

OT/PT Information Session – Transcript from October 26, 2022

00:00:01 Alim Lalani

OK. So welcome everyone.

Well, I guess you should probably see me.

There we go, my name is Alim.

I am the program manager for the Occupational Therapy program here at U of T we are a Master of Science and Occupational Therapy and joining us today for this session is the Department of Physical Therapy and the Master of Science in Physical Therapy program.

00:00:27 Alim Lalani

The Student Liaison Officer is Sarah McMahon, whom you see on zoom right now.

And in person, we have Professor Sharon Switzer McIntyre from the Department of PT.

And here's Sharon.

00:00:38 Dr. Switzer-McIntyre

Back to the camera but I'm right here.

00:00:41 Alim Lalani

Sharon would like to just introduce yourself and tell the group who you are?

00:00:49 Dr. Sharon Switzer-McIntyre

Hi Sharon Switzer, McIntyre excuse me. I'm a physiotherapist. I trained here at the University of Toronto 150 years ago.

I happen to have the privilege of being the program director for both our MSC PT program which is entry level to practice physiotherapy program and our Ontario international educated physiotherapy bridging program which is for our international educated colleagues who come to Canada seeking licensure to practice here in Canada.

My clinical area is musculoskeletal care, and in particular I have an interest in occupational health and occupational disease.

I teach in the musculoskeletal area of the program.

00:01:36 Alim Lalani

Great thanks Sharon.

Sarah, did you want to introduce yourself on behalf of physical therapy?

00:01:42 Sarah McMahan

Sure, thanks Alim.

My name is Sarah.

I'm the Student Liaison Officer in the Department of Physical Therapy, so I work very closely with Professor Sharon Switzer-McIntyre to review all your applications when you apply to the program and to work with our current student population.

Today Alim is going to give you a brief overview of the Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy program, and then Professor Sharon Switzer-McIntyre and I will talk to you about the physical therapy program.

00:02:22 Alim Lalani

OK thanks Sarah and so myself.

I'm the Program Manager for Occupational Therapy, so I oversee much of the admissions and the recruitment side of things, some of our program policies and your orientation into the program.

I will start today.

My presentation will be anywhere from 15 to 20 minutes and I'll speak just about the occupational therapy program and then after that we'll move over to Sharon.

So about occupational therapy. This is a 24 month full-time only professional graduate program. What that means is that when you take this program, there's a set curriculum so you don't really get to pick and choose your courses.

It's a set curriculum.

It is accredited by a national organization which is called the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapy in Ontario.

If you want to work as an occupational therapist, you have to be registered with a professional college called the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.

That sort of college is not the same as a school college as in George Brown College or Seneca College.

These are regulatory colleges and they look at stuff like registration, disciplinary matters, protection of the public and so many of these organizations exist for healthcare and other professions.

There's an engineering professional organization and one for doctors, nurses, et cetera. So OT's are one of those.

So what is occupational science and occupational therapy?

Well, I figure if you're here today, you probably know what they are, but sort of where does this land in the rehab sector?

What occupational therapists do, is they work with individuals and they try to find what occupation is most meaningful to them and they adjust and create a rehabilitation plan that is specific to that person's physical and or mental abilities and limitations so that they can proceed in life just as they would as if they didn't have those limitations in place.

So where do you find OT's?

They're in a lot of areas.

And this is kind of one of the good things that happened out of COVID

There's many bad things some of the good things that came out of it was that there's a lot more rehab professionals, including OT's, in really diverse settings where they weren't necessarily there before.

What you see on the screen there is the growing area for OT's is in mental health.

There's quite a few OT's working on things like people with eating disorders, with return to work with post traumatic stress disorder.

There's so many areas of mental health that OT's can work in and they are regulated as well.

So you're getting that same sort of level of service that you would expect from any sort of mental health professional.

If you Google OT in the news, or occupational therapy in the news, a lot of these articles are going to come up and I think this will give you a better idea of where OT's are.

We just put a smattering of headlines there, but the idea being is that you'll see that OT's actually make meaningful differences to people's everyday lives, and that's what sets this profession apart from others.

Why study OT at U of T?

U of T itself has a really great reputation in general, but our own facilities, we have a campus cohort at Saint George, which is the site in downtown Toronto, and one in Mississauga.

They both employ the newest technologies, teaching facilities, the tools that you'll have, and most importantly the access to our placement sites,

We have these field work placements during our program.

They are unpaid placements, but they're in a variety of different settings, so you could have a placement at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Then your next placement might be at a private company and then you're following placement might be at a mental health facility.

There's so many different places students can go and that is one of the big advantages with coming to U of T.

Our Mississauga campus, we call UTM, is in University of Toronto, Mississauga.

I know some of you are from out of province.

Mississauga itself is a huge city.

It's right next to Toronto's big, big population. If you Google it, you'll see that Mississauga is a full-fledged city.

Now there is a shuttle bus that goes from the Saint George to Mississauga Campus, but you you won't need it very often, if at all.

The learning that takes place is going to take place at your specific assigned campus site.

