

# DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM

The College of Health Sciences at Des Moines University offers an entry-level doctoral program of study in occupational therapy. The program includes 33 months of academic and professional study leading to a Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) degree. This includes 2 years (22 months) of didactic coursework, 24 weeks of Level II Fieldwork, and a 14-week doctoral capstone experience.

The OTD program prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and experience to provide occupational therapy services that improve engagement in everyday activities and promote enjoyment of life to its fullest. Our students develop the expertise to become caring and competent providers in diverse local and global communities. The curriculum prepares students to be reflective practitioners who facilitate health promotion, prevention, and wellness through occupation- and evidence-based practice, professional reasoning, scholarship, interprofessional collaboration, and innovation.

## MISSION

To support the health, wellbeing, and occupational engagement of people, communities, and populations by preparing compassionate and competent leaders in occupational therapy.

## VISION

We envision the DMU OTD program will be national leaders in occupational therapy education by engaging in scholarship, serving the local and global community, and creating therapists who are competent, collaborative, and innovative.

## Values

To fulfill its mission and advance toward its vision, the DMU OTD program seeks to prepare occupational therapists who value:

- Evidence-based and competent expertise in occupation;
- Reflection, collaboration, compassion, and professionalism;
- Inclusion, diversity, culturally responsiveness, and justice;
- Ethical and intentional decision making;
- Lifelong learning; and
- Holistic wellness, social responsibility, and health equity.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Achieve entry-level competence as an occupational therapist.

1.1. Demonstrate entry-level competence in all parts of the OT Process: Evaluation, Intervention, and Outcomes

1.2. Demonstrate the ability to support health and participation in all stages of life through engagement in occupation

2. Uphold the ethical standards, values, and attitudes of the occupational therapy profession, including promotion of occupational justice, cultural humility, and equitable care.

2.1. Explain and apply the concepts of occupational justice, cultural humility, and equitable care

2.2. Apply the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics to a practice situation

2.3. Adhere to the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and all federal, state, and facility regulations

3. Articulate and apply the occupational therapy domain and process through theoretically informed and evidence-based evaluations and interventions to achieve expected outcomes as related to culturally relevant occupations.

3.1. Describe the aspects of the occupational therapy domain: Occupations, contexts, performance patterns, performance skills, and client factors.

3.2. Demonstrate the ability to create an occupational profile which informs creation of a culturally relevant plan of care.

3.3. Demonstrate use of theory and evidence in evaluation and intervention to achieve expected outcomes.

4. Effectively communicate and collaborate intra- and interprofessionally with all who provide services and programs for persons, groups, communities, and populations.

4.1. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with, assign appropriate tasks to, and supervise the occupational therapy assistant while remaining responsible for all aspects of treatment.

4.2. Communicate with clients, families, communities, and other professionals in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team-based and collaborative care approach

4.3. Perform effectively on an interprofessional team to plan, deliver, and evaluate care that is safe, timely, efficient, effective, and equitable.

5. Lead, educate, and advocate regarding the distinct value of occupational therapy, access to occupational therapy services, and for the recipients of those services.

5.1. Identify social, political, economic, and healthcare trends at local, national, and global levels which impact occupational therapy practice.

5.2. Articulate the values, beliefs, and distinct perspective of the occupational therapy profession; occupation as a method and desired outcome of occupational therapy; and the role of occupational therapy practitioners to clients and other relevant parties clearly, confidently, and accurately.

5.3. Advocate for occupational therapy services by influencing policy, practice, and education.

6. Consume and contribute to research supporting occupational therapy in order to promote evidence-based professional practice and lifelong learning.

6.1. Design and implement a research study to address a clinical question.

6.2. Critically appraise and analyze research evidence to inform practice decisions.

7. Synthesize in-depth knowledge in a practice area through the development and completion of a doctoral capstone in one or more of the following areas: clinical skills, research skills, administration, program

development and evaluation, policy development, advocacy, education, or leadership.

7.1. Develop and complete a doctoral capstone experience (DCE) which focuses on clinical skills, research skills, administration, program development and evaluation, policy development, advocacy, education, or leadership.

