Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to send you this issue of *InsideOT* highlighting recent activities in the Occupational Therapy Department at Boston University. In this issue we welcome our newest faculty member, Dr. Dan Fulford, and share some of the exciting research, clinical, and education activities that our faculty and students are engaged in. We have just begun the admissions process for our first class in the entry-level OTD program and look forward to welcoming them in September 2016. The new program will be a three-year blended (on-campus and on-line) program that builds on our faculty’s expertise in delivering outstanding occupational therapy education.

Although we had a brief snow shower about a week ago, many of the leaves are still on the trees and showing the brilliant colors that make this time in New England very special. We are all hoping that last winter’s snowy nightmare really was a once-in-a-lifetime event. We wish you and your colleagues great success in the coming months. Please stay in touch!

Warm regards,

Wendy Coster, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Professor and Department Chair

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News from the Academic Programs

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

*Ellen Cohn, ScD, OTR/L, FAOTA, is the Director of the MSOT program*

The Fall 2015 semester began by welcoming 58 incoming students to the MSOT Program and new faculty member, Dan Fulford. We also welcomed two alumni as adjunct faculty to the BU OT Department community, Karen Turner (MSOT ‘09) and Emily Firn (MSOT ‘08).

To introduce our students to the critical thinking skills so essential to effective occupational therapy, we began our orientation program with a trip to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Once at the museum, we joined museum staff to engage in their Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) Program. Through facilitated discussions we listened to each other as we made interpretations about the art, examined our assumptions...
and asked, “What is going on here?” What a wonderful way to begin OT school.

The big news is that, we are converting the MSOT program to an entry-level OTD. We are planning to admit the first cohort of entry-level OTD students for September 2016. The Entry-Level Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program is designed to provide excellent preparation for leadership in occupational therapy in current and emerging practice settings. The three-year OTD program will offer courses in a blended (on-campus and on-line) format. Students will complete 22 on-campus courses across four academic semesters (similar to the MSOT program with a few changes in course content), eight on-line courses during the summer months, and the experiential components of the program. The program requires successful completion of academic courses and Level II fieldwork, a doctoral experiential component and a capstone doctoral project. Please check the Sargent website for more details.

Each OTD student will complete a mentored doctoral experiential component (an ACOTE standard for OTD programs) designed to support advanced skills in the student’s selected area of interest. The experience is a 16-week, full-time in-depth practicum in a situation of practice in one or more of the following areas: advanced clinical practice, research, policy and advocacy or education. Students will select a Doctoral Experiential Project area based on a match of interests with an appropriate faculty mentor’s expertise. Together, students and mentors will negotiate and formulate a specific topic and experience to be completed in a practice setting. We hope you all will be developing ideas for doctoral projects in your practice settings and will welcome OTD students to work with you on advanced practice initiatives. Stay tuned for more information about the new entry-level OTD.

In the meantime, please enjoy this edition of InsideOT and stay in touch. The faculty and current students always enjoy hearing from former BU students. I hope our paths cross again soon. All the best for remaining competent and confident.

Post-Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy
Karen Jacobs, EdD, CPE, OTR/L, FAOTA, is the Director of the OTD program

Our on-line post-professional doctorate in occupational therapy (OTD) continues to grow. In September 2015, we matriculated a new cohort of 8 students into the program. During the Fall 2015 semester, 6 post-professional students will have completed their capstone presentations on their doctoral projects with recent topics such as, Globalizing Occupational Therapy: Bridging Gaps in the Pediatric Care of the Dominican Republic through Education in School Based Occupational Therapy; Primary Care OT: An Occupation-based Approach for Veterans with Chronic Conditions; A Proposal for an Evidence-based Online Course to Support Executive Functioning and Social Skills in Post-secondary Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder; and Better Together: Advancing provider expertise in Family-Centered Care. All completed doctoral projects are indexed and available through the Boston University Mugar Library.

Effective on May 12, 2015, we started offering scholarships to matriculated students. The scholarship makes credits cost $895/credit + $60/tech credit. The total number of credits for the OTD is 33, although foundation courses may be required depending on a review of an applicant’s transcript(s).

