Purposeful living: an introductory occupational therapy course

Erin M. Blythe
The University of Toledo

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Purposeful Living: An Introductory Occupational Therapy Course

Erin M. Blythe

Faculty Mentor: Beth Ann Hatkevich, Ph.D., MOT

Department of Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program

The University of Toledo Health Science Campus

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Note: This document describes a Capstone Dissemination project reflecting an individually planned experience conducted under faculty and site mentorship. The goal of the Capstone Experience is to provide occupational therapy doctoral students with unique experiences whereby they can demonstrate leadership and autonomous decision-making in preparation for enhanced future practice as occupational therapists. As such, the Capstone Dissemination is not formal research.
Purposeful Living: An Introductory Occupational Therapy Course

*Program Philosophy*

The University of Toledo’s College of Health Science and Human Service maintains a continuous commitment to education, research, and service. The Occupational Therapy Doctorate program offered within the College is dedicated to cultivating skilled therapy professionals and future leaders within the field. Strong emphasis in the areas of research, advocacy, practice and autonomous decision-making drives the success of students within the program and prepares highly competent occupational therapists for service delivery in a variety of settings and with a diverse range of populations.

The occupational therapy program philosophy reflects the historical foundations of the field of occupational therapy. The term “occupation” is at the core of occupational therapy and subsequently viewed and central to the program at The University of Toledo; this term can be defined as the active doing of something that has meaning and purpose to the individual. Emphasis in this UT program is strongly focused on helping students to understand the value of occupation in promoting health and wellbeing.

The occupational therapy program recognizes the importance of training future professionals and holds high standards for the students within the program. Core knowledge in the areas of biology, psychology, sociology, and other health-related fields helps to develop professionals that will view clients holistically and with a strong understanding of the internal and external forces that impact one’s ability to optimally function in daily occupations.
The University of Toledo’s occupational therapy program has established strong relations with practicing therapists in the community. With an aim to complement coursework, fieldwork experiences have been established for each semester throughout the entirety of the program. Each experience is designed to build upon previous experiences, beginning with observation and working up to hands-on planning and implementation of therapeutic occupations. In addition to learning about the intervention strategies while on fieldwork, students have experiential opportunities to encounter a variety of diagnoses and practice the use of empathy and therapeutic use of self.

For the complete description of the program philosophy for the Occupational Therapy Program at The University of Toledo, please visit the web page at: http://hsc.utoledo.edu/healthsciences/ot.

Foundational Philosophy of Education

Education is not merely a process of intellectual growth, where the comprehension and attainment of knowledge are heralded but should also involve the development of social, emotional, and physical maturation. There are several crucial aspects that must be in place to provide effective and excellent learning environments. A classroom community that is committed to fostering growth in all of the previously listed areas is absolutely essential to making the intended strides and gains with students. A learner needs to be provided opportunities to take ownership of his education but can only do so if there are responsibilities and expectations. Just as an occupational therapist helps clients identify ways to actively participate in his daily occupations, so does a teacher help a student discover the keys to his own learning; the student must actively participate and unlock the doors to knowledge himself. As such, it is vital that educators
believe in the possibilities that exist in each student, encouraging and harnessing the potential to help each individual succeed.

The introductory course is developed with the intention of embracing the philosophy of the Occupational Therapy Program at The University of Toledo. The course maintains a central focus on the concept of “occupation”, continuing to maintain a commitment to the foundations of occupational therapy practice. The introductory course serves the program philosophy through advocating for the profession of occupational therapy and striving to meet the call of the Centennial Vision for the field. The American Occupational Therapy Association’s Centennial Vision states, “We envision that occupational therapy is a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, and evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society’s occupational needs.” Establishing availability of the introductory course to all undergraduate students at The University of Toledo enables the program to reach a multitude of discipline areas, educating future professionals in other areas of practice about the value of occupations and occupational therapy. Additionally, by enticing students in various areas of study with the lure of opportunities for self-growth and self-reflection, the course will expand efforts to recruit diverse groups of students for the occupational therapy program in the future classes.

The Occupational Therapy Program at The University of Toledo develops the student learner’s understanding of key concepts for both knowledge and practice through a variety of different learning techniques. The introductory course will incorporate the methods of teaching that are highly valued within the program, including, but not limited to: fieldwork experience, hands-on practice, self-reflection, independent and self-directed
projects, and other methods that actively engage students in the learning process. It is vital that the introductory course establishes and maintains a strong relationship to the graduate level coursework of the Occupational Therapy Program, spreading an awareness of the program and field of occupational therapy through students who pursue other career areas, and building strong foundations for future program applicants.

