



# Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

## OT 530/Group Dynamics Spring 2025

	Information
<b>Instructor Name</b>	Professor Morgan Villano, MPA, MSPS, OTR/L
<b>Instructor Email</b>	<a href="mailto:villanom11@sacredheart.edu">villanom11@sacredheart.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment
<b>Office Location</b>	N121
<b>Phone</b>	Professor Villano 860-833-9318 (cell)
<b>Course Format</b>	<b>iRAT, tRAT, Mini-Lectures, In-Class Experiential Participation/Observation, Group Presentations, Comparative Analysis Group Work, Individual Presentation on Group Engagement</b>
<b>Course Location</b>	12:30-2:30pm S132 3-5pm S205
<b>Course Times</b>	<b>Section A 12:30-2:30pm</b> <b>Section B 3-5pm</b>

### Course Description and Purpose

Course content will be provided primarily in facilitation of mini-lectures, in-class discussion, demonstrations, readings, and experiential opportunities. Students will experience a variety of “hands-on” activities, role-plays, videos, and demonstrations. In addition, students will either be required to access the SHU library to view one of two therapeutic group videos or will be provided with a YouTube link to watch a therapeutic group, for one of the course assignments. There will be no mid-term, only a final exam; the final exam will solely cover Frames of References/Models and their application to O.T. group facilitation.

In this course students will develop an understanding of group theory, group processes, and group practice. Additionally, the course focuses on how occupational therapists utilize

therapeutic groups for assessment and intervention using frames of reference and theoretical models.

## RELATIONSHIP TO VISION 2025

*“Occupational therapy maximizes health, well-being, and quality of life for all people, populations, and communities through effective solutions that facilitate participation in everyday living” (AOTA, 2016)*

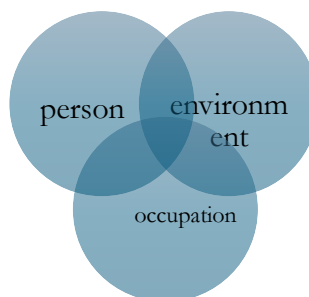
To meet society’s occupational needs, a practitioner of occupational therapy must understand and be able to explain and use the concepts of occupation, activity, occupational performance, and occupational balance. Activity analysis is one of the skills that distinguish occupational therapists from other health care professionals. It is one of the primary methods of assessment of clients, is a crucial aspect of evaluation, and a strategy in determining appropriate clinical interventions for individuals and groups in an ongoing and fluid fashion. It is a skill that you will need to use constantly as you work as an occupational therapist. Activity teaching is another core skill of an OT. As you work with clients and their families, you will be continually coaching and teaching them, encouraging them to better health and better occupational performance. Finally, activity grading is key to having successful sessions, as you alter, modify, and adapt what you and the client are doing, in the moment, to create the “just right” challenge for a client.

Using the skills of observation, knowledge of scientific analysis, together with clinical reasoning, you will be promoting client function. This course prepares students to apply clinical reasoning to support decisions and contributes to the development of confidence to communicate within interprofessional teams about the importance of engagement in occupation across the lifespan, given a person’s physical and emotional abilities. The skills you will learn in this class will be some of the most important occupational therapy skills you will need throughout your career.

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR THIS COURSE

The conceptual framework selected for this course is the Person, Environment, and Occupation Model (Law et al, 1996).

### *Person, Environment, and Occupation Model*



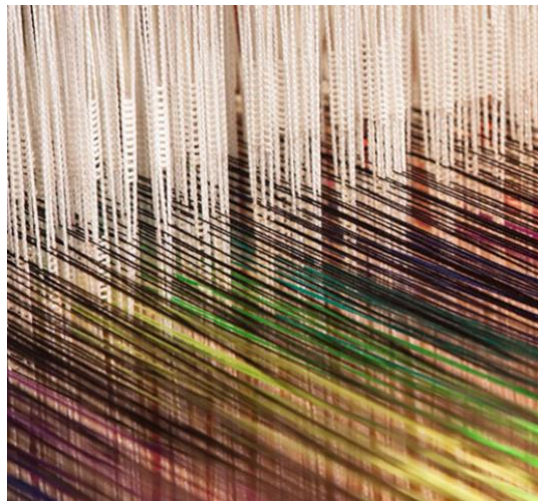
Copied from: Law, M., Cooper, B., Strong, S., Stewart, D., Rigby, P., & Letts, L. (1996).