In 2015, a retrospective study was conducted to investigate the nature, perception, and impact of the e-mentoring experiences of 29 graduates of our online post-professional OTD program at Boston University. Study results highlight positive features of electronic mentoring (e-mentoring); how multi-modal e-mentoring supports the accessibility needs of students; and students’ preferences to engage in real-time e-mentoring communication by web camera or telephone, supplemented with e-mail. E-mentoring positively impacted the professional development of students during and after the online OTD program. For more information about this study, please read: Jacobs, K., Doyle, N., Ryan (2015). The Nature, Perception, and Impact of e-mentoring on Post-professional
PhD in Rehabilitation Science
Gael Orsmond, PhD, is the Director of the PhD program

Mario Munoz, Richard Vartanian, and Rawan Al’Heresh completed their PhD degrees over the summer.

We admitted 3 new students to the program. Daekyoo Kim is working with Dr. Simone Gill, Chitra Khare is working with Dr. Susan McGurk, and Ariel Schwartz is working with Dr. Jessica Kramer. Ariel is a Boston University MSOT student completing her Level II fieldwork who is continuing on to her PhD.


Ecuador Trip 2015

Sarah McKinnon and 6 BU students (Jessica DeMarinis, Carol Haver, Whitney McWherter, Kevin Minner, Mary O’Donnell, and Briana Toegemann), along with faculty and students from St. Catherine University in Minnesota, traveled to Ecuador for 2 weeks this past June. Students spent mornings observing and integrating themselves into a variety of settings, including schools, clinics, and community centers, serving a variety of populations in Quito, Ecuador. They worked alongside occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, learning about the unique roles each of these professionals provide within their country, as well as observing barriers to occupational performance. Students had the opportunity to work on a variety of unique projects at their sites, including building supported chairs, designing and creating a sensory room, and assisting in hippotherapy sessions. Additionally, students attended a lecture by a physician working in the Quito area to gain a better understanding of the components and history of the healthcare system in Ecuador. On weekends they traveled out of the city to rural towns, where they observed indigenous health care practices, and learned about the occupations of the people of Ecuador (such as food cultivation and preparation, music, and ecotourism). The students also traveled to a community in the Amazon where they learned about other indigenous cultural norms and health remedies. Through reflecting on experiences in Ecuador,
the BU students gained a broader perspective of health care, an understanding of social justice issues as they relate to occupational therapy, and an appreciation of the country's unique culture and beauty.

Innovation in Open Style Lab

This summer, Boston University student Diana Smith, collaborated with other student occupational therapists, engineers, and designers in a 10-week educational summer program at MIT called Open Style Lab to create clothing with and for individuals with disabilities. She and her teammate, Renée Nassar from New England School of Design worked to design a piece of non-stigmatizing protective headgear for the staff at New England Center for Children (NECC). NECC is a school for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder where a small portion of the students exhibit aggressive behaviors. By means of intervening in these behaviors, some staff were incurring concussions. The final product called EduCap is a slim fitting piece of protective headgear resembling a baseball cap that protects the user without making him or her look to conspicuous. Diana and Renée are currently exploring options to make the product available to a larger market.

Independent Study in Israel

**Authored by Suzanne Gallanter**

I had the incredible opportunity to spend the summer living in Israel and interning at a vocational day program for adults with severe mental illnesses called Kol Mahol U’Mikhol. The center was run by occupational therapists, but also gave me the opportunity to learn from not only the OT's but from other therapists, such as social workers, art therapists, music therapists as well as occupational therapy students from nearby universities. I spent much of my time working one-on-one with several participants, focusing on building their independence in different areas including computer use, leisure, and social skills. During my time there, I also was able to introduce and co-lead a new group that was held several times a week. In this group we used the Nintendo Wii as a tool to address goals of many participants such as working on eye-hand coordination, balance, social participation, and exercise, to name a few. Even in the short time I was there, I was able to see an increase in morale and participation amongst many of the participants. Regardless of my limited Hebrew knowledge and the language barrier that was often in place, the participants and staff at the center created a comfortable and welcoming environment for me to learn in. While being so far from home, the immediate connection I was able to make with my supervisors over our love for occupational therapy showed me how universal occupational therapy can be regardless of where we are learning or practicing.

