



RANGOS SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Occupational Therapy

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

DESCRIPTION OF CURRICULUM THREADS

The curriculum is designed to ensure that students develop their professional philosophy and requisite practice knowledge, skills and attitudes. This curriculum is sequenced to challenge our students to integrate knowledge and skills from the pre-professional phase into the professional then advanced profession phases. The sequence prepares students to become professionals, practice-scholars, servant-leaders and entry-level occupational therapy practitioners. The sequence for the curriculum is organized into six major curricular threads that reflect the “pillars” of our curriculum design. Each of these curricular threads are expanded upon below.

1. Practice Foundations
2. Person-Occupation-Environment Interaction and Performance Across the Life-Span
3. Health Care Delivery Systems and Equitable Population-Focused Services
4. Practice-Scholarship
5. Community Engaged Learning, Fieldwork Education and Doctoral Capstone Experience
6. Servant Leadership, Advocacy and Occupational Justice

Thread # 1 Practice Foundations: The curriculum is designed to provide students with a strong foundation across three key areas 1) human science, 2) profession knowledge, and 3) professional skills. For example, students complete rigorous coursework in anatomy, neuroanatomy, kinesiology and clinical conditions to support their understanding of human engagement and the impact of function and dysfunction on human occupation. In order to introduce students to the profession’s knowledge, they explore the history and current structure, organization and vision of the profession. Students are also introduced to occupational science concepts and learn to view the human developmental continuum through an occupational lens. Finally, students are introduced to key professional skills including group and interpersonal dynamics, activity analysis, professional information literacy and occupational performance evaluation.

Thread # 2 Person-Occupation-Environment Interaction and Performance Across the Life-Span:

A guiding component of the Department of Occupational Therapy's curriculum philosophy is that occupational performance is developed and enhanced by treating the "whole person" and attending to physical, psychological, social and cultural issues as influenced by the environment. Our students are trained to recognize occupation as the critical link between the person and their environment and to appreciate the impact of personal (e.g., spiritual, cultural, physical) and environmental (e.g., social, physical, political) influences on occupational function and performance. Our consistent focus on person-environment interaction as the dynamic process whereby an individual has the potential to influence their environment, and vice versa through the use of occupation and engagement in occupational roles is integrated throughout the curriculum. This focus on occupation and occupational performance as an integrated and

consistent theme in the curriculum ensures the graduates develop the capacity to critically examine the occupations people perform and enables them to use occupation as the medium to assist people to live their lives to the fullest extent possible. Occupational science, occupation-based practice models for related occupational performance and the remediation, compensation and adaptation of occupational performance are applied. Foundational client factor-oriented coursework is transformed into exploring the client's performance skills and activity demands found in addressing areas of occupation. The information is organized into biomechanical, psychological, neuromotor, sensory, cognitive and perceptual processes which are addressed in a life-span perspective. Students learn specific approaches to addressing problems in performing occupations within various contexts. Community engaged learning, fieldwork education and the doctoral capstone experience provide opportunities for students to apply this academic knowledge, skills and attitudes in various contexts and to build the clinical competencies required of an entry-level practitioner.

Thread # 3 Health Care Delivery Systems and Equitable Population-Focused Services: The person-occupation-environment is isolated if curriculum content is too heavily weighted toward client-factors and performance skills. Equally important, occupational therapy practitioners must be skilled to recognize and address professional, social, cultural, political, legislative, and economic factors influencing and even directing, certain occupational performance options and occupational therapy service delivery models. Reflecting on the environment and context, both local and global, as significant influences on individual occupations including choices and options begins early in the curriculum and is reinforced repeatedly. The impact of contextual and environmental factors of practice and service delivery systems becomes a more defined focus as students move through the curriculum and increasingly participate in community engaged learning and Level I and Level II Fieldwork offers students the opportunities to refocus on factors impacting health care delivery systems from increasingly informed perspectives. Learning events later in our curriculum such as group and individual grant writing projects, community and program needs assessments, and the doctoral capstone are designed to support students' abilities to integrate contemporary social, economic, political, geographic, and demographic factors that impact health care policies and advocate for occupational therapy services that address identified individual and population-based needs

