



# Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY  
OT 504  
THERAPEUTIC USE OF SELF  
FALL 2025**

**SYLLABUS AND TOPICAL OUTLINE**

<b>Instructor Information</b>	
<b>Faculty</b>	Dr Sheelagh M. Schlegel DrHSc, MPH, OTR/L
<b>Contact</b>	schlegels@sacredheart.edu
<b>Office Hours</b>	Mon – Thursday 8:00 – 4:00
<b>Office Location</b>	N-122

**Course Overview**

<b>Course Information</b>	
<b>Course Meeting Times</b>	Section C Monday 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM Section A Monday 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM Section B Tuesday 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM
<b>Format</b>	In-person
<b>Location</b>	Building location: CHE, 4000 Park Avenue, Fairfield, CT Class location: Section C: N205 Section A: N166 Section B: N350
<b>Credit &amp; Workload</b>	This course is offered in a 16-week semester calendar. For a two (2) credit hour course, the total expected workload is 90 hours which includes activities such as lectures, discussions, group work, individual work, and experiential activities.  In a 16-week course, this 2 credit course averages approximately 5.6 hours per week.
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Not applicable



## Course Information

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION and PURPOSE:**

This first semester course is designed to promote reflection on the educational process and the individual student's future occupational therapy practice. Students will complete reflective self-assessments and analyze them to determine their therapeutic personality traits and modes necessary for developing a professional identity and skill base. Understanding the nature of the therapeutic relationship as an intentional process is taught for successfully developing client and group dynamics. Course formats will include seminars, discussions, and in class and online course activities.

### **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).



## AOA Vision 2030

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

Foundational Pillars			
<b>Inclusive and Equitable Professional Community</b>	<b>Evidence-Based, Client-Centered, and Innovative Practice</b>	<b>Universally Recognized with Valued Excellence</b>	<b>Occupational Justice and Advocacy</b>
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.

(AOA, 2025)

### 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 (occupational performance analysis and interpretation, enabling occupations, scholarship, professional communication, interpersonal skills, and professionalism).

### CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR THIS COURSE:

The Model of the Intentional Relationship in occupational therapy, as developed by Renee Taylor, PhD., is used as the theoretical model for this course. See the diagram on p. 48 of the course text for a concept mapping of the main constructs of the Model.

### MY THOUGHTS ABOUT LEARNING IN RELATION TO THIS COURSE

I believe that the true learning that applies in occupational therapy emerges from a grounding in knowledge that informs practice and is operationalized in skilled performance and in the context of relationship. What this means to you in this class is that you will develop knowledge related to the Intentional Relationship Model and professional interactions from readings and lectures. You will also engage in assignments and activities, such as role playing, that will give you an opportunity to apply those skills. Throughout, you will reflect on the affective dimension of what you



are doing, in other words, how does that reflect your values and those of the profession, and further the effectiveness of your professional relationships.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:**

The course has seminars, in class discussions, readings, role-play, in class learning activities, demonstrations, and online material in Blackboard. Written and video assignments in and outside of class will provide an opportunity to practice the iterative nature of self-reflection needed to advance through levels of critical thinking and clinical reasoning throughout a lifetime of occupational therapy practice.

**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:** Taylor, R. R. (2020). *The intentional relationship: Occupational therapy and use of self* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: F.A. Davis. ISBN-13: 978-0-8036-6977-2

**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.

**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.



**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 of the ACOTE standards: [NBCOT website](#).

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- Course, Learning, & Program Objectives, ACOTE standards, Learning Outcomes & Measures**

Program Objective	Course Objective	ACOTE Standard	Learning Activities	Assessment Strategies
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning	Students will demonstrate an understanding of the development and concepts, knowledge, and skills related to the Model of the Intentional Relationship (IRM), its importance for, and utilization in the practice setting.	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.	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and role plays and simulation.	Exam, video assignment. Modes Assignment
Engage in continual	Students will demonstrate	B.2.2. Analyze and evaluate	Recorded Seminar,	Exams



<p>learning and evidence-based practice with intellectual open-mindedness</p>	<p>understanding of the historical influences in society and in the profession that led to the development of the IRM and the importance of the use of the IRM to enhance the effect of occupational therapy practice.</p>	<p>occupational therapy history, philosophical base, theory, and sociopolitical climate and their importance in meeting society's current and future occupational needs as well as how these factors influence and are influenced by practice.</p>	<p>readings, links, class discussion</p>	
<p>Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate individual characteristics and situational contexts to decide which mode or mode sequence would be best to use in interactions with clients, clients' families and significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public, and to change modes as indicated by the needs expressed within the events</p>	<p>B.3.2 Demonstrate professional reasoning to evaluate, analyze, diagnose, and provide occupation-based interventions that: Address client factors, performance patterns, and performance skills. Focus on creation, promotion, establishment, restoration,</p>	<p>Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and or role play, written reflection, goal setting.</p>	<p>Exam, Video Assignment, Modes Assignment, Narrative Assignment</p>



