

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

## FAQ

### WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

Your life is made up of occupations—meaningful everyday activities. These occupations can include many roles, such as being a parent, a friend, a spouse, a tennis player, an artist, a cook, or a musician. We generally don't think about our daily occupations until we have trouble doing them. Everyone has occupations—from the toddler whose occupations are play and learning to develop important skills, to the older adult whose occupations are engaging with family and friends and managing his or her home. If you are recovering from an accident or injury, your valued occupations may be disrupted. Occupational therapy incorporates your valued occupations into the rehabilitation process.

[Source AOTA](#)

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[Observation Hours](#)

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## What do OTAs do?

OTAs help people who are sick or injured get back performing “occupations,” which are activities that are purposeful and meaningful to them in their daily life. OTAs work with people from birth to death in a variety of settings, including school systems, outpatient clinics, hospitals, mental health facilities, inpatient rehab, skilled nursing facilities, and in the community.

## If accepted to the OTA program, what type of class schedule can I expect in a typical week?

Depending on the semester, the OTA student may be on campus up to 4 days a week for lab and lecture. During clinical rotations, students are required to stay at their assigned facility during regular business hours which may run 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and may include time on Saturday and Sunday. Hours will vary depending on the facility.

The OTA Program is not a part-time program and requires an intensive amount of studying when not in class.

## WHO ARE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONERS?

Occupational therapy practitioners are either occupational therapists or occupational therapy assistants. They are skilled health care professionals who use research and scientific evidence to ensure their interventions are effective. With strong knowledge of a person's psychological, physical, emotional, and social makeup, occupational therapy practitioners can evaluate how your condition (or risk for one) is affecting your body and mind, using a holistic perspective.

## When does Clinical Education Fieldwork begin and where does it take place?

There are three fieldwork rotations throughout the program. The first fieldwork rotation will be 20 days built into the fall semester. The second rotation is at the end of the spring semester and will be eight weeks long. The final fieldwork during the summer semester consists of 8 weeks, full time, for a total of 16 weeks of full-time fieldwork.

The program has an extensive clinical network ranging from Hanceville, Alabama to Alaska. Students are placed based on educational needs and site availability. All clinical travel expenses are the responsibility of the student.

## What is fieldwork education?

Fieldwork education is a crucial part of your preparation to become an occupational therapy assistant. It provides you an opportunity to carry out practice and other professional responsibilities under supervision and role modeling by an experienced practitioner.

## Are students able to work during the program?

Full-time employment is not recommended, so that appropriate study time is available. The course load is a full-time load, and a student should expect to spend 2-3 hours of study time outside of class for each credit hour in which they are enrolled. For example, the fall semester is a total of 18 credit hours. Program students should plan for 50+ hours of study time outside of scheduled class time. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid at 256-352-8182 to discuss financial aid options.

## Can I complete the OTA Program online or on a part-time basis?

You can complete the necessary prerequisite (first year) classes at your own pace and often in an online format. The OTA Program classes (final year) must be completed in three consecutive semesters with admission to the program beginning in Fall. While online courses are included, this does not significantly reduce the number of days or hours on campus. The program involves a full-time commitment and course load, including significant study expectations beyond scheduled class times, for one full year.

## Are there any occupational therapy assistant educational programs offered online?

There are no accredited entry-level occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational programs that are offered in the online format. Some educational programs may offer some courses or parts of courses online ([see listings under “Distance Education” here](#)), but there are no educational programs offered entirely online.

**Are all of the OTA courses held on the campus at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville?**

All of the OTA program course work is held at the Hanceville campus. The first year of basic, prerequisite courses can be completed at any regionally accredited college. The clinical education portion of the program is in various health care facilities available both in-state and out-of-state. Additionally, there may be field trips that require students to drive and/or carpool to a given facility within a reasonable distance of the school.

**Is the OTA program fully accredited?**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program at Wallace State Community College 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. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is 301-652-AOTA. ACOTE's web address is [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org).

**Will the OTA program help me if I decide to go to OT school later?**

Yes and no. There are schools called bridge programs that are designed to take a student from an associates to a master's degree, but there is currently not a bridge program in the state of Alabama. The closest one is at Belmont University in TN.