The Person-Environment-Occupation Model: A transactive approach to occupational performance. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 63,(1), 9-23 for this syllabus and educational purposes only.

Law et. al. (1996) developed the Person, Environment and Occupation Model in response to an identified need from occupational therapy literature that describes the theory and clinical application of the interaction between the person, the environment, and the occupation. This model is a framework that guides clinical reasoning in analysis and understanding of the interdependent interaction as a person engages in all they need or want to do. This model has been selected to help frame this course as it is foundational in its application to occupational therapy practice

## RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Sacred Heart University occupational therapy program curriculum-design is based on the longstanding symbol of occupational therapy, the profession, going back to our professional history and roots. to that of weaving. Weaving is the craft of fabric production, in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric or cloth.



The visual representation of a piece of cloth shows the intersections of the warp and weft of the woven fabric. Our curriculum design utilizes the warp as a representation of the values of the profession, the program, and the university. Within this course the values of *authenticity, justice, integrity, altruism, and open-mindedness* are emphasized. The weft are the threads or streams of occupational therapy content, knowledge, skills, the experiences that comprise the foundation of our program (occupation - performance analysis and interpretation, enabling occupation, scholarship, professional communications, interpersonal skills, and professionalism). This course primarily presents learning about the curricular streams of *occupation - performance analysis and interpretation, communications, and interpersonal skills*.

## OUR THOUGHTS ABOUT LEARNING

'Learning' is a dynamic process that is layered, and supported by a solid foundation of knowledge, development of psychomotor and procedural skills, process, thinking, and reasoning skills, and reflection and/or analysis of one's biases and values, to make sound ethical and clinical judgments based on one's own and AOTA's core values, beliefs, and ethics. Building the skills to make sound, humane, evidence-based, ethical and clinical decisions take patience, persistence, active engagement, as well as a willingness to accept that proficiency takes time and hard work. We believe that students learn best in a safe, but challenging environment, and a student's ability to learn is dependent on perceived self-efficacy to succeed, and an environment that is conducive to success. It is our commitment to each student to provide a positive safe learning environment, inclusive of multiple opportunities to reflect, grow, challenge, and practice, coupled with our personal belief that all students will accomplish the objectives of this course.

## Course Materials

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Cole, M. B. (2018). *Group Dynamics in Occupational Therapy: The Theoretical Basis and Practice Application of Group Application*, 5th Ed. Slack, Inc.

## Student Learning Objectives/ACOTE Standards/Outcomes Measure

Student Learning Objective	Program Objective	ACOTE standard	Learning Experiences	How Learning Objective will be Measured?
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<p>1. Reflect on how group theories/group process, and OT models of practice and frames of reference shape OT group interventions.</p>	<p>Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level occupational therapy practice.</p>	<p>B.2.1 Apply, analyze, and evaluate scientific evidence, theories, models of practice, and frames of reference that underlie the practice of occupational therapy to guide and inform interventions for persons, groups, and populations in a variety of practice contexts and environments</p>	<p>Readings, lectures and discussions on group therapy theories/ research and on the application of OT frames of reference to group interventions</p>	<p>Therapeutic Group Comparative Analysis assignment. Yalom Group Presentations Exams Participation in class experiential learning opportunities</p>
<p>2. Monitor and reflect on group leaders' and members' behaviors and interactions as seen in different group contexts.</p>	<p>Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level occupational therapy practice.</p>	<p>B.2.2. Explain the process of theory development and its importance to occupational therapy.  B.1.2. Apply and analyze</p>	<p>Readings/lectures on group process, dynamics and roles; participation in discussion of videos/descriptions of group</p>	<p>Therapeutic Groups Comparative Analysis assignment Exams</p>

