Occupational Therapy Assistant

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Associate in Applied Science Degree
(5 semesters): 2 prerequisite semester + 3 program semesters
Career Cluster: Health Science

At a Glance
Employment of occupational therapy assistants is expected to grow by 43 percent from 2012 to 2022, much faster than average for all occupations. Occupational Therapy is best described by The American Occupational Therapy Association as follows: Occupational therapy focuses on enabling people to do the activities of daily life. The very word “occupation” means an activity which “occupies” our time. Young or old, we all have a job to do - the job of living. Learning, growing, playing, working, managing our homes, and caring for our families are among the “occupations” of life. Unfortunately, physical, emotional, or other challenges often prevent people from fully participating in the job of living. Disease, injury, depression, or developmental problems can make it difficult for people to do everyday tasks and be active and independent. Occupational therapy—a vibrant, growing profession makes it possible for people to achieve independence and to enjoy life to its fullest. By choosing a career as an occupational therapy assistant, you will make a difference! You will be able to improve the lives of people, from newborns to the very old.

Students today can look forward to dynamic careers working in multiple settings with people of all ages. The employment outlook for occupational therapy assistants is bright. Recent information published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected that the job outlook for occupational therapy assistants will continue to improve steadily for the foreseeable future.

Program Description
Under the direction of an Occupational Therapist, the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) assists in evaluating patients and in developing a plan of selected tasks to restore, influence, or enhance performance of individuals whose abilities to cope with daily-living tasks are impaired or threatened by developmental deficits, the aging process, physical injury or illness, learning disabilities, or psychological and social disabilities. Occupational Therapy Assistants are employed in general hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, schools, home health-care agencies, private practices, and other specialized health-care settings.

A student who has completed all OTA required general education courses may complete the OTA program courses in three semesters.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The certifying agency is the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT) located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, P.O. Box 31220, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449 at 1-800-SAY-AOTA Ext. 2911. The certifying agency is the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT) located at 12 South Summit Ave, Suite 100, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-4150. After successful completion of the NBCOT exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). Conviction of a felony may affect a graduate’s ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or to attain state Licensure. Most states require Licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination.

Admission Requirements
Applicants Must:
1. Meet all the general requirements of WSCC.
2. Complete general required courses for OTA by deadline of June 1.
3. Submit to WSCC Admission Office, by June 1 deadline, an official WSCC application for admission, current official college transcripts demonstrating completion of OTA general required courses, and a copy of official ACT scores (a minimum ACT score of 18 is required to qualify for program entry).
4. Submit to OTA Program Director, by June 1 deadline, a complete OTA program application, copy of unofficial college transcripts, documented evidence of 24 hours of observation and/or participation in not less than two approved occupational therapy departments. (Hours will be verified through telephone conversation or correspondence with supervisors listed on application). Proof of active/current AHA Approved CPR Certification for Healthcare Providers must also be provided with application. CPR training must include a hands-on component of skills demonstration. The program application can be found online at
http://www.wallacestate.edu/Programs/HealthDivision
/Occupational-Therapy-Assistant/index
5. Attain a minimum GPA of 2.5 or greater on a 4.0 scale with a grade of "C" or better on all general required pre-OTA courses. GPA calculated for program selection will be on the general required pre-OTA courses only.

Students are encouraged to meet with the OTA Program Advisor prior to spring semester (before application) to verify completed and needed course work, for successful application to the program.

Program application packets, which include the OTA Program application, documentation of observation hours, copy of unofficial transcripts and copy of healthcare provider CPR card, must be submitted to the OTA Program as a complete packet. Incomplete packets will not be accepted for consideration. Applications may be downloaded from the OTA section of the WSCC Web Page at www.wallacestate.edu.

Selection and Notification
1. The OTA program admits annually in the fall semester.
2. Candidates are ranked for admission on the basis of ACT scores, weighted GPA (GPA x 7.6) and completion of admission requirements.
3. Program applications will be reviewed for completion of program admission requirements. Written notification of the program admission status for each applicant will be mailed to the student at the address provided on the application.
4. Students must return written confirmation of their acceptance within 7 days of the postmarked date of the acceptance letter. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of place in the class. A signed consent to drug testing and background screening must accompany the acceptance confirmation.

Program Expectations
Students admitted into the Occupational Therapy Assistant program are expected to comply with the Health Science Program Regulations and Expectations as published in the Programs of Study section of the Wallace State College Catalog.

Upon Acceptance:
1. OTA students are required to submit an annual physical examination form, including proof of Hepatitis B and other lab results as indicated on the form.
2. Students are required to submit proof of current CPR certification. Only CPR courses that provide certification for health care providers will be accepted (see #4 under Admission requirements).

