

Career Profile: Occupational Therapist

Description:

Occupational Therapists (OT's) help individuals improve ability to perform tasks in their daily living and working environments. They help people who have conditions that are mentally, physically, emotionally and developmentally disabling. The majority of Occupational Therapists work in hospitals or large rehabilitation centers. A few work in schools, nursing facilities, out patient care centers and a small portion are self-employed through a private practice.

Pre-requisites for Occupational Therapy Programs:

BYU does not offer a degree program in Occupational Therapy. Some schools do offer an undergraduate degrees in Occupational Therapy but in 2007 these undergraduate programs will no longer be adequate when working as a professional OT. You must gain a masters degree in Occupational Therapy in order to practice as a professional. However, some people work with a baccalaureate degree as a Occupational Therapy Assistant.

The closest major that BYU offers would be Exercise Science. This is a list of general pre-requisites for admittance to an OT program. It is not specific to one school. You will need to check the pre-requisites needed by the school/s of your choice.

- College Algebra
Math 110
- Human Anatomy and Lab
PDBIO 220
- Human Physiology and Lab
PDBIO 362, 363
- Developmental Psychology
PSYCH 320, 321, 322
- Abnormal Psychology
PSYCH 342
- Statistics
STAT 221
- Chemistry and Lab
CHEM 101, 103, 105, 106, 107
- English Composition
BYU GE Program
- Speech Communication
TMA 150
- Technical Writing
BYU GE program
- Human Development
Psych 220
- Medical Terminology
NURS 102
- Physics and Lab
PHSCS 105,107, 106 ,108

Applying to OT School:

Most if not all pre-requisites need to be completed before applying. A competitive GPA for most Occupational Therapy Programs is a 3.5. Students must take the GRE and/or TOEFL. The average GRE scores required for most graduate programs of 3.5 on the written portion.

There are many ways to find schools that offer degrees in Occupational Therapy. Helpful websites include: www.petersons.com and www.collegesource.org. Both of these websites contain schools that offer the programs, contact information, and further information about their programs and schools.

Future of OT's:

It is projected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through 2012. As the baby-boom generation gets older the need for occupational therapist will grow. Hospitals will continue to hire occupational therapists to work with acutely ill in-patients as well as in out-patient rehabilitation settings. Employment growth in schools will result from the expansion of the school-age population and extended services for disabled students. Therapists will be needed to help children with disabilities prepare to enter special education programs.

The median of all occupational therapist for 2002 was \$51,990. The middle 50 percent earned between \$42,910 and \$ 61,620. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$35,130, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$74,390.

Certification Tests:

In order to become a certified OT you have to take the NBCOT –National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy. More information about this test can be found at <http://www.nbcot.org>. This website also has access to practice exams. This test currently costs \$420 if filled online and \$470 if application is filled in paper format.

Resources BYU offers:

Physical and Occupational Therapy Club
Contact Brent Feland

Brent Feland,
Exercise Science Professor
120-A RB
422-1182
brent_felan@byu.edu

Related Websites:

American Occupational Therapy Association
4720 Montgomery Lane
Bethesda, MD 20824-1220
www.aota.org

All of the information on this sheet has been compiled from an interview with Brent Feland, a professor in Exercise Science, and from the following resources: collegesource.com, University of Utah's website, and the Occupational Outlook Handbook found on the U.S. Bureau of Labors Statistics website under Occupational Therapist.