All traditional non-bridge occupational therapy programs require that you complete at least a bachelor's degree and sometimes a master's degree prior to admission. While many of the OTA program prerequisites and required courses may be counted toward completing your bachelor's, it is not a direct step into a traditional non-bridge OT program. The advantages of completing the OTA program before beginning an OT program include enhanced academic preparation, improved understanding of the profession, and an excellent employment potential to finance your future education plans. Individuals who are interested in pursuing a degree as an occupational therapist should contact the school of their choice for admission requirements. A listing of accredited occupational therapy programs is available through the ACOTE [website](#).

**Will I be able to get a job after completing the OTA program?**

Graduates are eligible to sit for the National Board Certification in Occupational Therapy, NBCOT. Following successful completion of the exam, a licensed Occupational Therapy Assistant will find job opportunities nationwide. Naturally, employment opportunities fluctuate within geographic regions and practice locations. Currently, a new graduate can expect a starting salary of \$40,000-70,000 annually. Click [here](#) for more details.

**I know that I need to take a national certification exam when I graduate. Do I have to take this exam in each state that I would like to practice?**

This is a **national** exam. You can take it anywhere it is offered. Your exam results will be reported to the appropriate state regulatory bodies that you have previously indicated. Once you successfully pass the national certification examination, you can apply for a license in any state.

**I have heard that changes are being made to the OTA curriculum/program. What changes can I expect?**

The OTA Program is continually changing and improving to meet the demands of a dynamic marketplace. However, when changes occur in admissions standards, prerequisites, or program classes, the changes are first communicated through the WSCC and OTA Program websites. It will also be published in the next WSCC catalog release. Changes of this type usually involve a transition year in which either old or new prerequisite requirements are acceptable for program admission consideration. Visit this [website](#) often for the most up-to-date information and the earliest possible notification of changes should they occur.

**Do I need to meet with an OTA program advisor at WSCC?**

Program advisors are available by email. Individual appointments are available. Advisors are happy to provide program information and individualized recommendations to help you successfully pursue your goal of becoming an OTA. If you are planning on transferring from another institution, go ahead and apply to the college and send your transcripts to the

admissions office to see what will transfer. Attaching a student copy of your transcripts to your email, or having a copy available during phone calls, appointments, or advising sessions will help the advisor provide the most accurate information. You can contact the Program Director via email at [laura.smith@wallacestate.edu](mailto:laura.smith@wallacestate.edu). Also, we have a [virtual tour](#) and [virtual advising](#) session linked to the OTA website for your convenience.

**If accepted into the OTA program, what is the expected financial cost of the second year of study?**

A breakdown of estimated program expenses is available on the “[Estimated Expenses](#)” link on the OTA Program website. Please visit this link for the most up-to-date expectations. Tuition and fee costs are published each semester when the WSCC Schedule of Classes is released – please see the WSCC website to view the current schedule.

**What is the length of the program?**

Ideally, the program takes approximately two years to complete - two semesters of prerequisites and three semesters of major required courses. Regardless of the length of time, you take to complete the prerequisites, the OTA Program classes are three consecutive semesters and must be completed within those three semesters. The classes begin in the fall of each year and graduate one year later at the end of the summer term.

**ASSOCIATE DEGREE:**

**AAS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT – Guided Pathway/Map**

**1st Semester**

ORI 110	Freshman Seminar	1
ENG 101	English Composition I	3
PSY 200	General Psychology	3
MTH 100	Intermediate College Algebra	3
<u>BIO 201**</u>	<u>Human Anatomy and Physiology I</u>	<u>4</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours		14

**2nd Semester**

BIO 202	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
PSY 210	Human Growth and Development	3
<u>HUM 101</u>	<u>Intro to Humanities</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours		10

**3rd Semester**

OTA 210	Occupational Therapy Fundamentals	3
OTA 211	Practical Anatomy and Kinesiology-Theory	2
OTA 212	Practical Anatomy and Kinesiology-Lab	2
OTA 213	Treatment Planning and Implementation: Part I Theory-Pediatrics	3
OTA 214	Treatment Planning and Implementation: 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
<u>OTA 221</u>	<u>Medical Conditions in OT</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours		18

**4th Semester**

OTA 215	Psychiatric Environment and Group Process in OT	2
OTA 216	Psychiatric Environment and Group Process in OT-Lab	1
OTA 220	Documentation for the OTAs	2
OTA 222	Treatment Planning and Implementation: Part II Theory-Adult	3
OTA 223	Treatment Planning and Implementation: 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
<u>OTA 227</u>	<u>Evidence Based Practice</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours		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
<u>OTA 234</u>	<u>OTA Review Seminar</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours		13
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>74</b>

\*\*BIO 103 prerequisite is not required for OTA students.

# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## What are the basic requirements for OTA Program admission?

Admission to the OTA Program is based on your prerequisite GPA and ACT score calculated to total your ranking score. [The General Education Worksheet](#) is used to calculate the total ranking points. The candidates are ranked highest score to lowest score after the June 1<sup>st</sup> application deadline.

## Where can I obtain information about the program?

Right now, you are looking at the best source of OTA Program information available – our program [website](#). The current WSCC catalog (available on the WSCC homepage) is also a great source. Finally, you can make an appointment with a Health Programs advisor through the WSCC Advising Center at 256-352-8040. For general program information or to set up an appointment to meet with a program advisor, contact the Health Division/OTA secretary at 256-352-8307 or [deidre.rooker@wallacestate.edu](mailto:deidre.rooker@wallacestate.edu).

## Can I get an information packet mailed to me?

The OTA Program no longer maintains printed information – all program information is posted on the [website](#).

2022 General Education Worksheet																		
Name: _____		Student # A _____		Program Applying To: Occupational Therapy Assistant														
<p><b>On printed unofficial transcript, highlight highest grade received for courses completed below.</b> If currently enrolled in a general education course, wait until grades are posted on transcript to apply. DO NOT circle a grade/point if class is <u>not complete</u>. All unofficial transcripts from each college attended must be uploaded to the online application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure accurate and truthful information.</p> <p><b>CLEP or AP Credit:</b> A copy of the official score report must be attached. CLEP and ACT CLEP credit will be awarded letter grade of "B". AP Exam Score of 5 = A, 4 = B, 3 = C.</p> <p><b>All light grey shaded areas must be complete to be considered. Answer each row, add columns, and calculate totals.</b></p>																		
Course Name and Number	College Where Completed (Please abbreviate)	Course Name	In Process	Circle earned grade and points	Credit Hours	For office use:												
ENG 101 English Composition I			Yes	A=12 B=9 C=6	3													
HUM Elective: ART, HUM, IDS, LIT, MUS, PHL, REL, THR			Yes	A=12 B=9 C=6	3													
Math: MTH 100, MTH 110, MTH 112, MTH 113, MTH 120, MTH 125, MTH 126, MTH 227, MTH 237, MTH 238, MTH 265			Yes	A=12 B=9 C=6	3													
BIO 201 Human Anatomy & Physiology I			Yes	A=16 B=12 C=8	4													
BIO 202 Human Anatomy & Physiology II			Yes	A=16 B=12 C=8	4													
PSY 200 General Psychology			Yes	A=12 B=9 C=6	3													
PSY 210 Human Growth and Development			Yes	A=12 B=9 C=6	3													
Observation Requirement Minimum 24 hours	CPR Certification* American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Providers	ACT Composite Score		Add circled points from above:	Add hours completed:	Divide TOTAL PTS by TOTAL HRS												
Facility _____ Hrs _____					23													
Facility _____ Hrs _____	Expiration Date _____	Minimum 20 required																
		Test Date _____		TOTAL PTS	TOTAL HRS	TOTAL GPA												
*Not required for application. Accepted students will be required to submit copy of CPR certification card at OTA orientation.																		
<b>Do Not Round Totals</b>																		
Meeting Minimal Requirements Does Not Guarantee Acceptance																		
This form expires July 28, 2021																		
				<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. Insert Total GPA from above</td> <td>_____</td> <td>(max 4.00)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Multiply line 1 Total by 9 =</td> <td>_____</td> <td>(max 36)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Insert ACT composite score</td> <td>_____</td> <td>(max 36)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Add line 2 and 3 for Total</td> <td>_____</td> <td>(max 72.00)</td> </tr> </table>			1. Insert Total GPA from above	_____	(max 4.00)	2. Multiply line 1 Total by 9 =	_____	(max 36)	3. Insert ACT composite score	_____	(max 36)	4. Add line 2 and 3 for Total	_____	(max 72.00)
1. Insert Total GPA from above	_____	(max 4.00)																
2. Multiply line 1 Total by 9 =	_____	(max 36)																
3. Insert ACT composite score	_____	(max 36)																
4. Add line 2 and 3 for Total	_____	(max 72.00)																