	of the ongoing interaction.	<p>maintenance, modification, and prevention.</p> <p>B.3.3 Evaluate client(s)' occupational performance, including occupational profile, by analyzing and selecting standardized and non-standardized screenings and assessment tools to determine the need for occupational therapy intervention(s). Assessment methods must take into consideration cultural and contextual factors of the client.</p> <p>B.3.7 Monitor and reevaluate, in collaboration with the client, care partner, and occupational therapy</p>		
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		assistant, the effect of occupational therapy intervention and the need for continued or modified intervention.		
Exhibit team collaboration skills, inter-professional practices, and demonstrate cultural humility in all communications and encounters	Students will identify optimal use of the IRM to facilitate meeting the client's occupational needs through effective communication with patients, families, communities, and members of the interprofessional team in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team approach to the promotion of health and wellness	B.3.21 Demonstrate effective communication with clients, care partners, communities, and members of the intraprofessional and interprofessional teams in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team approach to promote client outcomes.	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and or role play	Exam, Video Assignment, Simulation
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and	Students will demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments, as part of the	B.3.1 Demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments,	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and or role play/simulation	Exam, Video Assignment, Narrative Assignment



clinical reasoning	therapeutic process in both individual and group interaction.	as part of the therapeutic process in both individual and group interaction.		
	Students will demonstrate the ability to apply the Instruction Mode of the Model of the Intentional Relationship and the Teach Back method in interactions with clients, clients' families and significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public	B.3.19. Demonstrate and evaluate the principles of the teaching–learning process using educational methods and health literacy education approaches: To design activities and clinical training for persons, groups, and populations. To instruct and train the client, caregiver, family, significant others, and communities at the level of the audience	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and or role play	Exam, Video Assignment
Apply ethical reasoning aligned with the AOTA and the program's values to make decisions and practice	Students will demonstrate integration of the core values and ethics of the profession of occupational therapy in the	B.2.10. Demonstrate knowledge of the current published American Occupational Therapy	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion	Exam, Reflection Assignment



professionally	application of the Model of the Intentional relationship	Association (AOTA) Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and AOTA Standards of Practice and use them as a guide for ethical decision making in professional interactions, client interventions, employment settings, and when confronted with personal and organizational ethical conflicts.		
Demonstrate the knowledge and skills required of an entry level occupational therapist, including critical thinking and clinical reasoning	Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to utilize the different modes to respond to clients in a manner that promotes emotional and behavioral safety with the context of any treatment setting	B.2.8. Demonstrate sound judgment regarding safety of self and others and adhere to safety regulations throughout the occupational therapy process as appropriate to the setting and scope of practice. This must include the ability to assess and monitor vital	Recorded Seminar, readings, links, class discussion and learning activities and or role play.	



		signs (e.g., blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory status, and temperature) to ensure that the client is stable for intervention.		
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**Topical Outline & Course Schedule**

*Subject to change per instructor*

**Table 2: Topical Outline**

	<p><b><i>“When you love someone, the best thing you can offer is your presence. How can you love if you are not there?”</i></b>  <b><i>Thich Nhat Hanh</i></b></p>			
Wk	Dates	Topic	Reading	Assignments
1	8/25 & 8/26	1. Introduction to the course <b>Traits Assignment – Complete Section 2.1 and bring to class Due for Week 1 Class</b>	Chapters 1 & 2	<b>Traits Assignment – Complete Section 2.1 and bring to class Due for Week 1 Class</b>
2	9/1 & 9/2 Labor Day  All sections - Asynchronous	Introducing the Intentional Relationship Model and the Modes	Chapters 3 & 4	Watch recorded lectures
3	9/8 & 9/9	Introducing Mindfulness and the Affective Domain	www.mindful.org	<b>Final Traits Assignment Due end of Week 3 - Upload to BB</b>



4	9/15 & 9/16	Being Client-Centered: Understanding Interpersonal Characteristics and Mode Preferences	Chapter 5	
5	9/22 in person 9/23 online – watch recorded lecture	Complexities Within Client-Therapist Relationships: Inevitable Interpersonal Events of Therapy	Chapter 6	
6	9/29 online – watch recorded lecture 9/30 in person	Uncomplicating the Complicated: The Interpersonal Reasoning Process	Chapter 7	
7	10/6 & 10/7	Therapeutic Communication	Chapter 8	<b>Final Modes Due End of Week 7 Upload to BB</b>
8	10/13 & 10/14	<b>MIDTERM ONLINE</b> Ch 1-6		<b>MIDTERM ONLINE</b>
9	10/20 & 10/21	Establishing Intentional Relationships	Chapter 9	<b>Narrative Assignment Due end of week 9 - Upload to BB</b>
10	10/27 & 10/28	The Intentional Interview and Strategic Questioning	Chapter 10	
11	11/3 and 11/4	Understanding Families, Social	Chapter 11	