So if you're admitted to our program, you'll be assigned to either the Saint George campus in Toronto or the Mississauga campus in the city of Mississauga.

And that's where all your curriculum takes place, and all your learning takes place, and all your services take place.

The Saint George campus is in downtown Toronto.

Toronto is of course, one of the greatest cities in the world.

Many things to do here, but one thing people don't know about is that we do have an extensive nature system here, and one thing that you'll notice in both OT and PT is there's a robust extracurricular system set up.

We both have student Associations that have social activities that take place throughout our city here.

So let's go back to the program itself.

During the first year of the program it's highly theoretical, but your courses are still going to be specific to areas where OT's practice.

So you'll see on the screen there, it says Neuro is and neurological and mental health technology structure and function, which is essentially an.

Following that foundational year, which is a which is a tough year.

It's one of those things that everyone sort of realizes they have to go through because when you get to 2nd year, it's the applied courses you're going to take that foundational knowledge and you're going to apply it to real life case based situations.

Also during that that second year of the program, you're going to be doing a graduate research project, so that's just one course out of six you're taking per term, but the research project is going to involve working with a partner.

You're going to have a big paper to do.

You're going to do a presentation, and you're likely going to do a poster after that.

You're going to present at our graduate research day, so you'll have something hopefully published by the end of the program.

Now the fun part though, is field work.

That is 1000 hours at four different clinical sites that takes place starting in the first year of the program.

In fact, six weeks into the program, you're going to be on an introductory placement, not placement is only two weeks.

00:08:31 Alim Lalani

We don't technically count it as one of our four placements, but that's we call it an intro placement, just to give you a taste of what it's like.

Then throughout the program for the full 24 months, you're going to have access to mentorship, specifically a mentor, mentorship, opportunities, equity, diversity and inclusion committee opportunities, professional regulation opportunities, and learning about ethics and leadership so that you're not just sort of thrown into your new job when you graduate.

You're going to understand what it takes to be a professional in this field.

The research side is why it's a master masters program.

In the old days OT used to be a Bachelor of Science and Occupational therapy.

Well, now it's a masters program and in the Masters program you're taking more research and you're doing more field work, so it's quite intensive.

But the research project itself, you're going to be well supported.

You'll have a supervisor, you're going to have a research partner.

And you're going to be given all the research tools that you need.

So when I spoke before about this foundational year kind of being tough, that's part of the foundational year is teaching you how to do research.

So instead of you actually doing research, we're going to teach you how to be a researcher.

Then you go into second year and you actually conduct some research.

So on the screen there you'll see a number of areas where our students have conducted research with their supervisor and you'll see even there's some mention about robotics and AI.

Assistive Technologies, certainly an area of growth as well, in addition to mental health.

Before we have a course at U of T called technology in OT.

So if you're not a technologically inclined person, that's OK.

We don't have prerequisites for this program because in our foundational year we go over much of these foundational areas.

So technology being one of them, and you're going to do an actual tech project as part of this course guided by an incredible professor, her name is Rosalie Wang.

We have another one named Hardeep Singh.

They're both quite incredible at this course.

The field work program.

The idea of field work is that you're going to have sort of a ramping up of difficulty, so it starts off a little bit simpler for your first placement, and then the hurdles to cross become a little more intensive as you go into field work 2, field work 3, and then finally field work.

Throughout your field work placement, you're going to be well supported with a preceptor which is essentially like a supervisor, and they're going to give you feedback at the midterm and at the end.

You also have a chance to provide feedback on top of that because the preceptors, they want to know how well they're doing as well and how you're how far your learning has come during that placement.

So you're going to apply the theoretical knowledge you learned in class on an actual work site.

So we have a variety of settings and the way we sort of divvy up these settings is we talk about area of focus.

So is this going to be in mental health?

Is this going to be a technology?

Is this going to be in cognitive brain injuries?

Is this going to be in Pediatrics?

Is will this be in the burn unit?

That sort of thing.

Then practice area population you'll see in OT.

Things are split typically by age, so you'll have a course specifically about children, another course, just about adults and another course about older adults.

That's how specific we get.

And then, of course there's the setting.

So you could have, for example, a mental health setting that would be in a school board, not necessarily in a hospital.

So there's different areas of practice that take place in multiple settings.

So a hospital you could have 12 different types of areas of focus in every practice population, whereas in a school you'll have two areas of focus with one practice population.

In other words, children just in a school, so there's a lot of variety.

What are leap placements?

These are new placements, and by new I mean new practice areas.

These are areas where OT's have not necessarily been before.

So as an example, we had a group of OT's go and work at a soda manufacturing plant.

Yes, including in the office facilities as well because there was opportunities for things like coaching mental health return to work.

So many different areas of practice in industrial areas that may not have known that OT's do this type of work and can be employed full time in those companies to help improve their productivity.

So the point of these leap placements is to inform future practice.

This is how you grow a profession right.

00:13:03 Alim Lalani

So if you think about scopes of practice and different healthcare areas, nurses, for example, do a lot more than just what we traditionally see on TV shows.

You know if you look at a TV show about nurses from 40 years ago and a TV show today, it's very different, right?

