

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT, CAREER ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE

Program Deactivation

This program is deactivated beginning in the spring 2025 semester.

Program Overview

The OTA program is made up of 2 phases: (1) the pre-professional phase and (2) the professional phase. The pre-professional phase is considered the time required to complete all general education coursework and application requirements for the OTA program. After the student has applied and been selected for admission into the program, the student will enter the professional phase.

The OTA Program admits one class of 20 students per year that begins each Fall semester (mid-August). The deadline to apply is **June 1st** of the year you wish to enter the professional phase. The professional phase is completed over 4 semesters (16 months) with the student graduating the following Fall semester (Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall).

The deadline for applying (June 1st) occurs during the SUMMER semester prior to the FALL semester start date. If a student is enrolled in courses that will complete all requirements during the Summer Semester of the June 1 deadline, the student may submit the application with those required courses still in progress. However, the student will not be scored as high as the student that completes the general education coursework prior to the June 1 deadline.

Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination. After successful completion of this examination, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). Most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination.

***If you have a felony, misdemeanor, or have been convicted of legal and/or moral violations, NBCOT and the state licensure board have the right to refuse to grant you certification and/or licensure despite graduation from an accredited program.**

***Please note the OTA program has a selective admissions process, therefore due to the competitive nature of the selection process, careful preparation for application is highly recommended.

OTA Program Advisory Committee

- Haley Alexander¹
- Maggie Brown
- Ashley Brinkley
- Tonya Anglon¹
- Ashley Maxwell¹
- Amber Robbins
- Stacey Sanders¹
- Phyllis Scott
- Kemesha Spears¹
- Timothy Ulm

¹ Denotes Faculty members

Mission

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program supports the mission of Albany State University (ASU) and the Darton College of Health Professions in the goal of providing student-centered educational programs for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond. The OTA program also supports the Health Sciences Division in its goal of providing diverse program offerings with a comprehensive commitment to the health care learning needs of the area. The OTA program seeks to serve stakeholders in the Southwest Georgia region and beyond with a high standard of excellence in teaching and learning while promoting community and economic development and with a commitment to help each student realize their full potential for improved quality of life. The OTA program will provide high quality education to qualified students pursuing an entry-level career as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant by promoting a positive work ethic, a desire for leadership, professionalism in the classroom as well as the treatment settings, and a passion to provide the highest quality of patient care.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Albany State University strives to provide students with the knowledge and competencies needed to:

- Pass the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination
- Practice as a generalist in both current practice settings and emerging practice settings as defined by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
- Adhere to the upmost levels of professionalism and ethical behaviors
- Be actively involved in state and national occupational therapy associations and to become life-long learners

Degree

Upon successful completion of the program, students will earn an Associate of Science degree and will be academically eligible for licensure by examination.

Accreditation

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program is accredited by the:

The Program was placed on Probationary Accreditation effective August 5, 2023.

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA®)

6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200
North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929

AOTA's telephone number, C/O AOTA, is 301-652-AOTA and the web address is www.acoteonline.org (<http://www.acoteonline.org/>).

Graduates of the program will be able 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 examination, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). Most states require

licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on results of the NBCOT Certification Examination.

Individuals who have been convicted of a felony may not be eligible for licensure. If convicted of a felony, it is recommended that you contact the Occupational Therapy Board in the state where you plan to seek licensure to verify your eligibility for licensure. All students will be required to complete a national criminal background check prior to placement in clinical externships. Some clinical facilities may also require a drug screen prior to placement (students may be responsible for payment). The clinical affiliate determines whether a student can participate in the clinical rotation based upon the results of the background check and drug screen.

