Occupational therapists work with people of all ages facing physical, emotional, or mental challenges. Students who choose a career in occupational therapy will be instrumental in helping people participate fully in the daily occupations of their lives.

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program is a regionally recognized program, grounded in foundational sciences, graduating entry level leaders in the field of occupational therapy, who serve as valuable interprofessional team members in the healthcare system. Graduates are committed to providing quality evidence-based services individualized to facilitate quality of life, wellness and participation throughout all populations.

Accreditation

The occupational therapy program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA).

http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/occupationaltherapy/occupational-therapy-ms/

Program length

The Master of Science (M.S.) in Occupational Therapy Program is typically a two and a half year program. The program length is based on how long the required UWL coursework would take to complete for a full-time student who does not need to complete any prerequisite coursework. Program length may be extended due to the requirements of an individual student's research project.

2021-22 Faculty/Staff

The following is the graduate faculty as of the publication date of this catalog. This list will not be updated again until the next catalog is published in July.

Clinical Assistant Professor

Polly Berra, MS, OTR/L, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

Erin McCann, OTD, OTR/L

Laura Schaffer, OTD, MA, OTR/L, Interim Program Director

Assistant Professor

Angela Benfield, Ph.D., OTR/L, Admissions Chair

Ingrid Van Duyne, DHSc, MRC, OTR/L

Graduate degree

• Occupational therapy - MS

Courses

OT 515 Cr.3

Functional Neuroanatomy

This course will address the anatomical basis of neuroscience with emphasis on rehabilitation. Structure and physiological function of the central nervous system will be correlated for normal and abnormal processes. Patient examples and research literature will be utilized to foster appropriate clinical decision-making skills in students.

Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Summer.

OT 520 Cr.3

Introduction to Occupational Therapy

This course introduces the fundamentals of occupational therapy. Topics include an overview of the history of the occupational therapy profession, theoretical frameworks, the OT Program curriculum design, and contemporary occupational therapy practice. Lect. 6. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Summer.

OT 523 Cr.4

Human Physiology

The course examines the physiological function and regulation of major organ systems and their components in the human body and after injury or disease. The course covers normal physiology as well as selected diseases. Concepts are organized by systems: endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, renal, gastrointestinal, nervous, hematologic, hepatic, reproductive, vascular, and genetics. Prerequisite: admission to the Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Summer.

OT 524 Cr.5

Human Anatomy

Provides an in-depth understanding of the gross anatomy of the human body through lecture, laboratory experiences, audiovisual, computer and cadaver prosection and dissection. Systems included are musculoskeletal, neurological, and skeletal. Biomechanical function, topographic and clinical applications are emphasized. Clinical applications are discussed. Lect. 2, Lab. 4. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.
OT 526 Cr.3  
**Foundations of Movement**  
This course will apply principles of biomechanics, kinesiology, and motor control to guide understanding and analysis of movement during occupational performance. This will include the study of structure and function of the skeletal, muscular, and neuromuscular systems and their influences on normal and pathological motion. The development of movement and basic motor learning will be examined. Concepts will be explored supporting the foundations of movement and correlation with occupational performance across the lifespan. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 530 Cr.1  
**Occupational Performance Analysis**  
This course examines theories, frames of references, and other critical concepts used in the description and analysis of occupational performance. The form, function, and meaning of occupation will be explored in relation to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process. Documentation, cultural impact, key parts of the framework, ICF, activity analysis, and therapeutic intervention techniques will be presented. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 531; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 531 Cr.1  
**Applied Occupational Performance Analysis**  
This course applies key concepts used in the occupational therapy clinical practice (occupation, Framework, theory, and documentation). Activities and occupations will be analyzed for self and others through case studies, observation of others, and self reflection. Activity analysis and occupational performance analysis will be completed in relationship to individuals, groups, and populations through the use of occupations with self, observation of others, and both written and video case studies. Application of activity analysis, occupational analysis, selection and grading/adapting of activity and occupations, compensatory techniques, teaching and learning, and use of theory to guide clinical reasoning will occur. Use of occupation as it relates to design and implementation of treatment with various populations in traditional and non-traditional practice setting will be applied. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 530; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 545 Cr.1  
**Clinical Applications of Movement**  
This course will explore principles of biomechanics and kinesiology and how they relate to the understanding and analysis of movement during occupational performance. This will include the assessment of structure and function of the skeletal, muscular, and neuromuscular systems and their influences on normal and pathological motion and how this may impact occupational performance. This course will explore kinesiology considerations for specific musculoskeletal regions including the head, torso, upper and lower extremities and how this relates to commonly used hands-on assessments and interventions including range of motion, manual muscle testing, wheelchair positioning and client transfers. The use of movement assessment data will be utilized for intervention planning through the OT process. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 550 Cr.2  
**Scholarly Practice I: Occupational Therapy Research**  
This course is designed to help students become familiar with the principles of measurement and the research process. Topics covered include psychometric principles of assessment (e.g. reliability, validity, standardization), tool development, research designs, and ethics of research and assessment. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 570 Cr.1  
**Occupational Therapy Intervention: Group Dynamics**  
This course will provide students with a foundation in basic therapeutic communication skills. Models of group leadership used in occupational therapy treatment will be emphasized. Topics will include: basic styles of communication, stages of team building, group leadership in therapy, development of therapeutic use of self, conflict resolution, conflict negotiation, professional behaviors, supervision of occupational therapy staff and occupational therapy group models used in treatment. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 571; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 571 Cr.1  
**Applied Occupational Therapy Intervention: Group Dynamics**  
This course will emphasis hands-on learning experiences to apply the lecture content from OT 570. Students will plan and implement a variety of client centered groups, based on occupational therapy frames of references and other common theories. Student’s observation skills will be enhanced through routine applied experiences both in classroom sessions and in the community. Methods and techniques for developing professional behaviors, giving/receiving feedback, and critiquing individual communication and leadership styles will be refined during this seminar experience. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 570; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 573 Cr.1  
**Level 1 Fieldwork: Mental Illness**  
This mental health field experience is designed to provide an opportunity to practice occupational therapy interventions for individuals who have mental health disorders. Beginning professional abilities, observation and initial data gathering skills will be practiced. Fieldwork will be arranged by the occupational therapy fieldwork coordinator and supervised by instructional staff. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Spring.

