



Program Planning Guide

Pre-Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, A55280OT

The pre-occupational therapy assistant program builds the academic and professional foundation needed to successfully enter the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program and prepare for a career as an occupational therapy assistant. In the pre-occupational therapy assistant program, general education classes help students build the core skills needed to succeed in the OTA program and in clinical practice. Students develop a strong understanding of written and verbal communication, critical thinking, and basic math skills that support accurate documentation, clear patient instructions, and safe clinical decision-making. These courses also strengthen study skills, time management, and professional behaviors that are essential for keeping up with the academic and clinical demands of an OTA program.

General education coursework also helps students understand people more fully across the lifespan and within different social and cultural contexts. Students learn about human behavior, development, and social factors that influence health, which is critical when working with clients of all ages and abilities. Ethical reasoning and cultural awareness are emphasized so future occupational therapy assistants can provide respectful, patient-centered care, work effectively as part of an interprofessional healthcare team, and communicate compassionately with clients and their families.

The pre-occupational therapy assistant program is designed as a preparation track and does not lead to a degree. Students who decide not to pursue OTA will need to work with their Education Navigator to transition into a different degree pathway.

Pre-OTA Program General Education Classes:

Required Program Courses		Class	Lab	Credits	Notes:
ACA 122	Transfer & Career Success	0	2	1	Seated or online
BIO 168	Anatomy and Physiology I	3	3	4	Seated
BIO 169	Anatomy and Physiology II	3	3	4	Seated
Elective	Communication Elective	3	0	3	Seated or online
Elective	Humanities/Fine Arts Elective	3	0	3	Seated or online
ENG 111	Writing and Inquiry	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 150	General Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 241	Developmental Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 281	Abnormal Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or Online

A minimum grade of B must be earned in all science classes (BIO 168 and BIO 169) for full acceptance. A minimum grade of C must be earned in all other pre-program classes.

Communication Elective Options: COM 110, COM 120, COM 231, **ENG 112**, ENG 114

Humanities/Fine Arts Elective Options: Select One: ART 111, ART 114, ART 115, DRA 111, ENG 231, ENG 232, ENG 241, ENG 242, HUM 110, HUM 115, HUM 120, HUM 122, HUM 150, MUS 110, MUS 112, **PHI 240***, REL 211, REL 212

***Recommended for OTA students**



Pre-Occupational Therapy Assistant Suggested Course Schedule:

		Class	Lab	Credits	Notes:
1st Semester (fall)					
ACA 122	Transfer & Career Success	0	2	1	Seated or Online
BIO 168	Anatomy and Physiology I	3	3	4	Seated
ENG 111	Writing & Inquiry	3	0	3	Seated or Online
Elective	Humanities/Fine Arts Elective	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 150	General Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or online
	Total Semester Hours	12	5	14	
2nd Semester (spring)					
BIO 169	Anatomy and Physiology II	3	3	4	Seated
PSY 241	Developmental Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 281	Abnormal Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or Online
Elective	Communication Elective	3	0	3	Seated or online
	Total Semester Hours	12	3	13	



Planning for Your Future as an OTA:

Earning a bachelor's degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant (BSOTA) builds on the clinical skills gained in an associate-level program and prepares graduates for expanded responsibility within the profession. BSOTA programs include advanced coursework in leadership, ethics, research, community health, and higher-level therapeutic practice, helping students strengthen clinical reasoning, communication, and decision-making skills. This broader preparation can open doors to supervisory roles, specialty practice areas, education or training positions, and greater career mobility. Most importantly, a BSOTA equips occupational therapy assistants to deliver high-quality, client-centered care while adapting to the evolving demands of today's healthcare system.

After completing the required courses for admission to the OTA program, students who plan to earn a bachelor's degree later may take the following recommended courses while waiting to begin the program or while enrolled. These courses are commonly transferable to universities and may apply toward bachelor's degree requirements, depending on the receiving institution. Please see the college catalog for course descriptions.

Recommended Courses (Take one class from each row)		Class	Lab	Credits	Notes:
CIS 110	Introduction to Computers	2	2	3	Online or seated
COM 120 COM 231	Intro Interpersonal Com Public Speaking	3	0	3	Online or seated
HIS 111 HIS 112 HIS 131 HIS 132 POL 120	World Civilizations I World Civilizations II American History I American History II American Government	3	0	3	Online or seated
ENG 231 ENG 232 ENG 241 ENG 242	American Literature I American Literature II British Literature I British Literature II	3	0	3	Online or seated
HEA 110	Personal Health/Wellness	3	0	3	Online or seated
MED 121	Medical Terminology I	3	0	3	Online
MED 122	Medical Terminology II	3	0	3	Online
MAT 152 or MAT 171	Statistical Methods I Precalculus Algebra	3	2	4	Seated or online
SPA 111	Elementary Spanish I (See note below)	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 112	Elementary Spanish II	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 211	Intermediate Spanish I	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 212	Intermediate Spanish II	3	0	3	Seated or online



A minimum grade of C must be earned in all classes that transfer to a university for a bachelor's degree.

NC Universities that offer ACOTE-approved BSOTA programs:

Methodist University – Occupational Therapy Assistant to Bachelor's Pathway

Methodist University offers a bachelor-level pathway designed for Occupational Therapy Assistant students who want to build on their associate degree and expand their professional scope. The program emphasizes advanced concepts in occupational therapy practice, healthcare leadership, ethics, research literacy, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Coursework is structured to support working OTAs, allowing students to continue clinical practice while developing skills needed for roles in supervision, program coordination, education, and advocacy. This pathway prepares graduates for long-term career growth within occupational therapy and strengthens their ability to contribute to quality improvement and evidence-based practice across diverse healthcare settings.

Cabarrus College of Health Sciences – Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant

Cabarrus College of Health Sciences offers a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant that builds directly on the clinical foundation developed in an associate-degree OTA program. The curriculum expands students' understanding of healthcare systems, leadership, professionalism, research application, and population-based care while reinforcing core occupational therapy principles. Designed with flexibility for working professionals, the program supports continued employment in healthcare while preparing graduates for advanced responsibilities, leadership roles, and career mobility within the occupational therapy field. This degree enhances professional credibility and positions OTAs for growth in clinical, administrative, and educational settings.

Foreign Language Requirement

Spanish is not required for all bachelor's programs, but it is strongly recommended for pre-health students because it significantly improves communication with a large and growing Spanish-speaking patient population. Being able to speak Spanish builds trust, reduces misunderstandings, and helps prevent errors in patient care. Employers in healthcare provide stipends to bilingual employees, making Spanish a powerful advantage for anyone preparing for a health science career. The following Spanish courses are available for pre-health students, but are not always part of a transfer agreement: SPA 111, SPA 112, SPA 211, SPA 212

All universities will accept general education credit, although the number of credits that transfer may vary by institution. If you are unsure which university you plan to attend, a safe option is to choose courses identified as part of the Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC), which are noted at the end of the course description.

Students who have questions about the pre-OTA program should contact their Education Navigator.