

# ONLINE POST-PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DOCTORATE (OTD)

Program Contact: Karen E. Majeski  
(karen.majeski@qu.edu) 203-582-7432

The Post-Professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) is designed for practicing registered occupational therapists who want to merge their experience and practical skills with contemporary professional knowledge and scholarship.

The program enables registered occupational therapists to advance their skills to become future leaders and evidence-based scholars of the profession. The degree can be completed in five semesters online with minimal on-campus requirements and is tailored for the working professional.

Courses run in online modules of varying duration (i.e., 5-week, 7-week, 14-week). Students are required to attend a one-week, on-campus residency during the summer between the first and second year in the program as well as the Symposium Day at the end of the curriculum.

The online program offers an opportunity for practicing occupational therapists to continue their education without interrupting their careers. The pace of the program permits steady accumulation of skills that can be applied immediately to the workplace. Practitioners develop refined skills allowing increased specialization and direct practical application. This program is designed to further the American Occupational Therapy Association "Vision 2025" by creating practitioners who are equipped to lead the profession to meet society's occupational needs and to be "agents of change" within their communities and the occupational therapy profession.

The Occupational Therapy department offers multiple avenues for registered occupational therapists to advance their education.

## Occupational Therapy Doctorate

To be eligible to apply directly to the online post-professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) program, students need to have completed either a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy with a separate master's degree or a master's degree in occupational therapy. The program provides students with an opportunity to integrate clinical experience with theoretical concepts within the clinical literature, incorporate advanced concepts of policy and advocacy into practice, and develop the capacity for clinical scholarship. Students can customize most assignments to their own area of interest so that they can immediately apply what they are learning into their practice environment.

## Bridge from BSOT to OTD

This program recognizes the fact that a number of experienced practitioners previously entered the field of occupational therapy when the bachelor's degree was the accepted entry-level degree. As demands within healthcare have evolved, so did the educational requirements for students. This track is designed for individuals who currently have an entry-level BS in occupational therapy with initial National Certification Board for Occupational Therapy (NBCOT/AOTCB) certification to form a bridge from BS to an OTD.

Students in the Bridge from BSOT to OTD track will complete 12 credits of graduate coursework over the course of at least two semesters prior to beginning the doctoral phase of the program. Upon admission to the BSOT to OTD track, students will be assigned an adviser within the occupational therapy program who will work with students to determine an individualized plan of study.

## Class Schedule

OTD classes begin in the fall. The program requires five semesters: two academic years and summer between.

### Occupational Therapy Course of Study

Course	Title	Credits
<b>First Year</b>		
<b>Fall Semester</b>		
OT 651	Systems Thinking to Influence Change	3
OT 652	Introduction to Doctoral Studies	1
OT 654	Research Methods	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
OT 640	Directed Study in Evidence-Based Practice	3
OT 650	Application of Theory and Exploration of Occupation	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Summer Semester</b>		
OT 655	Professional Seminar	3
OT 656	Research Design Scholarship II <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Second Year</b>		
<b>Fall Semester</b>		
OT 653	Policy/Ethics	2
OT 680	Capstone I	2
OT 671	Leadership in Higher Education	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
OT 681	Capstone II	2
OT 663	Seminar: Innovations & Emerging Practice Issues	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>32</b>

<sup>1</sup> A portion of this course is taken at Quinnipiac University to fulfill the residency requirement.

## Graduation Requirements

Completion of all courses with a cumulative GPA of 3.00.

### <sup>1</sup>On-Campus Residency Requirement

All students in the online post-professional OTD program are required to attend an on-grounds, one-week summer course at Quinnipiac University (OT 656). Students also are required to attend the Symposium Day at the completion of the second year to present their final project.

*Interprofessional Program of Distinction*

In addition to their degree, students in the post-professional OTD program will have an option to earn a Distinction in Interprofessional Healthcare Education. Visit the Interprofessional Healthcare (<https://www.qu.edu/academics/centers-and-institutes/center-for-interprofessional-healthcare-education/>) page on our website for more information.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the occupational therapy doctorate program, students will demonstrate the following competencies:

1. **Leadership:** Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of leadership skills.
2. **Advocacy:** Synthesize knowledge of healthcare policies and systems to be an advocate at an individual, group and population level.
3. **Evidence-Based Practice:** Critique clinical practice based on current theoretical concepts and evidence within the clinical literature.
4. **Research:** Contribute to occupational therapy clinical research and scholarship.