7.2. Create a doctoral capstone project which evidences mobilization of the DCE and integration of learning.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for admission, students must have a minimum of 72 semester hours (3 years FTE) of undergraduate work at a regionally accredited college or university prior to the start of orientation.

The courses below are required for admission; students may apply while coursework is in progress. Coursework completion is required prior to matriculation, and pending coursework during the application cycle is acceptable. A prerequisite GPA and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale are recommended to be considered for admission. The following course work must be completed prior to matriculation; grades below a C- will not be accepted.

Subject	Required Course(s) or Term Hours
Human Anatomy <sup>1,2</sup>	4 semester hours
Human Physiology <sup>1,2</sup>	4 semester hours
Psychology	9 semester hours; Must include coursework in introductory, abnormal, and developmental psychology
Social Science or Humanities	3 semester hours; May include sociology, anthropology, philosophy, economics, or other
English Composition	6 semester hours; Must include college-level English writing, grammar, and composition
Statistics	3 semester hours
Medical Terminology	1 course Or Certificate of Completion via DMU's online Medical Terminology course

<sup>1</sup> with lab

<sup>2</sup> or a two-course sequence in anatomy and physiology with lab

Other recommended course work includes biology, human development/ human behavior, physics, kinesiology, research methods, philosophy, ethics, and speech/communication.

A personal statement is required along with three letters of recommendation, at least one of which must be from a college professor/ instructor who can attest to academic ability to enter a rigorous professional program. A letter recommendation from a licensed occupational therapist is highly desired.

Applicants are encouraged to observe occupational therapists, but a minimum number of hours is not required for application. The most competitive applicants will have observed several hours in a variety of occupational therapy settings, including in practice areas of children

and youth, work and industry, rehabilitation, health and wellness, mental health, productive aging, or another specific area.

Accepted students will be required to complete a criminal background check, which may include a drug screen, prior to matriculation into the program. DMU students are required to complete annual criminal background checks and drug screening while enrolled at DMU. Depending on fieldwork site placement, additional requirements may need to be met or updated. Students must also complete a physical examination and an immunization report prior to orientation. Proof of health insurance coverage which meets minimum requirements as specified within the Academic Catalog must be provided at orientation.

Additional information regarding program requirements can be found on the OTD Program website and within the Student Handbook.

## PROGRAM APPLICATION PROCESS

Application to the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program is accepted through the Occupational Therapist Centralized Application Service (OTCAS). Direct applications to DMU are considered on a case-by-case basis after OTCAS closes.

Detailed information regarding the process can be found on the OTD Program website.

Once the student's application file is complete with OTCAS, it will be sent to DMU. Applicants will be contacted by email if they are selected for an interview. An interview is required for admission. The interview process includes two components. The first interview is conducted using the Kira Talent Virtual Interview Assessment, a competency-based, holistic, asynchronous assessment. The second is a live session conducted either in-person or via Zoom, per the applicant's choice. Additional follow-up interviews may be required. Applicants will receive a response to their application status after the interview process. Because of the rolling admissions schedule, those who apply early in the admissions cycle are more likely to be interviewed than those who apply later.

The OTD program uses Holistic Review in making admissions decisions. This means that the program employs mission-aligned admission processes which take into consideration student experiences, attributes, and academic performance as well as the value that they would contribute to teaching and learning within our program and the practice and profession of occupational therapy. The OTD program works to consider applicants as a "whole," rather than focusing on one factor over another. This means

that selection criteria are linked to the mission and goals of DMU and the program, and, thus, potential contribution to the University, program, and the field of occupational therapy are considered.

The OTD program does not accept transfer credits or provide credit for prior experiences.

## PROGRAM PATHWAYS

In an effort to appeal to and meet the needs of a more diverse group of learners, applicants to DMU's OTD program can choose one of two pathways to earning their Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree. Both pathways are a part of the same student cohort and follow the same fulltime schedule. Students from both pathways will come together for weekly laboratory sessions.

- Traditional Campus Pathway
  - Students who choose the traditional campus pathway will engage in most class and laboratory sessions face-to-face on the DMU

campus. Students in this pathway will also have access to virtual class sessions when needed.