OT 611 Cr.2  
**Occupational Therapy in Acute Care Settings**  
Emphasis will be placed upon the ability of the student to perform creative treatments in an acute care occupational therapy setting. This course will provide the student with information about the pathophysiology of varied organ systems and the physiological control mechanisms as they pertain to the practice of occupational therapy. Students will demonstrate an understanding that patients in acute care have dynamic physiological changes, and therefore dynamic physiological needs. Patients’ unique problems will be emphasized for an individualized versus cookie-cutter approach to patient care. Prerequisite: admission to graduate OT Program; satisfactorily completed all OT didactic coursework required in previous semesters. Offered Spring.

OT 625 Cr.3  
**Community Mental Health Promotion**  
This course will provide foundational knowledge and experiential learning related to occupational therapy’s role in community-based practice settings for the promotion of mental health. Course concepts will include common diagnoses, group process, assessment and intervention specific to use in mental health contexts with a focus on occupational therapy’s role as consultant and facilitator in community emerging practice areas. Psychosocial considerations of occupational performance and impact of chronic conditions will be explored for those receiving services as well as caregivers and health care professionals. Prerequisite: successful completion of fall 1 coursework; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.
OT 640 Cr.2
Assistive Technology
This course will develop the students' ability to determine the need for and provide compensatory strategies for clients with physical and/or psychosocial dysfunction in different contexts. The student will design, fabricate, apply, and train a client in the use of assistive technology. Assistive technologies, prosthetics, communication aids, sensory aids, electronic aids to daily living, community mobility, driving, and wheelchair adaptations are addressed. State and federal regulations protecting various populations with dysfunction will be covered. Ergonomic and environmental modification principles will be used in home and community building assessment. Lect. 1, Lab 2. Prerequisite: OT 526; OT 530, OT 531; OT 545; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 641 Cr.3
Health Care Systems
This course addresses the evolution of the health care industry. It will critically analyze from the perspectives of the consumer, provider, manager, and taxpayer, the greater social systems and trends that impact its present state, and include a comparison of the health care industry in other countries. Service provision will be examined from the standpoints of fiscal management, human resource management, and operations management. Advocacy and consultation, as part of the change process, will be examined and practiced in the context of leadership in the OT profession and OT intervention contexts. Lect. 2, Disc. 1. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 650 Cr.2
Occupations and Interventions: Pediatrics I
Content includes the child as an occupational being within contexts, e.g., the greater social/political context, typical play contexts, etc. The occupational development and roles of children ages 0 through 18 will be examined in relation to typical developmental milestones, the development of ADL's, and the development of play. The application of occupational therapy principles (evaluation and intervention), and the use of clinical reasoning will be integrated within selected occupational therapy theories (sensorimotor processing, acquisitional, motor acquisitional, NDT, biomechanical, 4 Quadrant), which, in turn, will be integrated with developmental principles, occupations, and play. The effect of selected medical conditions (failure to thrive, developmental delay, febrile seizures, muscular dystrophy, Down Syndrome, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, etc.) on occupational performance in play and ADL's will be covered as well. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 651; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 651 Cr.1
Applied Occupations and Interventions: Pediatrics I
