

**SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**  
**OT 529 – FIELDWORK TOPICS IN MENTAL HEALTH**  
**SPRING 2025**

<b>CREDIT HOURS:</b>	1
<b>COURSE INSTRUCTOR:</b>	Nicole Peloso Smith MS, OTR/L
<b>OFFICE PHONE:</b>	203-396-8210
<b>OFFICE EMAIL:</b>	Peloso-n@sacredheart.edu
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	By appointment
<b>CLASS DAY AND TIME:</b>	Fieldwork seminar - MONDAYS 12:30pm – 1:30 pm Debriefing times as outlined in topical outline/course announcement Fieldwork experience: online Simucase simulations by due dates, In-person experiences as scheduled by faculty and sites
<b>CLASS FORMAT:</b>	Blended learning experiences including seminars, simulation and briefings; in-person fieldwork experiences. Please note that in person experiences may require additional pre-requisites such as (but not limited to) proof of vaccinations, masking and might cancel experiences for health reasons.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of Level I Fieldwork is for the student to integrate academic learning with clinical practice. It is designed to enhance clinical reasoning processes by integrating knowledge from previous educational and work experiences with current courses and fieldwork experiences. Fieldwork in combination with PBL, lab, and seminar will focus on reflective processes, therapeutic relationships, ethical practice, and other professional issues for working with adult mental health populations with a variety of needs for occupational therapy services. Self-directed, collaborative learning, and class participation are essential aspects of this course.

Students will engage in seminar and Level I fieldwork experiences during the semester. Each student will attend seminar classes during the semester (refer to Topical Outline for seminar dates). All students will regularly engage in online simulations, videos and

debriefings. Simulations will be repeated until student achieve 90% accuracy by the due date or receive a failing grade for that simulation. Student will also complete debriefing worksheet on Simucase simulations and videos and engage in debriefing discussions.

Students will also be assigned to specific in-person fieldwork experiences with faculty mentors in specific settings. Fieldwork placements will be determined by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. These experiences are essential to your learning and over the next three semesters equity of student placements will be the objective. All fieldwork experiences focus on developing students' observational skills for evaluation and intervention, understanding the role of the OTR and other members of the professional team in a variety of populations, and practicing professional behaviors. Each student will complete and hand in the fieldwork worksheet which reflects successful participation developing group protocols and an individual assessment (such as the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure) to their fieldwork faculty mentor. This worksheet will be pass fail with the possibility of mentor feedback and require rewrites until written adequately.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO SHU OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CURRICULUM**

The core concept the SHU OT program is **“Transformation through values base education.”** Our curriculum design is depicted by a longstanding symbol in OT going back to our origins- that of a weaving. The warp are the values of the profession, the program, and the university which run throughout the curriculum. The weft are the threads of occupational therapy content knowledge, skills, and experiences that comprise the foundation of our program. This course addresses the values of authenticity, justice, integrity, altruism, and open-mindedness. It is part of the curricular stream of becoming a professional and a future leader and development of relationships with individuals and groups. This is an advanced course that is near the end of the didactic curriculum, designed to prepare students as they prepare for full time clinical experiences and entrance into the profession.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE AND AOTA 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.”*** <http://www.aota.org/About AOTAVision-2025.aspx> )

As a future occupational therapy practitioner, you will be part of a globally connected professional group. Above is the statement of AOTA’s Vision 2025. In the future, you will have the opportunity to advance your career, profession, and advocate and promote occupational therapy’s role in meeting client and society’s needs. To meet client, population and society’s needs, our profession requires science-driven professionals, and effective leaders who, collaborate, innovate, connect and influence the future of our practice.

To realize AOTA's Vision 2025, all OTs must examine their own strengths and challenges, understand the tasks involved in role fulfillment, and forge an individual path for their career that contributes to the goal of maximizing the health, well-being, and quality of life for all people, populations, and communities. This course will provide you with an understanding of how we develop the *personal* abilities and competencies, as well as the *professional* abilities and competencies to contribute to creating a powerful and widely recognized profession. This preparation facilitates becoming an integral part of achieving Vision 2025 for our profession.