		Systems, and Group Dynamics in Occupational Therapy		
12	11/10 & 11/11	Understanding and Managing Difficult Behavior	Chapter 12	
13	11/17 & 11/18	Resolving Empathic Breaks and Conflicts	Chapter 13	<b>Video Assignment due 11/23</b>
14	11/24 Thanksgiving Week  All Classes on Monday 11/24 Sections A & B 8-10am Sections C&D 10am-12pm	Simulations		
15	12/1 & 12/2	Video Presentations		Reflection Assignments Due December 8th
16	Finals Week	<b>Exam Time TBD</b>		

## Final Grades

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

Assignment/Assessment	Percentage of Grade
Interpersonal Traits Survey. Students will complete a survey to determine their own particular	0%



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traits, and to identify those they would like to develop that will contribute to their successful use of self in practice. They will develop goals for developing underdeveloped or absent traits.	
Therapeutic Modes Assignment. Students will complete a survey to determine their own preferred modes and to identify those they would like to develop that will contribute to their successful use of self in practice. They will develop goals for developing lesser preferred modes.	10%
Mid-term Exam – Chapters 1-5	20%
Narrative Assignment. Students will read and insert themselves as an active character in a narrative based on a description of a situation, which will be posted on BB, and reflect from a narrative perspective	10%
Video Assignment Students will be given a case and develop a script that integrates knowledge and skills related to the Model of the Intentional Relationship and demonstrates the same in a video presentation. They will show their video and explain to the other students in their section what knowledge and skills are demonstrated, and they will be prepared to answer questions. They will include an example of the Teach Back method.	30%
Reflection on: 1. What you have learned in this class and how it had resulted in personal and professional growth particularly in relation to the core values and ethics of the profession of occupational therapy, and 2. What progress you have made on reaching your Mode goals.	10%
Final exam Chapters 6-15 and other written material	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

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 O.T. 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 THERPAY FACULTY:

- Your materials will always be available to you at least one week before class.
- 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).



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- 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 STUDENT SUPPORTS

### **Our Commitment to Inclusive Excellence**

As a student, it is important to know that at Sacred Heart University, inclusive excellence is not just a value – it is a foundational element that shapes our academic mission, our community culture, and our collective future. As a Catholic institution guided by a commitment to human dignity, justice, and the common good, we believe that true excellence is only possible when equity, inclusion, and belonging are fully woven into the fabric of our classrooms and university life.

In every course, we are called to foster environments where all members of our community feel seen, heard, respected, and empowered to thrive. This is a shared responsibility among SHU faculty, staff, and students. We look forward to the contributions you will make to help uphold this commitment to one another.

### **University Student Offices**

There are multiple support offices eager to support your learning and success at SHU. The services below are available for undergraduate and graduate students:

#### **Academic & Technology Supports:**



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- **Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)** - offers tutoring, writing, and learning support for all SHU undergraduate and graduate students. Visit the PASS Portal to sign up for tutoring, submit a paper for feedback through the Online Writing Lab (OWL), or look up peer-assisted learning opportunities for specific courses. Questions? Contact [CTLtutoring@sacredheart.edu](mailto:CTLtutoring@sacredheart.edu).
- **Office of Student Advising & Success (SAS)** – 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).
- **Office of Student Accessibility (OSA)** - Sacred Heart University provides equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability status. Students requesting accommodations should contact OSA. Students must be registered with OSA and submit appropriate documentation to be granted accommodations. Questions? Contact Kathy Radziunas ([radziunask@sacredheart.edu](mailto:radziunask@sacredheart.edu)).
- **Technical Support @ The Factory** – offers technical support, including Blackboard and classroom technology help, across walk-in, phone, self-service, help articles 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).

## Student Life Supports:

- **Counseling** - Students may experience a variety of challenges while enrolled at SHU. SHU provides both undergraduate counseling and graduate counseling services. Questions? Contact [counselingcenter@sacredheart.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@sacredheart.edu).
- **Dean of Students Office** - If you are experiencing challenges with accessing food, housing, technology, or other resources that may affect your performance, there are university resources available to support you. Contact Dean of Students, Denise Tiberio ([tiberiod@sacredheart.edu](mailto:tiberiod@sacredheart.edu)).
- **Campus Ministry** - provides faith-based support for students across religious backgrounds, including retreats, liturgical ministry, service experiences and more. Questions? Contact [campusministry@sacredheart.edu](mailto:campusministry@sacredheart.edu).

## University Policies



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## **Academic Integrity Policy**

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## **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/or 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.