

SPECIAL SESSION

The Teaching of Occupational Science

Abstract: In this special session, attendees will learn about the historical and contemporary perspectives of teaching occupational science, the teaching of occupational science compared with the teaching of occupation, and how occupational science has been applied across occupational therapy curricula. After a brief panel presentation, there will be a facilitated exploration and discussion of teaching occupational and occupational science across undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate curricula. Participants are encouraged to share their experiences learning and teaching occupational science. Participants will leave with strategies to infuse occupational science into the classroom as well as having access to resources that can be applied to courses that center on occupation and occupational science.



Thomas Mernar, PhD, OTR/L is an Associate Professor and Program Director of Gwynedd Mercy University's programs in Occupational Science (Bachelor of Health Science) and Occupational Therapy (Master of Science) in Gwynedd Valley, Pennsylvania. He developed an undergraduate curriculum in occupational science that enrolls many students prior to attending the graduate occupational therapy program. He has infused occupational science within the occupational therapy curriculum so that the complexity of doing, being, belonging, and becoming connects to the health, well-being, and occupational justice for all persons. He currently chairs the SSO: USA subconference committee on the teaching of occupational science. Contact information: Mernar.T@gmercyu.edu



Bonnie L Kennedy, PhD currently retired from occupational therapy practice and teaching is a founding member of SSO: USA. During her Occupational Science PhD program she pursued a cognate in Diversity and a Certificate in the Study of Women and Men in Society. The perspectives she carried with her from this experience influenced her research methodology and teaching in occupational therapy as well as her community based OT practice. Being mindful of the power dynamics between teacher / student and therapist / patient she is reminded that the Society for the *Study of Occupation* positions everyone here as a learner who studies occupation in different ways. Viewing teaching as an experience in learning about occupation as well as a role in the university affords opportunities to deepen learning for all participants. Contact information: bonnielkennedy@gmail.com



Sheama Krishnagiri, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA is an Associate Professor at the University of Nevada Las Vegas in the entry level OTD program. Her PhD is in Occupational Science from the University of Southern California. She has taught occupational science courses at the masters, OTD and PhD levels. Dr. Krishnagiri has conducted research on teaching occupation in curricula, as well as on a variety of social occupations. Contact information: Sheama.Krishnagiri@unlv.edu



Ashley Mason, PhD, OTR/L is an Assistant Professor at Ithaca College in the Department of Occupational Therapy. She received her PhD in Occupational Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her teaching infuses occupation and occupational science concepts into a variety of undergraduate, master's, and doctorate level courses which include content areas such as approaching research, technological intervention, pediatric development, evaluation, and intervention. Contact information: amason3@ithaca.edu



Karen McCarthy, OTD, OTR/L is an Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy at Dominican University of California. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Occupational Science through Queen Margaret University (UK) and University College Cork (UCC). She weaves occupational science into her teaching at the undergraduate and master's level, and is excited to be teaching a newly dedicated Occupational Science course for their entry level OTD program this upcoming summer. Contact information: karen.mccarthy@dominican.edu



Wendy B. Stav, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA received a BS in occupational therapy from Quinnipiac University and a PhD in occupational therapy from Nova Southeastern University. Her research focus is occupation-based practice and includes development of an occupation-based practice model, an assessment to measure occupation in practice, and occupation-based clinic makeover studies. Dr. Stav serves as the Chair of the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy at Saint Louis University which offers a bachelor of science in occupational science where she teaches undergraduate courses related to context and health. Contact information: wendy.stav@health.slu.edu