This course is designed to prepare students for their Peds Play Lab experience during the spring semester. Content and application will address play and playfulness (synthesis of content, assessment, OT theory, activity analysis, activity gradation, etc.), therapeutic use of self (modes of therapeutic interaction, verbal and non-verbal, physical, etc.), and documentation (deconstruction of test scores, synthesis of scores, clinical observations, client information, etc., for interpretation and recommendations). Activity analysis as it relates to a pediatric population, and the construction of playful, therapeutic activities will be emphasized. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 650; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 670 Cr.2
Occupational Performance: Physical Dysfunction I
The effects of acute and chronic disability on occupational performance will be explored in the context of the adult rehabilitation patient with orthopedic conditions from diverse backgrounds. Evaluation and treatment of the adult individual with orthopedic rehabilitative needs will be emphasized. Prerequisite: OT 530, OT 531, OT 550; concurrent enrollment in OT 671; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 671 Cr.1
Applied Occupational Performance: Physical Dysfunction I
This course provides hands on applied learning experiences allowing students the opportunity to practice assessment tools and treatment intervention methods typically used with persons with orthopedic problems. Prerequisite: OT 530, OT 531, OT 550; concurrent enrollment in OT 670; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 700 Cr.1
Physical Agent Modalities
This course will develop the student's ability to use superficial and deep thermal/electrotherapeutic physical agent modalities as part of an occupational therapy treatment plan. Students will develop skills in safe and effective applications of these modalities as well as understanding the underlying principles, indications and precautions/contraindications for these modalities. Students will learn how to document the use of modalities and how to complete client education regarding physical agent modalities. In addition students will develop an understanding of practice guidelines regarding use of modalities in occupational therapy. Lab 2. Prerequisite: OT 524, OT 670, OT 671; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Summer.

OT 720 Cr.1-3
Selected Topics in Occupational Therapy
This course offers in-depth study of particular concepts, clinical specialties, and/or non-traditional practice areas in occupational therapy. Topics are selected by the instructor and/or as developed by student/faculty dialogue to meet special interests and needs. Topics are relevant to occupational therapy education, and are not found elsewhere in the university curriculum. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Departmental option for pass/fail grading. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Occasionally.

OT 732 Cr.2
Occupational Science
This course will explore the unique contributions of occupational science that drive the field of occupational therapy. Students will investigate the impact of occupational engagement and correlation to health and well-being while comparing/contrasting contexts at the national and international level. Factors of diversity affecting occupational engagement will be examined to promote client-centered approaches and use of meaningful occupations for persons, groups, and populations. Prerequisite: completion and passing grade in fall 1 coursework; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Spring.
OT 726 Cr.2

Professional Seminar
This course will serve to facilitate development of leaders in the field of occupational therapy including roles in the areas of management, policy, advocacy and higher education. Students will reflect on personal leadership qualities and styles and develop personal and professional development plans. Students will develop strategies for promoting advocacy for the field of occupational therapy and policy development. Students will analyze data to develop a quality improvement plan to maintain outcomes. This course will address critical issues directly related to professional development, fieldwork preparation, and licensure and certification prior to beginning Level II fieldwork. Prerequisite: completion of all prior coursework; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 730 Cr.2

Occupational Performance: Physical Dysfunction II
The effects of acute and chronic disability on occupational performance will be explored in the context of the adult rehabilitation patient of diverse backgrounds with neurological conditions. Evaluation and treatment of the adult individual with neurological rehabilitative needs will be emphasized. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 731; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 731 Cr.1

