

MASTER OF ARTS IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (MAOT)

Program Description

Occupational therapy practitioners are credentialed professionals who work with individuals and organizations, using occupation in all its forms to help them develop to their fullest potential. Occupations are skills for the job of living, including care of oneself and others, work/education, social participation, and play/leisure. Occupational therapy practitioners work with people of all ages and ability levels in a variety of medical, educational and community settings, providing individual, group, or population-based services. For more information on the profession, visit the American Occupational Therapy Association website at www.aota.org (<http://www.aota.org>).

The MAOT program prepares students for dynamic careers as occupational therapists in a range of settings with individuals, groups, and populations of all ages. The curriculum is offered in a weekday format.

Graduate OT Programs Mission

Consistent with the missions of the University, the Henrietta Schmolz School of Health, the Graduate College, and the Department of Occupational Therapy, the Doctor of Occupational Therapy [OTD] and Master of Arts in Occupational Therapy [MAOT] Programs prepare occupational therapists to lead and educate in community, clinical, and emerging practice areas with grounding in evidence-based research, critical thinking, ethics, and social justice.

Curriculum

In the MAOT curriculum, the St. Catherine University Institutional Learning Outcomes provide the warp threads with a strong base in creative and critical thinking, intellectual inquiry, and social responsibility. The weft within the curriculum model includes the MAOT curricular tracks. The entirety of the curriculum is underpinned by the tenets of the profession, health, participation, occupational performance, and well-being. The program provides doctoral-level education that prepares graduates to meet emerging challenges in the complex and rapidly changing healthcare environment. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) *Vision 2030* identifies core tenets of future practice (AOTA, 2025) considered necessary to meet future healthcare needs including:

- **Inclusive and Equitable:** Occupational therapy provides a supportive and collaborative environment for people to grow as occupational beings.
- **Valued Excellence:** Occupational therapy is important across various settings, with a unique value in improving the quality of life and function in those served.
- **Evidence-Based and Client Centered:** Occupational therapy is evidence-based and client-centered, focused on innovative approaches to enhance treatment outcomes.
- **Justice and Advocacy:** Occupational therapy promotes accessibility and advocates for the right of all to engage in meaningful occupations.

The core tenets, embedded within the MAOT curriculum design and student learning outcomes (below), prepare graduates who are practice-ready in all entry-level contexts.

The program provides learning experiences to enable students to meet the following goals:

Creative and Critical Thinking

- Collaborate on intra- and inter-professional teams.
- Demonstrate competency in information search, critical analysis, synthesis and application of evidence to occupational therapy practice.
- Apply clinical reasoning in evaluation, interventions, and discontinuation of occupational therapy services in a variety of practice settings.
- Demonstrate professional written, oral, virtual, and non-verbal communication.
- Demonstrate therapeutic use of self with individuals and groups.

Intellectual Inquiry

- Use person-centered approaches to meet occupational performance and participation needs of diverse persons, groups, and populations.
- Identify international contributions to occupational therapy scholarship and practice.
- Describe human occupation across the life span, for persons, groups, and populations.
- Develop and implement intervention plans to address the occupational performance and/or participation needs of persons, groups, and populations.
- Apply, evaluate, and critique underlying models, theories, frames of reference, and core concepts for occupational therapy practice.
- Create a plan of life-long learning and professional development.

Social Responsibility

- Develop leadership competencies through participation in professional associations, conferences, and curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Demonstrate personal and professional conduct consistent with the AOTA Code of Ethics, St. Catherine University Policies, and other related documents.
- Demonstrate ethical decision making and behaviors in classroom and experiential learning.
- Evaluate personal, environmental, and contextual factors that support or limit occupational performance and participation.
- Evaluate the outcomes of occupational therapy services at the person, group, and population level.
- Analyze the influence of healthcare, education, and social service systems and policies and their influence on occupational therapy practice.

Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the Graduate Occupational Therapy Programs (MAOT and OTD) regarding human beings and how they learn is consistent with the philosophical base of the occupational therapy profession; that human beings learn through engagement in meaningful occupations. The department's philosophy is published in the MAOT Student Handbook.