This course provides opportunities for students to contribute to realizing AOTA’s Vision 2025 through completion of projects that:

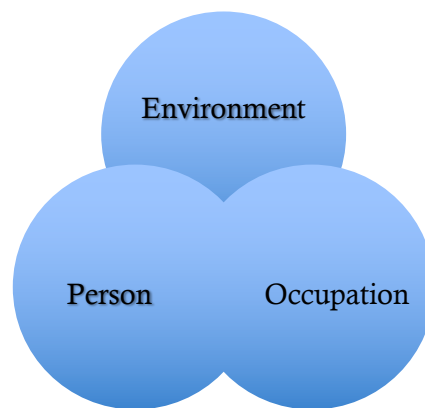
- Contribute to **effective** implementation of occupational therapist services through observation, assessment, and interventions that are evidenced–based, client-centered, and cost effective.
- Demonstrate effective **leadership** through advocacy and influence in affecting change in policy, environments, and complex systems.

- Demonstrate **collaboration** with clients, stakeholders, and inter-professional teams to produce effective outcomes. Collaborative and interprofessional experiences are at the core of occupational therapy practice with clients, their families, and support systems will enhance your ability to create effective outcomes.
- Contribute to equal **accessibility** of occupational therapy services to all populations and provide culturally appropriate and customized occupational therapy services. In gaining experience with people with mental health difficulties, you will enhance your impact as a practitioner across all settings.

( <http://www.aota.org/About/AOTAVision-2025.aspx> )

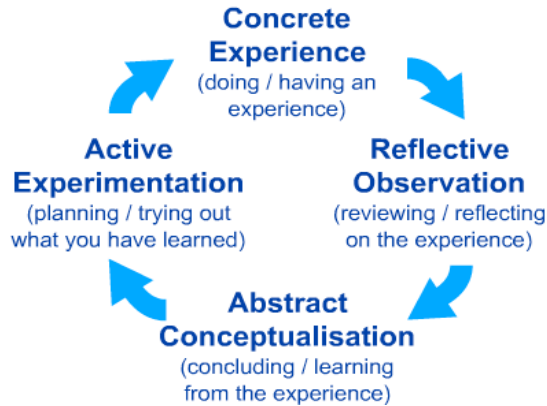
### CONCEPTUAL MODELS FOR THIS COURSE

We will be using the occupational therapy model PEO as the conceptual model for this course. PEO stands for Person, Environment, and Occupation. You have learned this model in your Introduction to Occupational Therapy course, and we will be applying this model as we consider evaluation and intervention planning for clients with mental health conditions.



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.

Fieldwork will also utilize experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984). ELT describes a learning cycle that includes four stages(below) which learners progress through. Learners apply didactic and lab experiences in active field for deep understanding and



Learners move from concrete experiences, to reflective observation, to abstract conceptualization, to active experimentation and back to the next level of concrete experiences.

*Copied from* Kolb, D., Boyatzis, R., Mainemelis, C. (2000) *Experiential Learning Theory: Previous Research and New Directions*. In R. J. Sternberg and L. F. Zhang (Eds.), *Perspectives on cognitive, learning, and thinking styles*. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000. For this syllabus and educational purposes only.

### **MY THOUGHTS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING (and how they will impact you in this course)**

Acquiring knowledge is a dynamic process that is layered and supported by a solid foundation. Building a foundation of knowledge in a particular area takes patience, persistence, active engagement, and a willingness to accept that proficiency takes time and hard work. I believe that students learn best in a safe environment and a student's ability to learn is dependent on perceived self-efficacy to succeed, and whether the environment is conducive to success. It is my commitment to each student to provide a positive safe learning environment with the perceived intention that all students will succeed in this course. I will be diligent in working with fieldwork educators to ensure that their learning environments and supervisory strategies are conducive for student learning. In the event that a student does not feel they are safe, it is the student's

responsibility to discuss the concerns with us. I commit to advocating for each student's safe learning and will do what is necessary to ensure a safe and productive learning environment inside and outside the classroom.

### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME**

I am committed to providing all students with the resources they need to successfully engage, interpret, and analyze experiences observed and practiced during the fieldwork experience. I will provide a safe environment that encourages open discussion about fieldwork experiences. I will provide the resources to assist students in bridging the gap between academia and practical experience. I will start class on time and will make every effort to finish on time.

All assignments are posted on Blackboard at the beginning of the semester. I will make every effort to adhere to the course topical outline, but unforeseen circumstances may arise that may require schedule flexibility. I will make every effort to post assignment grades within two weeks of receiving them.

