Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to send you this most recent update from Boston University. We are more than half-way through our first semester of the new entry-level OTD program with a terrific group of students. Their diverse backgrounds and experiences have brought very rich discussions to our classrooms and we look forward to the contributions we are sure they will make to the profession. Our last class of MSOT students will be finishing the academic portion of the program this May and some of you may be seeing them on fieldwork!

This very challenging election season has been stressful for everyone. It is a good time to re-affirm the occupational therapy values we share – inclusiveness, respect, and caring – in the work we do and our relationships with each other. We thank all of you for your great support of our students and our program and we wish you, your colleagues, clients, and families a joyful holiday season. We hope to see many of you in Philadelphia for AOTA’s spectacular Centennial Celebration!

Best regards,

Wendy Coster, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

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News from the Academic Programs

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy and Entry-Level Doctorate in Occupational Therapy

Ellen Cohn, ScD, OTR/L, FAOTA, is the Program Director of the MSOT and entry-level OTD programs

The academic year began with great enthusiasm as thirty students from around the country matriculated into the entry-level OTD program. They have immediately embraced the power of meaningful occupation and are already working in faculty research labs, writing articles for this newsletter or planning fundraising events for the 2017 AOTA annual conference and centennial celebration in Philadelphia. Alumna, Allison (Boris) Osipow (MSOT, 2015) also joined us as an adjunct faculty member to help out with the pre-school screening assignment at the BU Preschool.

After many years of affirming our commitment to IPE, Sargent College hired a Director for Interprofessional Education and Practice. Sargent College values the importance of client-centered and interprofessional team-based practice and will be integrating more IPE learning experiences into the entry-level professional programs. We searched around the globe and are delighted that Craig Slater, an occupational therapist, trained at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia.
has joined the Sargent College community. Prior to BU, Craig worked as the Senior Program Officer in Allied Health at the Health Education and Training Institute in Sydney, Australia. In this role, he designed, developed, implemented and evaluated educational resources, programs and training networks for allied health professions in the state of New South Wales. Please read more about Craig in this issue of Inside OT. We enjoy hearing about your current activities and have faith that you are confident and competent in providing occupational therapy services. We look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,
Ellen

Post-Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy

Karen Jacobs, EdD, CPE, OTR/L, FAOTA, is the Director of the OTD program

Since 2009, 50 occupational therapists have graduated from our on-line post-professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy (OTD) program at Boston University. Recently, we have made some important changes to our admission’s process, criteria and cost.

Our application process is online at: [https://bu-sar.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login](https://bu-sar.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login). We matriculate students three times a year: September, January and May. Completed applications must be received and verified at least one month prior to each matriculation point.

Applicants who have graduated from an ACOTE or WFOT-accredited degree program or who can provide a National Government Recognition documentation of their program in occupational therapy and who obtained a GPA of 3.0 or better on the US 4-point scale in that OT program are exempt from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Applicants who do not fulfill both of these criteria are required to submit scores from the GRE taken within the last five years. Minimum scores that have typically been achieved by admitted students include: Verbal 153, Quantitative 144, Analytical Writing 4.5.

Students for whom English is not their first language must take the iBT (the Internet-based version of the TOEFL [Test of English as a Foreign Language]). Students who are most competitive for admission will have a composite score of at least 110 and minimum scores of 22 in each section.

We offer scholarships to all matriculated students. The scholarship makes credits cost $895 (US$/credit + $60 (US$)/tech fee/credit. Students pay as they go each semester. As a matriculated student, if you have BU vouchers, you can use 6 credits of vouchers towards the cost of courses. 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). Eight students recently completed the program. These students and their doctoral project topics are:

**Leslie Hill OTD, OTR/L**

Sib Kinnect: Supporting Siblings of Children with Disabilities Using a Telehealth Approach

**Nicole Villegas OTD, OTR/L**

On-line Course to Expand Occupational Therapy Practice: Education and Implementation of Occupational Therapy in Primary Care