The responsibilities are different and the same goes for OT.

The scope of practice has expanded and these leap placements help to do that.

Our field work placements take place throughout the Greater Toronto area.

If you are placed at the Mississauga campus, you can certainly ask for placements that are closer to the Mississauga campus itself.

Ideally, though, if you keep your options open, those placements can be all over the GTA in different practice areas and settings.

All of these facilities have been vetted by us, so you do not have to go and find your own placement.

We find it for you and what we end up doing is having you rank a set of placements and then we communicate that ranking to you based on where you're going to be placed and the reason for the ranking.

And then once you get into the program itself, you'll have access to these four field work placements and each time we're going to make sure that you're rotated to a different type of site.

We also have this really neat mentorship program.

There's a course in our program, it's called building practice through mentorship.

And what that's about is that it sets you up with a mentor in the program, so that's a faculty or a clinician, and that person can become a source of support for you.

And then when I say support, that's professional support.

So particularly as you progress through the program, you might find yourself with some academic challenges.

This person is not your tutor.

This person is to help you work through building some of your skill sets to be successful as an OT student and then eventually as a professional practicing.

And in a lot of cases, the mentors look at this from the perspective of you're going to be their colleague one day, so they treat you like that.

You're treated respectfully.

The expectations are also quite high on you as a student as well, and you're required actually to come to these mentorship meetings to come with work completed.

Sometimes you get assigned little tasks or things to think about before your mentorship meeting, so it's not just this informal one-on-one.

You actually do have some reflections that you will have to follow through upon as part of this mentorship course.

Interprofessional education.

You'll hear this from our friends in PT as well.

This is where you work with other healthcare professionals, but the whole point of it is that you're going to bring your unique OT lens, your occupational lens, as we call it, when discussing matters of healthcare policy, practice with other healthcare professionals.

And of course, student life in our program.

You know the old cliché.

Work hard, play hard.

I can't necessarily say that here, and the reason for that is because your experience will differ.

Everyone's different, you're all coming in with diverse backgrounds in education.

Diverse backgrounds, culturally diverse backgrounds in life, you have different life experiences, and that's kind of the neat thing about the student life in our program.

Is it's meant to be inclusive there.

All of our activities are built around being inclusive so that nobody is left out at all, regardless of any sort of limitation or preference.

Some examples of the neat extracurriculars that have gone on the last few years, so certainly COVID kind of put a bit of a damper on some of them, but nevertheless, we're back in full swing as an in person program.

We've had courses in sign language and music nights.

We have a dragon boat team that participates every year and these are leisure activities.

Nothing is competitive unless you want it to be so, we do have a sports team, but if you just want to play recreationally, it's there.

If you want to do something with the arts, it's there, and it's not necessarily competitive.

The idea, again, is to be inclusive.

Some of the sessions to our educational base, so we have this group called Otech and it's groups of students who are interested in the application of technology within occupational therapy and so they will set up guest speakers or networking sessions where you can meet people in the industry.

Again, informal.

But also a bit formal too, so you can discuss things informally, but when you have events they want people to be dedicated and come on time and to really ask the good questions so that you're socializing yourself to becoming a healthcare professional.

Financial needs.

You should budget for \$13,000 approximately in tuition and expenses. Tuition and fees while you're in the program.

Of course you'll have your own expenses on top of that, especially if you're if you're living away from your rental home and you have to pay rent somewhere.

So that's on top of that.

We do have some scholarships and bursaries in our program.

They're quite limited.

Our bursary program is generous.

And that's a needs based bursary program where we expect you to have at least applied for a government student loan and perhaps a line of credit before coming to our bursary committee and asking for bursary funding

Our scholarships, both of which can be need and or merit based.

They typically range from anywhere from \$300 to up to \$1500, and they're sprinkled throughout the program.

Our admission requirements

All right, this might be why you're actually here today.

You would have an appropriate bachelor's degree with high academic standing.

What that means, that's almost any four year bachelor's degree or the equivalent from a recognized university.

If you're from the provincial college system, you can still apply but just be mindful that our minimum requirement is typically a four year degree from a university at the bachelor's level.

So you'll be competing as an applicant pool that's coming in with a university bachelor's degree.

The minimum GPA that we're looking for, GPA means grade point average, ideally on your transcript it would show something in the low to mid 80s at least.

80% in letter terms, that's ideally an A minus or a sub GPA, and sub meaning just a subset of your transcript. Specifically the most recent 10 full courses.

And for people with a four year degree, that's approximately your last two years of full time study.

Ideally you're looking at a 3.75 on a four point scale.

We do not have prerequisites in the occupational therapy program, but we do recommend some prior study in the areas you see on the screen there, it just will sort of reduce the amount of studying you'll have to do in the first year of the program.

There's a non-academic assessment that goes on with our application as well.

There's a personal statement submission that's going to ask two questions about your understanding about the profession and the practice of OT.

We also ask for a resume.

On that resume we'd like to know what you've accomplished and what your experiences are.

And one thing I want to emphasize to you is that we look at unrelated experience equivalent to related experience.

