

What can you do with a major in Occupational Therapist Assistant (OTA)?

Campus(s) program is offered: Austell

What are the most likely job titles one can expect to qualify for after completing this program?

Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant

What do students express as the thing they enjoy the most about this program?

The program is very hands-on with many lab activities, and the students usually enjoy those most.

What is the least?

Students probably least enjoy tests and exams!

What are some typical misconceptions about this program of study?

The biggest misconception about the field of occupational therapy is probably that we find people jobs! While OTs and OTAs may work with clients on employment-related skills, as well as adaptation of work environments, we do not simply find jobs for people. Another misconception is that the field of occupational therapy is not as “hands on” as nursing. OTAs often work with clients on increasing their independence in areas such as bathing, dressing, and even using the toilet.

What are some essential skills a student needs to be successful in this program?

Reading Comprehension — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

Active Listening — Giving full attention to what other people are saying.

Judgment and Decision Making — Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions.

Social Perceptiveness — Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Monitoring — Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals.

Service Orientation — Actively looking for ways to help people.

Coordination — Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.

What are some essential abilities a student needs to have in order to be successful in this program?

Oral Comprehension – ability to listen to and understand information and ideas

Oral Expression — ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking

Problem Sensitivity — ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong

Written Comprehension — ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing

What are typical skills and abilities a student gains once he/she has completed the program of study?

The OTA program provides a student with the necessary skills to perform as an entry level Occupational Therapy Assistant clinician after sitting for and passing the national certification exam and obtaining state licensure.

Typical work activities/occupational functions:

OTAs work under the direction and supervision of Occupational Therapists in Treating patients/clients with injuries, illnesses, or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. They help patients/clients develop, recover, and improve the skills needed for daily activities, as well as employment

Tasks:

Select therapy activities to fit patients'/clients' needs and capabilities.
Observe and document patients'/clients' progress in the medical record.
Communicate and collaborate with other healthcare professionals involved with the care of a patient/client.
Monitor patients'/clients' performance in therapy activities, grading and adapting the treatment plan as needed in conjunction with the Occupational Therapist.
Instruct patients/clients and families in home programs, basic living skills, or the care and use of adaptive equipment/assistive technology.

What additional training would you recommend for a student who wants to go to the next level?

If students desire to further their education and become an Occupational Therapist, they must apply and be admitted to a program. All Occupational Therapy programs are currently at either the Master's or Doctorate level and a list of programs may be found at www.aota.org.

Do any of the occupational courses transfer easily?

Prerequisite courses (such as Anatomy & Physiology, English, etc.) may transfer to another institution, however, due to every OTA program being unique, core Occupational Therapy Assistant courses usually will not transfer to other institutions. However, if students desire to further their education and become an Occupational Therapist, bridge programs exist (a list can be found at www.aota.org).

What are some common limitations, if any, in this program that students face?

The OTA program at CTC is a full time program. Classes take place 4 days per week (primarily during the hours of 8a.m.-5p.m. (with some exceptions) and fieldwork takes place approximately 40 hours per week for 16 weeks during the last semester of the program. This intense schedule does limit students' availability for performance of other obligations.

Are there any exams/certifications that a student needs to take after completing the courses? Are these exams/certifications offered on campus?

Upon completion of all required courses/fieldwork and graduation from an accredited program, students must take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification exam (www.nbcot.org). The exam must be taken at specific testing centers and cannot be taken at a Chattahoochee Tech campus.

Students must also apply for licensure through the Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy (<http://sos.georgia.gov/plb/ot/>) in order to practice as an Occupational Therapy Assistant in Georgia.

Possible employment settings:

Acute care hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, outpatient centers, school systems, home health, skilled nursing facilities, community agencies

Names of potential employers:

WellStar Health System	Rehab Care Group	Signature Healthcare
A.G. Rhodes Health and Rehab	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	Genesis Rehabilitation Services
HCR Manor Care	Aegis Therapies	CareSouth

*There are also numerous other contract companies that hire COTAs for employment in various settings such as schools, skilled nursing facilities, etc. These companies frequently change names due to mergers, etc., so all are not specifically listed.

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