- Hybrid Pathway
  - Students who choose the hybrid pathway will generally engage in class sessions virtually (synchronously or asynchronously) and will attend laboratory sessions face-to-face on the DMU campus. Laboratory sessions will generally occur 2 consecutive days per week. Students in this pathway will have the option to attend class sessions face-to-face on the DMU campus as able.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to own a laptop computer for their coursework by orientation. Although DMU doesn't require any specific model or brand of computer, there are minimum specifications students will need. Please access the Information Technology Personal Owned Devices page for minimum specifications. Please note these are minimum specifications, not recommended specifications, and that students can use either the Windows or Mac platform. Unique to the O.T.D. program, students must have a webcam.

While students provide their own computer hardware and software, the DMU Solutions Hub can assist with issues relating to use of DMU websites and services, such as email, the portal for student communication, and the course management systems. They can also assist with using the DMU network on campus and accessing printers available for student use. The Solutions Hub cannot help with hardware failures on your equipment or installing software on a student computer.

It is the student's responsibility to both back up their own data and work and to identify an alternative computer to use should their primary computer or internet connection fail.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE

The OTD curriculum has been designed to align with our philosophy of learning and our view of occupational therapy. At DMU, learning is transformative, integrative, active, collaborative, and inclusive; it is a dynamic process that continues to unfold and build. Our curriculum has been intentionally designed to create occupational therapists who are competent, ethical, culturally responsive, evidence-based, and collaborative scholars and leaders, prepared to engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and support health for all.

Designed as a spiral, the curriculum promotes deepening of understanding and skills through successive encounters and building of content. There are three phases to the curriculum: Knowledge, skills, and experience. In the knowledge phase, students focus on the themes of occupation and professional reasoning. In the second phase of the curriculum, students take their foundational knowledge and begin to apply and integrate it in order to develop skills. Two themes guide this phase, professional practice and scholarship. The final phase of the curriculum is experience. Themes in this phase include innovation and collaboration. Students experientially engage as a professional in order to meaningfully analyze and evaluate their knowledge and skills as well as to create themselves as leaders and members of interprofessional collaborative teams.

The program is 33 months in length and is divided into 8 terms. Each term builds on the information from previous terms. The length of time for each term varies.

## INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

One of the learning outcomes of the DMU Doctor of Occupational Therapy program and the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education is to effectively communicate and work interprofessionally with those who provide care for individuals, communities, and/or populations. To prepare students for interprofessional practice, a number of required and voluntary interprofessional education activities exist throughout the curriculum. Further detail is provided within related course syllabi.

## Program Outcomes

To review the program's outcomes statistics (e.g., average graduation rate, average employment rate, average licensure exam pass rate, etc.), please visit the program's outcomes webpage.

## Licensure

Students who satisfactorily complete the requirements for graduation from the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program of the College of Health Sciences are 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, including Iowa, require licensure to practice and use the NBCOT exam as the license examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification exam or to attain state licensure.

## ACCREDITATION

The entry-level occupational therapy doctoral degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is [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). In addition, all states require licensure to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION, ACADEMIC PROMOTION AND GRADUATION

The purpose of this document is to specify the technical standards the University deems essential for a student to matriculate, remain in good standing and ultimately achieve all the competencies necessary for graduation within their program. The University, therefore, requires candidates to confirm their ability to comply with these standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, as a condition of admission and on an annual basis thereafter within a program's advising processes.

Fulfillment of the technical standards for graduation does not guarantee that a graduate will be able to fulfill the technical requirements of any specific post-graduate residency or fellowship program or employment setting.

A candidate who is seeking a DO, DPM, MSPAS, DPT or OTD degree at Des Moines University must be capable of completing core educational requirements and achieving the competencies in the basic and clinical sciences. DMU seeks to develop candidates who have a deep and robust health science or medical knowledge base and outstanding clinical skills, with the ability to appropriately apply them, effectively interpret information, and contribute to decisions across a broad spectrum of medical situations and settings. The critical skills required to be successful are outlined below and include the ability to observe, communicate, perform motor functions, as well as to understand, integrate core knowledge and skills, and to behave appropriately in varied educational and professional situations.