So for example, if you had to work at a restaurant full time or part time during your undergraduate education to pay for school, and you did not have time to volunteer, in other words, work for free, that makes perfect sense to

us and your challenge, though for the resume portion of your application is going to be articulating that what sort of transferable skills did you pick up on your unrelated experience that would aid you in your quest to become an OT or to get into an OT program.

So as an example, we had a successful applicant this year who mentioned how she worked with her restaurant manager on developing an accessible movement plan throughout the restaurant.

In other words, setting up the table, setting up the washrooms, setting up the cooking facilities so that it could accommodate somebody who had a not only a wheelchair, but there was also somebody who had a disability where they weren't able to be around heat too often.

Someone else who was put off by loud noises, a disability that that disoriented them from loud noises.

And that was part of their application, is developing that plan and that applicant talked about how they were able to engage an external OT to help them figure that out within their manager's restaurant.

So that was really neat and how they able to relate that unrelated experience to why OT why OT became part of their journey.

And naturally, like many programs, we asked for two references, 1 academic and one professional.

Your campus assignment will either be Saint George or Mississauga campus.

We will send out a survey in February that asks you if you have a preference.

This has no effect on your admissions.

It's strictly just a preference, and if you get into our program, we'll try and accommodate whatever your preference is, but we use merit only, so just your grades, your personal statement, your references, your resume.

We don't look at campus assignment when it comes to your admission.

If you are given an offer of admission, it will be posted to the ORPAS online portal on May 15th and you'll also get an e-mail that same day that will also have your offer, but it will also most importantly state your campus assignment as either St. George's or the Mississauga campus.

To sum up what we're looking for, ideally you would have a science or liberal arts bachelor's degree and that's most degrees, and that includes even

things like business degrees and history degrees you know that falls under liberal arts, and so the easiest way for me to state this is there are some degrees that are not eligible.

So in other words, ineligible.

They are often Fine Arts degrees, so degrees and things like drawing, sculpting, etc., artwork degrees that are applied, so something like a professional trades, unfortunately are not eligible and things like theatrical arts, so like drama, acting, that sort of thing are unfortunately typically ineligible.

You have some exposure to the profession of OT, even if it's just at a surface level.

You've done some sort of reading on it.

You understand the profession.

You have a higher than normal GPA and you know, because we know class averages generally range and the C's or the B's, if you're in the A range or the A minus range, you're probably at the top of your class, so that's why we mentioned you're top ten top 10% of your academic class.

And your references can confirm what we see on your personal statement and your resume.

So how to apply.

Similar to physical therapy, you can use this website O-R-P-A-S, ORPAS, the Ontario Universities Application Center, and make sure you apply by January 6th.

And that's a hard deadline, so you know, try not to leave it till the last day.

It's kind of like buying concert tickets.

You don't want to wait till that very last moment to buy concert tickets.

You want to put them in, put your order in ahead of time.

It's the same with applying these programs.

Try and get in as early as possible.

This is our contact information.

There's an actual human behind those addresses, but at first I recommend just checking out our website.

We have a frequently asked questions page as well that can hopefully answer some of your questions in the meantime

Alright and that's it for me.

So go ahead and take it away Sharon and Sarah.

00:24:01 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Can people hear me OK?

I'm going to take my mask off because I've had it on all day so I promise I'll stay 2 meters apart and be a good healthcare professional, but it does get a bit much sometimes.

All right, well, welcome and I am sorry about the craziness.

Thank you for some of you were standing outside, I know, but welcome.

I'm going to give you a birds eye view of what it is to be a physical therapist, and very much like OT, physical therapy is one of the regulated health professions, so we have a regulatory college.

There is a licensing process post degree that you must go through in order to call yourself a physical therapist.

We have a number of controlled acts, so we're one of the few regulated health professionals under the regulated Health Professions Act that have controlled acts.

We have a controlled act in sectioning, oxygen titration, and pelvic health are our three biggies and soon to be ordering diagnostic imaging.

We do have some controlled acts which is as I said, different than some of the other regulated health professions.

Our profession is really directed from a variety of different ways towards prevention, diagnosis, treatment of predominant movement disorders.

But when you think of movement disorders, many people think about musculoskeletal movement disorders and that's kind of what I do, so I get it, but we work in all sorts of areas from the perspective of the body.

It's not just about musculoskeletal care and health, it's about cardiorespiratory care and health.

It's about neurological care and health.

So it's much broader than many people who have not had the privilege of being inside the profession see and we use exercise as one of our big modalities.

There's tons of amazing evidence now that supports that exercise is the best medicine, whether it be in a musculoskeletal environment or in a mental health environment.

Exercise really has probably one of the strongest pieces of evidence out there for some of the healthcare management strategies.

We also use also the different modalities.

Education is a big part of what we do and then consultation across a variety of different brains and fields of of practice.

So where do we work?

We work across the continuum of healthcare.

The privilege of being a physical therapist is that we can really work anywhere in the healthcare system and beyond and anywhere in the world.

Which is personally I think it's pretty exciting, so we work in acute care environments.

We work in rehab environments.

