PRE-OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Pre Occupational Therapy in itself is not an undergraduate major at Sacred Heart University. Rather, Pre Occupational Therapy preparation is a three or four-year course of study leading to the baccalaureate degree and the completion of required Occupational Therapy Program prerequisite courses, followed by two years of graduate study in Occupational Therapy. Graduate study in Occupational Therapy requires two calendar years, including summers, of graduate level coursework and supervised clinical fieldwork education beyond the baccalaureate degree. Students may complete their undergraduate degree in a discipline of their choice; however, the Health Science major leading to the Bachelor of Science in Health Science (BSHS) is preferred as it offers students a solid foundation in aspects specific to health care. Pre Occupational Therapy preparation can be accomplished in any undergraduate major but can only be completed in three years if the student selects a major in Health Science. The Health Science major must be declared by the end of the freshman year and require summer and winter intersession courses to complete the baccalaureate degree in three years. Regardless of undergraduate major, students must successfully complete all required prerequisites by the end of the summer prior to enrolment. A 3.0 cumulative GPA, 3.0 Prerequisite science GPA (Biology with lab, Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with labs), and 3.2 prerequisite GPA with no individual prerequisite course grade below a C are required for admission. Prerequisite course grades of C or lower are not accepted and must be repeated. For details regarding the Graduate Occupational Therapy program, program accreditation, admission, and application information, see Sacred Heart University’s Graduate Catalog or contact the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Freshman Admission Decision Option

A freshman admission decision application option is available to outstanding incoming Sacred Heart University Freshman. Freshman admission requirements include:

- Successful completion of four years of high school Science
- High school GPA of 3.2 or higher in academic courses (Math, Science, History, English, Modern Foreign Language)
- SAT scores of 1080 or higher

Sacred Heart University students accepted to the Occupational Therapy Program as freshmen must meet the following criteria prior to beginning the graduate phase of the Occupational Therapy Program:

- Successful completion of the baccalaureate degree in an undergraduate major
- Successful completion of all prerequisite course requirements with no individual prerequisite course grade below a C, and,
- Maintenance of a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and,
- A 3.0 prerequisite science GPA (Biology with lab, Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with labs), and,
- A 3.2 prerequisite GPA
- Completion of a graduate application in the senior year by October 31st or the date published by the Office of Graduate Admissions
- A successful group interview and PBL experience with the Occupational Therapy faculty admissions’ committee

Sacred Heart University undergraduates who were admitted into the Program as freshman who do not meet these criteria will lose their seat in the Occupational Therapy Program.
Regular Admission Application Option

Sacred Heart University undergraduates, who were not admitted into the Occupational Therapy Program as freshman, may apply to the Program on a competitive basis for either the Early or Regular Decision application options in their senior year. See the Office of Graduate Admission’s website for admission criteria and application information.

Program Accreditation

The Occupational Therapy Program is fully accredited through 2016-2017 under the “Standards for an Accredited Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist-2006” by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The faculty have refined the curriculum to meet the revised, 2011 ACOTE Standards that went into effect July 31, 2013. For information about accreditation, contact ACOTE c/o American Occupational Therapy Association, 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. Tel: 301-652-6611 ext.2914  www.acoteonline.org or www.aota.org

Graduates of the program are 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). Most states, including Connecticut, require licensure to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination.

Note: A criminal or felony background or conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination and/or attain state licensure. The graduate occupational therapy program requires the successful completion of all required coursework and level I and level II clinical fieldwork. The majority of clinical sites require students to complete a criminal background check (CBC), fingerprinting, and/or drug screening prior to participating in clinical education placements. Students with criminal convictions or backgrounds may not be able to obtain required clinical education experience(s), thus failing to meet the academic requirements of the Occupational Therapy Program. It is therefore the Occupational Therapy Program's policy that prior to enrolling in the professional graduate phase of the Program, all admitted students must consent, submit to, and satisfactorily complete a criminal background check (CBC) within six (6) weeks of registration for courses as a condition of matriculation. Matriculation will not be final until the completion of the criminal background check with results deemed acceptable to the Program Director or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. All expenses associated with the CBC, and/or fingerprinting, and/or drug screening are the responsibility of the applicant/student. Students, who do not consent to the required background check, refuse to provide information necessary to conduct the background check, or provide false or misleading information in regard to the background check will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, refusal of matriculation or dismissal from the program. Please refer to the Occupational Therapy Program's website for the CBC policy and procedures.

Students are admitted to the program on a competitive basis. Admission is based on successful completion of admission requirements, including completion of a baccalaureate degree in a field other than occupational therapy, and completion of all prerequisite courses by the end of the summer semester prior to enrollment.

If students require the summer prior to enrollment to complete prerequisites or the baccalaureate degree, any acceptance for admission into the program will be provisional to successful completion of the baccalaureate degree, all prerequisite
coursework, maintenance of GPA requirements, and group interview and PBL experience with the Occupational Therapy Admissions Committee. All applicants must have completed prerequisite courses in Psychology, Statistics, Biology with a laboratory, Human Anatomy and Physiology I with laboratory, and one additional prerequisite course with grades entered with the University Registrar prior to the interview. Early Decision applicants must have completed these prerequisites by the October 31st Early Decision Application; and Regular Decision applicants must complete these prerequisites by the interview. Regular Decision application deadline is December 15th of the senior year in college. See the Sacred Heart University Graduate Catalog or contact the Office of Graduate Admissions for admission criteria, application procedures, and program information.

Requirements
Pre Occupational Therapy preparation includes the necessary prerequisite course requirements for the Graduate Occupational Therapy program. Undergraduate students also complete coursework for their selected major, and Sacred Heart University required foundational, elective, and common core courses for a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree. Volunteer experience in or observation of occupational therapy practice is highly recommended.

PREREQUISITE COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students must take the following prerequisite courses while fulfilling requirements for their major field of study in earning a traditional Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree:

Applicants are required to maintain a 3.2 prerequisite course GPA, a 3.0 science prerequisite course GPA, and a 3.0 cumulative GPA. Only grades of C or better meet prerequisite course requirements.

- Biology I with lab (4 credits)
- Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with laboratories (8 credits)*
- Life Span Development or Developmental Psychology (course content must include the entire lifespan from birth to old age) (3–9 credits)
- Psychology (3 credits)
- Abnormal Psychology (3 credits)
- Sociology, or Anthropology, or Multicultural/Diversity Studies, or Social Psychology (3 credits)
- Statistics, or Psychological Statistics, Social Statistics, or Biostatistics (3 credits)* (Must include descriptive statistics, probability, confidence intervals, correlation and hypothesis testing)

* Must have been taken within the past 10 years.

Faculty

JODY BORTONE, ED.D., OT/L
Chair and Director of Graduate Occupational Therapy Program and Clinical Associate Professor

LENORE FROST, PH.D., OTR/L, CHT
Clinical Assistant Professor

LOLA HALPERIN MA, OTR/L
Clinical Assistant Professor

MARY-ELLEN JOHNSON, O.T.D., OTR/L
Clinical Assistant Professor

SHARON MCCLOSKEY MBA, OTR/L, DIPCOT
Clinical Assistant Professor

HEATHER MILLER-KUHANECK, PH.D., F.A.O.T.A., OTR/L
Clinical Assistant Professor

SHEELAGH SCHLEGEL, MPH, OT/L
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator
RECOMMENDED ELECTIVES

The following courses will help you once in the Occupational Therapy Program

• Neuroscience, or Brain and Behavior
• Physics
• Exercise Science
• Kinesiology