Thread # 4 Practice Scholarship: Our practice scholarship initiative began over 20 years ago and reflects an intentional approach to socialize Duquesne University graduates with a personal and professional identity that prioritizes and advocates for a scholarly approach to practice and which equips them with the knowledge and skill sets to produce scholarly products that enhance the practice of occupational therapy. Our scholarship sequence begins early in the curriculum when students learn to access, interpret and critique occupational therapy and related literature. An expectation to apply research literature in clinical decision-making is a consistent component of every intervention-focused course. Students continue to build on practice scholarship knowledge and skills as they study research processes, including project design and data analysis procedures in courses that emphasize quantitative and qualitative approaches to measurement. Many students embark on supervised research projects with a faculty mentor before they earn their baccalaureate degree and all students design and implement small scale studies in their research courses and more focused scholarly projects via their doctoral capstone.

Thread # 5 Community Engaged Learning, Fieldwork Education and Doctoral Capstone

Experience: Learning by doing is a central value of occupational therapy. Community engaged learning is a core component of engaged and transformative learning and is integrated in the pre-professional and professional phases of the curriculum. For example, in pre-professional coursework, students may hone their ability to describe occupational therapy by creating occupational therapy video commercials and apply activity analysis principles by creating adaptive equipment for individuals who require adaptations to complete a meaningful occupation. In the professional phase students learn to administer evaluations by administering them with clinical and non-clinical populations and learn the varied group leadership roles by designing and implementing groups with appropriate populations within the local community. Fieldwork and the doctoral capstone experience extend this learning by doing to an even fuller and more skilled extent. Level I Fieldwork is integral to our program's curriculum design and integrated into our two clinical reasoning courses and a psychosocial intervention course. A two-semester role emerging community-based Level I FW sequence provides opportunities to learn more advanced needs assessment and program development. Level II Fieldwork provides students with advanced opportunities to integrate theory and skills learned in the classroom within the clinical and community settings. Site-specific assignments and reflective online assignments ensure congruence of the fieldwork experience with their academic preparation. The advanced practitioner phase of the curriculum includes a 14-week doctoral capstone experience where students develop in-depth knowledge in a focused area of study that are integral to acquiring deeper-practice scholar competencies as reflected in the program's curriculum design. The doctoral capstone experience and project directly connect occupational therapy practice with scholarship via the creation, implementation & evaluation of culminating projects. These continuous, sustained and in-depth hands on learning experiences are continuous, graded, and varied in depth and breadth and reflect our commitment to provide multiple avenues for students to practice the professional values, clinical reasoning, professional performance skills and application of professional knowledge consistent with the curriculum framework of our program.

Thread # 6 Servant Leadership, Advocacy, and Occupational Justice: A focus on servant leadership is a constant focus within our university and our curriculum places a heavy emphasis on leadership, specialty roles, and innovation and entrepreneurship focused on creating occupational therapy roles where none may currently exist or are emerging. The professional seminar / leadership course sequence exposes students to various leadership theories and roles in occupational therapy. Students engage in self-assessment to explore their own leadership style and design leadership development plans to guide their leadership trajectory from fieldwork to post-graduation. In later courses, students build upon their leadership knowledge and apply advanced theories of advocacy and ethics in healthcare in relation to current and future practice setting to develop advanced skills in advocacy and engaged citizenry. Local, national, and global health issues will be examined through an occupational justice framework in the context of social, cultural, genetic, economic, gender, and health-system influences on health and health policy. As students complete their Level II Fieldwork experiences, they also participate in an online, seminar course focused on synthesizing their experiences from fieldwork in relation to curriculum objectives, sharing their experience from fieldwork with peers and practitioners and considering specialty and other roles beyond a generalist. Students create and disseminate evidenced-based, interactive educational sessions that are made available to local professionals,

representing alumni, fieldwork educators and practitioners who are seeking accessible, quality professional development.

An overview of how the relationship between these curriculum threads and the curriculum design can be found in Table 1.

