

Information for International Applicants to the Springfield College Occupational Therapy Programs

The Occupational Therapy Department at Springfield College offers several different degree programs, all leading to a graduate degree in occupational therapy. The specific program an international applicant may choose will depend on that applicant's prior background and qualifications as well as his or her personal and professional goals. The admissions policies described below were developed in accordance with the policies and procedures of Springfield College, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, as well as an awareness of the resources and supports available within the Springfield College Occupational Therapy Department and the College. It is the intention of the Occupational Therapy Department that these requirements and standards will help support each student's efforts to achieve his or her goals.

- For applicants who wish to become occupational therapists and who have little or no academic training in OT, the **Entry-Level Master's Program** provides the academic and clinical education required to receive a Master's degree in occupational therapy and to qualify to sit for the U. S. National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination¹. The Entry-Level Master's Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association².

There are two different routes of entry for the Entry-Level Master's Program:

1. A student may apply to enter Springfield College as an undergraduate to earn a bachelor's degree in a related major (approximately 130 credits) and a master's degree in OT (an additional 48 credits for the Master of Education in OT, or an additional 57 credits for the Master of Science). This dual degree program generally takes five years to complete. A student who has completed some college-level coursework but who has not yet earned a bachelor's degree may apply to enter as an undergraduate transfer student; the length of time required for a transfer student to complete the program will depend upon how many courses are accepted by Springfield College for transfer.
 2. A student with a bachelor's degree in another field may enter the program as a graduate student and complete 77 credits to earn a Master of Education in OT, or 86 credits to earn a Master of Science in OT. This graduate program generally requires two years to complete, although a student may take longer to complete the program if he or she wishes to carry a lighter course load.
- Applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree or certificate in occupational therapy from a foreign OT training program may be interested in applying to the **Post-Professional Degree Program**. This program, which requires the completion of only 32 graduate credits, is designed for occupational therapy practitioners who wish to engage in advanced study within the field of OT in order to receive a Master's degree or, if they already holds a master's degree, a Certificate of Advanced Study. Although a student may complete the required credits in three semesters, many students take longer in order to carry a lighter course load or take additional courses. Completion of this program does

not qualify a graduate to sit for the U.S. NBCOT examination since it is designed for practitioners who have already passed the exam.

Entry to the Post-Professional Degree Program requires that a student meet all of the following qualifications:

1. U.S. certification as an occupational therapist, as documented by a copy of the applicant's initial certification by the NBCOT
2. Successful completion of an introductory college-level course in statistics
3. Completion of a bachelor's degree, or its equivalent as determined by the Springfield College International Center
4. A minimum of one-year of full-time employment or its equivalent as a professional-level occupational therapist, as documented by letters from employers/supervisors
5. Prior certification and/or licensure as a professional-level occupational therapist, if required in the country in which the applicant practiced
6. Achievement of English language proficiency scores as described by the NBCOT

A foreign-trained applicant who meets all of the qualifications above with the exception of having taken and passed the NBCOT exam may be accepted into the Post-Professional Degree Program **on a conditional basis** under the following circumstances:

1. The applicant provides evidence of eligibility to sit for the NBCOT exam, as documented by an approved NBCOT Pre-Screening Application
2. The applicant has graduated from a program recognized by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) at the time of graduation. WFOT recognition is one of the factors considered by the NBCOT in determining the eligibility of foreign-trained occupational therapists to sit for the U.S. exam.

A student accepted conditionally will not be accepted fully into the post-professional program until he or she receives notification of having passed the NBCOT exam. A conditionally accepted student who does not pass the NBCOT exam by the end of his or her third semester in the post-professional program will be dismissed from the program. Only 12 semester hours of credit earned prior to full acceptance will be counted toward the graduate degree.

The NBCOT's Prescreening Application Procedure will, for an additional fee, review a non-WFOT-recognized program for comparability to U.S. programs, but it is not within the scope of Springfield College's capabilities to make this determination. For this reason, graduates of non-WFOT-approved programs will be considered for admission only to the Entry-Level Master's Program. If a student receives an eligibility determination from NBCOT after enrolling in the entry-level program, he or she may request approval to transfer into the Post-Professional Degree Program on a conditional basis as described above. All of the restrictions for conditionally accepted students described above will apply to this type of student as well.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum English language proficiency requirements set by the NBCOT or by Springfield College may inquire about applying directly to the Springfield College International Center Intensive English Program.

¹National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, 800 S. Frederick Avenue, Suite 200, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-4150, (301) 990-7979, www.nbcot.org

²Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, American Occupational Therapy Association, 4720 Montgomery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-3425, (301) 652-2682, www.aota.org