

# University of Pittsburgh - MSPO FAQ SHEET

## **What degree is required to enter the program?**

The MSPO program accepts students from all backgrounds. While the majority of students have degrees in the Health Sciences field, this is not required for acceptance. We look for well-rounded candidates who have completed all pre- requisites and more importantly 250+ observation hours.

## **How many students are accepted each year?**

24 students are accepted each fall.

## **When does the application process begin?**

Students may begin applying in July, with the application portal closing on December 31st of each year. Application review will begin immediately in January, with acceptances finalized by April 1.

## **When should I apply?**

The majority of students apply during the fall of their senior year. Some students choose to take a gap year and obtain observation hours during this time. These students should then apply during the fall of said gap year.

## **Does this program require a supplemental application?**

No. Our application is strictly through OPCAS. All materials must be submitted directly to your OPCAS application, except for your GRE scores. Your GRE scores should be sent electronically to the University of Pittsburgh, using code 2927. **Any materials sent directly to the program will not be considered towards your acceptance.**

## **Can I substitute a pre-requisite for a different class?**

Any course substitutions must be reviewed and approved by the Program Director. Please send all questions regarding course substitutions to the Paige Altman, Education and Training Manager for RST ([rstinfo@shrs.pitt.edu](mailto:rstinfo@shrs.pitt.edu))

## **Do I really need 250 observation hours?**

Yes. Students who obtain at least 250 observation hours enter the program with a better idea of the field, as well as, the hand skills and fabrication basics to ensure a smooth transition from student to clinician. If you plan to apply to the program with less than 250 hours, please state when you plan to earn the remaining hours on your OPCAS application.

## **How do I set-up observation hours with a clinic?**

Find a clinic in your area and call them. State your need to earn these observation hours and see what they can offer. Be persistent! If you truly want to be part of this field, you have to work your way up! If you need assistance finding a clinic in your area, visit [www.abcop.org](http://www.abcop.org).

## **When will I hear back regarding my status (accepted/declined)?**

Applications are reviewed once the University opens following the winter holiday. The month of January is reserved for this review period. Applicants can expect to hear an update regarding their status AFTER February 1st. All communication regarding your application will be emailed to the address on file with OPCAS. While the program appreciates your eagerness regarding your acceptance status, repeatedly emailing or calling program representatives will not accelerate this process.

**Can I take this program part-time?**

No. Accepted students must be enrolled full-time for five consecutive semesters, or 22-months.

**Are scholarships or financial aid available?**

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences offers many yearly scholarships. Outside Prosthetic and Orthotic groups also offer scholarships. It is up to the interested candidate to seek out these opportunities and apply. Financial aid is also available. Again, this responsibility falls to the student when filing appropriate documents.

**Is housing available?**

No. The University of Pittsburgh does not offer graduate housing. The majority of students live in apartments or townhomes, approximately 10-15 minutes from Bakery Square.

**Do students have to take any classes on main campus?**

Yes. Several night classes are taken on main campus.

**Are distance-learning courses offered?**

Yes. Students will take one online course, during their final semester in the program.

**15. Does the University help me earn a Residency after graduation?**

Yes. Because we require clinical hours, the program has been very successful in setting up student Residencies based off these clinical sites. Currently, we have a 100% Residency placement rating.

**Does the program assist with board certification?**

Your program is structured to fit NCOPE's board exam requirements. A comprehensive exam is scheduled during your fourth term and is set-up in a style similar to that of your board exams. Passing this exam is a mandatory graduation requirement.