

**San Jacinto College South Campus  
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Is the OTA program very difficult to get into?

The OTA program is rigorous and the application process is competitive. There are only 12-14 positions in the program, and the applicant pool exceeds the available positions.

2. Is the job market good?

Yes! The job market is excellent at this time as there is a push to hire more occupational therapy assistants. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, there is a projection of 25% job growth by 2031, much faster than the average for all occupations. About 11,000 OTA job openings are projected to exist during this time. OTAs work collaboratively with an OT for patient intervention. The median salary is \$61,730 in May 2021. According to the 2023 US News Rankings, Occupational Therapy Assistants are ranked #1 in Best Health Care Support Jobs and #19 in the 100 Best Jobs!

3. What is the starting salary?

Starting salary as an occupational therapy assistant will vary dependent on setting. The median pay is \$71,194 per Texaswages.com.

4. What is the program's graduation rates?

<b>Graduation Year</b>	<b>Students Entering/Graduating</b>	<b>Graduation Rate</b>
2020*	12/8	67%
2021*	14/12	57.7%
2022	12/12	100%
2023	12/11*	91.67%
2024	12/TBD	TBD

\*Students withdrew from program due to personal reasons.

TBD – Students currently enrolled in program

5. I heard there is a national licensing exam that I must pass in order to practice as and OTA in Texas?

Yes, there is a national licensing exam through the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). You will be eligible for the certification exam once you complete the program and graduate. As of March 2020, the occupational therapy assistant program at San Jacinto College has been accredited for seven years by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). Graduates of this program will be eligible to take the national certification examination for the occupational therapy

assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).

Once this exam is complete, you can apply for your licensure to practice through the appropriate state agency. In Texas, the agency is the Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners (TBOTE). However, please note that any felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT examination or attain state licensure. Applicants have the right to request a criminal history evaluation from the applicable licensing agency.

[www.NBCOT.org](http://www.NBCOT.org) – National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy

<https://ptot.texas.gov/occupationaltherapy/> - TBOTE

6. Do you offer this program at North or Central Campus?

No, the OTA program is only located at South Campus. However, you may take non-occupational therapy assistant courses (prerequisites) on other campuses, at night, on weekends, etc.

7. Do you offer this program at night?

No, the OTA program does not offer night classes.

8. When is the application deadline?

The OTA program has two submission deadlines:

Early Submission Deadlines	October 15, 2023- November 1, 2023 (by 5:00pm)
Regular Submission Deadlines	January 16, 2024- March 22, 2024 (by 5:00pm)

See OTA website for application deadlines (<https://www.sanjac.edu/programs/areas-of-study/health/ota/ota-admission-info>). Applications will not be considered after these dates.

9. Does submitting an application guarantee me a spot in the OTA program?

No. Applicants must meet the college's general admission requirements as well as program admissions requirements. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program. Submission of application early does not guarantee admission in the program but provides an opportunity for potential interview earlier in the spring.

10. When does the OTA program start?

The program will accept students annually to start every Fall semester. There is only one cohort admitted every Fall.

11. Are there any health entrance exams required?

Yes. An applicant who is selected for an on campus interview will take a health entrance exam at no cost to the applicant on their interview day.

12. Are observation hours mandatory?

No, but observation hours are strongly recommended. The program does awarded points on the admission rubric for applicants who have sought out observation hours and invested time to learn more about the profession. A strong application would include observations hours. See observation form in Appendix E.

13. Where do I go for observation hours if I seek observation opportunities?

Any facility is appropriate if you observe a licensed OT or OTA. Example settings are inpatient, outpatient, rehabilitation, acute care, pediatrics, mental health, skilled nursing facility, or home health.

14. Is there a recommendation form to complete?

Yes. Refer to the website to download the form. Three of these must be completed (one number in each category must be indicated). If you completed observations, an OT or OTA can complete a reference form. Reference forms cannot be completed by family or friends. Directions for completion are included in the Application packet- See Appendix B.

15. Can I submit my application in person?

The OTA program has transitioned to an electronic application system. Please see the link to apply for the OTA program. [OTA Online Admission Portal Link](#).

16. Do you have any non-traditional students in the program?

Yes, the OTA program admits students from various backgrounds, including those who may have had a previous career.

17. Do any of the required prerequisites have to be taken within a certain time period?

Prerequisites must be completed before the start of the program. Preferably prerequisite courses would have been completed at the time of submitting your application. However, if 1-2 courses are in progress, your application will still be processed. Prerequisites (A&P

I and II) should not have been taken more than five years ago. However, certain circumstances such as a second career will be considered. It is highly recommended to complete all A&P courses upon submitting your application.

18. I have to work throughout the program. Can I take the program part-time?

No. Due to the progression and sequence of the program, it is not offered at part-time status. There are clinical experiences embedded in the curriculum as well as 16 weeks of full time clinical experience required at the end of the didactic portion of the program.

19. What if I want to re-apply for the program?

Many students reapply and are encouraged to do so. You will need to complete a new application with all new documents and note on your application that you are reapplying. If observation hours were completed within two years of re-applying, you may resubmit those forms. Applicants should have copies of all materials initially submitted to resubmit certain documents of application.

20. Is the OTA program an online program?

No. The San Jacinto College OTA program is a face to face program. The program will only implement hybrid (online and on campus lab) or full online on a schedule if community and government officials place a state of emergency due to local, state, or national emergencies. Students are notified ahead of time if changes to instruction is required.

21. Do all my vaccinations need to be complete before applying?

No. Please see the application packet's Immunization and Health Screen/Drug Screen section.

22. Do I have to take the COVID-19 vaccine to be a part of the OTA program?

Please see the COVID-19 Vaccine statement under IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH SCREEN/DRUG SCREEN on page 5 of the application packet.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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