**Allison Laygo OTD, OTR/L**

Building an Executive Functioning Toolbox: An Interactive Online Course for School-Based Occupational Therapy Practitioners

**Hyun Jeong Lim OTD, OTR/L**

Development of the Functional Progress Measure for Residents with Dementia in Long-term Care Facilities (FPM-D)

**Kevin Berner OTD, OTR/L, ATP**

Outcomes of Assistive Technology Services in a Community Based Organization

**Manisha Sheth OTD, OTR/L**

Occupational Therapy Interventions to Improve Quality and Quantity Of Patients’ Sleep At Fast Track Joint Replacement Surgery Center

**Leah Baumann OTD, OTR/L**

OT VetSet: A Clinician’s Guide to Working with Veterans as Clients

**Leanna Katz OTD, OTR/L**

E.D.U.C.A.T.E.: A toolbox for practitioners in promoting health and wellness in long term care facilities

We are delighted that Dr. Karen Duddy, OTD, OTR/L has joined our on-line post-professional OTD program as a lecturer. Also, many of our graduates and students will be presenting at the 2017 AOTA conference. Following is a list of some of the presentations:
- Tracy Berry & Karen Jacobs. *The Skill of Being Entrepreneurial.* (poster)

- Kevin Berner. *Developing a best-practice, outcome-oriented interprofessional Assistive Technology services program at a community based organization.* (poster)

- Nancy Doyle & Karen Jacobs. *Mentoring Matters to Occupational Therapy* (poster)

- Karen Duddy, Dorene Doi, Thomas Tousignant, Gabriel Messenger & Dr. Karen Jacobs. *Primary Care OT: An Occupation-Based Self-Management Workshop* (short course)

- Sarah McKinnon & Karen Jacobs. *Effective advocacy activities to promote the distinct value of occupational therapy* (poster)

- Jennifer Phillips & Karen Jacobs. *Using Telehealth to Provide Services in a Primary Care Physician Family Practice.* (poster)

- Manisha Sheth. *Sleep: The Essential Occupation! Role of Occupational Therapy To Develop Health Promotion Program For Sleep Hygiene Among Older Adults In The Community* (poster)

- Kathryn Wise & Karen Jacobs. *There is No Place Like Home: Using Telehealth to Support an OT Restorative Care Program in the Community* (poster)

If you are going to the 2017 AOTA conference and expo in Philadelphia, please stop by our Boston University booth to learn more about all of our programs. We are also proud to be one of the sponsors of the Twitter Spot.

For more information about our online post-professional doctorate in occupational therapy program, please contact Karen Jacobs at kjacobs@bu.edu.

**PhD in Rehabilitation Science**

*Gael Orsmond, PhD, is the Director of the PhD program*

The PhD Program in Rehabilitation Sciences welcomed 4 new PhD students to work with OT faculty mentors. **Sam Abplanalp** received his B.A. in psychology from Indiana University – Purdue University and will be working with Dr. Daniel Fulford on research focused on motivation and social functioning in people with severe mental illness.

**Jennifer Chen** received both her bachelor's degree and master’s degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Southern California. She will work with Dr. Gael Orsmond and Dr. Ellen Cohn in the Families and Autism Lab, primarily on the ROAD Ahead Study, Drs. Orsmond and Coster’s IES-funded study examining how youth with autism spectrum disorder learn to manage the responsibilities of adulthood. **Elizabeth Munsell** will be mentored by Dr. Wendy Coster, and will also work on the ROAD Ahead Study. Elizabeth graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.S. in Kinesiology and received her M.S. in Occupational Therapy from Boston University. Elizabeth has been an adjunct faculty member for BU’s MSOT program for the past several years, while also working in the Cambridge Public Schools. **Sigal Vax** received her Bachelor’s degree from Tel-Aviv University and her Master’s degree from Haifa University, Israel. Her 17 years of experience in training, supervising and implementing psychiatric rehabilitation models led her to collaborate with the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation in Boston University. She will be working at the center with Dr. Marianne Farkas on scaling up rehabilitation employment interventions for people with psychiatric disabilities.

