Facilitating Pre-Occupational Therapy Student Success Using a Developmental Course Sequence: The Occupational Therapy Seminars

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Introduction

- DUC: Small private university
- Liberal arts and professional programs
- Total enrollment: 2100
- San Rafael, California
- OT Programs: BSMS (125) and ELM (90)
Presentation Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate the rationale for a developmentally-based multi-semester course series designed to help pre-OT majors prepare for graduate professional studies.

2. Understand the application of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model of Human Development to course development and implementation.

3. Identify appropriate developmentally-based instructional activities and assignments designed to help students meet CSLO’s.

4. Consider how this model might be applied to their program.
Background and Rationale

- Previously: 1-semester course: Intro to OT - freshman year, 2 units
- Issues with retention and progression
- Lack of broader context to consider occupation
Challenges of College Students

Life skills: social support, sleep, diet, exercise, money management

Academic skills: study skills, test taking, time management, writing

First generation: family support, economic support, academic preparation

Mental health: depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, role transition
Helping Students Succeed

• Integrated advising
• Co-curricular programs
• Early identification and referral
• Attend to the “whole person”
Theory of Human Ecology: Bronfenbrenner

• Developmental educational theory
• Humans grow as a result of experiences
• Person-environment interactions are reciprocal
• People develop through experiences in immediate environment
Ecology of College Readiness
OT Seminars

- Occupation as Therapy: Macro
- Occupation and Community: Exo
- Occupations of Others: Meso
- Occupation and Self: Micro
Situated Learning and Learning Communities

• Students learn best via apprenticeship model in “real life” settings

• Transformative learning communities focus on developing and sharing resources to benefit all
Occupational Science

- Humans as occupational beings
- Study of normal occupations across the lifespan
- Key concepts of occupation
The OT Seminars

• OT 1001: Occupation and Self
• OT 1002: Occupations of Others
• OT 1003: Occupation and Community
• OT 1004: Occupation as Therapy
OT 1001: Occupation and Self

• Focus: Transition to college, student occupations, self-care and wellness, introduction to OTPF, co-facilitation with integrated advisor, introduction to activity analysis
OT 1001: Activities/Assignments

• Occupations of students, transition to college, identification of resources
• Occupational narrative, self-assessment, and plan
• Learning styles quiz
• Intro to OTPF
OT 1002
Occupations of Others

• Focus: Occupations across the lifespan,
OT 1002
Activities/Assignments

• Occupational interview
• Occupational observation
• Book report- first person account
• Therapeutic communication skills
OT 1003
Occupation and Community

• Focus: Campus and community affiliation groups, occupational justice
OT 1003
Key Activities/Assignments

• Community event analysis paper
• Occupational justice paper
• The OT history overview
• Professional behaviors
OT 1004
Occupation as Therapy

• Focus: Introduction to OT practice, preparation to enter professional OT program, understanding of professional behavior expectations for OT program.
OT 1004
Activities /Assignments

• Medical terminology
• APA format /professional writing
• OT practice panels: guest speakers
• Student self-care strategies
• Petition to progress
• Volunteer work
OT Seminars: General Outcomes

• Increased student retention
• Development of cohesive cohorts
• Early referral as needed
• Exit plans for unqualified students
Lessons Learned

• Meet weekly for continuity
• Use regular, not adjunct faculty
• Use OT students to do presentations
• Invite recent grads as guest speakers
Next Steps

• Integrate with Dominican Experience, General Education
• E-portfolios, reflection
• Occupational Science focus
• Data collection/research on outcomes
Questions, comments

• Thanks you! (quotes)
References