We work in long term care chronic care environments.

We work in private practice environments.

We work in schools.

We work in India.

We work in consulting firms.

We work with the federal and provincial governments in policy areas, because again, we have this big view of people and people's health.

We work across the lifespan as does OT.

We work from, as I say pre gestation, gestation across to end of life.

Because physios do work a fair bit in pelvic health, so we are helping with areas and issues even pre conception through to to end of life.

We work across all systems.

As I said, so it's the musculoskeletal system.

It's the cardiorespiratory system.

It's a neurological system and many, many of our patients now are what we call, they have multiple comorbidities, so there are multiple systems involved in a lot of the patients that we see.

Even our simple ankle sprain usually have something else going on.

And then we work across health promotion domains.

You'll see us in Community health clinics.

You'll see us in health promotion, health prevention and community centers.

Also working in those areas where we may not be actually treating patients, but we're doing more of the health prevention, health promotion types of things.

As a therapist, we have what's called an essential competency profile.

This is teeny, tiny and I even put my glasses on my.

I should be able to recite all of this.

We have what's called an essential competency profile, which has been revised a couple of times now.

Nationally, it's a national document that we use to guide our practice and to guide our education.

There are seven essential competencies that formulate the way we think around being experts so our expert physiotherapy knowledge.

And then there are another, a number of other of the competency rules that I won't talk about now, but you can certainly find them.

All I have to do is Google essential competencies profile physiotherapy and it'll pop up.

As I said, I think one of the things that's most exciting about the profession is we really do have this broad scope.

You can be a clinician, which is what why most people come into the profession, and whether it's OT or PT or SLP or medicine or nursing, we're all usually coming into the to the world of healthcare to be clinicians to work with people to help people.

So I would say that's our strongest draw, and that's kind of where my heart always is.

You can be a researcher, you can be a clinician researcher.

You can be an administrator.

You can be an educator.

As I said before, health promotion, health prevention, you're always an advocate I would argue, but there are people, who are physios, people with physiotherapy background, who were strongly in the world of advocacy because they've understood patients journeys or as a consultant.

Now when I think about myself and my own career, I have done all of these things in my career, and continue to, and continue to thrive, because I can do all of those things.

Some days I think I'm a little bit ADHD.

But why study University of Toronto?

And I'll say this upfront.

Every physio program in this country is amazing.

The Canadian educated physical therapists are bar none tops in the world and I get to see a lot of different physiotherapists through my lens of the internationally educated physio bridging program.

So you cannot go wrong across the country.

We all share our essential company profile.

We all share curriculum guidelines, so everybody's covering the same.

We all need to write the national licensing exam.

We all cover the same content because you need to know the same kinds of things.

What's unique is the school within which we live and the faculty within that school.

So I would suggest to all of you regardless of what area of practice you're thinking about, whether it's OT or PT or medicine or nursing or dentistry, really think about:

How do I learn?

Where do I see myself?

So as you're going, kept thinking about, I want to be a healthcare professional.

Not quite sure which one yet which is, where do I, from the perspective of the beginning of my journey, which is the education part of your journey?

Here at U of T, we've gone through a very extensive and innovative curriculum redesign.

We started, feels like 20 years ago, but we started and restarted, and in September 2019, we launched our new innovative curriculum.

Guess what hit in March of 2020?

Actually, the first year I'm hoping that we actually get to deliver the curriculum the way it was intended.

Although we've learned a ton through COVID, there's been many, many Silver Linings, but we really committed to a large consultative process, and we developed our curriculum we've got.

And in fact we had already incorporated some hybrid elements into our curriculum, which saved us as we had to move quickly into a very non hybrid type of environment for a while.

However, we were as of July of 2020, the only students on campus because you can't learn to be a physical therapist if you don't touch people.

We had all sorts of restrictions, and we were following all sorts of important rules, but we came back on campus in July of 2020 to do our clinical skills.

We are fully accredited by the Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Council of Canada and we've just actually gone through that process and we have the highest standard of accreditation, so that's pretty exciting.

We have a number of diverse teaching and learning models and I would say that those have evolved even more over COVID, so it's one of our silver linings.

We have an incredible faculty and critical environment.

We have over 480 status only clinicians who also come and teach in various ways in our program.

We have them in our clinical skills labs and these guys have been able to benefit from them even today.

As we were doing a clinical skills lab where clinicians come in and help us that we have clinical internships we have.

The one thing that Toronto has over all those other programs I said are amazing, is we have Toronto.

If you look down University Ave. we've got five major teaching hospitals down University Ave.

We have over 200 clinical training sites where you can go for clinical internships.

And of course you have access to all of the amazing University of Toronto activities.

Our renewed curriculum

As we renewed our curriculum, and it's not like we threw the baby out with the bathwater, we had a whole bunch of things that were amazing, but when we went out and really reflected and talked to all of our stakeholders, we thought you know we need to really make sure we're emphasizing where we see the profession moving forward.

Where do we see ourselves?

What do we want to see ourselves as?

So we developed these three pillars, and this is probably the innovative piece that we did.