** Courses may be listed >once to reflect content focus

Table 1: Duquesne University, Occupational Therapy Department Curriculum Threads and Relationship to Curriculum Design

CURRICULUM THREAD/COURSE TITLE	COURSE #/CREDITS	PHASE
Practice Foundations		
Introduction to OT and Information Literacy	OCCT 150 (2)	Pre-professional
Anatomy & Lab	HLTS 315/L (5)	Pre-professional
Foundations and Concepts of Occupational Therapy	OCCT 305 (3)	Pre-professional
Occupational Performance Throughout the Lifespan	OCCT 310 (3)	Pre-professional
Fundamentals of Practice	OCCT 416 (3)	Pre-professional
Neuroscience	HLTS 503 (4)	Professional
Occupational Performance Evaluation	OCCT 535 (3)	Professional
Human Motion and Movement & Lab	OCCT 537/L (4)	Professional
Medical Conditions in OT	OCCT 548 (3)	Professional
Humans, Groups & Occupations	OCCT 518 (3)	Professional
Person-Occupation-Environment Interaction & Performance Across The Life-Span		
Foundations and Concepts of Occupational Therapy	OCCT 305 (3)	Pre-professional
Occupational Performance Throughout the Lifespan	OCCT 310 (3)	Pre-professional
Fundamentals of Practice	OCCT 416 (3)	Pre-professional
Neurosensorimotor & Function & Lab I	OCCT 519/L (4)	Professional
Neurosensorimotor Function & Lab II	OCCT 520/L (4)	Professional
Intervention Seminar & Lab	OCCT 522 (3)	Professional
Psychosocial Function & Lab	OCCT 525/L (4)	Professional
Biomechanical Function & Lab	OCCT 530/L(4)	Professional
Occupational Performance Perspectives & Lab	OCCT 545/L (3)	Professional
Community and Population Health	OCCT 560 (2)	Professional
Instructional Learning Theory and Technology I	OCCT 650 (1)	Advanced Professional
Healthcare Delivery & Equitable Population Focused Services		
Clinical Reasoning & FW I	OCCT 511 (3)	Professional
Clinical Reasoning & FW III	OCCT 512 (3)	Professional
Occupational Performance Perspectives & Lab	OCCT 545/L (3)	Professional
Environmental Adaptations & Rehabilitation Technology & Lab	OCCT 550/L (3)	Professional
Occupational Therapy Leadership and Administration	OCCT 561 (3)	Professional
Community and Population Programming	OCCT 565 (3)	Professional
Designing Effective Programs	OCCT 625 (3)	Advanced Professional
Practice Scholarship		
Evidence Based Practice	OCCT 541 (3)	Professional
Scholarship of Practice I	OCCT 533 (3)	Professional

Scholarship of Practice II	OCCT 532 (3)	Professional
Research Project I, II & III <i>*optional</i>	OCCT 610, 611, 612 (1 each)	Professional
Applying Evidence to Practice I, II	OCT 620/621 (3 credits total)	Advanced Professional
Practice Scholar Capstone I,II, III	OCT 635/645/655 (5 total)	Advanced Professional
Community Engaged Learning, Fieldwork Education and Doctoral Capstone		
Professional Seminar I	OCCT 422 (3)	Pre-Professional
Clinical Reasoning & FW I	OCCT 511 (3)	Professional
Clinical Reasoning & FW III	OCCT 512 (3)	Professional
Psychosocial Function & Lab & FW II	OCCT 525/L (4)	Professional
FW IV and V (Level II FW)	OCCT 555-556 (12 credits total)	Professional
Professional Seminar II	OCCT 575	Professional
Doctoral Capstone Seminar	OCCT 602 (1)	Professional
Doctoral Capstone Experience	OCCT 640,642,644 (10 total)	Advanced Professional
Servant Leadership, Advocacy and Occupational Justice		
Professional Seminar I	OCCT 422 (3)	Pre-Professional
Occupational Therapy Leadership and Administration	OCCT 561 (3)	Professional
Professional Seminar II	OCCT 575 (3)	Professional
Instructional Learning Theory and Technology I /II	OCCT 650/651 (3 credits total)	Advanced Professional
Transformative Leadership	OCCT 660 (3)	Advanced Professional