### **WHAT I EXPECT OF YOU**

I expect all students to be committed to learning and be prepared to discuss and integrate fieldwork experiences. I expect all students to actively participate in fieldwork as scheduled and to come to class on time and to be 100% present during seminars, debriefings and during fieldwork. I expect all students to try as hard as they can but we do not expect perfection. I understand that students learn in different ways and expect students to communicate with any concerns that might arise.

I expect every student to always represent the University and the Program in a professional manner. This includes professional communication with myself and sites, timely notices of unplanned changes in ability to actively participate in fieldwork experiences to both faculty mentors and site managers, dressing professionally and

maintaining a professional tone in all communications. This course is designed to provide extensive feedback and students are expected to respond to that feedback quickly and accurately. Students will submit required paperwork to fieldwork mentors by required deadlines as set by the fieldwork mentors. Inadequate site and fieldwork experience documentation will result in course failure, if not completed to the satisfaction of faculty mentors.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS**

Level I fieldwork involves observation and interaction with adults in a variety of community-based psychosocial settings. Experiences will include a combination of telehealth/in person and online Simucase simulations. As able, and dependent upon site availability to accommodate students will be assigned to fieldwork experiences with faculty mentors and site supervisors. Site supervisors may include, but are not limited to teachers, nurses, social workers, physical therapists and psychologists. Students are expected to follow the guidelines listed in the Level I fieldwork information sheet of the *Fieldwork Manual* for professional behaviors, dress code, conduct and confidentiality.

Students will also participate in classroom seminars, debriefings and activities related to fieldwork experiences (refer to topical outline for seminar dates). This course requires the completion of structured assignments that enable occupational therapy students to reflect on the evaluation and intervention of clients as they engage in areas of occupational performance.

### **COURSE POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Students are expected to attend, come prepared, and participate in all in-person and online classrooms, fieldwork experiences, and related activities.

1. As per school policy, a 100% attendance rate for all courses is required. Absences from classes are allowed only under extraordinary circumstances, such as illnesses, emergencies, religious obligations, or weddings or deaths of immediate

family members. Excused absences must be approved by the course instructor prior to class. Students are to notify the course instructor as soon as possible in emergency situations. Documentation for excused absences confirming circumstances that caused them are required prior to approval or within a week of returning to school following emergencies. All make-up work, including quizzes, exams and other assignments, is at the discretion of the course instructor. Please note that having to go to work, studying for an exam, or attending a family vacation are not excused absences. Students are required to refrain from signing up for other educational activities during fieldwork times. Failure to follow these procedures will result in the total grade reduction of one letter grade increment for each unexcused absence.

2. Please note that, should any classes take place online (via Zoom, or Microsoft Teams) due to inclement weather or Health contingencies, attendance policies will remain the same. Should you miss an in-person class due to an illness or another unexpected circumstance, virtual participation can be arranged with the permission of the course instructor.
3. Unless arrangements are made with the course instructor in advance, assignments submitted after the due date will receive a reduction of one letter grade increment each day following the due date.
4. To the extent permitted by federal and state copyright laws, the class lectures and materials provided by the professor are copyrighted. By participating in the class lectures, students consent to the video and audio recording of said lectures. As part of the requirements of the course, students are required to participate, whether in person or via electronic communications. At the professor's discretion, he or she may require students to leave their audio and video devices on during the class lectures.
5. All courses follow the University's Academic Integrity Policies as outlined in the *Sacred Heart University Graduate Bulletin* as well as the *Occupational Therapy Student Manual*. Please refer to these documents for policies and



procedures regarding professional behaviors and academic integrity. Students are also expected to adhere to the American Occupational Therapy Association's Code of Ethics.

6. All assignments, unless otherwise specified, must adhere to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) formatting and writing requirements. Please refer to the *APA Manual* for specific guidelines.
7. Attendance is mandatory for all specified Level I Fieldwork experiences including online simulations, debriefings, seminar and in-person experiences. Students who need to miss in-person fieldwork are required speak with both the on-site supervisor and the Asst. Fieldwork Coordinator ASAP. Time should be made up at the convenience of the site and make-up information should be emailed to the Asst. Fieldwork Coordinator. Failure to fully comply with fieldwork expectations including (but not limited to) full attendance, reflective performance, timely documentation (including timely (within 1 week) signed fieldwork worksheet) and adherence to maintaining the Occupational Therapy program's health pre-requisites in Castlebranch.
8. In the event of an emergency, the student must contact the AFWC and FW educator within 24 hours, in order to make arrangements for a rescheduling the FW experience. The FW educator decides if and when the student is allowed to reschedule or make up a missed experience. Unexcused absences may result in a lower final grade for FW. Students are responsible for making up the time missed and coordinate the make-up date with their fieldwork educator. Students must notify the AFC of the make-up arrangements.

