



Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

Special Trimester Late Spring/Summer 2026

Course # OT 574

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH HUMAN OCCUPATION: THEORY IN ADULT & GERIATRIC PHYSICAL DISABILITY

SYLLABUS AND TOPICAL OUTLINE

	Instructor Information
Faculty	Amanda Wheeler, PhD, OTR/L, CLT, CWHS Jaimee Hegge, OTD, OTR/L, CKTP
Contact	#203-371-7734 (Jaimee) & #203-365-4777 (Amanda) Jaimee: bettsj1008@sacredheart.edu Amanda: wheelera2@sacredheart.edu
Office Hours	By appointment
Office Location	CHE N124 (Jaimee) N125 (Amanda)

Course Overview

	Course Information
Course Meeting Times	Sections A & B 1:30-3:30PM
Format	This course series is designed utilizing an experiential approach to learning. The content will be provided through self-directed activities, case studies analysis, lectures and discussions, problem solving in small groups, hands-on activities, and special lab experiences (including clinical simulation and community site visits). The Theory portion of this content will be provided in synchronous class meetings once per week.
Location	Building location: CHE, 4000 Park Avenue, Fairfield, CT Class location: A133
Credit & Workload	This is a 2-credit course. The course is offered in a 15-week special trimester calendar. One (1) credit hour represents 45 hours of work over the course of a term, which includes activities such as lectures, discussions, group work, individual work, and experiential activities. For a two (2) credit hour course, the total expected workload is 90 hours. In a 15-week course, this course averages approximately 6 hours per week.
Prerequisites	Not applicable

Course Information

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COURSE DESCRIPTION and PURPOSE:

This course is designed for graduate occupational therapy students and will support development of clinical skills pertaining to evaluation, treatment planning and implementation, and documentation. This course is the second in a series of three that are scaffolded by level of complexity. The problem-based and team-based learning methods will be utilized to conduct classroom activities in this course. Students will be presented with clinical case studies prompting consideration of scientific evidence in relation to areas of occupation, client factors, performance skills, performance patterns, contexts/environments, and activity demands as well as culture, spirituality, and the meaning of occupations will also be considered. Case studies and assignments will encourage students to adopt a holistic view of clients and their caregivers during evaluation and treatment planning, and communication skills required to work on an interprofessional healthcare team. Transformation through Human Occupation: Theory in Adult & Geriatric Physical Disabilities will place specific emphasis on theory utilized with adult and geriatric clients through lecture and team-based learning.

COURSE RELATIONSHIP TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE AND AOTA VISION 2030:

"Vision 2030 is:

- The guiding force and definitive aspiration for the profession, to which AOTA aligns its organizational, strategic, and operational plans for maximum mission impact over the next five years.*
- Inextricably linked to AOTA's mission to advance occupational therapy practice, education, and research through standard setting and advocacy on behalf of its members, the profession, and the public.*
- Essential to the profession's ongoing viability and success," ([AOTA, 2025](#)).*

"As an inclusive profession, 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, 2025](#)).



Vision Statement: Enriching life for ALL individuals and society through meaningful engagement in everyday activities.

Foundational Pillars			
Inclusive and Equitable Professional Community	Evidence-Based, Client-Centered, and Innovative Practice	Universally Recognized with Valued Excellence	Occupational Justice and Advocacy
Creates a supportive environment fostering belonging, collaboration, networking, and continuous learning for all professionals to enhance growth and development.	Delivers high-quality and skilled care using latest research, focusing on individual client needs and goals while encouraging innovative approaches to enhance treatment outcomes.	Establishes occupational therapy's importance across various settings, demonstrating its unique value in improving individuals' quality of life and functional abilities.	Promotes education, advocacy, accessibility, and the right for ALL to engage in meaningful occupations through collaboration with consumers, other professionals, and policymakers.

([AOTA](#), 2025)

OUR THOUGHTS ABOUT LEARNING IN RELATION TO THIS COURSE

While it may appear that knowledge is certain, that there are facts we can count on, in reality knowledge changes over time. What we did in occupational therapy in the 1950's is not what we do today. We can teach you skills, assessment tools, and specific diagnostic categories, but all of that may be different in 20 years. That tool may no longer exist, the DSM may change the criteria for a diagnosis or drop it altogether, and the skills you rely on today may be shown to be ineffective by tomorrow's research.

Therefore, an important characteristic for you to develop is your capacity for curiosity and the desire to continually learn and improve. If you remain static in OT, you may become bored and may burn out. If the profession remains static, we may become irrelevant. All of us must engage in continual improvement for our profession to remain viable and for us to achieve our centennial vision.