## Program Mission

The mission of the Post-Professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) program is to provide excellent online educational opportunities that build upon the clinical experience of each student, to enable students to become an “agent of change” for their professional community and to foster lifelong learning and continued professional growth in the field of occupational therapy.

## Program Philosophy

Because the OTD program philosophy is humanistic and developmental in nature, it is recognized that students enter the program with unique experiences and interests. The OTD program is designed to allow students to reflect upon their own experiences and incorporate their particular interests into their coursework. To support students in an individual manner, a faculty adviser is assigned to each student from the beginning of the program. This allows the adviser to guide the student throughout the entire OTD curriculum.

## Admission Requirements

To qualify for admission to the Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) program, a student must meet the following admission criteria:

1. A bachelor's degree in occupational therapy with a GPA of 3.00 or higher. Students applying for direct entry into the OTD program must also have a related master's degree, OR an entry-level master's degree in occupational therapy with a GPA of 3.00 or higher.
2. Official transcript(s), indicating the year of graduation from an Accreditation Council for Education of Occupational Therapy (ACOTE) or a World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT) accredited entry-level professional program.
3. Proof of initial certification by the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) or American Occupational Therapy Certification Board (AOTCB) initial certification (prior to NBCOT). International applicants who do not have NBCOT certification must provide proof of qualification/licensure in their home country.
4. Students for whom English is not their first language must take the iBT (internet version of the TOEFL, Test of English as a Foreign Language).
5. Verification of current employment as an occupational therapist.
6. Proof of active licensure to practice (if applicable in the state of current practice).

7. Current membership to the American Occupational Therapy Association.

In addition, the student must submit the following documents, which will be used to evaluate the applicant's fit and potential for success in the OTD program:

1. Two professional references, at least one of which must be from a supervisor or administrator.
2. A personal essay that sets forth the applicant's professional goals and compatibility with the program's learning objectives. The essay must address focused questions that coincide with the program's mission. Question prompts may include:
  - *Describe a professional issue in your practice area and identify how you might address or resolve this issue.*
  - *How would this program assist you in meeting this professional need?*
  - *Reflect upon and describe your professional goals and motivations.*

Responses to EACH question should be at most 350 words.

Responses MUST include current references utilizing APA formatting. The essay will be evaluated based on depth of content, as well as writing ability.

Finally, a telephone interview may be required in the admission process. Qualified applicants will be notified via email if they are selected for an interview.

**Classes in the OTD program begin in August for the fall term. Classes for the BSOT to OTD bridge program begin no later than January if interested in a fall start. Candidates are advised to submit applications as early as possible.**

## Program Requirements

1. Students in the OTD program are required to achieve a GPA of 3.00 upon the completion of their first 9 credits, and must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 thereafter, as stated in the Graduate Student Handbook.
2. A student must earn a grade of C+ or above in all coursework. Any student who receives a grade below a C+ in a course is required to repeat and repay for that course.

In the event that a student does not achieve a 3.00 upon completion of the first 9 credits, they will be referred to the Progression and Retention Committee and placed on academic probation. The student must achieve a 3.00 semester GPA thereafter to demonstrate progression.

In the event that the student does not meet the GPA requirement in any semester after the first 9 credits, they will be referred to the Progression and Retention Committee and placed on academic probation.

If the student does not achieve a 3.00 per semester subsequent to being placed on academic probation, they will be dismissed from the program. A student may appeal dismissal by writing a letter to the dean. Please refer to the Graduate Handbook for specific policies regarding the appeal process.