# PREREQUISITES

**What courses are required for admission into the program?**

Students are required to complete the following courses with a grade of “C” or above in each: ORI-Orientation (a WSCC requirement. You are exempt from the Orientation (ORI) requirement if you transfer in at least 12 credit hours from another institution), ENG 101-English Composition I, Humanities Elective (the OTA Program recommends PHL 210 Ethics and the Health Sciences but any three-credit hour (Code ‘A’) art, music, theatre, religion, philosophy or literature course is acceptable), PSY 200-General Psychology, PSY 210-Developmental Psychology, MTH 100-Intermediate College Algebra, BIO 201 & 202-Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II. A full list of up-to-date courses and their credit hours can be found in the current WSCC catalog. Any prerequisite transfer course taken must include the same number of credits as those shown in the current WSCC catalog.

**Year 1: Prerequisite Course Semesters**

**Suggested Sequence for Fall Semester (Semester 1)**

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Completed?	Institution Where Completed
ORI 110	Freshman Seminar*	1		
ENG 101	English Composition	3		
PSY 200	General Psychology	3		
MTH 100	Intermediate College Algebra	3		
BIO 201	Human Anatomy & Physiology I**	4		

**Suggested Sequence for Spring Semester (Semester 2)**

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Completed?	Institution Where Completed
PSY 210	Human Growth and Development	3		
BIO 202	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4		
HUM 101	Introduction to Humanities***	3		

**Are there any exceptions to these prerequisite classes?**

Students who transfer in at least 12 credit hours from another regionally accredited institution are exempt from the Orientation (ORI) requirement. While the OTA program does recommend PHL 210 Ethics and the Health Sciences for the student’s Humanities elective, any Code A, three-credit hour Humanities course will substitute. Humanities courses include art (ART), music (MUS), theatre (THR), religion (REL), philosophy (PHL), humanities (HUM), or literature courses (LIT). Also, any higher math course can be substituted for MTH 100. Please note that MTH 098, MTH 116, MTH 131, and MTH 132 are NOT higher math courses and will not substitute for MTH 100.

**But I already have a bachelor’s degree (or master’s, etc.) – do I need to go back and take prerequisites?**

Yes. If you are missing the required prerequisite courses you must take them before your application will be considered.

**Do I have to complete the prerequisites in one year?**

No. You may take as long as you need to complete the requirements for admission into the program. However, the final year of OTA Program classes must be completed within the specified three-semester sequence. The final three consecutive semesters begin in the fall each year.

**Can the prerequisite courses be taken at any other colleges?**

Yes. Wallace State Community College in Hanceville transfers classes from accredited institutions across the country. Courses are transferable if they are equivalent in both credit hours and content to our established prerequisite courses. Information on course equivalency may be obtained by contacting the WSCC Admissions office at 256-352-8238 or Advising at 256-352-8040. A course description from your college catalog may be required.

**Can I substitute other courses for any of the prerequisites?**

Generally speaking, if the course name, description, and credit hours are the same – even if the course number code is different – a course will usually transfer. For example, ENG 101 English Composition I – a variety of course names and numbers are used by other institutions, but every school has a three-credit hour introductory English composition course. However, regardless of the course name or number used, the course content and the credit hours must be the same for substitution. For example, PSY 210 Human Growth and Development can be found under a variety of names (Lifespan Development, Development Psychology, etc.). Still, it must include the full life span in the content and be three semester credit hours in length. Not just any random Psychology course (like Abnormal Psychology or Child Psychology) will substitute. Your transcript would need to include Child Psychology, Adolescent Psychology, Adult Psychology, and Psychology of Death and Dying to have all the content found in the PSY 210 course. Ultimately the easiest way to determine equivalent course transfer is to contact the WSCC Department of Admissions or a WSCC OTA program advisor.

**Am I required to retake the Placement Test if I am transferring in from another school and have had the English and Math requirements?**

No, placement testing is not required for students transferring prerequisite level English or Math courses. However, if you have just graduated high school and are entering WSCC for the first time as a freshman, a placement test is required before registering for English or Math classes. Placement testing is at your convenience most days in our computer lab. If you are transferring in Math or English classes, it is not necessary to retake the placement test.