Additional OTA Program Requirements

1. The OTA program requires a full-time commitment from the student. Generally, classes will be scheduled Monday through Friday from 8:00am-5:00pm with some evening and/or weekend time commitments As Needed.
2. Since clinical education is a critical component of the program, all clinical practicums must be passed. Traveling out of town will be necessary. Students are responsible for their own transportation, food and lodging during the practicums unless other arrangements are made by the clinical site or student.
3. Students must provide evidence of the following prior to the first clinical practicum:
 - a. Health insurance (available through ASU).
 - b. Completed health form, including evidence of initiation of the Hepatitis B Vaccine series.
 - c. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification – American Heart Association BLS Health Care Provider course must be maintained throughout the program.
 - d. Malpractice insurance (available through ASU).
 - e. Signed letter of confidentiality and honor code.
4. The student is expected to assume responsibility for their own health in the event of illness, accident, or exposure to communicable disease.
5. A minimum grade of "C" is required in all OTA courses to advance in the program.
6. Fieldwork must be passed to graduate. In the event of unsatisfactory performance, a practicum may be repeated one time within 18 months of completion of didactic course work.
7. Once enrolled in the program, failure to satisfactorily complete the course work in the scheduled sequence will result in the student being withdrawn from the program. The student must re-apply, be re-accepted and repeat ALL determined course work.
8. Students must follow all policies and procedures relevant to Albany State University, the OTA Program, and the fieldwork sites.
9. Membership in state and national professional organizations is encouraged to enhance professional development.
10. All OTA students are required to purchase a name tag, uniforms as specified by clinical sites, stethoscope, sphygmomanometer, goniometer (large and hand) and a watch with a sweeping second hand.
11. In order to successfully complete the clinical fieldwork and work effectively as an OTA, students are required to possess the following functional abilities and critical skills:
 - a. Able to stand, walk on all surfaces, stoop, bend, kneel, crouch and sit for long periods of time.
 - b. Able to maintain good balance to assist with gait and transfer training.
 - c. Able to transfer or maneuver (by self or with assistance) patients weighing up to 300 pounds.
 - d. Able to lift, push, pull and carry objects weighing up to fifty pounds.
 - e. Able to reach above and below the waist.
 - f. Able to manually and visually operate and/or manipulate wheelchair, mobility aids, ambulation devices, instrumentation and equipment.
 - g. Able to visually and cognitively assess changes in a patient's condition.
 - h. Able to question the patient and relay information about the patient verbally and in writing.
 - i. Able to wear appropriate protective equipment and to tolerate unsightly, noxious environments.
 - j. Able to manage physical, emotional and mental stress effectively.
 - k. Able to tolerate other's value systems, morals, cultures, sexual orientation and religious beliefs.
12. **Re-Admission of Returning Students:** Because of the sequential nature of the course offerings, students must complete all courses in a Semester before advancing in the program. If a student is experiencing a first time failure, the student may re-apply to the OTA program for admission in the next fall class. Students reapplying to the OTA program must maintain the same requirements expected of all applicants outlined in the OTA Application Packet. OTA courses more than two years old will have to be repeated. More than one "D" and/or "F" in the OTA curriculum will result in permanent dismissal from the program. (This may be two courses or failure of the same course twice.)
13. The OTA program reserves the right to discontinue, at any time, the enrollment of an OTA student if, in the judgment of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the OTA faculty and the Dean of the Health Sciences Division, the student does not appear to have the necessary qualifications for a career as an OTA.
14. Due to the fact that pre-requisites for the Occupational Therapy Masters programs are different, graduation from the OTA program will not necessarily prepare the student for entry into an Occupational Therapy professional education program. Students wishing to pursue a career an Occupational Therapist should enroll as a Health Sciences major.

Program Admissions Requirements

To be considered for admission to the Occupational Therapy Assistant program, the applicant must:

1. **Apply and be fully admitted to Albany State University before May 1st of each year.**
 - You may apply now by selecting this link.
 - A \$20 application fee (subject to change) is required at the time you apply to the institution.
 - Do not send the ASU application fee to the OTA Program. The two application processes are separate and no additional fee is required when submitting the OTA Program application.
 - For transfer students: Official transcripts must be sent to the Albany State University Registrar's Office and must be received by the June 1 deadline.

- Please note that admission to the University **does not** ensure admission into the OTA program.
- Electronically submit your FAFSA application for Financial Aid before May 1st of each year.
 - For information on completing your FAFSA application, please visit the ASU financial aid information page at the following location: **Office of Financial Aid**.
 - Submit the completed OTA application by the June 1st deadline. **The student must complete an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program Application Packet. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all application material has been completed as directed and submitted by the deadline.**
 - **GRADE POINT AVERAGE:** Applicants must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher for all college or university level courses taken, **or** a 2.5 or higher grade point average for the last 40 credit hours completed to be considered for program admission. The general education GPA coursework must be completed with no grade below a "C". Students that do not meet these GPA requirements will not be considered for program admission.
 - Please note that the last 40 hours earned option is a "forgiveness" GPA for those that may have performed poorly in their initial college coursework and has since significantly improved.
 - **OBSERVATION HOURS:** Applicants must complete a minimum of 40 observation hours in two or more occupational therapy settings. It is the student's responsibility to arrange these observation hours.
 - The hours must be documented and verified/signed by an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant.
 - You may submit any documentation form from the facility or utilize the Observation Hours Form located within the application packet.
 - Please see the application packet for revised criteria regarding Observation Hours due to the COVID-19 Pandemic for a revised Reference Form.
 - **RECOMMENDATION FORMS:** At least two recommendation forms must be completed by an OT or OTA. The required **Recommendation Form** is located within the application packet and may be photocopied for additional recommendations.
 - **IMMUNIZATION FORM:** Must have immunizations completed with current PPD within 3 months of June 1 deadline. The required **Certificate of Immunization Form** is located within the application packet, and may be photocopied.
 - **GENERAL EDUCATION COURSEWORK:** To receive full consideration of your completed application, 8 general education courses must be completed before the June 1st application deadline. Candidates that have remaining courses that will be completed in the Summer Semester prior to the start of the program will be rated lower than those that have completed all general education courses before the application deadline.
 - All required general education courses must be completed with a grade of "C" or higher.
 - **UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS:** Copies of unofficial transcripts for all colleges or universities ever attended must be submitted with the OTA program application.
 - **PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE:** Proof of health insurance must be provided prior to the start of the OTA program. Please do not submit proof with this application packet. If you are selected for the program, then additional information will be

given to you at orientation for the submission of proof of health insurance. For additional information regarding this University System of Georgia requirement, please refer to the following website: **UnitedHealthcare Student Resources**.