Accreditation

The graduate program for occupational therapy at St. Catherine is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association. They may be contacted at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814.; phone (301) 652-6611 <https://acoteonline.org/>

Certification

The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) conducts a national certification program. To be certified as a registered occupational therapist (OTR), a person must be a graduate of an accredited program and pass a national certification examination, which is administered by the NBCOT. Completion of all academic, thesis/project, and fieldwork requirements is necessary to be eligible for the examination. When graduates apply to take the certification examination with NBCOT, they will be asked questions related to the topic of felony convictions. A felony conviction may have a potential impact on a graduate's eligibility for certification and credentialing. A student who is concerned about whether something in their background could affect eligibility to sit for the national certification examination can request an Early Determination Review directly from NBCOT. For more information, visit the NBCOT website at <http://www.nbcot.org/early-determination> (<http://www.nbcot.org/early-determination/>)

The NBCOT website is www.nbcot.org (<http://www.nbcot.org>).

In addition, all states have licensure for occupational therapy. In these states, it is mandatory to have a current occupational therapy license to practice. All states use the NBCOT examination as part of the qualifications for a license/registration.

Degree Requirements

Academic Course Work

Students must complete 72 graduate credits in occupational therapy courses and fieldwork credits. Students will usually take 13-14 credits in fall and spring terms and 4-6 credits in the summer and must be prepared to do additional work outside of class time.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork provides opportunities for students to experience working with a range of ages, conditions and in a wide variety of settings. Students complete two types of fieldwork. Level I Fieldwork is attached to two Seminar courses in the first two years of the program. Level II Fieldwork (10 credits) occurs following the completion of academic course work. It involves six months of full-time clinical experiences in the field. Students may elect to take an additional (4 or 6 credit) Level II (Specialty) Fieldwork experience in a specialty area of interest.

Years to Complete the Program

The MAOT program takes approximately 2.5 years to complete, but must be completed within five years. All MAOT graduate students have up to five years from the initial term of enrollment to complete all program requirements for a graduate degree. Level II fieldwork must be started within one year of the date of the last course in the curriculum. The two required level II fieldwork experiences must be completed within 18 months of the start of the first level II fieldwork.

Transfer Credits

Requests for transfer of credit are considered on an individual basis and only graduate courses will be eligible. Students must request a review

of previous coursework upon admission to the program if they wish to receive credit for previous work.

Progression Policy

Standards for Progression

To remain in good standing in the MAOT program, students must:

- maintain a 3.0 grade point average in the MAOT Program for each semester.
- earn a grade of C or better in each graduate course.
- successfully complete each Level I Fieldwork assignment.
- successfully complete Level II Fieldwork requirements.
- demonstrate satisfactory professional attitudes and behaviors as defined by the program.

Conditions for Academic Probation

Students are placed on academic probation by the MAOT program if:

- a grade of C has been earned in any MAOT course.
- the grade point average for an academic term falls below 3.0.
- the overall GPA for the MAOT Program is less than 3.0.
- The student has a pattern of needing multiple retakes in order to achieve a B- or better on written work or tests.
- The student fails one Level II fieldwork experience.

The MAOT Program Director, in consultation with the faculty, will identify the written conditions of academic probation. Failure to meet the written conditions for academic probation by the end of the next semester/term may result in automatic dismissal from the program under ordinary circumstances.

Removal from Academic Probation

Students will be removed from academic probation if the conditions are met by the end of the following semester/term. Failure to meet the written conditions for academic probation or to bring the grade point average to 3.0 by the end of the next semester/term may result in automatic dismissal from the program.

Academic Conditions for Program Dismissal

Students are automatically dismissed from the program for academic reasons if:

- a grade of C- is earned in a required occupational therapy course including Level I Fieldwork
- more than one grade of C or lower is earned in a required occupational therapy course
- conditions for removal from academic probation are not met
- overall GPA in the MAOT Program is less than 3.0 by the end of the semester/term on probation or the semester GPA for the term of academic probation is below 3.0.
- failure of one Level I fieldwork experience.
- failure of two consecutive level II fieldwork placements.
- Under extraordinary circumstances, you may petition in writing to repeat a course or fieldwork, but you may not take the next courses in sequence unless the petition has been approved and you agree with the conditions for continuance.

Conditions for Professional Behaviors Probation

Professional attitudes and behaviors will be considered in the student's overall evaluation and your progress in the program. Students may be placed on probation for demonstration of unprofessional behavior(s).