**Students Leading the Way**

**Engaging with the Global Healthcare Community: Ecuador**

For two weeks this past June, faculty member Sue Berger and 5 BU MSOT students, Alana Casey, Rachel Cohen, Chloe Hirsch, Emily Mitchell and Nicole Sullivan, along with faculty and students from St. Catherine University in Minnesota, traveled to Ecuador. During the week, students spent their time working with occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, and educators in schools and clinics in Quito, Ecuador. They were able to observe the
unique contribution that these professions brought their clients, as well as learn about social justice issues that impact the clients’ occupational performance. Students had the opportunity to design ergonomic wheelchairs, create activities and resources for teachers, play adaptive sports, and participate in a recycling program created by clients at a site. Students met with an advocate for persons with disabilities and attended classes where they discussed the history of Ecuadorian healthcare and the current issues that are being faced. Over the weekends, the group traveled to rural areas of Ecuador to visit a healthcare clinic that merges Western and indigenous medicine, a self-sustainable community, and a community in the Amazon rainforest. The students were able to learn about the valued occupations of the people of Ecuador, including food cultivation and preparation, music, spending time with family, and ecotourism.

Sharing My Lived Experience as a Peruvian-American at the White House
By Gabriella Vasquez, OTS

Over the summer, I was invited by the Peruvian American National Council to speak at the White House. During the weekend of July 20th to the 22nd, Peruvians from all over the world gathered to celebrate Peru’s Fiestas Patrias, or Independence Day. Invited guests were able to engage in several events that celebrated our food and music and also focused on the political representation of Peru in the United States. We had the chance to engage with senior White House officials from the Obama administration to discuss immigration policies, education policies, civic engagement and other key issues that affect Latinos. Among other Peruvian leaders, I was honored to speak about my academic and professional trajectory as a young Peruvian-American woman. I was proud to speak about my decision to study occupational therapy, as it is a profession that can improve the social, mental, and overall well being of the Latino community. I also spoke about the importance of understanding intersectionality and our role as Latinos in supporting other marginalized communities. It was profound being able to meet other Peruvians who credit their cultural background with their success.

Cultural Immersion Trip: Occupational Therapy in India

Seven MSOT students, Samantha Anscher, Emily D’Agostino, Cara Dart, Rachel Heidling, Mary Hennessey, Sarah Howie, and Rachel Wong, participated in a cultural immersion experience in Jaipur, India. For one month, the students volunteered at and learned about occupational therapy at Disha School, a resource center for children with multiple disabilities. At Disha, the students observed and worked directly with children ages 1 to 22 years in early intervention, hand therapy and sensory integration intervention sessions. The students were also able to observe a speech and language therapist and three different physical therapists at work. During their time abroad, the students also had the opportunity to visit Jaipur Foot, a non-profit clinic that provides anyone in need with fitted prosthetic limbs at no cost. The students found it very interesting and rewarding to see the process involved in making the prosthetics as well as to learn more about the inner workings of such an impactful organization. Overall, the students were thankful to learn about occupational therapy services provided in a different country and to be immersed in a rich and beautiful culture. They hope to return to India in the future.

Volunteering with Empower SCI & Ivy Street School

This past summer, BU OT student Chloe Hirsch had the opportunity to participate in two enriching programs related to the field of OT. For two weeks in July, Chloe volunteered as a residential aid for Empower Spinal Cord Injury, a non-profit, volunteer-based organization whose mission is to enable individuals with spinal cord injury to lead happier, more meaningful, and more independent lives. The summer residential program focuses on formal physical and occupational therapy, but also includes peer mentoring, rehabilitation counseling, and knowledge sharing amongst individuals going through similar challenges. Participants are able to work
on individual therapy goals, as well as learn about and participate in less traditional therapeutic activities, such as adaptive cycling, surfing, painting, and yoga. Education about overcoming travel barriers, maintaining healthy relationships, and wheelchair skills are also integrated throughout the two weeks. Through this experience, Chloe learned how to care for and best support individuals with spinal cord injury in order to help them successfully engage in valued and novel occupations.

