



The Occupational Therapy Program at V.C.U. is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, P.O. Box 31220, Bethesda, MD, 20824-1220, (301) 652-AOTA.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING TO THE  
ENTRY-LEVEL MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAM  
(2009-2010)**

*Table of Contents*

*Information Sessions for Prospective Applicants*..... 2  
*FACTS about the VCU Occupational Therapy Department*..... 3  
*About Richmond, VA*..... 4  
*Admissions Timeline*..... 5  
**Section A: Admissions Guidelines** ..... **6**  
*Prerequisites* ..... 6  
*Admissions Criteria*..... 7  
*When to Apply*..... 8  
**Section B: General Information** ..... **9**  
*Frequently Asked Questions*..... 12  
*Application Process Checklist*..... 16

**Cultivating Future Therapists through a Tradition of Excellence**



**Information Sessions for Prospective Applicants**

P.O. Box 980008  
Richmond, Virginia 23298-0008  
(804) 828-2219

To: Prospective Applicants to the Entry-Level Master’s Degree Program in Occupational Therapy  
From: Dianne F. Simons, Ph.D. OTR/L, Director, Entry-Level Graduate Program  
Subject: Monthly Information Sessions

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We have scheduled information sessions for prospective applicants to the Occupational Therapy Entry-Level Graduate Program throughout the year. These sessions occur on the third Friday of each month from 1:00-2:15pm. These sessions are designed so you can find out about our program and the admission process. The session includes a presentation about the program, information about the admission process, a question and answer period and a tour of the department. OT Department faculty members lead the information sessions. Current students in the program conduct the tours to provide prospective students with an opportunity to ask them questions about the program.

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month**

**1:00 - 1:55 p.m.**  
**2:00 - 2:15 p.m.**

**Presentation and Q&A Period**  
**Tour OT Department**

July 17, 2009- Dr. Marie Anzalone  
August 21, 2009 –Dr. Stacey Reynolds  
September 18, 2009 – Dr. Jodi Teitelman  
October 16, 2009 –Dr. Marie Anzalone  
November 20, 2009 –Dr. Tony Gentry  
December 19, 2009 –Jayne Shepherd

January 15, 2010 –Dr. Stacey Reynolds  
February 19, 2010 –Jayne Shepherd  
March 19, 2010 –Dr. Dianne Simons  
April 16, 2010 –Dr. Jodi Teitelman  
May 21 2010 –Dr. Tony Gentry  
June 18, 2010 –Dr. Dianne Simons

**All information sessions are held in the OT Department on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Theater Row Building, 730 E. Broad Street. Theater Row is located on the corner of Eighth and Broad Streets in downtown Richmond.**

**You do not need a reservation to attend.**

The Websites listed provide you with directions to the VCU Medical Center Campus and Theater Row where the Occupational Therapy Department is located.

**Directions to the VCU Medical Center Campus:** <http://www.vcu.edu/maps/mcvmap/mcvmapd.htm>  
**Directions to Theater Row:** <http://www.vcu.edu/maps/mcvmap/theaterrow/theaterrow.htm>

## FACTS about the VCU Occupational Therapy Department

- Educating Occupational Therapists since 1942
- First OT Program in the country to offer an entry-level OT degree at the Masters degree level
- Ranked 13th in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report (2008)*
- Only top 20 OT program in the state of Virginia
- Awarded 10-year term of accreditation by ACOTE in 2001 (the highest term of accreditation possible).
- Only OT program in the state to offer a post-professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate degree and to offer VCU MSOT graduates an opportunity to use a portion of their entry-level course work toward that degree.
- Internationally and nationally recognized faculty
- Seven of 8 faculty members hold doctoral degrees



### **Employment:**

In the class of 25 students who graduated in December 2008, 100% of graduates looking for jobs found employment before or within 2 months after graduation.

The VCU Occupational Therapy Department awards **three** degrees in occupational therapy:

#### **Entry-Level Program: Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (M.S.O.T.)**

*Prepares students from a wide variety of backgrounds to become practicing occupational therapists  
Provides community-based learning throughout the program at Fieldwork I and service learning sites  
Develops research skills through a faculty-guided small group research practicum*

#### **Distance Education program for current OTRs: Post-professional Master of Science (M.S.)**

*Provides theory-and evidence-based practice  
Develops advanced clinical research skills  
Requires completion a thesis on a topic of mutual interest to you and your advisor*

#### **Distance Education program for current OTRs: Occupational Therapy Doctorate (O.T.D.)**

*A clinical doctorate that focuses on the development of leadership  
Designed to appeal to working practitioners who are adult learners  
Enhances critical analysis skills in practice and the design of fundable projects geared toward evidence based practice  
Develops knowledge of the complexity of occupation and practice  
Requires completion of a Capstone Leadership Project*

- Small classes for optimum student/faculty interaction offered in a metropolitan setting rich in professional opportunities.
- Provide state-of-the art computer laboratory and assistive technology.
- VCU Medical Center, the hospitals, clinics and health sciences schools of VCU, form one of the leading academic medical research centers in the country.

### **Department Contact Information**

Dianne F. Simons, Ph.D., OTR/L  
Director, Entry-Level Graduate Program  
[dfsimons@vcu.edu](mailto:dfsimons@vcu.edu)

Marie E. Anzalone, Sc.D., OTR/L, FAOTA  
Director, Post-Professional Graduate Programs  
[meanzalone@vcu.edu](mailto:meanzalone@vcu.edu)



**Kashi Company ranked Richmond  
as one of the nation's Top 10  
"heart-healthiest Cities"**

## **About Richmond, VA.**

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Richmond, an ideal location for a dynamic university, serves as a vast learning laboratory, easily accommodating the varied interests and needs of a large student body. Beyond the campus borders, a wealth of opportunities is offered to visitors and residents with interests in history, art, sports, nature or just having fun. The "City of Monuments" has more than 50 art galleries and museums, including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Science Museum of Virginia, Virginia Historical Society, Virginia Aviation Museum, the Black History Museum and Cultural Center, Edgar Allan Poe Museum and the Richmond Children's Museum. Students can enjoy performances by the Richmond Symphony, the Virginia Opera, the Richmond Ballet, theater companies and music stars at several venues near the university's Monroe Park campus and Medical Center.



The city's diverse historic attractions include St. John's Church, where Patrick Henry made his "give me liberty or give me death" speech; the Virginia State Capitol, designed by Thomas Jefferson; the Maggie L. Walker Historic Site, home of the first woman to found a bank in the United States; and numerous Civil War battlefields.

Richmond serves as host for professional sports events such as the Richmond Marathon, the NIKE Dominion Open golf tournament and two Winston Cup NASCAR races each year. The city boasts a number of professional sports teams, including soccer, hockey, arena football and an AAA affiliate of the Atlanta Braves, as well as a number of amateur and community sporting teams and events. With class IV rapids flowing through the city, Richmond's Canal Walk is one of many recreational attractions, including 75 riverfront parks, and urban wilderness areas that are popular with cyclists, rafters and kayakers. Garden enthusiasts can find havens at Maymont Park, Agecroft Hall or the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens.

Once the commercial center of Richmond, Shockoe Slip now exhibits great charm with its brick sidewalks, cobblestone streets and renovated 19th century buildings. "The Slip" houses a number of restaurants, shops, hotels, nightclubs and apartments. Down the hill from the Slip, Shockoe Bottom features the historic Farmer's Market and an assortment of art studios, galleries, apartments and eateries, all in renovated and adapted buildings.

A great place for employment opportunities, the Richmond metropolitan area is home to a broad base of corporations, banks, hospitals, media firms, and federal, state and local government agencies as well as high-tech manufacturing companies, including several Fortune 500 companies. *Money Magazine* ranked Richmond among the best mid-size cities to live in the South.

Richmond affords VCU students the benefits of a thriving metropolitan city, while its intimate neighborhoods, cozy restaurants and cafes, and quaint local markets provide the familiarity of a small town.

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See: <http://www.vcu.edu/richmond/>

# VCU Occupational Therapy

Virginia Commonwealth University

## Entry-Level Graduate Program Admissions Timeline 2009-2010

<b>Admissions Process</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Times</b>
<b>Early Decision</b> Application period	June 15-Sept.15, 2009	
Offers for <b>Early Decision</b>	October 15, 2009	
<b>Regular</b> Admission Application period	<b>November 1, 2009-January 15, 2010</b>	
Offers for <b>Regular</b> Admission	By March 15, 2010	
"Open House" for <b>Accepted Applicants</b>	Friday, March 26, 2010	12:00-4:30pm
	Friday, April 16, 2010	12:00-4:30pm
Orientation for <b>all</b> New Students	June 1-2, 2010	9:00am
Classes <b>begin</b> for New Students	June 3, 2010	9:00am
<b>Information Sessions for Prospective Applicants</b>	<i>Held once a month, every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, throughout the year for prospective applicants.</i> <b>No reservation required!</b>	1:00-2:15pm

## Section A: Admissions Guidelines

### The Application Process

Applicants to the Entry-Level Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy must have completed at a minimum 90 credits toward a bachelor's degree, with a minimum of 15 credit hours of upper-level course work (courses at the 300 or 400 level), and have completed all prerequisite courses with a grade of C or better. Two applications must be completed: 1) **the University Application for Graduate Study**, and 2) **the Department of Occupational Therapy Supplemental Application**.

Applicants may initiate their application online at:

<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/admission/prospective/apply.html>. Type "Submitted with the OT Supplemental Application" on the page for the personal statement on the Graduate School online application form. Print the forms for the three letters of recommendation and the request for transcript form while on the Graduate School site (see Section II B & C). The Department of OT Supplemental Application is an MS Word document **that needs to be submitted electronically via email** to the Department Program Manager, Lawrence Smith, at [lsmith@vcu.edu](mailto:lsmith@vcu.edu). Interviews are not a required part of the application process.

### Entrance Criteria Policy Statement

Applicants are offered admission based on consideration of their qualifications using a standard review process. This is the sole basis for selecting applicants for the Entry-Level Master's Degree Program in Occupational Therapy. Other influences, whether administrative, legislative, or personal, are not considered a valid basis for preferential treatment of any applicant.

### Prerequisites

All applicants must complete the following courses with a grade of C or better with a minimum overall pre-requisite GPA of 3.00. Courses identified with an asterisk must have been taken no more than 7 years prior to the enrollment date.

- I. **English** - *6 semester hours*; English Composition and/or writing intensive courses.
- II. **\*Human Anatomy and Physiology** (with labs)-*6-8 semester hours*
- II. **Social Sciences** - *15 semester hours*, including:
  - **\* Life Span Development or Developmental Psychology** -*3-6 semester hours* - Read your bulletin carefully and take course(s) that prepare you well across the life span. If you cannot get a single life span development course you may need to take two courses to cover the entire lifespan, such as a 3 credit course in adult development and a 3 credit course in child development.
  - **\* Abnormal Psychology** *3 semester hours*.
  - **Other social sciences** *6-9 semester hours* - e.g., psychology, sociology, social psychology, anthropology; theories of personality is highly recommended. Political science, history and economics courses are not acceptable for this prerequisite requirement. The range of 6-9 credits depends upon whether 3 or 6 credits are needed to cover lifespan development to total 15 credit hours of social science courses.
- IV. **\*Statistics** - *3-semester hours*- A basic statistics course should cover descriptive statistics and statistical testing including t-test, chi-square, analysis of variance (ANOVA), linear regression and correlative analysis.

In addition, students are required to have a basic level of **computer competence**, the ability to use a personal computer for word processing, e-mail, online bibliographic searches, and Internet list-serve

discussions. It is also helpful for students to be familiar with presentation (e.g. PowerPoint) and spreadsheet software (Excel). A **medical terminology** class/course is recommended, but not required. These are minimum requirements. Applicants are encouraged to take other liberal arts and science courses to develop intellectual competence, enrich interest areas, and promote awareness of a range of social and cultural values.

Rare exceptions to the prerequisites will be considered based on clearly demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities comparable to those described. CLEP (College Level Examination Program) might be best considered. If you have any questions about courses meeting our pre-requisite criteria, please contact Lawrence Smith at (804) 828-2219 or at [lsmith@vcu.edu](mailto:lsmith@vcu.edu)

## **Admissions Criteria**

### **I. Academic Admissions Criteria:**

- A. **Grade Point Average:** A 2.70 GPA for all completed college course work and a 3.00 GPA on the prerequisite courses completed are the minimum requirements. (There is no rounding on these GPAs.)
- B. **Standardized Test Scores:** The *Graduate Record Examination* (GRE) Aptitude Test (3 parts) is required. Send the official score report (current within 5 years) by the application deadline to Lawrence Smith, Department of Occupational Therapy, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 980008, Richmond, VA 23298-0008. **Information about the GRE can be found at the Educational Testing Service website at** – [www.ets.org/gre/](http://www.ets.org/gre/). We suggest that you review before taking the GRE. There are classes and materials available. An acceptance decision cannot be made without receipt of GRE scores. So register early to ensure that scores are received in the OT Department by January 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **II. Professional Admissions Criteria:**

- A. **Volunteer/Work Experience:** (work or volunteer hours **must be completed** *prior* to the application deadline of January 15, 2010.)
  1. **60-hours in O.T.:** Supervised by an occupational therapy practitioner (e.g. an OTR or COTA). These required 60 hours must be in two different settings; one setting with adults and one setting with children. We do not require that the hours be divided equally between settings (See Application for OT, Part 4) Sixty hours is the minimum requirement. **Additional volunteer hours are not required, but should be recorded and will be considered in the overall assessment of the application.**
  2. **Related Hours:** In order to guide us in evaluating the overall quality of your application, please list all work or volunteer experience in other areas working with people with disabilities, special needs, international and community service. (See Application for OT, Part 4)
- B. **References:** Three references are required and you must use the Graduate School Reference Form available at <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/pdfs/reference.pdf> These references should attest to your academic skills, ability to complete graduate study, general work skills, and personal qualities desirable for one to be a competent occupational therapist. Thoughtfully select these people and encourage them to comment on these areas. *It is highly recommended no personal references be submitted. The objectivity of*

*personal references is highly scrutinized.* If you are now or have recently been a student you should request one reference from a professor who knows you well. If you have been employed, one reference should be from your employer. Other references can be from faculty, employers, occupational therapists, or others qualified to comment on your potential for successful graduate study in occupational therapy. If an occupational therapist or other health care provider can provide a knowledgeable, informed, and descriptive recommendation of your character and work-related knowledge, skills, and abilities, then this is highly recommended. If an OT does not know you well enough to complete the reference form sufficiently, it is wiser to select another choice to write the reference. (Letters of support are useful but the most important section is the checklist on the front page of the Reference Form. In order to give credit for a reference this form must be completed.) **Have your references returned to you, sealed and signed by the reference across the seal.** You will send all 3 envelopes along with your supplemental application to the O.T. Department, Virginia Commonwealth University at P.O. Box 980008, Richmond, VA 23298-0008, c/o Lawrence Smith, Program Manager. This process will assure you that all three of your letters have been received by the Department. When letters of recommendation are sent separately applicants are unaware of missing letters.

- C. **Transcripts:** Official transcripts are required from each community college, four year college or university you have attended. It is recommended that you send sealed official transcripts in the same packet with your 3 letters of recommendation. **Please send all official transcript(s) directly to: Lawrence Smith, Program Manager Department of Occupational Therapy, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 980008, Richmond, VA 23298-0008.** As soon as Fall and Spring grades are posted, please send these transcripts as well.
- D. **Essay:** This is a personal statement of your professional and educational preparation for O.T. Graduate Study. This essay must not exceed two pages. The essay is a critical scoring piece in the review process so be sure to give it sufficient time and energy. For information on what should be included in this essay please see the instructions listed under the Application for OT, Part 3.

### **When to Apply**

Application is a self-managed process. You are wise to send all supporting information including the three reference forms and transcripts together in a single packet. All application materials for both the University Application for Graduate Study and the Department of OT Supplemental Application, including scores from the Graduate Record Examination must be received before an application can be reviewed for admission. ***Applications for the class entering in the summer of 2010 will be accepted from November 1, 2009-January 15, 2010.***

The Graduate School forwards the University portion of the application materials to the Department of Occupational Therapy. The department Graduate Admissions Committee, composed of faculty and clinical faculty, review applications from November through March. Offers of acceptance will be mailed by March 15, 2010.

## **Section B: General Information**

### **Early Decision Option**

Students with strong academic credentials, for whom VCU is their top choice for OT education, may request admission through the "Early Decision Option". The Early Decision Option provides an opportunity for top applicants to apply and be granted admission to the Occupational Therapy Program prior to the general pool of applicants.

In order to be considered, the applicant must have an overall grade point average of 3.50 on college course work, a 3.50 grade point average on all pre-requisites taken, scores of at least 450 on the GRE Verbal test and 500 on the Quantitative test, and at least 4.0 on the Analytical Writing test.

The application process is identical to the Entry-level Occupational Therapy admissions process. The following requirements will need to be completed prior to submitting your application:

- At least 60 volunteer hours in 2 occupational therapy settings (one with adults and one with children);
- Three (3) letters of reference;
- Personal Statement Essay: "Occupational Therapy: The Complex Profession"

Early Decision applications will be accepted from June 15 to September 15. By mid-October, applicants will receive admission decisions.

Acceptance will be contingent upon completing all pre-requisites before O.T. classes begin in June of the year of admission. Applicants also will have to maintain the minimum 3.0 GPA during the remainder of undergraduate coursework and prerequisites.

***If accepted in the Early Decision Option, it is expected that the applicant will agree to enroll at VCU. The applicant would either agree to not apply or withdraw applications to all other O.T. Programs.***

All applications not accepted under the "Early Decision Option" will be considered automatically with the general pool of applications.

If you would like to be considered for the Early Decision Option, please complete the Early Decision form in the Supplemental Application and attach it to the front of your application.

### **Open House for Accepted Applicants**

The *Open House* is a fun day for accepted applicants with a lot of opportunities to learn about VCU. Participants meet faculty, staff, clinical faculty, and students. Accepted applicants tour the campus, learn about the curriculum, enjoy presentations, and gather resources about the University and city of Richmond including financial aid and off-campus housing information. Two Open Houses are scheduled each year. Upcoming Open Houses for the graduating Class of 2012, who will start June 2010, are scheduled for March 26, 2010 and April 16, 2010.

### **Tuition & Expenses**

The tuition and fees for 2009-2010 are \$4,998.55 for Virginia residents and \$9,095.50 for non-residents per semester beginning Fall 2009. Tuition and expenses are subject to change.

<http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/sa/>

### **Financial Aid**

Financial assistance is available through a variety of options including, Stafford Loans (guaranteed student loans), work-study program(s), a limited number of traineeships, outside resources and local employment. Students also may apply for supplemental loans if additional aid is needed. To apply for any financial assistance, you need to complete on-line a Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA): <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

The VCU Financial Aid Office for the MCV campus is located in Sanger Hall, Room 1-055, 1101 E. Marshall Street, P. O. Box 980244, Richmond, VA 23298, (804) 828-9800 to provide information and help. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8am to 4:30pm. <http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/finaid/>. Nicole Abdul is the Financial Aid Counselor assigned to OT. Her number is (804) 828-2702. Her e-mail is [nabdul@vcu.edu](mailto:nabdul@vcu.edu). Nicole Abdul will meet with accepted applicants during the two open houses.

### **Housing**

Classes are held on the Medical College of Virginia Campus. It may be possible to arrange summer housing in the dormitories, but this requires early reservations <http://www.students.vcu.edu/housing/>. Most students live in apartments or townhouses in the Richmond vicinity. The Department of Occupational Therapy sends accepted applicants a Student Orientation Booklet, or "Student Survival Manual" that includes a list of apartments recommended by current students. Martha Harper, Off Campus Student Services Coordinator, will meet with accepted applicants during the 2 Open Houses to discuss housing opportunities in Richmond.

### **Fieldwork**

The Entry-Level Graduate Program includes two phases of fieldwork experience. The first phase (Fieldwork I), where placements are integrated with course work, varies from half days to full days. Most of these placements are in the Richmond area, but some may be as distant as an hour's drive. The second phase of fieldwork (Fieldwork II) consists of two 3-month internships. To obtain the highest quality field placements for our students the curriculum has established contracts with a number of clinical settings throughout the United States. Fieldwork placements in the Richmond area may be limited, so students may have to consider other locations. Every effort is made to schedule students within commuting distance if they have dependent children or family members, but placement in a specific location cannot be guaranteed. Also, a student will not be placed in a facility from which that person has received a scholarship or loan in exchange for a commitment to work for that facility after graduation. Students can only be placed in facilities where we have a current contract. It is possible to establish new contracts with facilities, but it can be an extensive process. It is not always possible to establish a contract due to legal requirements of the university and the requirements made by other facilities. Students should contact the Fieldwork Coordinator, Jayne Shepherd early in their academic course of study if they have an interest in pursuing Fieldwork II at a facility other than those with whom we have established contracts.

Students should anticipate and plan for the expenses of fieldwork. Ordinarily the only expense associated with Fieldwork I is travel to and from the facility. The two 3-month Fieldwork II placements

are credit courses require the payment of tuition and may have associated expenses as room and board, and travel. A small number of placements may have a stipend.

Fieldwork II must be completed within 24 months after completion of the academic coursework.

**As a condition for participation in fieldwork**, students are generally required by the facility to provide documentation of training in blood-born pathogens and HIPAA (both of which are completed during Orientation for New Students), to disclose immunization information, to have a negative tuberculosis test, and to provide a criminal background check. If a criminal background check is required, students must make arrangements and pay for this service on their own. Further, students may be required to complete cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, to submit to drug screening, to comply with regulations of the facility and to waive their right to sue the facility. If required by facility, students are required to pay for vaccinations, a criminal background check, CPR training, drug screening, etc.

### **Professional Credentials**

Upon successful completion of the curriculum, students are eligible to take the national certification examination. Most employers require certification as proof of professional competence. Most states also require this certification as part of professional credentialing. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification examination or attain state licensure. NBCOT has policies related to examination candidates with felony convictions; further information can be obtained from that Board. See the NBCOT web site at: <http://www.nbcot.org/>

## **Frequently Asked Questions** **O.T. Entry-Level Master's Program**

### ***When does the program start and what is the class schedule?***

The entry-level program at VCU is a full time program. It is a seven semester program, lasting 2 and a half years. Students are accepted into a cohort. All students take the same curriculum throughout the program. Classes start at the beginning of June each year. Classes are scheduled from 8 or 9 am until 4pm Monday through Friday. For some semesters, students may be off on Friday afternoons. During the second summer there are no courses and students frequently choose to work in a related capacity. Graduation is in December.

### ***Are any of your entry-level courses taught online?***

No, the entry-level program at VCU is a full time, on-campus program. Our post-professional Masters and Occupational Therapy Doctorate programs for registered occupational therapists are online courses.

### ***When do I apply?***

The application period runs from June 15 to September 15 for Early Decision and November 1 to January 15 for regular admission. We notify those who have been accepted for Early Decision by October 15 and for regular admission by March 15.

### ***Can I apply before I have completed all of the prerequisite courses?***

All prerequisites must be completed before classes start in June. If you are in the process of completing prerequisite courses and you are accepted, you will be offered a provisional acceptance contingent upon successful completion of these courses. Once your transcripts are received you will be issued a final acceptance.

### ***Do I have to complete all of the required volunteer hours before applying?***

Yes all 60 volunteer hours in two settings (adult and pediatric) need to be completed at the time of application. This includes applications for the Early Decision option.

### ***How do you evaluate an application?***

The Entry Level Graduate Admissions Committee considers overall GPA on all college coursework. That overall GPA is weighed at 15% of the final application score. We also consider prerequisite GPA on the 30-33 credits that are specifically required for our program. Prerequisite GPA is weighed at 20%. The GRE scores are each weighed differently. Verbal and Writing scores are weighed at 10% each and the quantitative score at 5%. The letters of recommendation contribute 20% to the final score. The essay contributes the remaining 20%.

### ***How do I make my application competitive?***

Applications are competitive with excellent marks in prerequisite courses, good test scores, and well composed essays. Good volunteer experiences often contribute to excellent essays. Last year we had over one hundred applications for 42 places in the class. It is a competitive program so the better prepared you are in your undergraduate coursework and the better your volunteer OT experience and/or experience with individuals with special needs, the more competitive your application will be.

### ***What grade point average is acceptable?***

The Admissions Committee looks at the GPAs of applicants in two ways- an overall GPA and a prerequisite GPA (PGPA). At a minimum you must have an overall undergraduate GPA of 2.70 and a Prerequisite GPA of 3.00 or better. Prerequisite GPA is very important to the Committee because these courses are considered a better indicator of the knowledge that you will need for your OT courses. Our program is a graduate program that requires a minimum GPA of 3.00 to graduate so we accept students who we feel will be capable of earning "A"s and "B"s in challenging courses at the graduate level. So naturally we prefer to accept students who have proven that they are capable of making "A"s and "B"s in the courses that they have taken before they come to our program. For the class admitted in June 2009:

Average GPA 3.43 (Range of 2.8 to 3.99)

Average PGPA 3.55 (Range of 3.1 to 4.0).

***What Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores are acceptable?***

We prefer to see GRE scores above the 25th percentile. Each GRE test score is considered separately. The Verbal GRE score and Writing Score are weighted more heavily in our admission process than the Quantitative score because of their application to OT practice. Average GRE scores for students admitted in 2009 were:

GRE Verbal - 443 (Range 300-660)  
GRE Quantitative - 498 (Range 270-740)  
GRE Written Analytical - 4.2 (Range 3.0-5.5)

***The second time I took the GRE my Verbal score was better. Which one counts?***

The standardized test must be current within 5 years. If you have taken it several times within the 5-year limit, the highest overall test scores from one testing will be used. We will not combine the best individual subtest scores from different administrations of the test.

***My courses were taken at a community college. Is this OK?***

Community college courses are acceptable. If you are applying with 90 credits, at least 15 of those credits need to be upper level courses (300 and 400 level) taken at a four-year college or university. For Virginia Community Colleges please refer to the VCU transfer guide for the appropriate courses to take for prerequisites.

<http://www.transferguide.vcu.edu/>

***Why is the human development prerequisite 3-6 credit hours?***

Our human development prerequisite requirement is for lifespan human development. If you take child development course, you will need to take a course with an adult perspective. In this case it will take two courses to achieve the lifespan perspective. The total required prerequisite credits in social science whether you have one or two development courses is 15 credits.

***I took a 4 credit course in Human Anatomy and Physiology with Lab. This was all my college offered.***

You must have at least 6 credits in human anatomy and physiology with lab. If a college only offers a 4-credit course, at least 2 credits must be added. These can be physiology, kinesiology, neuroscience, or other courses related to this requirement.

***My courses are graded as Pass/Fail. Is this acceptable?***

All prerequisite courses must have a letter grade of "C" or better. Pass / Fail grades are not acceptable for prerequisites because they cannot be calculated in a grade point average (GPA).

***I was given credit for English Composition from Advanced Placement testing in high school. Do I have to take another composition course?***

We accept AP courses transferred into a university and calculate the course grade as an "A."

***Do you accept CLEP (College Level Examination Program) credits?***

CLEP testing is acceptable except for lab courses. The CLEP examination in English Composition for Essay is accepted by VCU for 3 credits of UNIV 111 - University Focused Inquiry I. There is no CLEP exam equivalent for English 200. For clarification see: <http://www.vcu.edu/uc/clc/VCUUC-ClepEq.htm>

***I took a course that I think meets your prerequisite, but it has an odd title, and I'm afraid you will not accept it. What should I do?***

Mail (or FAX (804) 828-0782) the catalog course description to Lawrence Smith, the Program Manager of the OT Department. Please include your contact information so that you can be notified of the evaluation results. If you have the course syllabus, this would be even more helpful.

***I have taken all of the required prerequisites and I still have elective hours to take what do recommend that I take?***

You are free to take any course that interests you. Additional social sciences can be valuable, but literature courses often teach you even more about the human experience through the stories of people's lives.

***Is financial aid available?***

Many of our students have been successful securing funding through the financial aid office and other outside sources. Nicole Abdul is Financial Aid Counselor for the Schools of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Allied Health Professions. She can be reached at:

Sanger Hall, Room 1-055, Mon.–Fri., 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.  
1101 E. Marshall St.  
P.O. Box 980244  
Richmond, Va. 23298  
Phone: (804) 828-2702/Fax: (804) 828-2703

<http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/finaid/contact/index.html>

***Are students able to work while enrolled in the OT program?***

The entry level Masters program is a full time graduate program. Some students have managed to do some part-time work while a full time student. Their ability to do this depends a great deal on the type of job they have. As a rule, we do not recommend that students work while going to school.

***I still have a lot of questions that need answering.***

Monthly applicant information sessions are scheduled from 1:00-2:15pm the third Friday of each month. **The schedule is posted on our web page. Please review our Web page at <http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/occu/> thoroughly and if you still have unanswered questions Program Manager, Lawrencine Smith, is available by phone at (804) 828-2219 or e-mail at [lsmith@vcu.edu](mailto:lsmith@vcu.edu)**

## Entry Level Master's Program Course Sequence

Summer I	Fall I	Spring I
<p><b>(ANAT 525)</b> Human Anatomy (5) <b>(OCCT 530)</b> Nature of OT (2)</p>	<p><b>(OCCT 520)</b> OT Applications: Kinesiology (2) <b>(OCCT 522)</b> Interdisciplinary Medical Lectures (3) <b>(OCCT 531)</b> Interpersonal Communication and Group Dynamics (2) <b>(OCCT 532)</b> Life Span Occupational Development (3) <b>(OCCT 533)</b> OT Principles, Values &amp; Theories (4) <b>(OCCT 620)</b> Practice Activities I (1)</p>	<p><b>(OCCT 521)</b> Neuroscience Applications to Occupational Therapy (3) <b>(OCCT 534)</b> OT Evaluation and Intervention Overview (3) <b>(OCCT 630)</b> Adult Evaluation and Intervention I: Foundations (2) <b>(OCCT 635)</b> Psychosocial Evaluation and Intervention I (2) <b>(OCCT 640)</b> Pediatric Evaluation and Intervention I: Infant and Preschool Children (3) <b>(OCCT 660, section 1)</b> Level I Fieldwork in OT (1)</p>
<b>Credits: 7</b>	<b>Credits: 15</b>	<b>Credits: 14</b>
Summer II	Fall II	Spring II
<p><i>Students are free to work their second summer. Many students gain experience in the field by finding jobs working as OT Aides or Rehab Assistants, working with clients with disabilities in summer camp settings, etc.</i></p>	<p><b>(OCCT 621)</b> OT Practice Activities II (1) <b>(OCCT 631)</b> Adult Evaluation &amp; Intervention II: Activities of Daily Living (2) <b>(OCCT 632)</b> Adult Evaluation &amp; Intervention III: Work, Play/Leisure, Geriatrics (2) <b>(OCCT 641)</b> Pediatric Evaluation and Intervention II: Ages 6-12 Years (4) <b>(OCCT 660, section 002)</b> Level I Fieldwork in OT (1) <b>(OCCT 709)</b> Research Process and Statistical Analysis in Occupational Therapy (4)</p>	<p><b>(OCCT 623)</b> OT Practice Activities III (1) <b>(OCCT 636)</b> Psychosocial Evaluation and Intervention II (2) <b>(OCCT 650)</b> Occupational Therapy in Health Care (3) <b>(OCCT 651)</b> Administrative &amp; Supervision of Occupational Therapy Services (3) <b>(OCCT 670)</b> Case Based Clinical Reasoning in Occupational Therapy (2) <b>(OCCT 729)</b> Research Practicum in Occupational Therapy (3)</p>
	<b>Credits: 14</b>	<b>Credits: 14</b>
Summer III	Fall III	
<p><b>(OCCT 680)</b> Level II Fieldwork in Occupational Therapy (9)</p>	<p><b>(OCCT 681)</b> Level II Fieldwork in Occupational Therapy (9)</p>	<b>Graded Credits: 59</b> <b>Pass/Fail Credits: 23</b>
<b>Credits: 9</b>	<b>Credits: 9</b>	<b>Total Credits: 82</b>



## **Application Process Checklist**

***Please make sure that you complete all parts of the process***

- 1. Complete the online **VCU Graduate School Application**, which can be found at:  
<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>
  - The online application process requires **payment of a \$50. 00 application fee**
  - If you are a Virginia resident, be sure to complete the **Application for Virginia In-State Tuition**
  - Under the personal statement page type **"Submitted with the OT Supplemental Application."**
  
- 2. While on **the VCU Graduate School Forms website** download the following forms under "Forms" found at: <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/forms/index.html>
  - Official Transcript Request forms** (print as many as needed)
  - Print Three Letters of References forms**
  
- 3. Have the Educational Testing Service (ETS) send your **Official GRE Test Scores** directly to the **VCU Graduate School (GRE School Code 5570)**.
  
- 4. Complete the **Supplemental Application** (Word.doc), which can be downloaded from the Department of OT webpage at: <http://www.sahp.vcu.edu/occu/programs/entrylevel.htm>  
The Supplemental Application includes the following components. Be sure to complete all parts.
  - Applicant Information and Computer Competency Statement*
  - Early Decision Option Request Form* (only applicable from June 15<sup>th</sup> -September 15<sup>th</sup>)
  - Personal Statement Essay*
  - Volunteer/Work Experience in Occupational Therapy*
  - Related Experiences*
  - Prerequisite Status*
  - Incomplete Course Work*
  
- 5. Electronically submit the **Supplemental Application**. Send your complete supplemental Application as an **attachment to an email with the subject heading "MSOT Application,"** to Program Manager, **Lawrencine Smith** at [lsmith@vcu.edu](mailto:lsmith@vcu.edu).
  
- 6. Send a **complete single packet** containing the following items to: **Lawrencine Smith, Program Manager, Department of Occupational Therapy, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 980008, Richmond, VA 23298-0008**
  - All official transcripts** in sealed envelopes signed across the seals by official university or college registrars.
  - Three letters of reference** (on the official VCU Graduate School form) in sealed envelopes signed across the seals by the references.