We really tried to consolidate our evidence and develop these three pillars that we wrap our curriculum around where we want to make sure we have really solid critical thinkers.

We want to make sure that we have clinicians who use an inquiry mindset and we want to make sure that all of our clinicians embrace professionalism at from all sorts.

So those 3 pillars are wound throughout our entire curriculum.

We check back with ourselves as faculty.

Are we meeting the standards?

Are we pushing our students and they'll all say this to you?

Are we pushing our students to be in that place in that space where we're going to be uncomfortable?

We might not have all the knowledge but we can figure it out.

So critical thinking has really been something that's been very prominent as we kind of rejigged our curriculum next slide.

Now our curriculum looks very different than anything you've ever had before.

You're not going to take six courses where you've got Tuesdays from 2 to 4 course A, and Wednesdays you've got, B.

We are 24 months full time.

Not a lot of breaks.

Although we have a lot of fun.

Where you're in school from 8:30 or 9:00 o'clock till well, it's now 5:42 and they're still here, so 4:30 is usually as long as we'll go

Everything we do is integrated so you might be in this room talking about some theoretical frameworks, then we'll go to the Clinical Skills Lab and we'll start to put that into practice.

So there's lots of there's not a lot of down time.

There's a lot of fast-paced learning, that's as I said, integrative.

We start with introduction to the profession.

We move into an introduction to musculoskeletal health and care, and then you rapidly move into cardiorespiratory and then neurological, and then you go out into clinical internship.

There's 1250 hours of clinical practice in our program.

We do 5-6 week clinical internships and you must meet a variety of different criteria in those particular experiences to meet all the essential competencies that I showed you.

So you out for clinical internship and you come back and you do more of an integrated, you use the theory and now the practice.

And we do an integrated unit which is 6 weeks over the summer, which again we had designed as a hybrid unit because we didn't want our students always in this room.

You'd notice there are no windows in this room and when you're here on a beautiful July afternoon, knowing that you really want to be out there, we

wanted to create some opportunities where students could learn from the dock if they chose to do.

We then go into our research program so we have a research course as well, like OT does, where you are in small groups.

Our research projects are proposed by our clinical faculty who are out in the clinical environment and say, you know, I really need to know a little bit more about something and they pose a question.

They act as one of the facilitators and then they are paired with a faculty member.

Our faculty also supply topics and you will work with that small group very intensely for the first three-week unit in Unit 7 to provide to develop a research proposal that you submit to ethics for U of T.

If you're in the hospitals, depending on where your project is, it's both you have to do it for both then.

In September of the next year, you start collecting your data and you have a year to collect the data.

You write it up and present it on research day and we have the highest publication rate of any program in the rehab sciences across the country.

So we really do try to help people steer towards, let's do some knowledge exchange, let's make sure all the great work that everybody's doing gets out there for people to know, and for people to change their course of care, and the way they think.

In the second year you come in, and so your second year actually begins, essentially with you, for the research course and then you go out for the rest of the semester.

12 weeks in clinical internships.

So one in one site, six weeks, and one site, six weeks in another.

They come back after the holidays.

You do advanced musculoskeletal care.

You go back out for another internship.

Come back and we do what's called a selective so you can pick some areas that you're super excited about and want to learn more about, and then you go and then you work on your research project.

Finish off your research project, present that, and then you finish the program back out in the clinical environment.

You can tell it's action-packed.

There's not a lot of downtime, but it's super exciting.

I think I've already done this one Sarah.

We do have the highest publication rate.

So our clinical education.

As I said the sites are divided into essentially six categories where you have we have acute care hospitals, we have rehabilitation centers and long term care facilities, there are pediatric centers, outpatient facilities that are private practices and all sorts of different things.

We have community services.

We have administration and I would also add over the course of COVID, we've also added research based internships as well, where people are working directly with researchers to collect data.

Often we'd like to make sure that those are clinically based research data collection opportunities so that people get a chance to keep their hands on people.

We have, as I said, over 200 sites. This is a small sample of them and certainly I would encourage you to go on our website and just have a peek at how many sites we have across the entire GTA and beyond.

And student life and beyond.

I would say it's a very special, and whether it's OT or PT coming into a rehab based program, is a very special experience where you create friends for life.

You're with these people for 24 months.

You are shoulder to shoulder with them, doing all sorts of different activities and learning and thinking and problem solving.

But there's also time for fun, and we have a student council that make sure that that fun happens.

There are a number of different activities, including as you come into the program.

Once where you get an opportunity to meet everybody and start to become comfortable and familiar with who you're passing is going to be, I can honestly say, remember I graduated 150 years ago, I'm still really close with many of my classmates.

I think it's over to you now, isn't it?

00:41:52 Sarah McMahon

Thanks Sharon, yes it is.

I'm going to go through a little bit about the admissions process for the physical therapy MScPT program.

There's two major components, the first being academic and then the second being non academic.

I'm going to go through each of those.

I do see there's a handful of questions in the chat as well.

Alim and I and our small group of our students are going to stick around to answer those questions afterwards, so just hang tight.

We will get there.