**Academic Accommodations:**

Sacred Heart University provides equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability status. Students requesting accommodations should contact the Office of Student Accessibility,

<https://www.sacredheart.edu/offices--departments-directory/student-success->

[center/office-of-student-accessibility/accommodations-process/](#)). Students must be registered with the Office of Student Accessibility and submit appropriate documentation to be granted accommodations. For further information about requesting accommodations, please contact Kathy Radziunas, Director of the Office of Student Accessibility, [radziunask@sacredheart.edu](mailto:radziunask@sacredheart.edu), or Laurie Scinicariello, Assistant Director of the Office of Student Accessibility, [scinicariello@sacredheart.edu](mailto:scinicariello@sacredheart.edu).

### **Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Sacred Heart affirms and strives to make available for every student a learning environment that is welcoming, equitable, and culturally sensitive and is supported by a curriculum that celebrates diverse voices, fosters agency, and encourages the capacity for self-advocacy. Although we at SHU MSOT program know there is much work to be done, we will do what is needed to advance the cause of social justice on our campus and in the community as we learn together and from each other. To read more, visit the You Belong at SHU web page <https://www.sacredheart.edu/sacred-heart-life/you-belong-at-shu/>. If you have any ideas about ways to enhance your success, please reach out to your faculty or the Program Director. If you feel that you have been mistreated in any way, you are encouraged to submit a Bias Incident Report or contact [diversityandinclusion@sacredheart.edu](mailto:diversityandinclusion@sacredheart.edu)

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS**

Please refer to *Program Manual*

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Napier, B. (2011). *Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Survival Guide*. Bethesda, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association.

### **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Ferri, B (2019). *Effective Occupational Therapy Documentation*. Hauppauge NY: Nova.

Sames, K.M (2009). *Documenting Occupational Therapy Practice (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

### **PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER WITH LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Each program in OT must meet the same Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standards. How they are met varies from program to program. In each program, each standard must be addressed in at least two courses. The standards that are addressed in this course are listed below. To review each standard, please refer the AOTA website at [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org)

The course learning objectives are linked to the ACOTE standards as well as the program's objectives, mission and vision, and the overall curricular design. The core concept the SHU OT program is "Transformation through values base education." Our curriculum design is depicted by a longstanding symbol in OT going back to our origins- that of a weaving. The warp are the values of the profession, the program, and the university which run throughout the curriculum. The weft are the threads of occupational therapy content knowledge, skills, and experiences that comprise the foundation of our program. This course addresses the values of authenticity, justice, integrity, altruism, and open-mindedness. It is part of the curricular stream of becoming a professional and a future leader and development of relationships with individuals and groups. This is an advanced course that is near the end of the didactic curriculum, designed to prepare students as they prepare for full-time clinical experiences and entrance into the profession.

Level I Fieldwork supports the scaffolding of knowledge and critical thinking as it requires students to integrate what they learn in didactic coursework and apply that knowledge to clinical practice. The expectation is that the student be given the opportunity to observe and interact with education and health professionals and clients to better understand the therapeutic process.

All course expectations are designed according to Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains---Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. This course will facilitate students to perform within the Domains of Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating and Creating. Refer to <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/effective-practice/revised-blooms-taxonomy/> .

**The student will actively participate to accomplish and meet the objectives to:**

Learning Objective	Program Objective	ACOTE standard	Learning Experiences	How will the Learning Objective be Measured?
Demonstrate understanding of psychological and social factors that influence client(s) engagement in occupation while on Level I fieldwork.	Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry-level occupational therapists, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning.	C.1.6. Fieldwork in Mental Health, Behavioral Health, or Psychosocial Factors	Classroom discussions and debriefings, FW experiences, Discussion Board	Discussion board, Final FW evaluation, Online simulations achieved at 90% accuracy and active discussions during debriefings
Summarize the clinical presentation of an occupational therapy client with a mental health condition, describing strengths and weaknesses in occupational performance and the impact of client's contextual factors on occupational therapy practice.	Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning	B.3.3. Standardized and Nonstandardized Screening and Assessment Tools B.4.6. Care Coordination, Case Management and Consultation	Classroom discussions and debriefings, FW experiences	Occupational profile, online simulations achieved at 90% accuracy, FW final evaluation
Demonstrate emerging professional, written, and oral communication skills	Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an	B.3.5. Reporting Data B.3.3. Standardized and	Classroom discussions, and debriefings; FW experiences	Discussion board, Final FW evaluation,

