

Pre-Occupational Therapy Fact Sheet

Creighton
UNIVERSITY

Student Success
Advising Resources and Support

Prerequisite and Recommended Courses

Pre-OT students should research schools carefully to be aware of all prerequisite courses and other admissions policies, as prerequisites vary among OT programs. Students should meet with a Pre-Health Advisor in their freshman year to develop their timeline for application to OT school.

PREREQUISITES OFTEN REQUIRED FOR OT SCHOOL

The following courses are commonly required by OT schools. Some courses, although not specifically required for an OT program, may be required to take upper-level courses, such as anatomy and physiology, at Creighton.

- General Biology I w/ Lab - 4 hours - BIO 201/205
- General Chemistry I w/ Lab - 4 hours - CHM 203/204
- Human Anatomy - 3 hours - EXS 111 (only accepted by Creighton), EXS 331, or PHA 310
- Physiology - 3 hours - BIO 449 or EXS 320
- Statistics - 3 hours- Many options for courses
- Psychology - 6 hours- required courses vary; typically General, Abnormal and/or Lifespan/Developmental
- English - 3 hours - ENG 150
- Medical Terminology - 1 hour - OTD 215

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Creighton's OT program requires students to have 6 hours of Theology (often completed via the Magis Core Christian and Biblical Tradition).
- Creighton's OT program does not require a physiology class, nor does it require a lab with anatomy; however, a number of programs require both anatomy and physiology to be completed with labs.
- Some schools may not regard credit earned through examinations (AP/CLEP/IB) as being equivalent to completing required courses, but they may accept higher-level college courses as substitutes. Research individual schools for their policies regarding AP/CLEP/IB credits for prerequisite courses.

PRE-OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY GROUPS AND RESOURCES

Pre-Occupational Therapy Club: All pre-OT students should participate in the Pre-Occupational Therapy Club. This student organization provides leadership opportunities to further explore and gain experience in the OT profession. Learn more on CU Involved:

<https://cuinvolved.creighton.edu/organization/pre-ot>

Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions (SPAHP): Make an appointment with SPAHP admissions office personnel in the spring of the year applying to personalize the application process.

Creighton Preference: The Creighton Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program gives preferential admission consideration to Creighton undergraduate students who complete all prerequisite coursework at Creighton. Students who fully participate in the pre-professional communities and have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 are guaranteed an interview.

BECOMING A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

Competitive applicants to OT programs must complete at least 60 hours of course work. Competitive applicants have solid academic records, well-rounded co-curricular experiences, robust experience working directly with patients, supportive letters of recommendation, and can clearly articulate their reasons for choosing the OT profession.

Selecting a Major, Grades, and GPA

Students are encouraged to choose a major where they can demonstrate strong overall academic performance, while also focusing on developing a solid foundation in the sciences. Ideally, a major should be based on student interests and should support an alternate career. OT programs look for students who demonstrate the academic ability to handle rigorous course loads.

Grades play a crucial role in occupational therapy school admissions, reflecting a student's ability to handle challenges. Maintaining grades above a "B" is important, especially in the two years prior to applying. Grades below a "B" or having more than two withdrawals (W) may raise concerns about academic readiness or judgment.

GPA's calculated on OT school applications include coursework done at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course.

Aim for GPA's of **3.3 or above**.

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COURSE SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Freshmen and sophomores usually take only two natural science or math subjects each semester.

Biology:

General Biology I (BIO 201/205) is a typical choice for freshman fall, as it can prepare students for Anatomy and Physiology. General Biology II (BIO 202/206) is a typical choice for freshman spring. However, some pre-OT students may not need to complete General Biology II and should consult with a Pre-Health Advisor. Completion of either General Chemistry I (CHM 203) with a grade of "C" or better or Introductory General Chemistry 1 (CHM 102) with a grade of "B-" or better is required to take General Biology II (BIO 202).

Chemistry:

General Chemistry I (CHM 203/204) may be needed to enroll in the Anatomy and Physiology courses required by many OT programs. Students should consult with a Pre-Health Advisor about the necessity of Chemistry for their particular situation. To be eligible to take General Chemistry in the freshman year, students must achieve a sufficient score on the Quantitative Assessment for New Students (QANS). Students who do not achieve a sufficient QANS score will need to complete CHM 102 with a grade of "B-" or better to progress to CHM 202.

Physics:

A small number of OT schools may require a semester of physics. Students who have sufficient math and physics (a year of high school physics or a semester of college introductory physics, math through pre-calculus) are eligible to take General Physics I (PHY 201/205).

Math:

MTH 205 is often the best choice for pre-OT students. However, students who are applying to OT programs that require Physics will need pre-calculus algebra and trigonometry knowledge to prepare for General Physics I (PHY 201/205).

Sample First Semester Schedule

Course sequencing may vary depending on a student's readiness

- General Biology w/ Lab (4 hours)
- General Psychology (3 hours)
- Magis Core Class (3 or 4 hours) - ENG or Critical Issues & COM 101
- Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PHL or THL
- Maybe another Magis Core Class (3 hours)
- RSP Class (.5 hours)
- Pre-Professional Community (0 hours)

CO-CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

Volunteer & Service

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Students should have service experiences in healthcare and non-healthcare settings. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities:
<https://www.creighton.edu/scsj>.

Shadowing

Shadowing physical therapists is essential for gaining professional insight and meeting OT program requirements. Schools often require documented shadowing hours. Shadowing in diverse settings and sustained experience with one OT can strengthen applications, especially when a recommendation letter from an OT is needed. Research individual program requirements for specifics.

Research

Research experience is not a requirement for admission to OT programs, but may add an extra layer to an application if the student is particularly interested in research. See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities:
www.creighton.edu/curas.

Leadership and Teamwork

Students must demonstrate leadership and interpersonal skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Students must also demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively.

Healthcare Experience

Students should pursue hands-on patient experience through volunteering or employment, such as working as a PT/OT Tech, CNA, EMT, or rehabilitation aide.

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