		the role of sociocultural, socioeconomic, and diversity factors, as well as lifestyle choices in contemporary society to meet the needs of persons, groups, and populations.	therapy interventions	Participation in class experimental learning opportunities
3. Identify different client populations that can benefit from a particular type of a group intervention.	Respond to unmet needs in underserved communities through leadership, advocacy or service.	B.1.2. Apply and analyze the role of sociocultural, socioeconomic, and diversity factors, as well as lifestyle choices in contemporary society to meet the needs of persons, groups, and populations  B.1.3. Demonstrate knowledge of the social determinants of health for persons, groups, and populations with or at risk for disabilities and chronic health conditions.	Readings, lectures and discussions on group therapy theories/ research and on the application of OT frames of reference to group interventions with diverse populations.	Exams  Class experiential learning opportunities.  Guest Lecture content and application to course  Therapeutic Group Comparative Analysis Assignment

<p>4. Select group interventions while integrating literature/ research evidence, expert opinion and personal experience.</p>	<p>Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level occupational therapy practice.</p>	<p>B.2.1. Apply, analyze, and evaluate scientific evidence, theories, models of practice, and frames of reference that underlie the practice of occupational therapy to guide and inform interventions for persons, groups, and populations in a variety of practice contexts and environments. occupations.</p>	<p>Readings, lectures and discussions on group therapy theories/ research and on the application of OT frames of reference to group interventions; participation in class discussions.</p>	<p>Exams Therapeutic Group Comparative Analysis Assignment Participation in class experiential learning opportunities</p>
<p>5. Reflect on personal traits and abilities and determine areas for personal growth and professional development to ensure therapeutic use</p>	<p>Demonstrate self-reflection.</p>	<p><b>B.4.1</b> <b>Demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments, as part of the therapeutic process in both</b></p>	<p>Readings, lectures and discussions on the therapeutic use of self as a group leader; participation in class discussions</p>	<p>Exams, varied assignments per T.O.</p>

of self as a group leader.		<b>individual and group interaction.</b>		
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Course Schedule

Subject to change.

<b>Date of Class</b>	<b>Class Content</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Readings Due Before Class</b>	<b>Quiz or Final Exam</b>
Wk 1	<b>Course Introduction</b>  <b>Review of Assignments</b>  <b>Introduction to Groups</b>  <b>Introduction to Cole's 7 Steps</b>	Predominantly lecture based today  Focus of this class is to take notes on assignments, ask questions about assignments and then begin to digest the class content.	Cole Text Chapter 1	N/a
Wk 2	<b>Group Development</b> <i>Stages</i> <i>Group goals</i> <i>Group Norms</i> <i>Group Roles</i>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text Chapter 2  Cole Text: Chapter 3	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapters 2 and 3



	<i>Characteristics of effective groups/problems and challenges in groups</i>		Cole Appendix E 1. Group Roles Benne & Sheets: <a href="http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_85.htm">http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_85.htm</a>	tRATs held in Class
Wk 3	<b>Introduction to Yalom Therapeutic Factors, and the Relationship Group Dynamics</b>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Brene Brown Audio link – listen to before class  Yalom, Chapter 1 and part of Chapter 2 per Bb	iRAT  tRAT on Yalom Chapter 1 and part of Chapter 2 per Bb  RATs held in class
Wk 4	<b>Introduction of Transference and Transparency</b>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In class learning experience is to prepare for your Yalom Therapeutic Factors Presentation for week 5	Yalom Chapter 7 – pages 201-229	iRAT  tRAT on Yalom Chapter 7 pgs 201-229.  RATs held in class
Wk 5	<b>Yalom presentations</b>	In class Yalom Therapeutic Factors PPT and live group facilitation demonstrations— <b>GRADED PRESENTATION</b>	All sections will be combined 12:30-2:30 for the presentations	N/a

