in course work and 22 in fieldwork.

### Curriculum requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANAT 525</td>
<td>Advanced Functional Anatomy (Occupational Therapy) (Occupational Therapy)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 520</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Applications: Kinesiology</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 521</td>
<td>Neuroscience Applications to Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 522</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>OCCT 530</td>
<td>Nature of Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>OCCT 531</td>
<td>Interpersonal Communication and Group Dynamics</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 532</td>
<td>Life Span Occupational Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCCT 533</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Principles, Values and Theories</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 534</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Evaluation and Intervention Overview</td>
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<td>OCCT 620</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Practice Activities I: Activity Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 621</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Practice Activities II: Assistive Technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 623</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Practice Activities III: Activity and Occupational Synthesis</td>
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<td>OCCT 630</td>
<td>Adult Evaluation and Intervention I: Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 633</td>
<td>Adult Evaluation and Intervention II: Facilitating Function With Disability Across the Continuum of Care</td>
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<td>OCCT 635</td>
<td>Psychosocial Evaluation and Intervention I: Foundations</td>
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<td>OCCT 640</td>
<td>Pediatric Evaluation and Intervention I: Infant and Preschool Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 641</td>
<td>Pediatric Evaluation and Intervention II: Ages 6 to 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 650</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy in Health Care</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>OCCT 651</td>
<td>Administration and Supervision of Occupational Therapy Services</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 670</td>
<td>Case-based Clinical Reasoning in Occupational Therapy</td>
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<td>OCCT 709</td>
<td>Research Process and Statistical Analysis in Occupational Therapy</td>
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<td>OCCT 729</td>
<td>Research Practicum</td>
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<td>OCCT 636</td>
<td>Fieldwork I in Psychosocial Occupational Therapy</td>
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<td>OCCT 660</td>
<td>Level I Fieldwork in Occupational Therapy (sections 001 and 002)</td>
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<td>OCCT 680</td>
<td>Level II Fieldwork in Occupational Therapy: A</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCT 681</td>
<td>Level II Fieldwork in Occupational Therapy: B</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours: 82

### Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 82

**Graduate program director**

Dianne F. Simons, Ph.D., OTR/L

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Program website: sahp.vcu.edu/departments/occu/programs (http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/departments/occu/programs)