Course Materials

A wide range of course materials was developed in the creation of this dissemination project. For the purposes of the dissemination manuscript, the course syllabus and instructor evaluation have been included to illustrate the concepts and focus as intended for the introductory course. The course has been titled, “Purposeful Living: The Role of Occupational Therapy” because the intention is to develop in students an understanding of the role occupational therapists play in helping people to live an active life that takes aim at fulfilling an individual’s goal, or purpose.

The introductory course was not implemented during the Capstone Experience. The teaching experiences afforded throughout the Capstone Practicum included guest lecturing at The University of Toledo Occupational Therapy Program and Owens Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program as well as an opportunity to serve as instructor of an Occupational Therapy Assistant lab. The action plan included in the present manuscript reflects the student and instructor feedback from the Occupational Therapy Assistant lab that was led by the graduate student.
College of Health Science and Human Service

Course Syllabus

Program: Occupational Therapy
Course Name: Purposeful Living: The Role of Occupational Therapy
Credits: 2 semester hours
Contact Hours: 1 lecture, 2 lab
Level Course Offered: Undergraduate
Semester(s) Course Offered: Fall, Spring

Catalog Description:
Introduces the occupational therapy profession and occupational therapy’s role in maintaining functional daily living. Explore your daily occupations through self-reflection and develop strategies for personal growth.

Expanded Course Description:
Explore what it means to be human. This course examines the human desire to be occupied through doing things (occupations) that are meaningful and purposeful to the individual. Gain insight into the value of uniquely tailored daily living and the impacts of occupation on health and well-being. Through analysis of your daily occupations along with an exploration of personal development strategies, this course will help shape your understanding of human occupation. Includes basic information about the occupational therapy profession as well as the examination of the occupational therapy process as a means of directing a client’s participation in occupations selected to develop, maintain, or restore functional daily living.

Prerequisite(s): None
Co-Requisites: None
Instructor(s) Name: Beth Ann Hatkevich, MOT, OTR/L, Clinical Associate Professor
Office Location: Collier Building, Room #4222
Office Hours: By appointment
Campus Phone: (419) 383 – 5848
Campus E-mail: bethann.hatkevich@utoledo.edu
Additional Contact Information: None
**Required Textbook(s) and Materials:**


2. Course Handouts

**Suggested Textbooks:** None

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Describe the occupational therapy profession and process.
2. Clearly communicate the meaning of the term “occupation” and roles of an occupational therapy practitioner.
3. Discuss the educational and professional criteria for occupational therapists.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and practice of empathetic understanding and disability awareness.
5. Develop and implement strategies to achieve personal goals.
6. Analyze the influence of environmental factors on functioning and completion of daily occupations.
7. Examine, compare, and discuss differences in sensory needs for optimal functioning in daily occupations.

**Teaching/Learning Experiences:**

A variety of learning experiences and teaching techniques will be utilized. Experiences include, but are not limited to, large group instruction, small and large group discussions, hands-on experiential learning, site visits, structured assignments.

**Attendance:**

Attendance and timeliness is expected for each class. Students are to communicate anticipated absences in advance, in keeping with professional behavior, by contacting the course instructor (see contact information on front of syllabus). Students are responsible for missed assignments. Arriving more than five (5) minutes late or leaving early from class will be considered an absence per incident. Absences beyond two (2) occurrences will result in a reduction of 5% of the final grade for each occurrence. Excessive absenteeism and tardiness may result in a failing grade as a result of not meeting course objectives.
Class Participation:
Preparation and active participation is expected for each class.

Classroom Courtesy:
- No cellular phones will be allowed in class or on site visits.
- Demonstrate self-respect and respect for others.

Assignments and Grading:
Learning outcomes will be determined through:
- Six (6) Quizzes 150 points (25 ea)
- “Where Does Your Time Go”/
  Daily Occupation Charts 25 points
- Personal Goal 50 points
- Goal Progress
  - Two (2) check-ins with instructor 50 points (25 ea)
- Final Goal Report 25 points
- Environmental Challenge 25 points
- Site Visit 50 points
- Site Visit Presentation 50 points
- Reflections 75 points (25 ea)
  - 1. What is OT?
  - 2. Disability awareness
  - 3. OT and me – a good fit?