Applied Occupational Performance: Physical Dysfunction II
This course provides hands on applied learning experiences allowing students the opportunity to practice occupational therapy assessment tools and treatment intervention methods typically used with persons with neurological problems. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 730; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 740 Cr.2

Occupations and Interventions: Pediatrics II
This course is the second unit in a two-semester sequence of the study of pediatric population. Content emphasized in the lecture course includes the child as an occupational being within contexts, e.g., the greater social/political context, typical social contexts for play/interaction, educational contexts, family contexts, and practice contexts. The occupational development and roles of children ages 0 through 18 will be examined in relation to typical psychosocial development, social participation, and educational performance. Other content pertains to visual perceptual development, and fine motor/handwriting development. The application of OT principles (evaluation and intervention), and the use of clinical reasoning will be integrated within selected frames of reference (visual information analysis, psychosocial, coping, social participation, and sensory processing), which, in turn, will be integrated with developmental principles and play. The effect of selected medical conditions (including but not limited to learning disorders, emotional behavioral disorders, autism, and visual/auditory disorders) will be examined in relation to occupational performance. Prerequisite: OT 650, OT 651; concurrent enrollment in OT 741; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 741 Cr.1

Applied Occupational and Interventions: Pediatrics II
OT 741 provides the students with an opportunity to practice didactic content in OT 740, develop competence in administering pediatric assessments, apply sound clinical reasoning to selection of assessments and planning intervention for children with various conditions in a variety of contexts (medical, school, home, etc.). Students will apply theory and relevant evidence in assessment and intervention choices. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 740; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 751 Cr.2

Scholarly Practice II: Research Methodology
This course is the second in the series of scholarly practice courses. It is designed to help the students become familiar with research methodologies used in occupational therapy and to gain experience in selected steps of the research process. Topics covered include reading a scholarly article, literature searching strategies, research methodologies (single-subject, correlation, research, descriptive, qualitative, etc.), principles of ethical research, and application/interpretation of statistical data. Students will practice reading, critiquing, analyzing, and discussing scholarly literature. Prerequisite: OT 550; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 760 Cr.3

Scholarly Practice III: Evidence-Based Practice and Research
This course is the third in the series of scholarly practice courses. In this course, students will analyze the similarities and differences between the inquiry process and clinical practice. Students will design a research study and initiate data collection. They will also be introduced to the evidence-based practice and how it is used to inform clinical practice. Students will develop a clinical question and complete a systematic review of the literature for evidence that relates to it. They will appraise the literature, including meta-analysis. Prerequisite: OT 751; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 770 Cr.2

Scholarly Practice IV: Analysis and Scholarly Dissemination
This course is the fourth and final course in the series of scholarly practice courses. In this course, students will analyze, interpret, and disseminate their research and systematic review, with meta-analysis findings. Student will use SPSS and systematic review/meta-analysis software to manage, analyze, interpret, and document the research data. They will critically analyze the contextual and cultural influences of data collection and analysis. Students will develop scholarly presentation (oral and written) which disseminates their findings in the most appropriate manner for the context. Prerequisite: OT 760; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 775 Cr.1

Critical Analysis of Practice
This course applies the OT Practice Framework using case studies. Case studies will include information gathered from OT 790 Level I Physical Dysfunction fieldwork experiences. These cases will be typical to occupational therapy practice and will require a synthesis of material from several courses. Working alone or in groups, students will use clinical reasoning and reflective practice to process case studies with various types of clients in a variety of practice contexts and environments. All cases will include critical thinking skills that will be required by practicing therapists in today’s health care arena as well as enable students to explore issues important to the practice of occupational therapy (i.e. the occupational therapy process, evaluation, evidence-based intervention, theory/models/frames of reference, ethical issues, and justification of services.) Additionally, students will explore emerging market areas of interest in the OT profession and share with peers to advocate for change in service delivery in the health care system. Prerequisite: OT 790; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 776 Cr.2

Occupations and Interventions: Older Adult
Occupational performance in the aging population will be explored with emphasis on the impact of disease or injury in the older adult population from diverse backgrounds. Specific focus will be on analysis of the socio-cultural, environmental and personal life roles of the elderly as well as those disease/dysfunction processes that frequently impact this population. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 777; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.
OT 777 Cr.1
Applied Occupations and Interventions: Older Adult
This course provides hands on applied learning experiences allowing students the opportunity to practice the occupational therapy process of observation, evaluation, analysis and treatment of the older adult population. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 776; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 780 Cr.3
Program Development
This course will focus on the steps of creating occupation-centered program development with the goal of program implementation of developed programming during fall 2 of the curriculum. Topics will include beginning with an idea, exploration of problems/gaps in current programming, a needs assessment, analysis of demographic and epidemiological data, and a review of literature for evidence-based interventions. Students will then create programming to meet community needs through development of a mission statement, goals and objectives and an evaluation plan. Principles of grant writing will also be presented. Prerequisite: completion of all prior coursework; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Fall.