**Can I be admitted if I still have prerequisite courses to be completed?**

It is recommended that the student complete all prerequisite coursework before applying to the OTA program. If the student is enrolled in a prerequisite course during the term in which they are applying (Summer), they will only be considered on a space-available basis. The student must provide an updated transcript with the course grade posted.

Currently, the program is receiving more applications from individuals that have completed all prerequisites than we have space available. At this time, it is highly unlikely that you will be considered for admission without having completed all prerequisites.

## **Transfer Credit for Incoming Students**

Per website: <https://www.wallacestate.edu/admissions/transfer-credit>

1. Transcripts will be evaluated after the student has been admitted to the college.
2. Evaluation of transfer credit is based on a student's program of study at Wallace State. Only transfer courses that are applicable to a student's program of study are considered for transfer credit.
3. Only official transcripts will be evaluated for transfer credit. Student copies will not be utilized for evaluation of official transfer credit.
4. A grade of "D" may transfer if the cumulative GPA is 2.0 or above at the time of admission.
5. The grade of "D" may only be applied to general education courses for the Associate's Degree unless program restrictions or course prerequisites prohibit. See Course Descriptions and Abbreviations for specific prerequisite requirements.
6. All major required courses require a grade of "C" or higher for successful course completion.
7. No graduate level or pass/fail courses may transfer.
8. Courses taken under a quarter or trimester system will be evaluated and adjusted to the semester system.
9. Students inquiring about the application of transfer credit should complete a Re-Evaluation of Transfer Credit Request available on the Admissions section of the website or available at Lion Central in the Bailey Center.

# PROGRAM APPLICATION

## **When can I apply for the program?**

Following the completion of the first year of general education/prerequisite courses, you should submit an [application](#) for the OTA program between March 1st and June 1st of the year in which you would like to start the OTA program classes. The OTA Program classes begin in the fall semester of each year. Please note – a new application is required each time you apply, and the program releases a new application near the first of each year. Keep copies of everything submitted as items from previous applications will not be released and are destroyed immediately after the application period closes.

## **What information is required to complete an application?**

The following information is required to be submitted directly to the Admissions Office: [WSCC application](#), official transcripts from each college attended, and ACT score report.

The following information is submitted directly to the OTA Program using an electronic application process: completed OTA program application, [documentation](#) of volunteer/observation experience, as well as student copies of all transcripts and your official ACT score. See [application instructions](#) for specific submission details.

## **Is it necessary to get letters of recommendation to better my chances of being accepted into the program?**

No. Letters of recommendation are not required and will not better anyone's chances of being accepted into the program. Letters submitted will not factor into the admission decision.

## **How many students apply to the program, and how many are accepted each year?**

The number of applications submitted varies from year to year. For example, in recent years, the program has received well over 100 applications to the OTA Program, of which approximately 80% had completed all admission requirements and were eligible for program admission. There is not a waiting list, and every qualified applicant is considered. Applications are not returned, nor is any information released from application packets. Currently, the program accepts 60 students each year in the fall using a process that considers prerequisite GPA and ACT calculated to a total ranking score.

### OTA 2021 Admission Statistics

Applications: 73 (69 qualified)  
Total Accepted: 59  
Average Prerequisite GPA: 3.59  
Average ACT Score: 22

## **Are CPR certifications, physical examinations, background checks, drug testing, or any other medical testing required to submit or complete an application?**

No. The required physical exam, drug testing, background screening, and CPR certification are completed AFTER you have been accepted into the OTA program so that each will be current and valid throughout the clinical rotations. Do not complete any of these items until formally accepted into the program and instructed to do so by the program director.

## **What is the timeline for the admissions process?**

The program begins accepting applications on March 1st of each year. The final deadline by which all applications must be received is June 1st. Each applicant will receive a reply by email within approximately 4 – 6 weeks (usually around July 1st) regardless of the decision made.

## **How do I make my application more competitive?**

To be competitive in the OTA program admission process, you should work on improving your prerequisite GPA and ACT score. You can schedule a meeting with the program advisors, and they can help you review your transcripts and determine the best course of action for your success.