Failure to improve specific behaviors identified by the faculty as problematic will result in dismissal from the program.

Conditions for Professional Behaviors Program Dismissal

Students will be automatically dismissed from the MAOT program for the following unprofessional behaviors:

- violation of the Code of Ethics of the American Occupational Therapy Association
- violation of the Institution's policy on academic integrity
- violation of the Institution's policy on student conduct

(The complete document on student conduct, including the process for implementation, may be found on the University Policies website.) Students may appeal an academic probation or dismissal from the MAOT program by following the Student Complaint Process outlined on the University Policies website and identified in the *MAOT Student Handbook*.

Entry Level Masters Curriculum

The Master of Arts in Occupational Therapy – Entry Level Masters (ELM) program is available for women and men with a baccalaureate degree. It is offered in a weekday format. It prepares students to be certified as a registered occupational therapist.

Code	Title	Credits
OCTH 5010	Human Occupation	3
OCTH 5200	Mental and Behavioral Health	3
OCTH 5210	Mental and Behavioral Health: The OT Process	3
OCTH 5410	Children, Adolescents, and Families	3
OCTH 5450	Children, Adolescents, and Families: The OT Process	3
OCTH 5500	Neuroscience	3
OCTH 5560	Participation and Technology	3
OCTH 5600	Kinesiology for Rehabilitation	3
OCTH 6000	Foundational Skills for Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OCTH 6010	Seminar A: Entering the Profession	1
OCTH 6020	Seminar B and Level I Fieldwork - Psychological and Social Factors Impacting Performance	1
OCTH 6030	Seminar C and Level I Fieldwork Practice Reflection	1
OCTH 6040	Seminar D: Readiness for Level II Fieldwork	1
OCTH 6045	Community and Advocacy	3
OCTH 6060	Physical Assessment and Intervention Planning	3
IPE 7000 or OCTH 6310	Evidence Based Practice: Interprofessional Perspectives and Competencies Evidence Based Practice	3
OCTH 6410	Foundations of Research	3
OCTH 6610	Rehabilitation Concepts	3
OCTH 6615	Rehabilitation Practices	3
OCTH 6620	Ethical Management	3
OCTH 6700	Older Adults in Context	3
OCTH 6710	Older Adults - The OT Process	3

OCTH 7000 & OCTH 7500 or OCTH 7800	Master's Project Seminar and Master's Project Thesis	4
OCTH 7700	Level II Fieldwork	5
OCTH 7710	Level II Fieldwork	5
Total Credits		72

Code	Title	Credits
Summer Term		
OCTH 5010	Human Occupation	3
OCTH 5500	Neuroscience	3
Fall Term		
OCTH 5410	Children, Adolescents, and Families	3
OCTH 6000	Foundational Skills for Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OCTH 6010	Seminar A: Entering the Profession	1
OCTH 6410	Foundations of Research	3
OCTH 6700	Older Adults in Context	3
Spring Term		
OCTH 5200	Mental and Behavioral Health	3
OCTH 5600	Kinesiology for Rehabilitation	3
OCTH 6020	Seminar B and Level I Fieldwork - Psychological and Social Factors Impacting Performance	1
IPE 7000 or OCTH 6310	Evidence Based Practice: Interprofessional Perspectives and Competencies Evidence Based Practice	3
OCTH 6610	Rehabilitation Concepts	3
Summer Term		
OCTH 6030	Seminar C and Level I Fieldwork Practice Reflection	1
OCTH 6045	Community and Advocacy	3
Fall Term		
OCTH 5210	Mental and Behavioral Health: The OT Process	3
OCTH 5450	Children, Adolescents, and Families: The OT Process	3
OCTH 6060	Physical Assessment and Intervention Planning	3
OCTH 6620	Ethical Management	3
OCTH 7000	Master's Project Seminar	1
Spring Term		
OCTH 5560	Participation and Technology	3
OCTH 6040	Seminar D: Readiness for Level II Fieldwork	1
OCTH 6615	Rehabilitation Practices	3
OCTH 6710	Older Adults - The OT Process	3
OCTH 7500	Master's Project	3
Summer Term		
OCTH 7700	Level II Fieldwork	5
Fall Term		
OCTH 7710	Level II Fieldwork	5
Total Credits		72