Total: 500 points

Late Work Policy:
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period as posted in the course schedule.
Late assignments will only be accepted at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading Scale:
A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79%
D = 60 – 69%
F < 60%
**General Information:**
For more information on FERPA, Cheating and Plagiarism, Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes and Student Code of Conduct, please refer to the appropriate section of the University of Toledo website.

**ADA Statement:**
If you require special accommodations because of a condition that meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see the instructor. Special accommodations are made only with documented need and with institutional approval. Please see the instructor or Department Chair for more information. Faculty expect and encourage students to inform them at the beginning of the semester of any individual learning needs related to classroom participation and performance evaluations (i.e. exams, presentations, demonstrations). Accommodation of individual requests will be based upon appropriate documentation in keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and institutional policies.

**Academic Support Services:**
A combination of services is provided to students to both enhance the educational experience and improve student growth. Services include but are not limited to:

1. Library Services
2. Testing Center
3. Campus Computer Lab
4. Tutoring
5. Writing Center

**Note:**
The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as deemed necessary and will communicate such amendment to the students in the course.
## Course Topics & Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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</table>
| Week 1 | Aug. 26 | Lecture:  
- Introduction to course  
- Review assignments and expectations  
Lab:  
- “Trading Places” (icebreaker)  
- Set rules  
- Define “occupation” | • Read Ch. 1, 2, & 3 for next week |
| Week 2 | Sept. 2  | Lecture:  
- What is OT?  
- OT and healthy people  
- OT History  
Lab:  
- YOUR roles and occupations  
- The big picture | • Read Ch. 5 & 7 for next week  
• Begin - “Where does your time go?” (1 weekday and 1 weekend) |
| Week 3 | Sept. 9  | Lecture:  
- The OT Process  
- Where do OT’s work?  
Lab:  
- Site visit options and selection of sites  
- Expectations for site visits  
- Multiple Intelligences & Personality | • Review site visit options |
| Week 4 | Sept. 16 | Lecture:  
- Pulling it together – Goal Development  
Lab:  
- Personal goal area refinement  
- Preliminary goal development | • DUE - “Where does your time go?”  
• Read Ch. 6 for next week |
| Week 5 | Sept. 23 | Lecture:  
- Goal setting in healthcare and OT  
Lab:  
- Finalize Goals  
- Develop goal tracking methods | • Begin goal charting! |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture:</th>
<th>Lab:</th>
<th>DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>You: A sensory being</td>
<td>Brain Class – gustatory, olfactory, auditory, visual</td>
<td>Reflection #1</td>
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<td>Engine charts</td>
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<td>Read Ch. 9 for next week</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Oct. 7</td>
<td>You: A sensory being (continued)</td>
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<td>Read Ch. 8 for next class</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Brain Class – vestibular, proprioceptive, tactile</td>
<td>(Oct. 21)</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Oct. 14</td>
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<td><em>Fall Break</em></td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Frequently treated diagnoses in OT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goal check-in #1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>completed prior to today</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Frequently treated diagnoses in OT (continued)</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Environmental factors</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>A day in the life…</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>Site Visit Presentations</td>
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</table>
| Week 14 | Nov. 25 | Lecture:  
|         |         | • OT education & pursuing a career in OT  
|         |         | • Is OT right for me?  
| Week 15 | Dec. 2  | Lecture:  
|         |         | • UT OTD overview  
|         |         | Lab:  
|         |         | • Student goal reports  
|         |         | • DUE – Goal check-in #2 completed prior to today!  
| Week 16 | Dec. 9  | Lecture:  
|         |         | • Course Summary and Review  
|         |         | Lab:  
|         |         | • Student goal reports  
|         |         | • DUE – Reflection #3 |
Midterm Feedback and Evaluation

Instructor: _____________________________
Course: _____________________________

Instructions: The primary purpose of this evaluation is to help your instructor improve her teaching, and therefore to help you improve your learning. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated. Please circle your responses. Most questions on this form use the following scale:

| Strongly Disagree (SD) | Disagree (D) | Agree (A) | Strongly Agree (SA) | Not Applicable (NA) |

General Questions:
1. The instructor is consistently well prepared and organized for class.  
2. The instructor speaks clearly and understandably.  
3. The instructor makes me feel free to ask questions.  
4. The instructor grasps and responds to students’ questions and comments.  
5. The instructor never intimidates or embarrasses students.  
6. The instructor’s examples and illustrations are clear and concise.  
7. The instructor is able to give alternative explanations when needed.  
8. The instructor is familiar with concepts covered in the lecture and laboratory time.  
9. The instructor’s use of visual aids and hands-on experiences is effective.  
10. The instructor encourages students to participate actively in class time.  
11. The instructor manages class time effectively.  
12. The instructor is readily available for consultation with students.