Wk 6	<b>Models/Frames of reference Developmental group approach</b>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text: Chapter 8  Cole Text: Appendix B  Cole Text: Chapter 11	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapters 8 & 11 and Appendix B  RATs held in class
Wk 7	<b>Models/Frames of reference Behavioral Cognitive Continuum</b>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text: Chapter 6	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapter 6  RATs held in class
Wk 8	<b>Models/Frames of reference Psychodynamic</b>  <i>Psychodynamic focus, Freudian concepts in groups Group evaluation, interventions and occupational therapy Group leadership</i>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text: Chapter 5  Cole Text: Appendix C	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapter 5 and Appendix C  RATs held in class
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Class Content N/a</b>	<b>Class Activities N/a SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>Readings N/a</b>	<b>N/a</b>

Wk 10	<b>Models/Frames of reference Cognitive Disabilities</b>  <i>Allen's Cognitive Approach Six Cognitive Levels Groups – evaluation and interventions</i>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text: Chapter 7	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapter 7  RATs held in class
Wk 11	<b>Models/Frames of reference MOHO and other occupation-based models</b>	Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities	Cole Text: Chapter 10	TBD
Wk 12	<b>Models/Frames of reference: Sensorimotor Approaches/Groups</b>  <b>Ross – 5 Stage Group</b>	Quizzes, Seminar, and Group discussion  In-class learning experiences and activities  Prep for Final Exam  Watch M. Ross video BEFORE class: <a href="https://echo360.org/media/1d38368f2f122dfb51b9649d752c624e6f2b922d310c28f2034fb200b101e4a6407cc2fba535cc6b/public">https://echo360.org/media/1d38368f2f122dfb51b9649d752c624e6f2b922d310c28f2034fb200b101e4a6407cc2fba535cc6b/public</a>	Cole Text: Chapter 9	iRAT  tRAT on Cole Chapter 9  RATs held in class

Wk 13	AOTA Inspire Annual National Conference	No Class	No Class	No Class
Wk 14	<b>Final Exam</b>	Final Exam Only, no lecture or activities.		Final Exam covers Weeks: 6 7 8 10 11 13
Wk 15	<b>Photo Stories Presentations</b>  <b>Due in Bb TBD</b>	N/a	N/a	N/a
Wk 16	<b>Photo Stories Presentations</b>	N/a	N/a	N/a

## Final Grades

*Please read this section carefully.* Final grades will be determined by student performance according to the following:

Assignment	Focus	Grade
<i>Dates are subject to change</i>		

<p><b>Individual Readiness Assessment Tests (iRAT)</b></p> <p><b>Team Readiness Assessment Tests (tRAT)</b></p>	<p><b>Individual and Team based assessments of the required readings</b></p> <p><b>Due Dates =</b>  <b>1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/13, 3/20, 3/27</b></p>	<p><b>9 points total</b></p> <p><b>Each RAT is worth 0.5 points</b>  <b>=</b>  <b>iRAT = 0.5 &amp;</b>  <b>tRAT = 0.5</b></p>
<p><b>Therapeutic Factors Presentation and Group Facilitation</b></p>	<p><b>Group level presentations to the class on the understanding and use of Therapeutic Factors</b></p> <p><b>Due Date in Bb and Presentation:</b>  <b>Thursday 2/6/25</b></p> <p><b>All sections combined</b></p>	<p>15 points total</p>
<p><b>Therapeutic Group Comparative Analysis Assignment</b></p>	<p><b>Small group work focused on the ability to understand, interpret, and advise on Therapeutic Factors from a comparative analysis lens</b></p> <p><b>Due Date in Bb only:</b></p>	<p>20 points</p>

	<b>Sunday 3/16/25 11:59 PM</b>	
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Due Date:</b> <b>Thursday 4/10/25</b>	21 points
<b>Photo Story Assignment</b>	<b>The ability to take course content in its totality, interpret and present your own experiences as part of a group</b>  <b>Due Date in Bb:</b> <b>4/16/25 11:59 PM</b>  <b>Presentation Dates:</b> <b>4/17/25 &amp; 4/24/25</b>	35 points

The final letter grade is assigned in accordance with the university grading policy.