Reasonable accommodations consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act and the Iowa Civil Rights Act may be required by otherwise qualified individual candidates to meet the technical standards specified below. Requests for University-provided accommodations will be granted if the requests are reasonable, do not cause a fundamental alteration of the health science or medical education program, do not cause an undue hardship, are consistent with the standards of the health science or medical profession, and are recommended by the Accommodations and Educational Support Specialist.

1. Observation: Candidates and students must be able to acquire required information and timely interpret demonstrations, experiments, and laboratory exercises in the basic sciences. They must be able to observe a patient/client accurately for purposes of interactions, evaluation, and treatment.

2. Communication: Candidates and students must be able to demonstrate proficiency in the English language such that they can communicate effectively in oral and written form with all members of the health care team. Candidates and students must be able to communicate with patients/clients in order to elicit and share information. They must have the capacity for comfortable verbal and non-verbal communication and interpersonal skills to enable effective caregiving of patients/clients and collaboration within a multidisciplinary team. In any case where a candidate's ability to communicate is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate reasonable alternative means and/or abilities to communicate with patients/clients and members of the healthcare team.

3. Motor and Sensory: Candidates and students must have sufficient motor and tactile function to execute movements reasonably required to perform basic laboratory tests, perform physical examinations, and provide clinical care, including emergency treatment to patients. Such actions may require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements and strength, vestibular function, and functional use of the senses of touch to meet professional care standards. In any case where a candidate's ability to complete and interpret physical findings using such skills and functions is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate reasonable alternative means and/or abilities to retrieve these physical findings. Candidates and students must be willing and able to touch and examine **without regard to known or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, or other characteristics protected by law.**

4. Strength and Mobility: Candidates and students must demonstrate strength, including upper and lower extremity and body strength, and mobility to provide clinical care, attend to emergency codes, and to perform or direct such maneuvers as CPR.

5. Evaluation and Treatment Integration: Consistent with the ability to assess at a minimum symmetry, range of motion, and tissue textures, candidates and students must perform proper evaluation and treatment integration.

6. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities: Candidates and students must have the ability to accurately measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, problem solve, and think critically. They must also have the ability to participate and learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small groups, virtual learning, team and collaborative activities. Interpretation of information from multiple sources (written, verbal, environmental, and interpersonal) is also expected. In addition, candidates and students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures. Candidates and students must be able to concentrate, timely analyze and interpret data, and make decisions within areas in which there is a reasonable amount of visual and auditory distraction.

7. Behavioral Attributes, Social Skills, and Professional Expectation: Candidates and students must be able to effectively utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, complete all responsibilities attendant to the evaluation and care of patients/clients, and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues. Candidates and students must be able to professionally manage heavy workloads, prioritize conflicting demands, and function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments; to display flexibility, to learn to function in the face of their own possible biases and uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients, and to not engage in substance overuse or abuse. Candidates and students must be able to understand and determine the impact of the social determinants of health and other systemic issues (including workload and environmental demands) which impact the care for all individuals in a respectful and effective manner regardless of known or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, veteran status or any protected status. Professionalism, compassion, integrity, concern for others, ethical standards, interpersonal skills, engagement, emotional intelligence, and motivation are all qualities that are required throughout the educational process.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Des Moines University welcomes qualified candidates and students with disabilities who meet the technical standards of the program, with or without reasonable accommodations. Students with a disability who may need accommodations during their educational career at DMU will be asked to reaffirm their need for accommodations when acknowledging the ability to meet technical standards annually. The student is responsible for requesting accommodations through the Accommodations and Educational Support Specialist in Academic Support within the Center for Educational Enhancement. Please reach out in person, by email ([accommodations@dmu.edu](mailto:accommodations@dmu.edu)), or by calling Academic Support at 515-271-1516. The Accommodations and Educational Support Specialist reviews all requests for accommodations through an individualized, interactive process.

The use of an intermediary may be a reasonable accommodation while performing some non-essential physical maneuvers or non-technical data gathering. However, an intermediary cannot substitute for the candidates' or student's interpretation and judgement. Intermediaries may not perform essential skills on behalf of the candidate or student, nor can they replace technical skills related to selection and observation.

