Master of Science (Occupational Therapy)

SCHOLAR STREAM

Information for Students

2017

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
Department of Occupational Therapy
**Introduction**

The Scholar Stream offers a select group of MSc (OT) students the opportunity to acquire valuable research skills and experience, participate as a member of an established or emerging research team, and make an original contribution to the knowledge-base of the profession.

Students in the Scholar Stream will develop skills that are applicable to any practice setting. The Scholar Stream is for students who (i) have an interest in research, including the application of research to enhance clinical practice; (ii) are interested in contributing to an active research program in fields as diverse as childhood disability, healthy ageing, mental health, human rights, neurophysiology, chronic pain and bariatric care; and/or, (iii) think that they may be interested in pursuing a higher degree (PhD) in the future. Not all students will be interested in pursuing a PhD. However, for those who are interested or become so, the skills and experience acquired will afford them a head start.

The Scholar Stream represents a commitment by the Department of Occupational Therapy to fostering a research culture, building research capacity, and enriching the MSc (OT) experience for students with outstanding academic records, and a want for challenge.

Students who are selected for the MSc (OT) Scholar Stream will (1) complete a research internship (≈96 hours over two years); (2) participate in monthly Seminars (Year 1 Winter Term and Year 2 Fall Term); and, (3) complete an independent inquiry, under supervision.

Students who are selected for the MSc (OT) Scholar Stream will receive a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) in Year 1 (≈ $2000) and Year 2 (≈ $2000) of the MSc (OT) program.

**Course Requirements**

Instead of taking 3 elective modules, Scholar Stream students will register in at least one module (1 credit) and Advanced Topics in OT Research and Practice (OCCTH 699) in Year 1 Winter Term and Year 2 Fall Term (2 x 1 credits). Scholar stream students will also register in OCCTH 900 (6 credits) instead of OCCTH 903 (3 credits) in Year 2 Intersession.

**Admission to the Scholar Stream**

Early in Year 1, MSc (OT) students will be invited to submit an expression of interest (EOI). In their EOI students will tell us about their research experience and/or interests, and why they are applying for the Scholar Stream. Places in the Scholar Stream are limited: Admission will be based on student GPA, EOI and follow-up interview.

**EOI Deadline: September 15th, 2017.**

Expressions of interest should be submitted by email to Dr Dawn MacRitchie (dawn.macritchie@ualberta.ca)

Places in the Scholar Stream are limited: Admission will be based on student GPA, EOI and follow-up interview. The interview will explore the student’s research interests, prior research experiences and academic strengths. One purpose of the interview is to determine whether a match can be made between the candidates and potential supervisors.
The Scholar Stream affords students the opportunity to engage in supervised research in a team setting. Scholar Stream students will develop competences in the following areas:

- Applying theory and appraising evidence
- Formulating a research question and/or hypotheses
- Designing a rigorous strategy of inquiry
- Implementing a research plan and carrying it through to completion
- Analysing and interpreting research findings
- Orally defending their work
- Writing for publication

(1) Research Internship

Scholar stream students will be embedded within an established or emerging research team, participate in team meetings, and contribute at least 96 hours of research assistance. Depending on the needs of the research team, students may be asked to conduct literature searches, participate in data collection, or enter and analyse data.

(2) Monthly Seminars (OCCTH 699)

Scholar Stream students will enrol in Advanced Topics in OT Research and Practice (OCCTH 699) in Year 1 Winter Term and Year 2 Fall Term. This course comprises a series of thought-provoking readings and monthly seminars exploring cutting edge science and scholarship with leading figures in OT and related fields.

(3) Independent Inquiry and Treatise (OCCTH 900)

Scholar Stream students will complete an independent inquiry and treatise, under supervision. In most instances, this inquiry will be nested within a larger research project directed by the student’s supervisor. The inquiry will culminate in a treatise that has two major components: (i) a review of theory and research pertinent to the topic; and (ii) the write-up of the student’s own inquiry.

Examination for OCCTH900

Scholar Stream students will submit a treatise for examination and orally defend their work. There is no minimum or maximum word limit. However, the approximate length of the treatise will be 10,000-15,000 words. The treatise will have three parts: preliminary materials, the body of the treatise, and appendices. See Appendix 1 for details.
**Timeline**

**Year 1 Fall Term:** Students are admitted into the Scholar stream and negotiate a plan for their research internship and assistantship with their supervisor.

**Year 1 Winter Term:** Students will enrol in Advanced Topics in OT Research and Practice I (OCCTH 699). Each student will participate in research team meetings and activities.

**Year 1 Intersession (Spring/Summer):** Students apply for ethics approval if required. Students may also complete their assistantship (or part thereof), and commence data collection.

**Year 2 Fall Term:** Students will enrol in Advanced Topics in OT Research and Practice II (OCCTH 699), commence their review of related theory and research, and may commence or continue data collection, under supervision.

**Year 2 Winter Term:** Students continue their research and commence write-up, and participate in research team meetings and activities.

**Year 2 Intersession (Spring/Summer):** Students register in OCCTH900, complete their treatise and orally defend their work.
APPENDIX 1. TREATISE FORMAT

(1) Preliminary materials
   i. Title page
   ii. Acknowledgements
   iii. Abstract
   iv. Table of contents
   v. List of Tables
   vi. List of figures

(1) Body of the treatise
   i. Introduction, including a succinct statement of the research problem, a summation of the inquiry (e.g., approach and methods), and discussion of the scope and significance of the inquiry.
   ii. Review of theory and research (completed in OCCTH900). The review will be written to the style and specifications, including word limit, of a Journal to which it might be submitted.
   iii. Write-up of original research (completed in OCCTH900). The report will be written to the style and specifications, including word limit, of a Journal to which it might be submitted.

(3) Appendices
   i. Search strategy and critical review forms (if applicable)
   ii. A copy of the 'guidelines for authors' for the target journals.
   iii. Ethics approval, participant information sheets and consent forms (if appropriate)
Notes:

Year 3 Fall Term: Sept. 5–Oct. 27 / 7 weeks (OCCTH 528 *3 Field Work)
Scholar Stream Students MUST successfully complete two sections of OCCTH 699. OCCTH 699 #1: Year 1 Winter OCCTH 699 #2: Year 2 Fall
Scholar Stream Students MUST successfully complete one Student Selected Module (OCCTH 543). OCCTH 543 can be taken at one of the following times: Year 1 Intercession Year 2 Winter Year 2 Intercession
Scholar Stream Students take an extra 3 credits to complete the program