Similar to occupational therapy, we do require an appropriate bachelor's degree with high academic standing.

Just like with occupational therapy, it can really be anything in the liberal Arts and Sciences.

If you're not sure if your degree counts, you can send us an e-mail and we can have a look at it for you.

The vast majority of the degrees that are offered will be appropriate.

To be competitive for the physical therapy application, you are going to need, I would say a sub GPA cutoff of around 3.8 to 3.84.

It sort of varies from year to year, but it's essentially like an A minus to an A.

It does vary from one year to the next in terms of the cutoff, so that is something to keep in mind.

We do look at specifically the last two years, or 20 half credits, and I'll review that in a moment.

Unlike occupational therapy, there are a handful of prerequisites that you will need to complete before you can be admitted to the program.

I've got them listed here.

We do ask that you verify the physiology, anatomy and stats with the department before you apply, and you can reach out to us by e-mail to do that.

I just wanted to talk a little bit about the sub GPA.

This process is the same for occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech language pathology as well.

When you apply to ORPAS, so that's the Ontario University application Centers rehab division, they calculate a sub GPA based on the last, approximately, 2 years or 20 half credits of your degree.

What they'll do is, I'll actually move forward just to the example here so I can show you.

If for example, you're in your 4th year right now, what they'll do is they'll take all of your fall term classes.

So if you're studying full time, that would be 5 full classes.

They're going to count all of those.

Then they're going to go back to year 3.

Assuming that you're studying full time, you'll have 10 classes.

So they're going to count all of those.

And then I'm going to go back to year 2.

Now, assuming that you're studying full time, you will have had 10 courses in year two.

We only look at the last 20 half credits, so you'll see here, year four and year three, that gives us 15.

We only need five more, so what we'll do is we'll weigh this second year as 5 credits rather than 10 so we don't pick and choose which five courses to use out of the ones you've completed.

We'll just take a weighted average of that whole year and I can answer your questions about that afterwards as well, if you've got specific ones, but that's the general process we'll use.

This is called the grading system conversion table, and this is a copy of what it looks like from 2017, so make sure you look at the current one.

They basically have all of the schools from Canada converted into sub GPA so they're basically putting everybody's grading scale on the same, sort of using the same layout.

If you did your undergrad at Acadia, you'll see at the bottom Acadia is #7, so they use alpha grades or letter grades, whereas if you did it at, let's see. Let's say you did it at one of the other schools that uses a numeric grade, like a percentage grade you, would follow whatever number you've got here.

I can go over that with you again to go through some examples later.

But just to give you a heads up, that's how or pass calculates the sub GPA.

In addition to the academic components, we also have some non academic components that we look at.

The first one is the Casper online situational judgment test.

So Casper, as I said it's an online test.

You can do it from anywhere you want.

You just you create your account.

The tests are scheduled for specific dates.

You would be given a scenario and then ask to respond to that scenario and it's meant to measure your personal and professional characteristics.

For example, it's meant to measure things like empathy, communication, your ethics, and so forth.

So that's one of the non academic components that is unique for PT.

We also ask for reference letters, just like with OT; one academic reference letter, so this should be from a professor who's taught you and then one professional reference letter, and that could be from an employer.

Or if you if you're volunteering in a lab somewhere, you have a research supervisor you can use that person as a professional reference.

Regardless of who you choose just make sure that both of the referees are able to address your aptitude for studies in physical therapy.

Make sure they know you.

It's pretty clear when we look at the reference letters, if the person doesn't really know the applicant well, so my suggestion would be to get to know your professors and start thinking about that as you go through your degree, who you might be able to ask for a reference letter.

The last piece of non academic elements that we look at -

00:48:58 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Sorry, I just wanted to say something about that. If when you are asking for references, I would highly recommend because you're often in larger classes where your profs probably don't know you, is when you ask them for references, give them a piece, little highlight of that was so amazing.

Make their job easy.

Otherwise we get formulated letters that don't play well for you, so take the initiative and, say like, ask them if they're going to say yes, and here's some ideas of what you could say.

Write that down.

You can use those words.

Sorry Sarah.

00:49:40 Sarah McMahan

Nope, that's great. Thanks Sharon.

The next piece I wanted to talk about was our computer administered profile.

After we've reviewed the rest of your application, we select a small percentage of applicants to complete this computer administered profile, or CAP as we call it.

It's administered online.

It's a set of questions, not unlike what you might get if you were to get an interview, and you'll be asked to type out your responses.

Some examples of the types of questions that we ask would be like, imagine a situation, how might you respond to this?

Or we might ask you to provide an example of something that you've done.

We may ask you to tell us a little bit about why you're interested in physical therapy as a profession, that kind of thing.

So that's the next step, and this is, as I said, by invitation only.

So we do invite just the top applicants to complete this.

Just to give you a sense of our enrollment data over the last few years, we do have quite a few applicants to the program.

You'll see last year, for example, we had just over 1300.

The class size is 110 and our GP cutoff last year was a 3.84.

It does vary from year to year.

It really just depends on the applicant pool, how many people have applied and so forth, so we can't tell you ahead of time what the cutoff will be.

