Occupational Therapy Assistant

Note: This fact sheet does not include the program specific curriculum. To access the curriculum from the program's webpage, click one of the links below the section titled "Degrees Offered."

Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA) are an important part of today's health care rehabilitation team, helping people with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities achieve greater independence and quality of life. In less than three years you could graduate, take the certification exam and obtain a license to work under the supervision of an Occupational Therapist.

DEGREES OFFERED

- Associate of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant

PROGRAM INFORMATION

OTA professional coursework starts in January each year, following completion of pre-requisites in Human Anatomy, General Psychology, Medical Terminology, Intermediate Algebra and College Writing. Prospective OTA students who want priority consideration will wish to submit their applications by Sept. 15.

Program Accreditation

The Newman OTA Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-2682 and their web address is www.acoteonline.org. Graduates of the program will be eligible 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 exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). In addition, Kansas and most other states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Please note that a felony conviction and/or other records of misconduct may affect the graduate's ability to participate in required fieldwork, sit for the NBCOT certification examination, and/or attain licensure.

Certification and Licensure

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Classroom environment

The majority of your OTA classes will include lab experiences for active, hands-on learning. In addition, many courses include field trips and/or fieldwork experiences to reinforce classroom learning. Two fieldwork internships in a hospital, school, nursing home, or other location are required in order to complete your learning experience and prepare you for your first job as an OTA.

Financial Aid

If you are a displaced worker, it may interest you to know that the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas has approved Newman's OTA program for scholarship assistance to eligible Workforce Investment Act (WIA) participants. Hospitals, long-term care corporations, and other health care related agencies occasionally offer tuition assistance in exchange for a promise to work at their facilities upon graduation.

For information on other forms of grant, loan and scholarship assistance, please visit Newman's Financial Aid department.

How to Apply:

Please note that acceptance by Newman University must precede acceptance into the OTA Program. Early application for Newman University admission is highly recommended as the first step in the OTA application process.

1. Review applicant handbook.
2. Obtain full admittance into Newman University by applying through the Admissions office.
3. Make sure to speak to financial aid early and often.
4. If you have any questions about prerequisites or course information, please contact a faculty member.
5. Submit application materials found in the Applicant Handbook by Sept. 15.

Classes begin in January.

PROMINENT CAREERS

The demand for occupational therapy services is strong, and the employment outlook for OTAs is expected to increase much faster than average for all occupations through 2018. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics projected employment of OTAs to increase by 30 percent from 2008 to 2018. This projection is based on the bureau's assumptions that demographic trends and advances in medical technology will fuel demand for therapy services.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook, median annual earnings nationally for OTAs were $48,230 in May 2008, and opportunities for individuals interested in becoming occupational therapy assistants are expected to be very good. Work Environment School systems, hospitals, and long-term care facilities are the primary work settings for occupational therapists and OTAs. However, your professional work environment and patients can vary greatly. You may be helping an individual with depression in a nursing home or a child with mental retardation in the classroom.

Although working as a Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA/COTA) can be both fulfilling and financially rewarding, the opportunity to continue your professional development by becoming an Occupational Therapist (OT/OTR) is something you may wish to consider. This requires a master's degree in occupational therapy. The American Occupational Therapy Association currently lists over twenty colleges and universities that are specifically marketing to OTA graduates who are seeking OT degrees. Those wishing to teach in an OTA or OT educational program will want to obtain a Master's or Doctor's degree in OT or a related field.

EXPERT, ACCESSIBLE FACULTY

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program consists of a group of carefully selected scholarly and professional practitioners who creatively introduce students to emerging theory and current best practices.

Newman Graduates regularly cite close collaboration with talented, dedicated faculty as one of their most meaningful experiences at Newman.

Newman faculty members are more than just leaders in their field. They take an active and personal role in students' studies and progress, forming strong relationships with students through coursework, special projects and informal out of class discussions.

ACCREDITATION

Newman University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org.

FINANCIAL AID

With many scholarships, grants, work-study and company tuition assistance programs available, the cost of a degree from Newman University is comparable to that of state universities.

PROGRAM CONTACT

For more information about this program, visit the program's webpage on the Newman University website and click the link "Request more info".

To contact Newman University Admissions, office hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday. For a personal appointment call 316-942-4291, ext. 2144 or e-mail admissions@newmanu.edu. Call us Toll-Free at 877-NEWMAN (639-6268) or visit our website at www.newmanu.edu.