## Expectations for Attendance and Participation

### Attendance:

As per program policy, a 100 % attendance rate for all courses is required. A one-time absence from class may be allowed, only under extraordinary circumstances, such as illnesses, emergencies, religious obligations, or important family events, e.g., wedding of an immediate family member. Documentation for an absence due to an important family event requires at least three weeks advance notice, and documentation of all other absences confirming circumstances that caused them are required within a week of returning to school. Please contact your course instructor in advance of an absence unless it is an emergency. In case of emergency notify the department as soon as possible. Failure to follow these procedures will result in the total grade reduction of one letter grade increment for each unexcused absence. In the event you experience cold/flu symptoms please notify your instructor immediately and do not attend class.

### What you can expect of us:

We will model the same professional behaviors that are expected of all of you. We will treat you as future colleagues and adult learners. We will speak with each other using first names and in a manner that is respectful. We are flexible, reasonable, and understand that things happen in life and to the best of your ability you are expected to be fully present and engaged in the coursework. Please speak with us if you are having any difficulties with the material, assignments, or course expectations.

- Class will start on time, unless there are extreme events beyond our control.
- We will answer your emails within 24-48 business hours.
- When we are meeting with you and when we are in class with you, we will give you our undivided attention. We will all practice *being fully present* in the moment, and in our communications with each other. It is an important behavior to learn for future work with clients.

### **What we expect of you:**

We expect that you will all demonstrate the professional behaviors you will need as an occupational therapist. You should behave in this class just as you would behave on your first job as an occupational therapist. We expect you to be fully engaged, participate in discussion, ask questions and seek clarification when needed. Therefore:

- You will be in class and ready to start on time. Tardiness is not acceptable.
- There will be no use of cell phones, texting or use of personal social sites on laptop during class.
- Attendance of all classes is required.
- Professional dress and attire are required at all times during class and during community service learning.
- While we expect you to attend all classes, you will be allowed one excused absence without penalty (loss of points towards final grade) if you have good cause for that absence and have communicated with us.
- All material covered in class and posted on Blackboard is your responsibility, even if you are absent.
- You are fully responsible for acquiring all learning, materials and knowledge should you miss class time. Any absences (beyond one) will be made up in some way, an additional assignment for example, or there may be a loss of points toward your final course grade.
- Assignments must be turned in on time unless you have spoken to us in advance of the due date and have come to an agreement with us about an alternate arrangement. (No alternate arrangements for homework's).
- Late assignments with prior communication and agreement may be accepted but may result in a grade reduction. Each day the assignment is late will result in the reduction of the final assignment grade by one portion of a letter grade.

- Late assignments without prior communication and arrangement with us will not be accepted and will be given a grade of zero (0).
- Students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to the class to which they are assigned. This course will not consist of lecturing to you on material you should have read.
- Students are expected to demonstrate professional communication in all its forms, verbally, written, email, and other electronic communication. The use of email and electronic communication can lead to misunderstandings regarding *tone of voice* in joking or sarcasm. Please be aware of this and be clear in all your communication. All communication must demonstrate respect toward your peers and course instructor(s).
- Students are expected to follow the University and Program's policies with regards to honesty and academic integrity, as well as AOTA's Code of Ethics.

## Fostering our Classroom Community

### Academic Integrity

#### Course Policies:

All university programs and courses adhere fully to the University Policy on Academic Integrity, as stated in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) and on the [Academic Integrity Web Page](#). Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, and other unethical behavior) could result in a grade of F for the assignment and/or course.

#### Individual and Group Work:

Students are responsible for independent reading of all materials. Students are responsible for independent work, unless there is a requirement for group work. If group work is a requirement, students are expected to participate fully collaborate, share, and exchange in equal measure.

#### Artificial Intelligence:

It is expected that all written work submitted within this course is your own, as an individual or as a group submission. This includes, but is not limited to, the writing of papers and the business/program plan. Your learning is a product of your own study, inquiry, reflection, and writing, and is built into each assignment. Any writing drawn from other sources must be documented and cited accordingly. **You may not use ChatGPT or other AI composition software while completing assignments** within this course without the express permission of the course instructor. There will be an automatic zero



given for any assignments that utilize AI without transparency to your peers or instructor.

