

# Occupational Therapy Combined Degree Program Podcast

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Hello, my name is Kassie and I am a staff member in The Graduate School at Grand Valley State University. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Grand Valley's Occupational Therapy combined degree program. Today we're going to cover the admissions process, program requirements, and the qualities that distinguish this program.

Let's start by explaining to you what this program entails. GVSU graduate students pursuing a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy may pursue a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree at Grand Valley through this combined degree program. In the program, students will have the opportunity to develop advanced practice skills and prepare for advocacy, leadership, and teaching opportunities. Students in Grand Valley's combined degree programs are able to complete both degrees in as few as 5 years, while a traditional pathway would require 6 or more years to complete both a Master's and Doctorate degree.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, growth in the profession of Occupational Therapy is estimated to be at 17%, much faster than average. In 2020, there were more than 130,000 Occupational Therapy positions in the United States, with the average salary at \$85,560 or \$41.14 per hour.

Admission to GVSU's master's in occupational therapy program is completed through OTCAS (<https://otcas.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>). The application materials necessary to have your OTCAS application verified include all official transcripts; an Achievement Profile that details experiences in paid healthcare, leadership, education, research, and professional or community service; and character ratings from three recommenders. Upon completion of the OTCAS application, all applicants also need to complete a Graduate School application or supplemental form to officially apply to GVSU. There is a \$30 nonrefundable application fee; however, this is waived if you attended Grand Valley previously or if you have previously applied to Grand Valley.

The Occupational Therapy combined degree program is a secondary application process, meaning that students must first be admitted into the Master of Occupational Therapy program before they would be eligible to apply for the combined degree program. No applicant enrolled in an undergraduate program will be considered for admission into the Occupational Therapy combined degree program. The application criteria for this combined degree include:

- Minimum of 3.25 GPA in Master of Occupational Therapy coursework
- Critical evaluation of an occupational therapy article
- Submission of a personal statement, including specific goals and timelines for completion
- Interview with Occupational Therapy faculty members
- Three letters of support from professional colleagues, supervisors, or faculty
- Professional resume

Initial application materials for traditional students are due by the end of Winter I; application materials for hybrid students are due by the end of Fall I. Please contact the program director or your advisor for details.

More program details as well as the online application can be found on the Occupational Therapy combined degree website, [www.gvsu.edu/combineddegrees/](http://www.gvsu.edu/combineddegrees/).

The great news about Grand Valley's graduate programs is that tuition rates do not change based on residency status. In other words, there are no extra costs for being an out of state student. Current tuition costs and information about scholarships and financial aid can be found [www.gvsu.edu/financialaid](http://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid) or by calling (616)331-3234. For information on graduate assistantships, please contact The Graduate School at [gradschool@gvsu.edu](mailto:gradschool@gvsu.edu).

The Occupational Therapy combined degree program at Grand Valley is 109 credits from the beginning of master's level coursework to the completion of the post-professional doctorate. 73 credit hours of entry-level Master of Occupational Therapy coursework are combined with 9 credit hours from the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program. Upon completion of these 82 credits, students will be awarded their Master's in Occupational Therapy degree and be eligible to practice as an occupational therapist. Students accepted into the combined degree program will be able to begin their Doctor of Occupational Therapy coursework after being awarded their master's degree. Following completion of the remaining 27 doctorate credit hours, students will be awarded their post-professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree. For a complete listing of all courses please visit [www.gvsu.edu/ot](http://www.gvsu.edu/ot).

The combined degree program is unique in that class sizes are small with less than 10 students. In addition, coursework is tailored to student interests and learning styles with relevant and timely assignments that have practical application to current Occupational Therapy issues. Courses are delivered via a combination of synchronous, asynchronous, and 1:1 advising and mentoring from and experienced Occupational Therapy educator or clinician.

That is just a snapshot of the Occupational Therapy combined degree program at Grand Valley State University. We hope that you will consider applying to a graduate program at GVSU. Any questions can be directed to the Graduate Program Director, Dr. Susan Cleghorn at [cleghors@gvsu.edu](mailto:cleghors@gvsu.edu) or to The Graduate School at [gradschool@gvsu.edu](mailto:gradschool@gvsu.edu). Thank you for your time and we hope you have enjoyed this podcast.