About the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Bates

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program started spring 2011. This nationally-accredited program takes six quarters to complete and a limited number of applicants are admitted every spring quarter. The program is full-time, 7:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday at the downtown campus. Graduates are prepared as a generalist with highly developed interpersonal and technical skills and specialized clinical skills that meet the demands of the profession.

The curriculum combines biological and behavioral sciences with occupational therapy concepts and treatment principles for practice in a variety of clinical settings. Classes focus on practice and application of clinical skills. Proficiency in communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving and working as a professional team member are important components of the curriculum. The curriculum is designed to be developmentally-sequenced teaching students therapeutic, interpersonal, and technical skills for working in a variety of healthcare and educational settings.

Students learn through lecture, labs and hands-on practice, in addition to twenty hours of fieldwork each quarter in which students are placed in different work settings to observe practitioners and educators provide services with individuals with disabilities.

After completing the first four quarters of OTA core courses with a grade of 2.0 or better in each course, students are placed full-time in two sixteen-week clinical fieldwork. After successfully completing the required clinical fieldwork with a grade of 2.0 or better, students earn an Associate’s of Technology degree from Bates. Students then take a national board exam and upon successfully passing the exam, they become a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) and are ready for employment.

The program mission

The mission of the program is to provide a supportive learning environment that will inspire and challenge students to become competent, caring, creative and conscientious professionals. The OTA program is based on the occupational therapy practice beliefs of therapeutic occupations as a way to remediate illness and maintain health. The curriculum is also based on the importance of establishing a therapeutic relationship that is occupation-based, client-centered, contextual, and evidence-based. At the core of the OTA curriculum is teaching values, knowledge, and skills so our graduates are able to provide occupational therapy services with compassion, respect, and competence.

Approximate cost of the program

- Tuition and fees for six quarters (based on 2015-16 tuition fees) - $10,106.
- Books, supplies and uniform - $1585.00
- Clinical liability insurance, health insurance, immunizations, TB testing, health/dental check, and criminal background check - $740.00
- Possible travel expenses to clinical sites (5th and 6th quarters) - $500.00
- Additional expenses after program completion - National Board OTA Certification Exam and State OTA License - $720.00