**Summer at the Aphasia Resource Center**

In June 2015, 1 OT and 6 OT students worked with an interprofessional team of clinicians and students from Sargent to put on the Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Program for 8 adults post-stroke with aphasia. This is the 5th year that the program has occurred. This year the interprofessional team intentionally added more interprofessional education experiences to increase the experience of working with professionals from other disciplines for the students. The OT students, Aditi Amlani, Angela Viani, Rebecca Frank, Athina Kalemos, Colleen Moore, and Melissa Regan, collaborated with SLP students, a Nutrition student and PT students to
deliver the most client-centered and comprehensive intervention possible for this group of community dwelling adults. The students met before the program started at an orientation where all students were introduced to the findings of each profession’s initial evaluation and goals for the different participants. They observed other professions’ intervention sessions, participated in co-treatment sessions, and collaborated with students from other professions on particular goals for clients. Overall these efforts to increase the conversation between the students from different professions were well-received and appreciated by students who reported feeling more comfortable interacting with students from other professions and that they understood the different professions better.

**India Trip 2015**

In August, 3 MSOT 2 students (Lauren Morales, Kimberly Salloum, and Christina An) spent the month volunteering at DISHA in Jaipur, India. DISHA is a school and resource center for children with disabilities. The varying diagnoses of the children included autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, intellectual impairments, and ADHD. The students were able to observe the children in the classroom setting and during therapy sessions with both the physical and occupational therapists. A majority of the volunteer experience was spent working alongside the 2 occupational therapists in the sensory integration room, where occupational therapy interventions promoted play, emotional regulation, and motor skills. During their time in India, the students learned about the rich history of occupational therapy and culture of India and also had the opportunity to visit Jaipur Foot, the largest prosthetic clinic in India.

**Update: iPad Use with Individuals with Low Vision**

In Spring 2015, InsideOT included a story on the independent study of 4 Boston University OT students: Katherine White, Britt Howe, Emily Holden, Viktoriya Landar. These students trained 5 older adults with visual impairment to use technology, specifically the iPad, to meet everyday occupational needs. After completing the program, the older adults involved reported improved engagement in social participation, communication, and leisure activities. Even more exciting, 3 months after the intervention program’s conclusion, the 5 older adults took the lessons and skills they learned and began to lead an iPad program at their local low vision group.

In August 2015, OT Practice published an article on their independent study. Read more about this innovative program here:

Promoting OT in the NICU

Former faculty member Elsie Vergara and former ScD student Rosemarie Bigsby were awarded the Pioneer in Neonatal Therapy Award this past spring. They, among others, have worked tirelessly for decades to promote occupational therapy’s presence and purpose in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). They have contributed immensely to advancing research in this area and educating current and future therapists to ensure meaningful contributions are made in the NICU.

Emerging Leader Alumni Award

Standing out among Sargent College graduates of the past decade, Elizabeth Lima Remillard (MSOT ‘09) was awarded the college’s Emerging Leader Alumni Award, which recognizes a graduate who demonstrates innovation and leadership in the advancement of health and rehabilitation sciences. Liz is the co-founder of Empower Spinal Cord Injury (SCI), a non-profit corporation that enables individuals with spinal cord injuries to lead more meaningful and more independent lives.

Faculty Recognition: Gael Orsmond, PhD

Gael Orsmond, PhD, was elected President-Elect-Designate, for Division 33 (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorder) of the American Psychological Association.

New Faculty: Dan Fulfold, PhD

Dan Fulfold is the newest addition to the Occupational Therapy faculty, joining this fall as an Assistant Professor. He hails from the sunny skies of California where he was most recently a member of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco. Dan received his bachelor’s in psychology from UCLA and his PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Miami.