We believe that all our students can learn given sufficient resources, proper instruction, and adequate motivation and effort. For you to continue a path of lifelong learning as an OT, and not become stifled and complacent, you will need the intention to do so, the motivation, drive, and curiosity to ensure you do not become bored or boring, in your practice. We will make this course playful and silly wherever it is appropriate to do so.



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We also believe in evidence-based teaching and have crafted activities and assignments that research suggests will help you learn the material. There is abundant evidence that repetition is important, that writing (in pencil) helps you to remember, that merely reading and highlighting content is not sufficient for long term learning, and that quizzes, and self-questioning will help you learn. We will use many, if not all, of these strategies this semester.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM DESIGN:

The cornerstone of the MSOT program and curriculum at SHU is “**Transformation through values-based education.**” Our curriculum design is a blueprint for learning. The curriculum reflects the mission, vision, and philosophy of our program. Our program philosophy contains our beliefs about occupations, human beings, learners, and teaching practices. Consequently, the design of the curriculum has emerged from our philosophical beliefs. 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 (occupational performance analysis and interpretation, enabling occupations, scholarship, professional communication, interpersonal skills, and professionalism).

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

The Transformation through Human Occupation course series utilizes a multimodal approach to teaching and learning, including didactic lectures, large and small group discussions, experiential learning activities, and self-directed learning. There will be opportunities to learn through demonstration and hands-on skill development. Instruction may also include on-line synchronous and asynchronous experiences. This course will also introduce learning strategies used in Problem- and Team-Based Learning (PBL/TBL) curriculum as a means to foster students’ independent and collaborative learning. The self-directed time designated in your semester schedule is mandatory. Students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to class. Other research resources include but are not limited to journal articles, media sources, and any material from the previous semester(s). It may also include notes and readings from other courses.



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Small groups will break down a case study and will assign students to find out necessary information and bring it back to the group in order to make clinical decisions. Students are expected to discuss current literature and evidence to assist with clinical decision making. You are also expected to utilize creative methods when presenting your research findings to your small groups.

As a group, you will select and demonstrate appropriate evaluation and intervention methods for the clients portrayed in the case studies. You will determine treatment priorities, conduct activity analysis, formulate short-and long-term goals (using the SMART format), and write SOAP notes and treatment plans individually and as a team for the clients portrayed in the case studies. For some of the case studies, your groups will engage in a mock treatment planning meeting involving the “client”, their caregiver(s), other professionals and stakeholders. In addition, you will be expected to present to your peers and instructors as if you were an occupational therapist providing an in-service.

The primary teaching method that will occur in OT574 is Team-based learning which will incorporate individual student work, group problem-solving, and immediate instructor and peer feedback provision. Students’ knowledge of the foundational material necessary for the TBL will be assessed via individual and team quizzes (Individual Readiness Assurance Test [iRAT] and Team Readiness Assurance Test [tRAT]). Below is the general framework for how the course will run most weeks:

Schedule:

iRAT: 15 minutes

tRAT: 10 minutes

Review questions briefly/Mini Lecture: 30-40 minutes

Break: 15 minutes

Application Exercise: 40-45 minutes

TBL Rules:

1. IRATS and TRATS are closed notes and closed book quizzes.



2. IRATS will be completed independently.
3. TRATS are to be completed after discussion with all group members using scratch cards
4. If you get an answer incorrect on your TRAT, but choose it correctly on the second attempt, you will receive half credit for that question (no limit on how many questions you can do this for).

Appeals process: If you disagree with the wording of a question or feel it should be discarded, email as a Team to provide your rationale and provide an alternative question. If faculty are in agreement, you will receive full credit for that specific question on your TRAT. Each team needs to submit their own appeal. A granted appeal for one group does not apply to the entire class. You cannot write an appeal for iRATs.

Exams will consist of both computer-based didactic assessment and in-person demonstration of skills learned.

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.

This syllabus and course outline are 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.

COURSE MATERIALS:

REQUIRED TEXTS NEW TO THIS COURSE:

Schofield, K. & Schwartz, D. (2019). *Orthotic Design and Fabrication for the Upper Extremity: A Practical Guide* (1st ed.). Slack. ISBN-13: 978-1630915902

REQUIRED TEXTS FROM PRIOR COURSES

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>



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Cole, M. B. & Tufano, R. (2020). *Applied theories in occupational therapy: A practical approach* (2nd Ed.). SLACK Incorporated.

Pendleton, H. M. & Schultz-Krohn, W. (2024). *Pedretti's Occupational therapy practice skills for physical dysfunction* (9th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier. ISBN: 978-0323792554

Sames, K.M. (2015). *Documenting occupational therapy practice* (3rd Ed.). Pearson Education Inc.