**OT 640. Directed Study in Evidence-Based Practice. 3 Credits.**

Students learn the steps of the evidence-based practice continuum. Each student follows the steps using actual practice case studies from his/her individual practice sites and presents the responses to each step in the process to discover evidence to guide the practice case questions. Peer interaction and feedback is critical to the realistic development of evidence to guide practice decisions. A major assignment is to have each student participate in the writing of a systematic review or an evidence-based practice brief for the profession. Students complete a needs assessment of a particular site or practice area as well.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 654.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**OT 650. Application of Theory and Exploration of Occupation. 3 Credits.**

This course explores occupation--the central construct of the profession, and occupational science as a disciplinary knowledge base of the profession. Students examine a variety of theories relevant to occupational therapy and analyze their practice using critical theory.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 652.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**OT 651. Systems Thinking to Influence Change. 3 Credits.**

Knowledge of health care delivery in the U.S. is fundamental to providing occupational therapy services. A key element to providing relevant health care services is an understanding of the broader systems that influence and drive delivery models. This course addresses the general systems model as applied to the delivery of health care services. System components are addressed including the resources, the internal processes, external influences, measurable outcomes and stakeholders in service delivery systems. The course examines the range of service delivery models in OT including the traditional medical model, school-based, community, educational, home health, hospice and telehealth, among others. The course prepares students to analyze the key components of delivery system and determine how OT services are optimized in specific models.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**OT 652. Introduction to Doctoral Studies. 1 Credit.**

Students develop learning strategies for doctoral work and explore contemporary leadership theory and create a professional development plan for doctoral work with goals and objectives related to becoming an agent of change.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**OT 653. Policy/Ethics. 2 Credits.**

The future leaders of the profession need an understanding of the political and legal policies impacting occupational therapy, as well as the ethics involved in decision making. Students explore the role of the occupational therapist in advocacy as well as the concepts of social justice. The impact of these policies and decisions are reviewed in relationship to all settings and the occupational as well as psychosocial well-being of the individual client and populations of clients.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**OT 654. Research Methods. 3 Credits.**

This course is the first of a series of courses focusing on scholarship in the profession. Emphasis is placed on understanding qualitative and quantitative research methods and building a solid foundation needed to carry out a scholarly project. This course covers the scholarship process, with a focus on developing a question for scholarly exploration, ways of answering questions and approaches to analyzing results.

**Corequisites:** Take OT 652.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**OT 655. Professional Seminar. 3 Credits.**

This course integrates prior learning into the discussion of how to become an "agent of change" within systems. Topics include advocacy, leadership and leadership theories, group dynamics and change management. Student integrate this knowledge through the development of a program proposal and evaluation.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 651.

**Offered:** Every year, Summer

**OT 656. Research Design Scholarship II. 4 Credits.**

This course is the second of a series of courses focusing on scholarship in the profession. Emphasis is placed on developing a proposal for a scholarly project. Drawing on the content of OT 654 students develop the background to the project and problem statement, questions guiding the project informed by theory, and write a design a scholarly proposal in regards to ethical policies and procedures necessary to conduct research.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 640, OT 654.

**Offered:** Every year, Summer

**OT 671. Leadership in Higher Education. 3 Credits.**

Students analyze trends in higher education and health care. Building on these trends students create one course including a full syllabus, learning objectives, learning outcomes and assessment. This course provides a foundation for teaching in the future, either full or part time.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 652.

**OT 663. Seminar: Innovations & Emerging Practice Issues. 3 Credits.**

This course will initially focus on environmental scanning for evidence of change and locating evidence in the literature for that change within a student-identified area of interest. Then, weeks four through seven focus on the individual theme as selected by each student.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 640.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**OT 680. Capstone I. 2 Credits.**

This capstone course is a culminating experience in the occupational therapy curriculum, which integrates all core material. Students design and execute a scholarly or creative project that is relevant to current and emerging practice areas in occupational therapy. Students gain experience in project management, critical analysis and professional presentations.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 656.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**OT 681. Capstone II. 2 Credits.**

This capstone course is a culminating experience in the occupational therapy curriculum, which integrates all core material. Students design and execute a scholarly or creative project that is relevant to current and emerging practice areas in occupational therapy. Students gain experience in project management, critical analysis and professional presentations.

**Prerequisites:** Take OT 680;

**Offered:** Every year, Spring