

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (DOT)

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Program at Slippery Rock University offers an entry-level Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program in an on-campus, face-to-face learning format with scheduled off campus fieldwork placements. The curriculum focuses on contemporary practice using evidence-based strategies to provide students with generalist and advanced training learning experiences. Classroom and laboratory learning opportunities are influenced by accreditation standards established by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).

## Occupational Therapy Program Mission & Vision Statements

### Mission

The program's mission is to facilitate and support the education of future occupational therapy professionals who will demonstrate compassion, evidence-based knowledge, and advanced practice skills with both individuals and distinct populations.

### Vision

Slippery Rock University's Entry-Level Doctorate in Occupational Therapy Program will be recognized for preparing practitioners who will use transferrable knowledge and skills in a variety of practice areas. As such, they will be committed to lifelong learning and ethical, competent and evidence-based practice in an era of continued change and challenge, while providing personal and professional leadership to improve the world in which they live.

Both the mission and vision statements align with key aspects of the vision statements developed by Slippery Rock University and the College of Health, Environment and Science. It also considers the profession of Occupational Therapy, including the AOTA Centennial Vision Statement (for 2003-2017) and the AOTA Vision Statement 2025, the ACOTE Accreditation Standards and specific competency areas that are unique to the training of the occupational therapist.

## Accreditation Status

**The entry-level occupational therapy doctoral degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA),** located at 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is <http://www.acoteonline.org>. Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, all 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.

All students must complete Level II fieldwork (OCTH 810 & OCTH 815) and doctoral experiential requirements (OCTH 820) within 24 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program.

The timeline for accreditation for the program by ACOTE involves three steps: (1) Applicant Status (completed), (2) Candidacy Status (completed), and (3) Initial On-site Evaluation (completed). Initial accreditation will result in program graduates being able to sit for the national certification exam after their commencement in 2021.

The first OT class will be graduating in August 2021 due to COVID-19. However, students will typically graduate at the end of the spring semester. Graduation from an ACOTE accredited educational program makes one eligible to sit for the certification exam administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) to become an Occupational Therapist Registered (OTR) and to apply for state licensure in the state(s) one wishes to practice.

## Program Description

The first academic year of the program is comprised of clinical and applied sciences along with foundational occupational therapy offerings that provide an important introduction to the history, philosophical base and theoretical concepts of the profession along with therapeutic use of self, research and ethical guidelines, and challenges faced by therapists. The conclusion of the first year provides students with their first part-time fieldwork experience in psychosocial settings.

In the second academic year, students are involved in classroom learning experiences that include assessment and intervention with children, youth and adults and related technology that can be utilized with these populations. Concurrent Level I (part-time) fieldwork experiences are also scheduled with courses that provide instruction in working with children/youth and adults to allow growth in professional knowledge, skills and abilities. Students are engaged in didactic offerings that provide insight into management, leadership, policy, advocacy, clinical educations of clients/families, research and grant writing. The second year concludes with comprehensive examinations and further preparation for full-time fieldwork.

The third year in the program is based primarily off-site in two Level II (full-time) fieldwork settings and at a doctoral practicum site where capstone projects will be completed. This doctoral experiential practicum is scheduled to allow students to develop advanced skills in clinical practice, research, administration, leadership, program or policy development, advocacy, education or theory development. This requirement is stipulated by ACOTE and is the major academic requirement that differentiates an entry-level doctoral degree and master's degree.

The purpose of this program is to provide cost-effective training for entry-level occupational therapists with an emphasis on providing advanced learning opportunities to prepare graduates for the challenges that currently confront the professional practitioner. In particular, the program will focus on assisting special-needs populations to live safely and independently in their preferred environment. This focus will be integrated throughout didactic and clinical experiences and will establish the program as unique. Faculty and student-faculty scholarship combined with the development of emerging practice, will provide important opportunities for service to the Slippery Rock community, Butler County and to the Metropolitan Pittsburgh area. Graduates will be prepared for the national certification exam and will be trained as dynamic, ethically principled and client-centered practitioners who will demonstrate

leadership within their organization and the profession of occupational therapy.

The program will allow students to earn an entry-level doctoral degree that will provide them with generalist and advanced professional practice training. Successful completion of the program will meet the standards of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). All candidates completing the OT program are eligible to be nationally registered after achieving a passing score on a national examination.

Satisfactory completion of the national certification exam is one-step towards state licensure, which is a different process in each state.

The program will consist of courses that provide a strong foundation in:

- Basic tenets and theoretical perspectives of occupational therapy
- Screening, evaluation and referral
- Intervention plan formulation and implementation
- Context of service delivery
- Leadership and management
- Scholarship
- Evidence-based practice
- Professional ethics, values and responsibilities

## Related Links

Occupational Therapy, DOT Program Page ([https://www.sru.edu/academics/graduate-programs/occupational-therapy-\(doctor-of-occupational-therapy\)/](https://www.sru.edu/academics/graduate-programs/occupational-therapy-(doctor-of-occupational-therapy)/))

Occupational Therapy Department Page (<https://www.sru.edu/academics/colleges-and-departments/ches/departments/occupational-therapy/>)

Occupational Therapy Fact Sheet (<https://www.sru.edu/documents/programs/factsheets/graduate/FS-DOT.pdf>)

Professional Licensure/Certification Page (<https://www.sru.edu/students/student-consumer-information/professional-licensures/>)