Mission of the Master of Occupational Therapy Program

The mission of the occupational therapy program is to prepare compassionate, ethical and competent occupational therapy practitioners, equipped to serve and lead as agents of change in a global society.

The Curriculum Design

The curriculum design follows a spiraling, developmental model (Weddle & Sellheim, 2009). Students acquire a basic understanding of foundational skills and then are drawn into a deeper level of understanding and more sophisticated critical thinking as the curriculum progresses through application and mastery phases. To ensure students are prepared to enter practice as a generalist occupational therapist at the end of the curriculum, MOT faculty work together to plan the sequencing, depth, and integration of course content.

Specifically the curriculum design and philosophy are informed by the following:

The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model

The PEOP model demonstrates the dynamic interaction of intrinsic Person skills, facilitators, and barriers provided by the Environment, and the Occupations (skills and tasks to manage health) and ability of the person necessary for optimal Performance and participation in health (Christiansen, Baum, & Bass-Haugen, 2015).

MOT Curricular Themes and Student Learning Outcomes

The following six curricular themes are threaded throughout the curriculum. Not all themes are evident in each class while some are found more heavily in some courses than others. These themes support the Mission of the MOT Program and the larger goal to prepare students to successfully complete the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) registration exam and become eligible for licensure as an OTR/L.

To that end, the MOT Program has six themes; each of these themes has associated student learning outcomes (SLO) that are consistent with entry-level generalist practice.

Upon completion of the MOT program, students will be able to:

Theme 1: Occupation-Based Theoretical and Foundational Skills (B.1.1-B.1.8, B.2.0-B.2.11, B.3.1-B.3.6)

SLO 1: Develop a sound understanding on theoretical knowledge base that is foundational to the practice of occupational therapy (GLO 1, GLO 3)
Theme 2: Competent Occupational Therapy Practitioners (B.4.1-B.4.11-B.5.1-B.5.33)

SLO 2: Demonstrate the skill of a competent entry-level occupational therapy practitioner (GLO 1, GLO 3)

Theme 3: Evidence-based Practice and Research (B.3.1-B.3.6, B.8.1-B.8.10)

SLO 3: Use scholarly inquiry and evidence based practice while engaged in the art and science of occupational therapy. (GLO 2, GLO 3)

Theme 4: Critical Thinking and Reasoning (B.4.1-B.4.11, B.5.1-B.5.33)

SLO 4: Demonstrate competent clinical skills practicing according to ethical principles that benefit the client and other stakeholders (GLO 5)

Theme 5: Character Formation and Ethical Leadership (B.7.1-B.7.12, B.9.1-B.9.13)

SLO 5: Articulate the connection between personal faith-commitments and service, leadership and reconciliation within OT practice. (GLO 4)

Theme 6: Diversity and Intercultural Competence (B.6.0-B.6.6)

SLO 6: Demonstrate respect for culture and diversity in occupation-centered practice while engaging with diverse individuals, groups, and communities. (GLO 6)

Educational Philosophy of the Master of Occupational Therapy Program

The faculty of the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Program at Messiah Colleges believe that occupational therapy education “promotes clinical reasoning and the integration of professional values, theories, evidence, ethics, and skills” (AOTA, 2015, p.1). Sound, occupation-based reasoning in conjunction with the use of the best evidence and outcomes assessment is utilized to teach and shape strong occupational therapy leaders.

In accordance with the AOTA philosophy, best practices in adult education, the mission, foundational values, and the guiding educational assumptions of Messiah College, the educational philosophy of Messiah’s MOT faculty is summed in the following three statements:

Self-Directed Learning

Rooted in the belief value that each person is to be respected and valued (Messiah College’s Foundational Values) and in the seminal work of Knowle’s Andragogy Theory of Adult Learning (1968) the MOT program affords students opportunities for shaping their learning. The faculty respect each student and build on previous knowledge and experience while focusing on applying theory to OT practice, developing critical thinking and problem solving skills; thereby empowering their students to learn.
Learning in Community
Community is a foundational value of Messiah College. Learning communities blend theory and practice to create a collaborative environment that encourages students’ active involvement in learning. Research indicates learning communities can improve student persistence and academic achievement (MacGregor et al. 2002; Tinto, 1998). The MOT program at Messiah is a cohort model that is intentionally designed to create an active, collaborative learning environment in which students connect with their peers and faculty. Research demonstrates that participation in learning communities is positively linked to student engagement and students report overall satisfaction with college (Zhao, Kuh, 2004). Intentional learning communities give students the opportunity to build a network of peers who provide on-going support in and out of the classroom. Learning communities in Messiah’s MOT program take many forms including small group work, linked courses, and group fieldwork. These opportunities encourage collaboration and consensus building, facilitate dynamic self-understanding, provide opportunities to for diversity exploration, and the enhancement of leadership and communication skills. Finally, learning communities enable students to construct knowledge together and to share the experience of learning as a community of learners (Tinto 1998).

Experiential Learning with Reflection
The Messiah MOT program draws on Kolb’s (1984) theory of experiential learning. Faculty encourage students to work through the four-stage cyclical theory of learning; that includes (1) experience, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualization, and (4) experimentation with new ideas. In utilizing this process, transformational learning can happen in a variety of educational activities (including didactic education, problem-based learning, laboratory experiences, case studies, and experiential learning). Faculty emphasize intentional reflection throughout the program that interfaces between the institutional learning environment and student learning styles (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).
References:


