



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE & OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Application Process FAQs

What is the deadline for applications?

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the first Tuesday in December, for entry into the program the following fall. No late applications will be accepted, and application fees are due when the application is submitted.

Applications are only accepted once a year and there are no rolling admissions. No applications are reviewed until after all applications are submitted on the first Tuesday in December.

When will I be able to start my online application?

The application system typically becomes available around the last week in August.

Where can I find the application?

The application can be linked through the application system at <https://applynow.unc.edu/apply/>. You will need to create an account in order to start the application process; the application does not need to be completed at one time. Be sure to keep your password as you will need this to access your application at a later date.

I can't find Occupational Therapy listed on the application in order to declare my intention to apply for the MSOT program.

What should I do?

The list of programs is alphabetical by department, so it may appear that you have passed the spot where "Occupational Therapy" should be due to multiple types of programs in other departments (i.e. Dentistry); however, keep scrolling down and you will see Occupational Therapy.

If I'm currently enrolled or planning on taking prerequisite courses next semester, what should I put on my application?

On the prerequisites section of the application, you may indicate that a course is "in progress". Please use this option if you are currently enrolled and grades will be posted after the application deadline or if you are planning on taking the course during the spring semester. In the additional information section, please write the anticipated date of completion for that prerequisite.

Also, if you are in the process of taking one or more prerequisite courses in the fall and will have an updated transcript at the end of the fall semester (after our application deadline) you will be able to upload one additional transcript after the application deadline. Please do this as soon as possible in order that those grades are considered with the rest of your application.

I am currently taking prerequisites at a college or university that is different than where I received my undergraduate degree. How do I represent this on the "Educational History" section on the application?

Please be sure to include all of the schools you attended on the Educational History section of the application. If you are completing prerequisites at a different institution than where you attended for your undergraduate work, you can fill in "Prerequisite Courses" where it asks for your major, then select "no" when it asks if you received a degree or certificate.

Where do I send my transcripts?

Transcripts are uploaded electronically. You can scan and upload unofficial copies of your transcripts for the application process. Admitted students will be asked to send a hard copy of their official transcripts to the Graduate School after admission. DO NOT MAIL YOUR TRANSCRIPTS TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OR THE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM.

Please follow the directions at <http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html> for uploading transcripts. If you have difficulty, please contact the Graduate School admissions office at gradadmissions@unc.edu.

Where do I send my letters of recommendation?

Letters of recommendation are uploaded electronically. On the application, you will be asked to provide a current email address for each of your references. Once you provide a valid email address, the application system will generate an email to each of your references explaining the process and how to upload the letter they write on your behalf.

If your references have difficulty uploading their letter of recommendation, please encourage them to carefully re-read the directions, and if they have followed them carefully and are still having difficulty to contact Technical Support for ApplyNow, or the Graduate School admissions office at gradadmissions@unc.edu.

How can I strengthen my application?

Applications are reviewed based on a number of factors, including GPA, prerequisite grades, volunteer and work experiences, OT observations (variety and depth), recommendations, and the quality of both content and writing style in the essays.

Applicants can strengthen their applications by doing as well as possible in prerequisite courses, building on the work/volunteer and OT observations sections, and spending time reflecting on and answering the essay questions with high quality written communication skills. In particular, be familiar with the UNC program, the philosophy on which it is based, and the work of the faculty. This should allow you to construct essays that reflect an understanding of occupational therapy and occupational science at a level that is reasonable for people applying to an entry-level program. Use references for your essays that include articles from professional journals and/or current text books in addition to other sources of information.

Also, choose your recommenders carefully -we want to hear from people who know not only your general character, but also about specific skills or qualities that you have based on how they know you. Examples based on experiences the recommender has had with you are also helpful, as it gives us an idea of how you behave in those situations. Recommenders who only write a few general statements about how wonderful you are don't help us very much as we review your application. Lastly, examining the document "Profile of Accepted Students" available on the website may be helpful in terms of getting an idea of the qualities/experiences of students we have accepted in the past.

What happens after applications are submitted?

After the application deadline, all applications are reviewed by the faculty of the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. Each application is reviewed for a variety of qualities, and receives an overall rating that reflects the reviewers' recommendation for interview of the applicant. The Admissions Committee then considers those recommendations along with other application information and narrows the applicant pool down to approximately 40 people who will be invited to interview. Again, all faculty participate in interviewing applicants, and the Admissions Committee considers interview ratings and other information in order to narrow the applicant pool once again to 24 applicants who will be offered admission into the OT program.

What is the timeline for this process?

Although it varies somewhat, faculty review of applications is typically completed by the second week in January, and interview invitations are usually communicated by the 3rd week in January. The interview day is usually on a Friday in early to mid-February, and final admissions decisions are made prior to the beginning of March.

If I'm invited for an interview, what should I expect?

Those invited for interviews receive more detailed information close to interview day, but generally applicants are invited to a morning interview session or an afternoon session. Morning interviewees are divided into 3 groups, and rotate through 3 interview activities: 2 individual faculty interviews, each lasting about 20 minutes, a small group information session with the Admissions coordinator, and a session with current students with no faculty present. Around lunch time, afternoon interviewees arrive, and all interviewees and current students have lunch together. After lunch, all applicants attend a large group session in which the overall curriculum and information about fieldwork are reviewed and applicant questions are answered as needed. At that point, morning interviewees are finished and may leave, and afternoon interviewees begin the rotation process through the 3 interview activities. Interviewees should plan to spend about 5 hours in the interview process. Interviewees who cannot attend on-site can use the phone or Skype/Zoom for interview activities.