3. Malpractice and liability insurance, available through the College, is required of all OTA students. Health insurance is also required but is not available through the college.
4. OTA students are required to undergo Background Screening and Drug Testing according to Health Science Division policy.

Progression:
OTA students must attain a minimum grade of "C" in all general education and major required courses. Failure to do so in major required courses will result in dismissal from the program. A student in good academic standing will be allowed to apply for readmission only once to the program.

OTA students are required to exhibit professional behavior at all times. A professional behavior assessment is completed on each OTA student. A minimal acceptable score of 70 is required each semester by OTA students. Failure to obtain the minimal acceptable score will result in probation of the OTA student with supplemental counseling by an OTA advisor. If the OTA student is unable to obtain the minimal required score after counseling, they will be dismissed from the OTA program.

Readmission to Program
Students whose progression through the OTA program is interrupted and who desire to re-enter the program must schedule an appointment with a OTA faculty advisor to discuss re-entry. The student must apply for readmission to the OTA program within one year from the term of withdrawal of failure. Students who are accepted for readmission are required to repeat certain classes previously completed.

Readmission may be denied due to, but not limited to, any of the following circumstances:
1. Failure to possess a GPA of at least 2.0 for all OTA major and OTA general education courses.
2. Refusal by fieldwork sites to accept the student for fieldwork experiences.
3. Over 12 months have elapsed since the student was enrolled in an OTA course.
4. Student has been dismissed from the program.

Career Path
Occupational Therapy Assistants are employed in general hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health-care agencies, private practices, schools and other specialized health-care settings. Depending on your employer or the setting in which you work, your tasks may include:
• Aiding the growth and development of premature babies
• Improving learning environments for physically or mentally challenged school children
• Adapting home environments for people dealing with the effects of stroke, reduced vision, or other conditions
• Analyzing job tasks and equipment to prevent future injuries for an injured worker

Measuring the effectiveness of treatment activities
Median annual earnings of occupational therapy assistants were $53,240 in May 2012, with the highest 10 percent earning more than $73,120. (Source: U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics)

The WSCC Occupational Therapy Assistant Program courses will be accepted for transfer to Athens State, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and University of South Alabama in the Bachelor Degree in Health Science. As of January 1, 2007 all students interested in furthering their career and becoming an occupational therapist are required to obtain a post baccalaureate degree (i.e. professional master’s degree or entry level doctoral degree).

Please consult STARS transfer guide for the latest information. Occupational Therapy Assistant

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**1st Semester**
- ORI 110 Freshman Seminar 1
- ENG 101 English Composition 3
- PSY 200 General Psychology 3
- MTH 116 Mathematical Applications 3
- Total 10

**2nd Semester**
- SPH 106 Fund of Oral Communication 3
- BIO 201 Human Anatomy & Physiology I 4
- HIT 110 Medical Terminology 3
- CIS 146 Microcomputer Applications 3
- HUM/FA Humanities/Fine Arts Elective 3
- Total 16

**3rd Semester**
- OTA 210 Occupational Therapy Fund. 3
- OTA 211 Practical Anatomy & Kinesiology-Theory 2
- OTA 212 Practical Anatomy & Kinesio-Lab 2
- OTA 213 Treatment Planning & Implement: Part I Theory-Pediatrics 3
- OTA 214 Treatment Planning & Implement: Part I Lab-Pediatrics 2
- OTA 217 Orientation to Fieldwork 1
- OTA 218 Level I Fieldwork-A 1
- OTA 219 Level I Fieldwork-B 1
- OTA 221 Medical Conditions in OT 3
- Total 18

**4th Semester**
- OTA 215 Psychiatric Environment & Group Process in OT 2
- OTA 216 Psychiatric Environment & Group Process in OT-Lab 1
- OTA 220 Documentation for the OTA 2
- OTA 222 Treatment Planning & Implement: Part II Theory-Adult 3
- OTA 223 Treatment Planning & Implement: Part II Lab-Adult 2
- OTA 224 Occupational Activity Analysis 2
- OTA 225 Occupational Activity Analysis-Lab 2
- OTA 226 Level II Fieldwork-A 4
- OTA 227 Evidence Based Practice 1
- Total 19

**5th Semester**
- OTA 230 Professional Skills Development 3
- OTA 231 Rehabilitation Management 3
- OTA 232 Splinting 2
- OTA 233 Level II Fieldwork-B 4
- OTA 234 OTA Review Seminar 1
- Total 13
- TOTAL CREDITS 76