Grading Questions:
13. The instructor returns students’ work in a reasonable time.  
14. The instructor’s feedback on assignments is sufficiently detailed to help me learn.

Other Questions:
15. I sought one-on-one assistance from the instructor.  
16. I prepared thoroughly for each class period.  
17. I have understood the basic principles of this course.  
18. I am pleased with my learning and performance in this course so far.

I would like the instructor to: (check all that apply)

[ ] Give more introduction to each class
______ Give shorter introductions to each class
______ Lecture less
______ Speak more slowly
______ Speak louder
______ Clarify the objectives of each class more
______ Summarize the main points of the techniques/classwork more often
______ Discuss more concrete or "real life" examples
______ Use visual aids more
______ Encourage students to respond to each other's comments more
______ Be more open to different points of view
______ Other? ______________________________________
______ Other? ______________________________________

Comments:
21. What are strong points about your instructor's teaching style? In other words, what do you want him/her
to continue to do in the future (in class, lab time, or during office hours)?

22. What specific suggestions do you have to help your instructor improve her teaching?

23. Overall, what are the strengths of this course? In other words, what features or teaching methods
contribute significantly to your learning?

24. What would you suggest to improve the course? For example, do you want to elaborate on any of your
responses on the previous page?
Owens Community College

Department of Occupational Therapy

Action Plan for Curricular Evaluation

**Evaluation Period:** Midterm

**Semester and Year:** Winter 2008

**Instructor:** Erin M. Blythe

**Course Number and Title:** OTA 121 (Lab) OTA Practice Skills II

**Course Strengths:**

Feedback for the course is positive overall. Many students shared in course feedback that the use of powerpoint and handouts provided to explain course material are useful and valued. The students respond well to active learning and appreciate the enthusiasm of the instructor for the course topics. The students additionally describe that the materials has been presented in creative and interactive ways that keep their attention. The students have responded well to the variety of teaching and learning methods that have included lectures, hands-on learning, group work, exploration, and peer presentations. Several students stated in course feedback that they felt the instruction helped to clarify and elaborate on materials, and that the instructor was willing to answer lingering questions. The students noted an appreciation for having explanations presented in a variety of ways to reach a stronger understanding for the various learning styles.

**Course Recommendations – Student Feedback:**

There are several recommendations pertaining to the course itself as well as some specifically geared toward the instructor. Some students noted that there is a great deal to
cover in a seemingly short amount of time and that though the course is engaging, at
times the class runs a few minutes over the allotted time. The course feedback shows that
many of the students would like more real-life examples incorporated into the lessons.
This would help students learn how the material is applied in real situations and bring
greater understanding of why it is important to learn as well. Some students additionally
noted that it would be helpful to re-cap important, key points from a lesson. It is noted
that some students commented on wanting more feedback on written assignments. There
were several students who also noted that the instructor is at times soft-spoken and may
be difficult to hear.

**Course Recommendations – Instructor:**

There are several important areas of focus for this course. One area of the course that I
feel is important to focus on in planning for the future includes the course assignments.
The students were flexible with the fact that some assignments changed over the course
of the semester due to necessity and schedule. The weekly review questions, though
tedious, were helpful in getting the students focused on key points of each chapter. It was
unclear whether students were truly reading the chapters fully or if they focused only on
locating the answers to the review questions. Course exams did not necessarily reflect
key areas of focus in each chapter or in other course materials. At times, given the gross
amount of material to cover as well as the time consuming nature of several chosen
learning experiences, the was insufficient time to review key concepts and ensure that the
students had a firm grasp of the material. Overall I feel that this has been an exciting,
engaging, and effective course for students and myself as well.
Action Plan to Implement Recommendations:

- Review course outline and assignments, making adjustments and changes that will incorporate the active, engaging learning that students have responded to this semester.
- Match real-life stories that parallel various lessons and will enhance student understanding of presented material as well as material from course readings.
- Outline key concepts from each chapter and weekly lesson, ensuring that a brief recap is succinct and clear.
- Utilizing the key concepts pulled from the course materials, review the course exam to ensure that these areas are the focus.
  - Write exam questions that incorporate more application of course material, replacing questions that focus on recall of specific statements and rote memorization.
- The instructor will work on projecting her voice and checking with students to ensure that her voice carries.