## PROCESS FOR ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH THE TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Candidates are required to attest at the time they accept an offer to matriculate that they meet the applicable technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, and annually confirm they continue to meet these standards. These standards are not intended to deter any candidate or student who might be able to complete the requirements of the curriculum with reasonable accommodations.

The University will provide reasonable accommodations as may be required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Iowa Civil Rights Act

A student whose behavior or performance raises questions concerning his or her ability to fulfill these technical standards may be required to obtain evaluation or testing by a health care provider designated by the University, and to provide the results to the Center for Educational Enhancement to be considered as part of the interactive process to determine possible reasonable accommodations.

Technological compensation can be made with respect to certain technical standards, but candidates and students should be able to perform these standards in a reasonably independent manner.

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

In addition to the technical standards set forth, candidates and students must possess the general physical health necessary for performing the duties of a student in the health sciences and a health professional in training without endangering the lives of patients and/or colleagues with whom they might have contact.

Course	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Year 1</b>		
<b>Fall Term</b>		
OTD 1611	Functional Anatomy and Kinesiology	5
OTD 1612	Evidence Based Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OTD 1613	Professional Reasoning 1	1
OTD 1614	Foundations of Occupational Therapy	4
OTD 1615	Conditions Affecting Occupation	4
OTD 1616	Occupational Health and Wellness: Population Perspective	1
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>18</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>		
OTD 1617	Professional Reasoning 2	2
OTD 1618	Human Behavior and Lifespan Development	3
OTD 1619	Occupational Therapy Process 1: Evaluation	5
OTD 1620	Functional Neuroscience	4

OTD 1621	The Occupational Therapy Scholar 1	2
OTD 1622	Care Coordination and Collaborative Practice	2
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>18</b>
<b>Year 2</b>		
<b>Summer Term</b>		
OTD 2608	Occupational Therapy Process 2: Technology and Environmental Intervention	4
OTD 2609	Occupational Therapy Process 3: Preparatory Methods Intervention	5
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Fall Term</b>		
OTD 2607	NAMI Provider Education Program for OTD	0.5
OTD 2610	Capstone Preparation 1	1
OTD 2611	The Occupational Therapy Scholar 2	2
OTD 2613	The Occupational Therapy Entrepreneur 1	2
OTD 2614	Occupational Therapy Process 4: Psychosocial Intervention	4
OTD 2615	Occupational Therapy Process 5: Rehabilitation, Disability, and Participation Intervention 1	3
OTD 2616	Occupational Therapy Process 6: Intervention for Children and Youth	6
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>18.5</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>		
OTD 2617	Capstone Preparation 2	1
OTD 2618	The Occupational Therapy Scholar 3	2
OTD 2619	Professional Reasoning 3	3
OTD 2620	The Occupational Therapy Entrepreneur 2	2
OTD 2621	Occupational Therapy Process 7: Rehabilitation, Disability, and Participation 2	4
OTD 2622	Occupational Therapy Process 8: Health, Wellness, and Productive Aging Intervention	4
OTD 2623	Healthcare, Policy, and Advocacy in Occupational Therapy	2
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>18</b>
<b>Year 3</b>		
<b>Summer Term</b>		
OTD 3608	Level II Fieldwork A	12
OTD 3609	Capstone Preparation 3	1
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>13</b>
<b>Fall Term</b>		
OTD 3610	Level II Fieldwork B	12
OTD 3611	Capstone Preparation 4	1
OTD 3612	The Occupational Therapy Practitioner	1
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>14</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>		
OTD 3613	Doctoral Capstone Experience	14
OTD 3614	Doctoral Capstone Project	1
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>123.5</b>

To receive a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree, a student must satisfy the following:

- Successful completion of all academic requirements:
  - Pass all academic course work, fieldwork experiences, and doctoral capstone
  - Dissemination of an individual Doctoral Capstone Project
  - Maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at least a 3.0
- Approval for graduation by the program faculty, Dean and the Board of Trustees of the University following recommendation by the Academic Progress Committee. Academic performance and professionalism are evaluated and considered for graduation.
- Satisfactory resolution of all financial obligations.