- **HAND WRITTEN ESSAY:** Applicants must include a hand-written essay explaining why you have chosen OTA as a career. (The required minimum length is 2 pages unless you are unable to complete volunteer hours. See the application for more detailed information.)

TEAS TEST REQUIREMENT: Submit a copy of the TEAS score report. Please refer to the program application packet for more information.

Selection Process

The OTA Selection Committee reviews and scores each application based on the following criteria: grade point averages (Cumulative G.P.A. or for the last 40 credit hours and G.P.A. for all required general education courses), the total number of hours observed in two or more occupational therapy settings, the quality of the hand written essay, TEAS score report results, the quality of the received recommendations, and the completion status of general education courses.

Applicants will be notified via email no later than June 15th. Correspondence of acceptance or regret will be made through email and should be sent to OTA Selection Committee no later than July 1st. The Albany State University OTA Program does not utilize a waiting list and those denied acceptance must reapply the following year. Application information such as volunteer hours and essays can be reused for reapplications.

Legal Limitations

Individuals who have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor may not be eligible for licensure. If convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, it is recommended that you contact the Occupational Therapy Board in the state where you plan to seek licensure to verify your eligibility for licensure. All students will be required to complete a national criminal background check prior to placement in clinical externships. Some clinical facilities may also require a drug screen prior to placement (students may be responsible for payment). The clinical affiliate determines whether a student can participate in the clinical rotation based upon the results of the background check and drug screen. Should the student be denied clinical placement, they cannot progress through the program and will be dismissed. Careful consideration of any questionable record should be carefully scrutinized prior to application. The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) also performs background checks to determine the eligibility of graduates to take the certification exam. You can request an Early Determination Review prior to applying for the OTA Program by contacting NBCOT.

GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: <https://sos.ga.gov/georgia-state-board-occupational-therapy> (<https://sos.ga.gov/georgia-state-board-occupational-therapy/>)

NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: www.nbcot.org (<http://www.nbcot.org/>)

Non-Discrimination Policy

Albany State University's Darton College of Health Professions, in compliance with Federal law, does not discriminate based on race,

color, national origin, handicap, sex, religion, or age in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.

The faculty of the Occupational Therapy Assistant program acknowledges Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and PL 103-336, The **Americans with Disabilities Act** and will consider for admission, progression, and graduation candidates who demonstrate the ability to perform the essential abilities. These standards are admission guidelines and are subject to continuing revision and improvement.

Course	Title	Semester Hours
Freshman Year		
Fall		
Courses required for program admission		
The following general education course requirements totaling 26 hours must be completed prior to program attendance		
ENGL 1101	English Composition I	3
BIOL 2411K	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
PSYC 1101	General Psychology	3
MATH 1111	College Algebra	3
Semester Hours		13
Spring		
Courses required for program admission		
BIOL 2412K	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
ARTS 1100	Art Appreciation ¹	3
PSYC 2103	Human Growth & Development	3
POLS 1101	American Government	3
Semester Hours		13
Sophomore Year		
Fall		
OTA Core Curriculum Courses		
OTAS 1100	Introduction to Occupational Therapy	2
ALHE 1104	Intro to Disease Conditions	2
OTAS 1105	Patient Skills for the OTA	2
OTAS 1111	Functional Anatomy and Kinesiology	4
ALHE 1120	Medical Terminology	2
Semester Hours		12
Spring		
OTAS 1121	Therapeutic Media	2
OTAS 1131	Physical Function in Occupation I	4
OTAS 1140	Psychosocial Function in Occupation	3
OTAS 1145	Developmental Function in Occupation	3
Semester Hours		12
Summer		
OTAS 1132	Physical Function in Occupation II	4
OTAS 2200	Assistive Techniques and Technologies	3
OTAS 2260	Treatment Methods and Management for the OTA	4
Semester Hours		11
Junior Year		
Fall		
OTAS 2410	Fieldwork Experience Level II A ²	5
OTAS 2412	Occupational Therapy Seminar	2

OTAS 2420	Fieldwork Experience Level II B ²	5
Semester Hours		12
Total Semester Hours		73

¹ Humanities requirement may be met by taking any literature or appreciation course in the Humanities Area of the Core IMPACTS (<http://catalog.asurams.edu/undergraduate/core-curriculum/#coreimpactstext>).

² ** All OTA students must complete level II fieldwork within 18 months following the completion of academic preparation.

** Fieldwork must be passed with a grade of "C" or better to graduate. In the event of unsatisfactory performance, a practicum may be repeated one time within 18 months of completion of didactic course work.

*** A mandatory NBCOT examination preparation course that is paid for by an assessed student fee will be held at the conclusion of the last semester of the OTA Program upon successful completion of the program and graduation with an Associate of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant degree.

Depending on your enrollment status, you may be required to take ASU 1101, "First Year Experience".

Any OTA course presented for graduation that was completed three calendar years or more prior to the anticipated date of graduation must be successfully challenged or repeated for credit