Stony Brook Occupational Therapy Program

APPLICANT NOTES

Please Note: Throughout the admissions process it is important to check the “spam” folder in one’s email as often reminders and important information sent through either OTCAS or by the program often end up in the “spam” folder.

Reminder to 2013-2014 Applicants!
An OTCAS application for Stony Brook is not considered complete (and an interview invitation cannot be extended to a student) until all of the following have been received:

☐ OTCAS Application with verified transcripts from all institutions attended
☐ 3 Complete OTCAS Recommendation Forms, 2 must be from an OT
☐ Stony Brook Supplemental Application – $50.00 Fee

Transcripts
- Transcripts must be sent from all institutions attended
- If a student is currently taking courses, it is a good idea to order transcripts from the current institution during the fall semester and choose to have the transcripts sent to OTCAS once all fall grades are posted
- For institutions where all coursework is complete the transcripts should be requested and sent to OTCAS immediately
- There is a form in OTCAS that should be used to order transcripts from all institutions attended. Please refer to the Official Transcript, Frequently Asked Questions section of the OTCAS Website for the location of this form.

Recommendation Forms
- Before one enters their reference’s contact information in OTCAS, they are advised to contact the evaluator to:
  1. Confirm that they are willing to write a reference,
  2. Determine if they prefer to send a paper or online form
  3. Obtain the evaluator’s e-mail address in order for them to submit a reference electronically.
- Each Reference will be provided with extensive instructions for submitting recommendations to OTCAS.
- Please refer to the Letters of Recommendation, Frequently Asked Questions section of the OTCAS Website for more information on references.

Supplemental Application
Important information to remember when completing supplemental application:
- Think of the supplemental application as the second part of one’s entire application. Stony Brook’s OT Program sends out a supplemental application to ALL APPLICANTS regardless of how competitive one is for our school.
- After submitting an OTCAS application one will receive an email with a link to pay for the supplemental application. Once the fee is paid, the link to the application will be e-mailed to the email that has been used in the OTCAS application.
- Read all the material very carefully and follow all instructions.
- Complete each supplemental application in a timely manner. We recommend completing the application within approximately two weeks from the date it was received.
- When the supplemental application is complete, check it for spelling errors, then save the file as “Last Name, First Name.” It is important that this form is returned via email with the following information in the subject line: LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, OT APPLICATION
- Email the supplemental application to catherine.gropper@stonybrook.edu

Secondary Essays
- Both essay questions are mandatory.
- Essay questions should be answered with a minimum of 350 words and no more than 500 words for each essay question.
- The essays should be checked for spelling errors. It may be a good idea to write the essay in a word document for easy spell checking then copy and paste it into the application. The format of the document does not allow for spell checking.

Professional E-mail Correspondence
We know that e-mail is an excellent tool to ask a quick advising question, but it is important that prospective students are utilizing it appropriately and effectively in order for it to be a meaningful way of communicating information. As a professional in any industry (but even more so for health care) there are severe ramifications for not communicating information effectively, professionally, and appropriately. The Occupational Therapy Faculty and Staff holds themselves to a high standard when it comes to responding to student inquiries in an appropriate time frame, and we do our best to offer you the most extensive response we can. Please take the time to show us the same respect by being thoughtful with
your e-mail communication. Also remember, often a quick question may actually require us to ask some follow up questions to make sure we are giving the best information or advice as possible. If you feel that your question may require more discussion please call or contact us to make an appointment for an advisement.

Here are some other things to think about when contacting professional staff, professors, health care professionals and admissions' offices.

- **Subject:** Always include a subject in your email and make it as specific as possible. This will help your recipient find the email should they need it at a later date.
- **Short and to the Point:** Longer emails tend to be skimmed due to the heavy volume of emails that the recipient may receive during the day. Keep the email concise and directly ask your questions or state your needs. Avoid excess introductions and niceties.
- **Politeness:** Even though the emails should be concise, they should also be polite. Re-read the email before you send it and ask yourself whether the tone of the message could be misconstrued as it often is in any written form of communication. It might even be helpful to have a friend look at the email before it is sent.
- **Correct Grammar:** Make sure you write in complete sentences with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You should also avoid overly familiar phrasing, text messaging syntax, and emoticons. It is also helpful to avoid writing in all caps and not to use too many exclamation points as these forms of typing could potentially be translated as yelling and make the email harder to read.
- **Standard Signature:** In addition to signing your name, you should have a signature at the end of the email that includes your name and contact information.

**The Interview**
The interview is an important component of the health professions application process. The Stony Brook OT program looks for personality qualities such as integrity, leadership ability, decision-making skills, honesty, and knowledge of the profession. The interview is not only a chance for the interviewer to evaluate potential students, but an opportunity for potential students to learn more about our school.

To make the most of the interview there are some guidelines potential students should follow and some preparation should be done:

**Appearance**
Students are seeking to enter a profession, and during the interview, potential students should appear comfortable in that role. Students should dress and act professionally. For men, that means a sports coat and tie or suit; for women, a suit (skirt or pant), dress or skirt with blazer. Being clean and well groomed is obviously of great importance. Dress modestly – no low-cut blouses or low hanging pants. Tone down the jewelry and cologne; get rid of the piercings. Remember that body language is a powerful means of nonverbal communication. Gestures and movements can speak volumes. Be conscious of slouching (boredom?), playing with a pen or paper clip (nervousness?), and crossing one’s arms (hostility?). Try to be relaxed and poised.

**Preparation**
There are several areas that will likely be discussed in the interviews. Potential students can make a better impression and feel more relaxed if they are prepared to discuss them.

- **THE SCHOOL:** Be sure to read the material on paper and on-line that can be accessed. Be sure to visit the [Stony Brook OT Program’s website](http://www.otcas.org). Be aware of the school’s philosophy, mission statement, curriculum, etc.
- **THE PROFESSION:** Potential students should have an understanding of the Occupational Therapy profession. To learn more about the profession visit [AOTA’s website](http://www.aota.org).
- **YOU:** Potential students should know themself and be able to articulate their goals, philosophy, motivation for applying to the OT Program, etc. Potential students should have thought about these things already as they prepared to write their essay. Here is another opportunity to put them forth.

**Style**
The key to success in an interview is to relax and be yourself. Answer questions honestly – do not try to second-guess the interviewer. Maintain a positive note – nobody likes a whiner. Use the opportunities given to you to point out your accomplishments and strong points. Make eye contact with your interviewer and establish a rapport. Assume that your interviewer is on your side and do not get defensive at every question that is asked. Also be sure to speak clearly. Take the time to think about responses so one can be articulate.

If you haven’t already, we encourage you to read our [Frequently Asked Questions](http://www.otcas.org) section of the OTCAS Website. There is a lot of information there that you may not have even thought about yet!