Chloe also had the opportunity to participate in Ivy Street School’s Summer Residential Program for one week in August. Ivy Street School is a residential education program dedicated to helping transition aged (16-22 years) individuals with a variety of neurological deficits develop self-management and executive functioning skills. Eight students with high functioning autism are given the opportunity to live in a BU dorm for one week as they work towards achieving personal goals. Students are given the opportunity to job-shadow, work on community mobility, participate in a variety of self-reflection activities, and volunteer during a Red Sox game. During her experience, Chloe was able to plan and implement life skill interventions for the students as well as help them develop meaningful and purposeful goals that could be carried over into the school year.

Pi Theta Epsilon Honor Society – Omicron Chapter Induction

In September, 19 second-year occupational therapy students were recognized for their scholastic excellence and for their commitment to advancing the field of occupational therapy. Inducted students included Samantha Anscher, Alana Casey, Rachel Cohen, Emily D’Agostino, Cara Dart, Phillip Garner, Hannah Guskie, Rachel Heidling, Mary Hennessy, Sarah Howie, Maria Lopez, Nicole Morrissey, Natalie Sadon, Nicole Sullivan, Adam Swatt, Dima Thabit, Marysa Walsh, Rachel Wong, and Catherine Xenakis. The Omicron chapter also elected the following members to its executive board: President - Maria Lopez; Mary Hennessy – Vice President; Nicole Sullivan – Secretary; Rachel Heidling – Treasurer. Sarah Howie was also elected to serve as the chapter’s AOTA Student Conclave Representative. The chapter is looking forward to promoting the field of occupational therapy through scholarly events such as OT mentor talks and resume workshops and by participating in the AOTF St. Catherine’s Challenge.

New Faculty: Craig Slater, Director of Interprofessional Education

This semester, Sargent College welcomed Craig Slater, MPH as the Director of Interprofessional Education and Practice. Craig has completed a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy from La Trobe University and a Master of Public Health from the University of Sydney. The OT Department is excited to not only work with Craig in his role as Director, but to also have him join the team as a Clinical Assistant Professor. Prior to joining the BU community, Craig worked as a Senior Program Officer in Allied Health at the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) in Sydney, Australia. Some of his major work in this role involved implementing an interprofessional clinical supervision training program for clinicians, developing a simulation-based education resource, and developing an interprofessional family conferencing training program. Clinically, Craig brings with him over twelve years of occupational therapy experience in both Australia and in the United Kingdom. His clinical expertise includes acute care, rehabilitation and community settings, and hand therapy. During his short time at BU, he has already made an impact on the Sargent community through the Interprofessional Education Orientation program he hosted this past September for first-year
graduate students in the OT, PT, AT, SLP, and Nutrition/Dietetic programs. Through this experience, first-year graduate students came together to learn about the meaning and importance of interprofessional education and practice from a panel of healthcare clients and to engage in thoughtful discussion and interactive activities.

**U.S. Department of Education Grant Awarded to Professors Orsmond and Coster**

Professors Gael Orsmond and Wendy Coster are conducting a U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES) funded study (PI:Orsmond; R324A160113) focused on high school students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who will graduate high school with a diploma. The primary goals of this ROAD Ahead Study are to understand the interventions and supports used by parents and special educators to teach students with ASD how to manage daily life tasks, as well as to identify factors contributing to optimal post-school outcomes for this population. To achieve these goals, Professors Orsmond and Coster will be working with their team over the next four years to conduct focus groups and online surveys with school personnel, as well as to conduct a short-term longitudinal study with students with ASD and their parents.

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**Recent Faculty Publications & Presentations**

**Faculty Publications**


**Faculty Presentations**


**Cohn, E.S.** (2016, April). *Listening in: Outcomes matters to families matters*. Sensory Integration Special Interest Section Annual Program. American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.


