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Facilitating Pre-Occupational Therapy Student Success Using a Developmental Course Sequence: The OT Seminars

AOTA Centennial Conference, 2017



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Introduction

- **DUC: Small private university**
- **Liberal arts and professional programs**
- **Total enrollment: 2100**
- **San Rafael, California**
- **OT Programs: BSMS (125) and ELM (90)**



Presentation Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate the rationale for a developmentally-based multi-semester course series designed to help pre-OT majors prepare for graduate professional studies.
2. Understand the application of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Human Development to course development and implementation.
3. Identify appropriate developmentally-based instructional activities and assignments designed to help students meet CSLO's.
4. Consider how this model might be applied to their program.

Background and Rationale

- **Previously: 1-semester course: Intro to OT- freshman year, 2 units**
- **Issues with retention and progression**
- **Lack of broader context to consider occupation**

Challenges of College Students

Life skills: social support, sleep, diet, exercise, money management

Academic skills: study skills, test taking, time management, writing

First generation: family support, economic support, academic preparation

Mental health: depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, role transition



Helping Students Succeed

- Integrated advising
- Co-curricular programs
- Early identification and referral
- Attend to the “whole person”



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Theory of Human Ecology: Bronfenbrenner

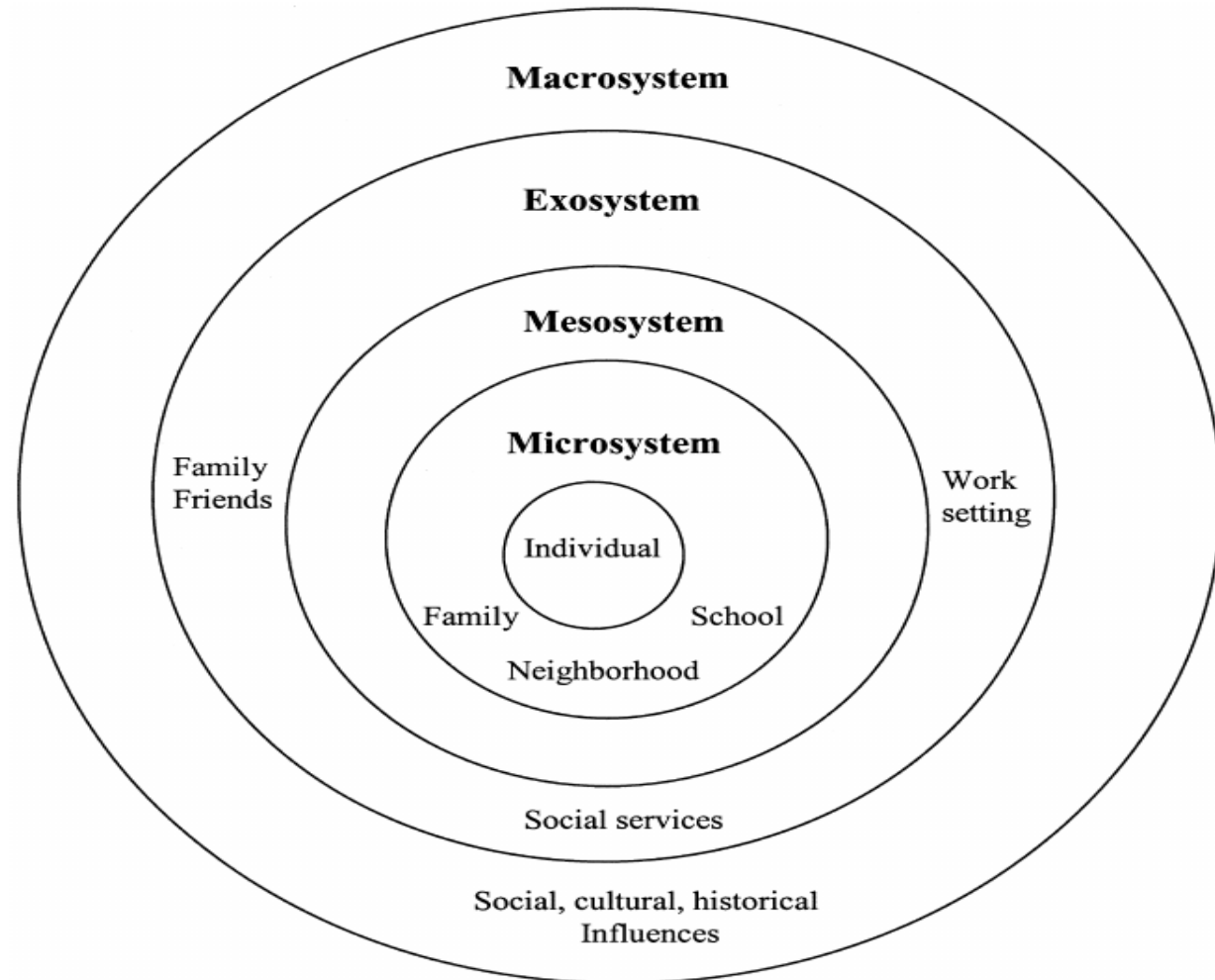
- **Developmental educational theory**
- **Humans grow as a result of experiences**
- **Person-environment interactions are reciprocal**
- **People develop through experiences in immediate environment**



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Ecology of College Readiness



OT Seminars



Situated Learning and Learning Communities

- Students learn best via apprenticeship model in “real life” settings
- Transformative learning communities focus on developing and sharing resources to benefit all



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Occupational Science

- **Humans as occupational beings**
- **Study of normal occupations across the lifespan**
- **Key concepts of occupation**



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The OT Seminars

- **OT 1001: Occupation and Self**
- **OT 1002: Occupations of Others**
- **OT 1003: Occupation and Community**
- **OT 1004: Occupation as Therapy**



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OT 1001: Occupation and Self

- **Focus: Transition to college, student occupations, self-care and wellness, introduction to OTPF, co-facilitation with integrated advisor, introduction to activity analysis**



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OT 1001: Activities/Assignments

- Occupations of students, transition to college, identification of resources
- Occupational narrative, self-assessment, and plan
- Learning styles quiz
- Intro to OTPF

OT 1002

Occupations of Others

- **Focus: Occupations across the lifespan,**



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OT 1002

Activities/Assignments

- Occupational interview
- Occupational observation
- Book report- first person account
- Therapeutic communication skills



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OT 1003

Occupation and Community

- **Focus: Campus and community affiliation groups, occupational justice**



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OT 1003

Key Activities/ Assignments

- Community event analysis paper
- Occupational justice paper
- The OT history overview
- Professional behaviors



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OT 1004

Occupation as Therapy

- **Focus:** Introduction to OT practice, preparation to enter professional OT program, understanding of professional behavior expectations for OT program.



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OT 1004

Activities /Assignments

- Medical terminology
- APA format /professional writing
- OT practice panels: guest speakers
- Student self-care strategies
- Petition to progress
- Volunteer work



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OT Seminars: General Outcomes

- **Increased student retention**
- **Development of cohesive cohorts**
- **Early referral as needed**
- **Exit plans for unqualified students**



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Lessons Learned

- **Meet weekly for continuity**
- **Use regular, not adjunct faculty**
- **Use OT students to do presentations**
- **Invite recent grads as guest speakers**



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Next Steps

- **Integrate with Dominican Experience, General Education**
- **E-portfolios, reflection**
- **Occupational Science focus**
- **Data collection/research on outcomes**



Questions, comments

- Thanks you! (quotes)

References

