



Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How long is the OTA Program?

The program is 5 consecutive semesters.

Q: Does the OTA Program's five semesters include summers?

Yes, students attend classes during the summer semester.

Q: Does the OTA Program admit students every semester?

No, the OTA Program only admits students each spring semester.

Q: If I'm not ready for the spring admission, can I begin in summer or fall?

No, students are admitted as a cohort every spring semester and all courses are completed together.

Q: Is the OTA Program accredited?

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and website www.acoteonline.org. Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapy assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). In addition, most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Q: Are there any entry requirements for the OTA Program?

Yes, the OTA Program has a competitive admissions process. For complete details regarding prerequisite courses and admission details for each year (may change slightly from year-to-year), see the OTA page on the CTC website: Programs and Courses → Academic Programs → Health Sciences → Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Q: I already have a degree; am I required to complete all of the prerequisites?

Yes, all of the prerequisites must be completed. If you have already completed many of the pre-requisites, it is possible that those courses may be transferred into CTC to count toward the OTA degree, however, suitability for transfer will only be decided by the CTC Registrar. In order to determine if your previous college coursework is eligible for transfer, you must complete an application to become a student at CTC and have all of your previous coursework in the form of a transcript sent from the other institution to the CTC Registrar.

Q: Will credits obtained at another college or university transfer for the prerequisite courses?

If you have already completed many of the pre-requisites, those classes may be transferred into CTC to count toward the OTA degree; however, suitability for transfer will only be decided by the Registrar of CTC. In order to determine if your previous college coursework is eligible for transfer, you must complete an application to become a student at CTC and have all of your previous coursework in the form of a transcript sent from the other institution to the CTC Registrar.

Q: Since I have a degree, can I exempt the HOBET requirement?

No one is exempt from any admissions requirements, including the HOBET.

Q: How do I go about getting the required observation hours?

All applicants must complete a minimum of 20 total hours (10 hours in each of 2 different settings) of clinical observation and submit documentation to the Health Sciences office (form is on the CTC website, OTA page) by the deadline. Ten hours must be in one setting, and 10 hours in another setting (for example, could consist of 10 hours of observation in a pediatric outpatient clinic and 10 hours in a skilled nursing facility). This is designed to give the applicant a better understanding of the role of an Occupational Therapy Assistant in multiple practice areas.

Q: Do you have a list of possible place to observe?

Obtaining observation sites is not a service performed by the college; the applicant must independently seek out an occupational therapy setting and speak with the appropriate staff/personnel regarding observation hours. There are many therapy providers to choose from – do a Google search for terms such as “Occupational Therapy departments,” “Hand Therapy AND Occupational Therapy,” “Rehabilitation Therapy,” “Skilled Nursing Facilities” or “Nursing Homes in Georgia,” etc. Call or email settings in your area and explain that you are applying to an OTA Program and that you would like to observe either an OT or an OTA at their facility. Some facilities (typically larger organizations or hospitals) may have more extensive requirements for observing, such as completing a volunteer services orientation or observing a minimum number of hours. If so, contact smaller organizations, skilled nursing facilities, and outpatient centers, as they may be more likely to have fewer requirements.

Q: Can I count hours worked as an OT Aide or Rehab Aide toward the required observation hours?

Applicants who currently work in a healthcare setting may complete the entire 20 hours at that facility if the facility has more than one practice area (for example, the facility would need to provide both outpatient and inpatient therapy, or both acute care and inpatient rehabilitation, etc., in order to obtain 20 hours). If the facility does not provide more than one practice area (such as a SNF or school), only 10 observation hours will be accepted. However, the observation hours must be directly with an OT or OTA, observing patient care, rather than primarily office or clerical duties.

Q: Can I count hours observing with a PT, PTA, or other health professional toward the required observation hours?

No, you may only count hours directly observed with an OT or OTA.

Q: Is there an expiration date for observation hours?

Applicants who have submitted forms verifying observation/work experiences during a previous application year may use those hours in a subsequent application year. Previously submitted forms are kept in the applicant's file in the Health Science office and will expire after 3 years. Any observation hours not submitted but recorded on a previous year's form (starting with 2013) will be accepted, also with a 3 year expiration.

Q: Is it possible to complete the OTA Program while working?

It is possible for a student to work part-time while in the program, however it is not advised due to the intense nature of the program. Some courses require offsite activities (such as service learning or fieldwork), which may occur during the week or on a weekend. This, along with the final Level II fieldwork (full-time) that is off-campus, will not be changed to accommodate a work schedule.

Q: Can I be admitted to the OTA Program if I have a previous criminal record?

While a previous criminal record may not prevent you from being admitted to CTC or the OTA Program, a felony conviction could prevent you from taking the national certification exam or obtaining state licensure. You should contact the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (www.nbcot.org) and the GA State Board of Occupational Therapy (<http://sos.georgia.gov/plb/ot/>) if you have questions regarding whether a felony conviction would prevent you from taking the exam or working as an OTA in the state of GA. In addition, if you have had credentials (e.g., license, registration, certification) in another field (e.g., PTA, nursing, etc.) denied, revoked, suspended, or subject to probationary conditions, your eligibility to take the national certification exam or obtain an OTA license may be in jeopardy.

Q: What are the typical hours while in the OTA Program?

Days/times for OTA Program courses vary each semester. During the first semester of the program, expect to be in class at least 2 days per week, with time on campus increasing to 4

days per week for all other semesters. Typical hours during the first 4 semesters vary and may start as early as 8:00am and end by 4:30. During the last semester, students must attend off-campus fieldwork that requires being at a clinical site full-time for 16 weeks (8 weeks in two different settings).

Q: What is the cost of the OTA Program?

The total number of credits for the OTA Program is currently 94, with 66 being core OTA courses. For an estimate of tuition, fees, etc., see the most current Chattahoochee Technical College catalog online (as of 2013, tuition is \$85 per credit hour for in-state residents, however this may change at any time). Costs of initial physical examination/immunizations, drug test and background check, books, transportation, expenses associated with fieldwork, etc., are variable and not included in tuition/fees.

Q: After completing the OTA Program, does the college provide job placement?

The college does not provide specific job placement. However, the college does have a Career Services department which hosts annual job fairs and frequently receives OTA job announcements. Career Services also has other services to assist students in their job search such as instruction in resume writing and job search skills.

Q: What is the typical average annual salary for a new OTA graduate?

For average entry-level salaries, see the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapy-assistants-and-aides.htm>. Keep in mind that salaries may vary significantly by region or area in the U.S., as well as by practice setting.

The Chattahoochee Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Chattahoochee Technical College Title IX Coordinator, Dianne Lassai Barker, 5198 Ross Road, Room 132P, Acworth, GA 30102, (770) 975-4023, or dianne.barker@chattahoocheetech.edu or Chattahoochee Technical College Section 504 Coordinator, Mary Frances Bernard, 980 South Cobb Drive, Building G1106, Marietta, GA 30060, (770) 528-4529, or maryfrances.bernard@chattahoocheetech.edu.