In his research, Dan seeks to gain insight into questions such as: What motivates us to achieve our goals? Do motivational principles apply to socially relevant goals in the same way as non-social goals? And, most critically, How do physical and mental illnesses put up roadblocks for motivated goal pursuit? Dan has addressed these questions in persons with severe mental illness, including people with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, using both experimental laboratory paradigms and real-world methods. He is looking forward to building on his research here in the OT department by using new methodologies to address questions related to the role of context and the environment in facilitating goal pursuit, as well as how to improve participation among people with motivational and social deficits. Dan also aims to directly apply his research findings to help others as a licensed clinical psychologist. He also looks forward to exploring Boston with his wife and son.
Health Matters Virtual Conference

On September 17, 2015 Sargent College hosted its first free virtual conference called Health Matters. Thousands of individuals from around the globe joined this event. The Department of Occupational Therapy was well represented in this event as speakers, panelists, moderators and as a co-host.

Here are the participants and their respective roles/presentation titles:

Dr. Jessica Kramer presented a Ted-like talk called, Nothing About Us Without Us: Partnering with Youth and Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities to Conduct Rehabilitation Research.

Dr. Simone Gill, presented a Ted-like talk called, Get Moving: Why It's Easier Said Than Done and was the moderator for a panel discussion on child development.

Karen Duddy, Karen Turner, Brooke Howard and Wendy Coster (moderator) participated in panel discussion on Being an Agent of Change.

Kevin Berner was a panelist in the How Technology is Changing Rehabilitation (Techno-rehabilitation) panel.

Karen Jacobs was a co-host of this event, helped with the planning of Health Matters and was the moderator for a panel discussion, Multi-disciplinary care of persons with concussion at the Ryan Center for Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation: A live panel discussion.

View the event at: https://livestream.com/accounts/3723851/events/3637711
Read a story about the event in BUsToday: http://www.bu.edu/today/2015/sargent-college-health-matters-conference/

Lead the Way Symposium

Above: Picture of 22 OT colleagues from Iceland who attended the BU Lead the Way Symposium on October 3, 2015.

About 50 people attended Boston University’s Department of Occupational Therapy’s 2015 Lead the Way Symposium on Saturday, October 3rd, from 8:30am to 12pm. The focus was on Innovative Approaches to Interventions for Chronic Diseases. The aim was to provide participants with perspectives on ways to incorporate occupation into their practice with individuals with chronic conditions. There were presentations in the areas of acute care, community and rural settings, and chronic conditions. BU Sargent College Clinical Assistant Professors Robin Newman, OTD, OTR/L and Nancy Lowenstein, MS, OTR/L, led the Symposium, offering their extensive clinical and research knowledge in the area of interventions for individuals with chronic conditions. The introduction was followed by presentations from practitioners working in various settings. Elizabeth Lima Remillard, MS, OTR/L from Empower Spinal Cord Injury, Inc. spoke about improving quality of life for individuals with chronic spinal cord injury. A presentation entitled “Self-Management of Chronic Conditions and the Occupational Role for Farmers” was provided by Mary W. Hildebrand, OTD, OTR/L of the MGH Institute of Health Professions. This was followed by Emily Firn, MS, OTR/L and Madeline Williamson, MS, OTR/L from Massachusetts General Hospital, who presented on the role of OT in treating chronic conditions in an acute care setting. Kathleen Lyons, ScD, OTR/L from the Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine, and faculty member Robin Newman, OTD, OTR/L, provided a perspective on “Self-Management and Oncology”. Both practitioners and students participated in the event, including a group of OT’s from Iceland. The presentations were well received by all who were in attendance. This meaningful educational experience was worthwhile and effective in providing useful information to all who attended.
Faculty Presentations


obesity: A call for action. Presented at the American Occupational Therapy Association Conference. Nashville, TN.

Faculty Publications


Be an Advocate for OT Education

What YOU can do for BU:

Supervise Level I or Level II fieldwork students
Provide a guest lecture
Collaborate with faculty & students to identify research questions

What BU can do for YOU:

Tuition vouchers for supervising BU students
Goode Test Library: borrow resources
Provide CE opportunities:
Annual: Lead the Way Symposium

If you have a story you would like included in a future edition of INSIDEOT please contact insideot@bu.edu.