Smith-Gabai, H. & Holm, S. E. (2024). *Occupational therapy in acute care* (3rd ed.) Bethesda, MD: AOTA Press. ISBN 13: 978-1-56900621-4

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Gillen, G. (2020). *Stroke rehabilitation: A function-based approach* (5th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier. ISBN 978-0-323-63994-1

Additional documents will be scanned to Blackboard

Link to SHU Bookstore: [SHU Bookstore](#)

STUDENT BUDGET FOR COURSE SUPPLIES: All materials for this course will be provided by your instructors. The Occupational Therapy Department has already selected and purchased a wide range of materials for use during this course. If, for any reason, you choose to engage and teach an activity for which we do not have the specific materials, you may have to purchase those materials from your own funds. Adjust as needed for your 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. Adjust as needed for your course

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES: 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. The standards that are addressed in this course are listed in the table below. This link will allow you to review all the [ACOTE standards](#).

The course objectives, program objectives, the mission and vision of the department and the overall curricular design are all linked to the ACOTE standards. Table 1 shows the connection between the entire course series objectives, the program objectives they



are linked to, and the ACOTE standards that are addressed in this course, as well as how we plan to meet and measure the learning objectives for this course.

Table 1- Program Outcomes, Course Objectives, ACOTE Standards, Learning Activities & Measures

Program Outcomes	Course Objective	ACOTE Standard	Learning Activities	Learning Measures
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning	Interpret client behaviors to adjust interventions accordingly.	B.2.6. Effects of Disease processes	In-class demonstrations	Midterm & Final Exams
Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, use of evidence, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level, holistic application of the occupational therapy process.	Defend his or her choice of assessment or intervention using varied methods of clinical reasoning, and/or research evidence.	B.2.10. Ethics and Professional Interaction	Application activities	
	Apply research evidence appropriately to the decision making process in clinical cases	B.3.1. Therapeutic Use of Self	Guest speakers	
		B.3.2. Professional Reasoning	Mini-lectures	
		B.3.4. Application of Assessment Tools and Interpretation of Results		
		B.3.8. Grade and Adapt Processes or Environments		
		B.3.9. Establish, Restore, and Modify		
		B.3.10. Plan for Discharge		



		B.3.11. Community Mobility B.3.12. Functional Mobility B.3.13. Dysphagia and Feeding B.3.15. Assistive Technologies and Devices B.3.16. Orthoses and Prosthetic Devices B.3.17. Referral to Specialists B.3.21. Effective Communication		
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning Engage in continual	Explain the theoretical or clinical rationale behind selected intervention techniques. Defend his or her choice of assessment or intervention using varied	B.2.6. Effects of Disease processes B.3.2. Professional Reasoning B.3.4. Application of Assessment Tools and Interpretation of Results B.3.8. Grade and Adapt	Assigned class readings Group discussion In-class Application activities	TBL iRATs/tRATS



learning and evidence-based practice with intellectual open-mindedness Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, use of evidence, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level, holistic application of the occupational therapy process.	methods of clinical reasoning, and/or research evidence. Apply research evidence appropriately to the decision making process in clinical cases	Processes or Environments B.3.9. Establish, Restore, and Modify B.3.11. Community Mobility		
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning Engage in continual learning and evidence-based practice with intellectual	Interpret client behaviors to adjust interventions accordingly. Explain the theoretical or clinical rationale behind selected intervention techniques. Defend his or her choice of assessment or intervention using varied	B.2.6. Effects of Disease processes B.3.9. Establish, Restore, and Modify B.3.15. Assistive Technologies and Devices	In-class demonstrations and discussion Guest speakers Mini-lectures	Health Education Resource



open-mindedness Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, use of evidence, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level, holistic application of the occupational therapy process.	methods of clinical reasoning, and/or research evidence. Apply research evidence appropriately to the decision making process in clinical cases			
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning Engage in continual learning and evidence-based practice with intellectual open-mindedness Exhibit critical thinking, clinical reasoning, use	Interpret client behaviors to adjust interventions accordingly. Explain the theoretical or clinical rationale behind selected intervention techniques. Defend his or her choice of assessment or intervention using varied methods of clinical reasoning,	B.2.6. Effects of Disease processes B.2.10. Ethics and Professional Interaction B.3.1. Therapeutic Use of Self B.3.10. Plan for Discharge B.3.21. Effective Communication	In-class demonstrations Application activities Guest speakers Mini-lectures	AI Case Conversation Assignment



of evidence, and competence in skills requisite for entry-level, holistic application of the occupational therapy process.	and/or research evidence. Apply research evidence appropriately to the decision making process in clinical cases			
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Topical Outline & Course Schedule:

See separate document with comprehensive outline for all courses associated with Transformation Through Human Occupation: Adult & Geriatric Physical Disabilities (OT574, OT575, OT576)