### **Academic Integrity:**

The graduate occupational therapy program adheres fully to the Sacred Heart University policies and procedures on Academic Integrity, as stated in Student Manual. Please refer to the Student Program Manual.

### **Professional Behaviors:**

Professional dress and attire is always required in at all times, unless otherwise advised. Please refer to Student Program Manual.

## Policy on Syllabus Changes and Contractual Obligations

This syllabus and course outline is subject to change by the instructor during the semester. Changes may be necessary because of students' specific interest(s), general class progression, and class cancellations. If such changes are implemented, they will be announced in class and posted online. This syllabus and any addendums attached shall not be construed by the student as a contract, implied or expressed, between the student and/or the professor and the University.

## How We Support Your Learning at SHU

### Support from Your Instructor

Please approach your instructor before or after class, or during a class break, to schedule an appointment; or email your instructor. Based on your and your instructor's schedule, a Zoom or Teams virtual meeting *may be* arranged in lieu of an in person meeting.

### University Support Offices

There are multiple University support offices eager to assist SHU students:

[Center for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#) - offers tutoring, writing, and academic support for all SHU students. Visit the [PASS Portal](#) to sign up for tutoring, submit a paper for feedback through the Online Writing Lab (OWL), or look up Classroom Learning Assistants (CLAs) and Learning Lab schedules for specific courses. Questions? Contact [CTLtutoring@sacredheart.edu](mailto:CTLtutoring@sacredheart.edu).

[Office of Student Advising & Success](#) – offers appointments with student success coordinators and advisors who are ready and eager to meet with you about

exploring majors and programs, and key academic skills such as time management. Questions? Contact [studentsuccess@sacredheart.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@sacredheart.edu).

[Technical Support @ The Factory](#) – offers technical support, including Blackboard and classroom technology help, across [walk-in](#), [phone](#), [chat](#), [self-service](#), and [help article](#) formats. Questions? Contact [techsupport@sacredheart.edu](mailto:techsupport@sacredheart.edu).

[University Library](#) – offers research and information support, in person and online.

To begin your research now, you can book a study room, schedule an appointment with a librarian, and explore online tutorials all through the [SHU Library website](#). Questions? Contact [reference@sacredheart.edu](mailto:reference@sacredheart.edu).

Counseling & Ministry Supports - Students may experience a variety of challenges while enrolled at SHU. Information about [undergraduate counseling](#) and [graduate counseling](#) services are available via the [Counseling Center website](#). [Campus Ministry](#) also provides faith-based support for students.

## Academic Accommodations & The Office of Student Accessibility

Sacred Heart University provides equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability status. Students requesting accommodations should contact the [Office of Student Accessibility \(OSA\)](#). Students must be registered with the Office of Student Accessibility and submit appropriate documentation to be granted accommodations. For further information, please contact Kathy Radziunas, Director of OSA, [radziunask@sacredheart.edu](mailto:radziunask@sacredheart.edu).

## Our Commitment to Inclusive Excellence

Inclusive Excellence is the recognition that our institution's success depends on how well we value, engage, and include the rich diversity of students, staff, faculty, administrators, alums, and surrounding community. For more information about inclusive excellence, visit the [Office for Inclusive Excellence \(OIE\)](#) website, email [inclusiveexcellence@sacredheart.edu](mailto:inclusiveexcellence@sacredheart.edu), or call 203-365-7530.

If you believe you have witnessed or experienced bias, discrimination, or harassment in any way, I encourage you to submit an [Incident Report](#) or contact [inclusiveexcellence@sacredheart.edu](mailto:inclusiveexcellence@sacredheart.edu). If you are experiencing challenges with accessing food, housing, technology, or other resources that may affect your performance, I encourage you to contact your advisor first. Dr. Sharon McClosky, Department Chair, may be requested for additional support if needed.