But these are sort of the most recent statistics that we are able to share with you.

To review the application process, you will be using the Ontario University Application Center to send your application when you apply.

When you do this and you create your account through ORPAS, you can select whether you want to apply to physical therapy, occupational therapy and/or speech language pathology

All three of those applications are handled using this same application system.

So if you are applying to OT and PT and speech language pathology, you only need to submit this once, it's one application for all of the rehab science programs in Ontario.

So that said, when you set up your application, it's going to ask you which programs, which schools, and then each school will have their own set of supplementary sections that you'll need to complete.

So for our program, U of T PT, you'll have to tell us which courses you've taken to fulfill the prerequisites.

For occupational therapy, if you were applying to that one at U of T, you'd have to upload your personal submission.

Every school will have their own unique components.

Once you get everything filled out then you can go ahead and submit.

References, transcripts and all documentation - please be sure to send that directly to ORPAS.

Don't send it to the individual schools, send it to ORPAS, and they will distribute it to the individual programs and schools to which you've applied.

The deadline again is January 6th,2023.

I'm going to put up our contact information here so you can see that and I think that is it for us.

I believe we have a few of our students that are available to provide building tours and Alim and I will also be here to address some of the questions that have been posted in our chat here.

And we have some students with us as well online who will be available to answer questions in breakout rooms, so perhaps what we can do is... Sharon, would you like to introduce our our lovely volunteers who have come in to provide building tours?

00:54:26 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

We have a number of our first year's here, you're all first years?

I'm just checking to me before I say something.

They're all first years, so they're really great group of people, here to ask questions of and to take a little tour of the building if you're interested.

We're going to introduce.

I don't have my mask on, so I'm going to do this and you can just... why don't you say name and what's where your undergrad?

00:54:52 Carolina

Hey my name is Carolina and I went to the University of Waterloo for their kinesiology program.

00:54:59 Alyssa

Hi everyone, my name is Alyssa and I went to McMaster for their kin program.

00:55:04 Moe

Hi, my name is Moe.

I went to uottawa for Health Sciences.

Student

Alisha and I went to Waterloo for BioMed.

00:55:14 Mackenzie

Hi Mackenzie, I went to the University of Lowell, Laurentian University for kinesiology as well.

00:55:22 Matt

Everyone, my name is Matt and I went to McMaster for Kim.

00:55:27 Nidhi

My name is Nidhi and I went to Waterloo for KIN

00:55:31 Alex

Hi, my name is Alex.

I went to York for KIN as well.

00:55:46 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

So as you can see, there's some fairly diverse education and background.

There is, there is like different cities, slightly different programs, and then should we go through our ones on the screen as well?

00:55:56 Sarah McMahan

That would be great.

So if you are a PT or an OT student who's joining us online, a huge thank you for taking the time out to do this today.

Maybe you could go around and just introduce yourselves?

00:56:12 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Just call them, perfect.

00:56:12 Alim Lalani

Yeah, we say yeah call them out Sharon.

Please thank you.

00:56:16 Shahir

Yeah, my name is Shahir.

I went to Guelph for my undergrad.

00:56:20 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

What did you take your undergrad in?

00:56:21 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Shahir?

00:56:21 Shahir

Biomedical science.

00:56:23 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Thank you.

00:56:26 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Ewan?

00:56:29 Ewan

Hi, my name is Ewan and I did my undergrad at the University of Toronto, Major in Neuroscience, major in ecology and evolutionary biology and a minor in French.

00:56:44 Lee Ann

Hi everybody, I'm Lee Ann and I went to York for kinesiology.

00:57:01 Speaker

I'm attending as a guest.

00:57:03 Speaker

I'm interested in attending the MSOT program.

00:57:03 Speaker

OK.

00:57:08 Jasmine

Hey, I'm Jasmine.

I went to the University of Waterloo, also for kinesiology.

00:57:21 Antonia

Hi folks, my name is Antonia. I went to UBC in bio.

00:57:29 Rafi

Hi my name is Rafi I went to Waterloo for bio.

And I'm also like locked out of my house right now, so this is a bit a bit busy so I do apologize.

00:57:38 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Hey where are you? Oh no traffic Sam.

00:57:45 Speaker

It's Starbucks, actually.

00:57:47 Sam

My name is Sam.

I did undergrad in KIN at Western.

00:57:52 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

See, we're getting more diverse now.

00:57:57 Juan

Hi, my name is Juan.

00:57:58 Juan

I did my undergrad at Waterloo for kin.

00:58:03 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Can't see who's underneath the...

00:58:08 Ilana

Hi everyone, my name is Ilana.

I'm an OT one student.

I did my undergrad at UTM for molecular bio.

00:58:18 Ria

Hi everyone, my name is Ria.

I'm a second year OT student and I did my undergrad at U of T Scarborough for mental health and population health.

00:58:28 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

And James.

00:58:31 James

Oh hi, I'm James.

I'm from the US.

I study at Springfield College, Massachusetts.

I'm majoring in Health Science.

00:58:39 Dr. Swtizer-McIntyre

Great, thank you.