Learning Objective	Program Objective	ACOTE standard	Learning Experiences	How will the Learning Objective be Measured?
in interactive learning with peers, building relationships with clients, and participating in behavioral health or psychosocial practice arenas	entry-level occupational therapists, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning.	Nonstandardized Screening and Assessment Tools B.4.6. Care Coordination, Case Management and Consultation		Online simulations achieved at 90% accuracy and active discussions during debriefings
Conduct professional observations and prepare written documentation that reflects knowledge of how psychological and social factors affect occupational performance in relation to environment/context, development expectations, and challenges to occupational performance for various individuals	Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry-level occupational therapists, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning.	B.3.2. Professional reasoning	Classroom discussion and debriefs, FW experiences	Discussion board, Final FW evaluation, Online simulations achieved at 90% accuracy and active during debriefings
Demonstrate cultural/ethical awareness and respect for diversity when discussing, interpreting, reporting, and	Promote justice through compassionate service to the local and global communities.	B.2.10. Ethics and Professional Interactions B.1.2. Sociocultural, Socioeconomic,	Classroom discussions and debriefings; FW experiences	Discussion board, Final FW evaluation, Online simulations achieved at

Learning Objective	Program Objective	ACOTE standard	Learning Experiences	How will the Learning Objective be Measured?
engaging with others in classroom and professional practice environments		and Diversity Factors; and Lifestyles		90 % accuracy and active during debriefings
Participate in assigned psychosocial level I FW placement and adhere to University's, the OT Program's, and the settings' policies and procedures, including safety requirements	Apply ethical reasoning aligned with the AOTA and the program's values to make decisions and practice professionally.	B.2.10. Ethics and Professional Interactions	Classroom discussions and debriefings; FW experiences	Discussion board, Final FW evaluation, Online simulations achieved at 90 % accuracy and active discussions during debriefings
<b>Develop skills in self-assessment and reflection in order to support personal and professional development and professional behaviors</b>	Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry-level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning.	B.4.8. Quality Management and Improvement  Provide therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments as part of the therapeutic process in both individual and	Classroom discussion and debriefings; FW experiences	Assignment checklist and final FW evaluation

Learning Objective	Program Objective	ACOTE standard	Learning Experiences	How will the Learning Objective be Measured?
		group interaction		
Understand and adhere to the AOTA <i>Code of Ethics</i> and begin to formulate one's own ethical practice	Apply ethical reasoning aligned with the AOTA and the program's values to make decisions and practice professionally.	B.2.3. Ethics and Professional Interactions	Classroom discussions and debriefings; FW experience	In-class AIR ethical analysis, Assignment checklist, and Final FW evaluation
Demonstrate understanding of own values and background, and the impact of these on developing roles as occupational therapy professionals in traditional and emerging psychosocial practice arenas	Apply ethical reasoning aligned with the AOTA and the program's values to make decisions and practice professionally.	B.2.3. Ethics and Professional Interactions	Classroom discussions and debriefings; FW experiences	Assignment checklist and final FW evaluation



**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERCENT OF GRADE</b>
Jan 6th and throughout all FW	Maintain Pre-requisites on Castlebranch & create profile on Exxat	All immunizations, background checks, & Exxat profiles must be maintained	5%
Throughout semester- see Topical Outline for due dates	Simucase cases	Complete assigned Simucase simulations & videos, repeating sections until achieve 90% accuracy, due Sunday by 11:59 pm. In class worksheets submitted on Bb by 11:59 pm Monday. Come prepared to <i>actively</i> question and talk about cases in debriefing sessions.	50%- each combination of worksheet, active debrief session participation and final grade of 90% or higher on Simucase.
Feb 17- Mar 24	Discussion Board	Blackboard Discussion - due March 24, 2025	5%
In Person Experience Worksheet  Attendance and Level I Fieldwork Evaluation of FW experience	On site requirements including group/ individual preparation and delivery and evaluation such as COPM- SIS  Submission of hours on Exxat and Evaluation of Level 1 experience on Exxat	Time logs on Exxat – due within 1 week of finishing FW  Evaluation due one week after completion of experience	40%