

Pre-Occupational Therapy at JWU

Coursework: JWU courses for OT entry overview

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:e3751761-e886-4610-ab58-d5a86f1f47d2>

Getting Started: Go to Thinking About Becoming an OT Student? at <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers.aspx>

Programs: Using the links above as a starting point, and learn about the differences between a OT Masters and Doctorate. Pre-reqs vary. Pay attention to accreditation status as can be quite important. In-state, public schools are most affordable for residents (see FAQs).

OT Observation: Advice here on how to get <https://www.myotspot.com/ot-observation-hours/> and <https://blog.coremedicalgroup.com/pre-ots-guide-observation-hours>

START EARLY! Schools vary in terms of required hours, but shoot for 20-100 (see link above), with at least 2 different OTs. Document in log (see FAQ).

* Consider using your OT Observation work for internship credit, contact Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond for this.

Community Volunteering: Service in just about any capacity is encouraged! Food pantries, online crisis counseling, tutoring, hospital volunteering, religious volunteering, Greek-life volunteer projects, etc.. Document in log (see FAQ).

GRE Testing: Schools vary in whether or not GRE required. Start thinking early about whether or not the schools you will be applying to do as often > \$200 each attempt. If so, consider buying a GRE prep study book or study program early (Magoosh, Kaplan, & Princeton Review are definitely helpful, but expensive!). <https://OTCASdirectory.apta.org/5254/GRE-Requirements-and-Codes-by-Program>
See FAQ for more details.

Scientific Research: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in a scientific research project. Undergraduate research opportunities are often available within your major (advertised when they become available) or by applying to outside summer research fellowships (go to AMCAS, How to Gain Experience). * Also, you can contact JWU Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond to search for research opportunities as part of an internship.

International Medical Outreach: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in volunteer travel programs outside of the US. Have known students who worked in medical camps in Peru and Vietnam over school breaks. *Be careful as some may have significant costs.* See link below:

<https://www.volunteerhq.org/blog/how-to-volunteer-abroad-as-a-physical-therapist/>
<https://www.volunteeringolutions.com/blog/recommended-pre-med-volunteer-projects-abroad/>

JWU Articulation for BIO/HSC Majors: Students in these programs who meet the criteria in the link below will have GRE requirement waived AND be eligible for JWU scholarships.

<https://catalog.jwu.edu/admissions/applying/biology-otd-articulation-agreement/>

For more info on the JWU OTD program, search JWU OTD

Application Process:

Begin ~1 year before hope to begin OT school

GRE: If taking, plan on taking 1 year (often Spring) before you plan to matriculate into OT school as will give you time to re-take if necessary.

Write OTCAS Personal Statement:

Start 1 year (often Spring) before you plan to matriculate. Take help from writing tutors/faculty on personal statements!

OTCAS Application: Portal opens each year on July 22nd. Best to have application submitted early, by Fall - Winter, before you plan to matriculate.

OTCAS Recommendation:

3-4 total: 1-2 faculty (at least 1 science suggested), 1-2 OT care, and/or 1 other.

Interviews: Top candidates will be asked for interviews 3-6 months prior to matriculation. Ask for help to prep from faculty or Experiential Learning!

IMPORTANT Pre-OT FAQs:

1. Keep log on your computer of your experiences, including names of persons you work with as you will need to document your experience later in your application.
2. Science mastery and grades, especially the BCPs (Biology [BIO], Chemistry [CHM], and Physics [PHY] courses) should be strong as possible in order to be competitive for any of these programs!
Take advantage of tutoring & consider re-taking a course if grade less than/equal to a C, especially in the core sciences.
3. Please be aware that ALL collegiate grades will be counted when you applied (even if you re-take a course) and will be converted to standardized OTCAS system which adjusts your JWU GPA slightly (ex. B+ at JWU = 3.5 → adjusted OTCAS system B+ = 3.3).
To calculate yours, MAKE A COPY of the link, follow instructions, & save a copy for your records: <https://1drv.ms/x/s!Ak5n0wrbFYysg4Ff52Yr8vziv-huAw?e=crPGbl>
4. In 2020, the adjusted overall GPAs for OT school admissions ranged from 3.2-3.7. US acceptance rate was ~43% (College Tuition Compare).
5. Many accepted students have taken one to several gap years in order to improve their applications, gain experience, and save up money before actually applying. More maturity is a big positive in the health field as often had more experience with patients & readier for the rigors of an intensive, quick program. As of 2020, the average age of acceptance was 24 years of age.
6. If looking at in-state, public schools: Your state of residence is the one in which you are claimed by parent/custodian or file as an independent on income taxes, not necessarily where you live, and sometimes an issue when parents are divorced. Some forward-thinking students move to states with state, public OT schools to establish residency in those states as an independent for 1-2 years (ie. no parent/guardian claiming you as a dependent on taxes for that year, set up banking/license in that state) before applying.
7. GRE specifics: To register, go to https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/
Note, no subject tests are generally required. For OT: "Minimum combined scores for the GRE are usually around 290, broken out as 150 for verbal and 140 for quantitative." (<https://www.myotspot.com/ot-school-prerequisites/>)
If not taking the GRE, please realize that no GRE requirement drastically increases the applicant pool, sometimes making acceptance more challenging.
8. If you are not a strong candidate by graduation, some students continue to take courses (or re-take) through accredited programs online or in-person. Some great examples are Portage Education <https://portagelearning.com/> and UC Berkeley Extension Sciences