Final Grades

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

Assignment/Assessment	Percentage of Grade
TBL iRATs & tRATs You are required to complete individual and group quizzes as part of the TBL format for this course. These quizzes will be closed book, timed, and you will only have <u>one</u> opportunity to take the quiz when they occur in person. You will work independently on the iRAT quizzes, and you will work with your group on the tRAT quizzes. iRATs will occur on most weeks throughout the semester. <u>The following weeks IRAT will be graded:</u> 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14 <u>tRATs will take place and be graded during weeks:</u> 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13	36% <i>iRAT 18%</i> (2% x 9) <i>tRAT 18%</i> (2% x 9)
Health Education Resource Group Assignment July 27th before class	



Your group will create an occupation-centered education resource and convert it into a digital format using technology. Your goal is to create an accessible, evidence-based, and visually appealing educational tool that reflects your understanding of the course material and clinical application. Your group and topic will be randomly assigned at the start of the semester	14%
AI Conversations Due 5/17 & 7/12 You will be required to complete an AI conversation via blackboard with a simulated patient to acquire basic information you would gather during an initial evaluation (prior level of function, home environment, social history) and respond to an open-ended prompt once you feel you have collected all necessary information	10% (5% x 2)
Midterm Exam Monday, June 8th 11am The midterm exam will be primarily multiple choice and true/false questions. This exam will have a study guide, but the questions will be more application than rote memory. You will have 60 minutes to complete the exam. If you require additional time or an alternate setting, you MUST schedule your exam with the OSA office.	20%
Final Exam Wednesday, August 5th 10am The final exam will be primarily multiple choice and true/false questions. The final is not cumulative. The final exam will also have a study guide, and the questions will be more application than rote memory. You will take this exam during final exam week at 10am. You will have 1 hour to complete the exam. If you require additional time or an alternate setting, you MUST schedule to take your exam with the OSA office	20%
Total	100%



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The final letter grade is assigned in accordance with the university grading policy: [SHU Graduate Grading System](#).

Student Expectations

ATTENDANCE: As per program policy, a 100% attendance rate for all courses is required. Per university policy, attendance will be recorded on Blackboard for each class and for each student. Absences from classes are allowed only under extraordinary circumstances, such as illnesses, emergencies, religious obligations, or important family events; for example, a 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 the 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. Please refer to COVID Contingencies policy in the Student Manual with regards to absences/isolation for colds and flu symptoms, or the SHU [Coronavirus](#) web page. Please note that, while classes might take place online (using Zoom, Webex, or Microsoft Teams) in case of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, attendance policies for the online classes are the same as for the in-person classes.

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, students may be required to leave their audio and video devices on during the class lectures.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY and PARTICIPATION: Please refer to the 2025-2027 OT Student Handbook.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS: Please refer to the 2025-2027 O.T. Student Handbook.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PLATFORMS: In accordance with Sacred Heart University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#), the use of Artificial Intelligence platforms is on a case-by-case basis in the Department of Occupational Therapy. Students are permitted to use artificial intelligence chatbots (such as ChatGPT) **only when explicitly directed by the instructor**. If you are ever unsure whether the use of an artificial intelligence chatbot is allowed, please contact the instructor prior to using it.



How We Support Your Learning at SHU

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FACULTY:

- Your materials will always be available to you at least one week before class (usually much earlier than that).
- We will answer your emails during the work week within 24 business hours.
- We will grade your papers and have things back to you within 3 weeks of your turning them in (if you turn them in on time).
- We will explain why we are doing what we are doing. We don't believe in 'busy work' and won't give you any.
- We will have very high standards for your behavior and ours. We believe in Stephen Covey's 7 habits of highly effective people. We also believe that to demonstrate and model responsibility and efficacy, we must have integrity. Integrity starts with making and keeping promises and commitments. We pride ourselves on being dependable and keeping our commitments.
- When we are meeting with you, and in class with you, you will have our undivided attention. We will all practice 'being present' in the moment in our communication with each other. 'Being present' in the moment is an important skill to learn. If it ever seems like we are distracted and not listening fully, please say so. If you ask a question when we are distracted or when we cannot give you our full attention (for example at the beginning of class while setting up), we will tell you so and will tell you when we will be able to give you our full attention.
- We will start and end class on time, unless there are extreme events.
- We spend a lot of time planning what we will do in class and what we think are activities that will help you learn this material- but that will also be fun.
- We will model the same professional behaviors we expect of all of you. We will treat you as a future colleague and an adult student. Please speak with us if you're having any difficulties with the material or assignments. However, we also believe in personal responsibility.

University Supports (Read the University Syllabus Extension)

The university has many supports, services, and policies available to support your success at Sacred Heart University. Be sure to visit this course on Blackboard and click "Syllabus Extension" under the Syllabus module to read important information regarding academic integrity, academic accommodations, learning support services, and more. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.