OT 785 Cr.1
Adult Clinical Practice
This course is a one hour lecture that includes close examination of the Occupational Therapy Process. Using occupational therapy theories, research, and knowledge from previous courses students will work with course instructor and other students to develop an assessment plan, treatment plans, recertification, and discharge planning with a community volunteer. Students will develop and provide occupational therapy in-services to mimic treatment rounds and continuing education development in a clinical setting. Students will discuss and examine occupation, roles, and participation in relation to occupational performance. Medical conditions and their influence on health, wellness, and participation will be examined. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 786; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 786 Cr.1
Applied Adult Clinical Practice
This course is a two hour seminar that includes implementation of the Occupational Therapy Process and supervised hands on experience of adult clinical practice. Using occupational therapy theories, research, and knowledge from previous courses students will work with course instructor and other students to implement an assessment plan, treatment plans, recertification, and discharge planning with a community volunteer. Students will discuss and examine occupation, roles, and participation in relation to occupational performance. Medical conditions and their influence on health, wellness, and participation will be examined. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 786; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 787 Cr.1
Applied Pediatric Clinical Practice
This course is a two-hour seminar that includes practice of implementing the Occupational Therapy Process in pediatric clinical practice with supervised, hands-on experience of pediatric therapists. Using occupational therapy theories, research, and knowledge from previous courses, students will work with course instructor and other students to implement an assessment plan, treatment plans, and discharge planning with a community volunteer child and family. Students will develop and provide occupational therapy services under supervision. Students will discuss and examine occupation, roles, and participation in relation to occupational performance. Medical and developmental conditions and their influences on health, wellness, and participation of children and the family will be examined. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OT 787; admission to the graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Spring.

OT 790 Cr.1
Level I Fieldwork: Physical Dysfunction
This 30-hour fieldwork will provide an opportunity for students to observe and practice occupational therapy in a clinical setting with a variety of diverse populations. Professional abilities including cultural sensitivity, the use of occupation within a clinical setting, preliminary documentation and assessment skills will be experienced. Fieldwork will be arranged by the occupational therapy academic fieldwork coordinator and supervised by clinical fieldwork educators. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall.

OT 791 Cr.1
Level I Fieldwork: Pediatrics
This course is designed to give students an opportunity to observe and participate in the OT process as much as possible in a pediatric setting. Students will be expected to practice professional behaviors at all times. On a level that is appropriate to their setting and in accordance with their clinical supervisor, students will be expected to participate in evaluation, treatment planning, treatment implementation, and beginning documentation as it relates to the population and context in which they are assigned. Sustained observation, reasoning in action, and therapeutic use of self will be practiced. 40 hours. Prerequisite: OT 650, OT 651; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Winter.

OT 795 Cr.6
Level II Fieldwork
The Level II Fieldwork experience provides the student with a 12-week clinical placement in a practice setting under the supervision of an approved occupational therapy clinical fieldwork educator. Students will practice occupational therapy assessment, interventions, measuring outcomes, and documentation. This course provides opportunities to apply didactic learning in clinical practice. Students are required to complete six months of full time fieldwork within a 24 month period. This 12-week course is repeated one time for a total of 24 weeks. Repeatable for credit – maximum 12. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Summer.

OT 798 Cr.1-6
Independent Study in Occupational Therapy
Independent, in-depth study of some specific problem or area in occupational therapy. This course shall be taken under the direction and supervision of a member of the occupational therapy faculty. Repeatable for credit – maximum six. Prerequisite: admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Offered Occasionally.
OT 799 Cr.1-4

**Research: Master's Thesis**

An independent research project is to be selected and executed under the direction of an OT department faculty member by those students electing to pursue a thesis track. The project may be in any area related to occupational therapy. Repeatable for credit – minimum four credits, maximum six. Prerequisite: OT 760; admission to graduate Occupational Therapy Program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Occasionally.