## **What do I do if I don't get admitted to the OTA program?**

Typically, the OTA program receives more qualified applicants than we have space available. Due to accreditation standards, space, clinical availability, and faculty limitations, the OTA program only admits 60 students. Based on current statistics, that means that two-thirds or more of those who apply will not be admitted. It is very common for applicants to apply to multiple programs.

## **GPA**

### **What is the minimum GPA required for program admission?**

A minimum 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale is required. The prerequisite GPA is the most important factor for admission. Thus the higher the prerequisite GPA score, the better your chances for admission. Keep in mind that this is a minimal requirement – currently, those being admitted have a significantly higher average GPA than this score.

### **How is the prerequisite GPA determined for program admission, and what if some of the prerequisite courses have been retaken, earning higher grades to improve my GPA?**

The prerequisite GPA considers only the grades achieved in each of the prerequisite courses. The OTA Program no longer uses a cumulative GPA. During the application process, the highest grade achieved in each prerequisite class (regardless of the order in which those classes are taken) is used to determine the application GPA points awarded. . [The General Education Worksheet](#) is used to calculate the total ranking points. Remember – this process only considers the grades achieved in seven courses. This includes the following: ENG 101, Humanities elective, MTH 100 or higher Math, BIO 201, BIO 202, PSY 200, and PSY 210. It does not include orientation. A prerequisite GPA (and thus the points awarded) can be improved by retaking any prerequisite course in which you achieved less than an “A.” Every prerequisite class in which you score an “A” puts you that much closer to a 4.0 prerequisite GPA and thus the highest possible score in this category.

# ACT

## **Do you require the ACT or any other special entrance exams to be admitted into the program?**

Yes. A minimum score of 20 on the ACT is **required** for a student to be qualified for acceptance into the OTA program, regardless of previous education, degrees awarded, or experiences. Individuals who have completed higher degrees are not exempt from this expectation. The ACT score is a factor considered for admission, thus the higher the score, the better your chances of being admitted. Generally, ACT scores improve when taken after college-level work, especially math and science courses. If you are planning to retake the ACT, you might consider the ACT Residual Exam offered at WSCC. This exam is the same as the national exam but is offered on-campus, allowing for a quicker release of scores. Contact 256-352-8044 for more information.

## **But I already have a bachelor's degree (or master's, etc.) – do I need to go back and take a basic college entrance exam like the ACT?**

Yes – if you have never taken the ACT, you will need the ACT score before applying to the program. Without the score, your application will not be considered. However, the good news is that if you already have a degree (or even if you've already taken all your prerequisites), you should be “over” prepared for the ACT. Generally, ACT scores improve when the test is taken after college-level work. Contact our testing center at 256-352-8044 for more information about WSCC Residual ACT Exam.

## **Is it necessary to take the writing portion of the ACT?**

No, it is not necessary to take the Writing portion of the ACT. The OTA program only requires the standard four-section (English, Reading, Math & Science Reasoning) version of the test.

## **I took the SAT...is it the same thing?**

First of all, determine which SAT you took. Virtually everyone took the Stanford Achievement Test while you were in high school. This standardized test would have been given by the teachers at your high school to gauge your academic progress, and it was not a college entrance exam. However, you may have also taken a college entrance exam similar to the ACT, known now as simply the SAT (previously the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, SAT 1: Reasoning Test or SAT Reasoning Test). While the College Board's SAT is not the same as the ACT, there is a concordance scale available that allows us to convert your SAT score to an equivalent ACT score. You may email your SAT score to the OTA program secretary for additional information.

## **How do I improve my ACT score?**

The ACT is a college admission exam. Although WSCC does not have a minimum required score for college admission, the OTA Program, and most other health programs require a minimum score as part of the application process. If it has been several years since you last took the ACT- retake it. Often scores will improve after you have completed college-level courses, particularly math, science, and English coursework. Visit the ACT website. ACT offers practice questions and study recommendations online. You might also consider taking an ACT prep course (the WSCC Alumni Association offers several) or purchasing a study guide or engaging a tutor to help you prepare. You also might consider taking additional college courses in your area(s) of weakness, such as a reading class or math class. While it is important to strengthen your low sub-scores, you can also see improvements in the overall score by improving your strengths. For example, if your best sub-score is in English, work on improving that area. If it is a topic that you are better at - perhaps you enjoy it more – then you can often improve more in that area than trying to improve in an area that you don't enjoy or at which you do not excel.

