Indiana State University
College of Health and Human Services
Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation
M.S. Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy Program

Vision: The Occupational Therapy program will be recognized for empowering individuals to become highly skilled occupation-based professionals that focus on interprofessional practice in multiple environments, emphasizing rural and underserved communities. The program will graduate individuals qualified to become OT practitioners respected in the community for their excellence in practice, professionalism in the therapeutic environment, and professional responsibility.

Mission: The mission of the Occupational Therapy program is to provide competent health care providers who possess basic skills as a health care provider, consultant, educator, manager, researcher, and advocate for the profession and the consumer. In addition the program seeks to improve patient access and quality care for rural and underserved populations through interprofessional education.

In achieving its mission, and that of the University, the School of Occupational Therapy will:

- Demonstrate the responsiveness of Indiana State University to the needs of the community (local, regional, national, international). The Western Indiana Health Professions Task Force identified the need for occupational therapy in the Wabash Valley and beyond. The ISU OT program will empower students to become the highly skilled evidence and occupation-based professionals.
- Reinforce the University's commitment to service. A facet of the curricular theme, professional responsibility facilitates the students' involvement with the needs of the community. The theme reinforces the attitudes of caring and respect that are consistent with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for the American Occupational Therapy Association.
- Provide experiences in the classroom, laboratory, and therapeutic environments that provide exposure to traditional and emerging practice areas. Thus, expanding their knowledge and encouraging students to engage in creative and innovative thinking.
- In preparation for future practice, provide opportunities for interprofessional collaboration.

SECTION 2

Curriculum

Statement of Learning Philosophy

The learning philosophy of the Indiana State University Occupational Therapy Program is consistent with the published philosophical base of the profession:

Occupational therapy education is grounded in the belief that humans are complex beings engaged in a dynamic process of interaction with the physical, social, temporal, cultural, psychological, spiritual, and virtual environments. Through active engagement within the internal and external environments, humans evolve, change, and adapt. Occupational therapy educators advocate the use of occupation to facilitate health promoting growth, change, and/or adaptation with the goal of participation in meaningful occupation that supports survival, self-actualization, occupational balance, and quality of life.

The profession of occupational therapy is unique and dynamic, grounded in core principles of occupation, and is influence by emerging knowledge and technologies. Thus, the education of future occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants must consistently reinforce the development of new knowledge supporting the use of occupation, the application of clinical reasoning based on evidence, the necessity for lifelong learning, and the improvement of professional knowledge and skills.

Occupational therapy education promotes competence through educational experiences that foster the occupational therapists' and occupational therapy assistants' practice potential and scholarship development. Occupational therapy educators use active learning that engages the learning in a collaborative process that builds on prior knowledge and experience and integrates professional academic knowledge, experiential learning, clinical reasoning, and self-reflection. Occupational therapy education promotes integration of philosophical and theoretical knowledge, values, beliefs, ethics, and technical skills for broad application to practice in order to improve human participation and quality of life for those individuals with and without impairments and limitations.

The occupational therapy education process emphasizes continuing critical inquiry in order that occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants be well prepared to function and thrive in the dynamic environments of a diverse and multicultural society, using the power of occupation as the primary method of evaluation, intervention, and health promotion. (AOTA, 2007, p.511)

At Indiana State University, the occupation of learning is a complex adaptive response comprised of infinite interactions between student abilities and the context in which learning occurs. Students enrolled in the ISU OT program are viewed as occupational beings with a desire to master the requirements of becoming entry level occupational therapists. ISU OT Faculty is charged with developing learning environments that engage students in goal attainment. In meeting this charge, the ISU OT faculty must address the breadth of

services (domain) as well as the processes of occupational therapy practice!

The ideal learning environment provides a graded contextual challenge that facilitates mastery as indicated by Bloom's Taxonomy. An environment consisting of the delivery of content and evaluation of knowledge is an important aspect of learning. However, solely relying on learning about occupational therapy is limiting. We believe that students become invested in the process when they are allowed to engage in opportunities. The ability to "do" facilitates the adaptive response and integration of what they have learned. Over time, a transformation in thinking and processing occurs with the accumulation of constructive learning opportunities.

ISU has incorporated a learning philosophy that uses Bloom's taxonomy as the basis for teaching foundational knowledge through high-order thinking by addressing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. To accomplish this educational task, we have incorporated numerous learning theories to address Bloom's domains, as well as differing types of course content, learner focus and desired outcomes. Our objective in teaching is to empower students to become life - long learners and good citizens by enforcing educational accountability, learning to learn and how to access information. Students in our classes are not passive learners and are required to engage in activities. Our teaching philosophy blends cognitive learning theories (Smith & Ragan) constructivist (Kolb), social cognitive (Bandura), cognitive dissonance (Bruner, Festinger) and cognitive flexibility (Spiro) theories.

In order to affect change or growth experiences and knowledge accrual, an emotional relationship must be present to connect the experience to the information (Behaviorist: Skinner, Watson and Thorndike). To provide those emotional relationships with information and knowledge we enact all the theories mentioned above to facilitate activities such as games (jeopardy, life, aggravation, monopoly etc...), group learning, hands -on experiences, real life case reports/study and experiences and student directed learning. Ready access to information via the web for today's millennial students means that creating a value for retaining information for immediate recall may be difficult. Combining real life situations with self-accountable classroom activities, such as using the lap top classroom to have students answer their own questions, provides a basis for student directed learning and resonance of information through an emotional connection. Student engagement and excitement in the classroom is a good barometer of educational awareness and knowledge transition. The desired outcome of the interactions between the learner and the deliberate learning environment is that ISU students attain their goal of becoming entry level occupational therapists. In the process of attaining their goals, students become professionals who are collaborative with individual's seeking services as well as with other professional disciplines who deliver care. Students/future professionals are intrinsically challenged to excel in therapeutic practice demonstrating the responsibilities associated with the emerging role of an occupational therapist.

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