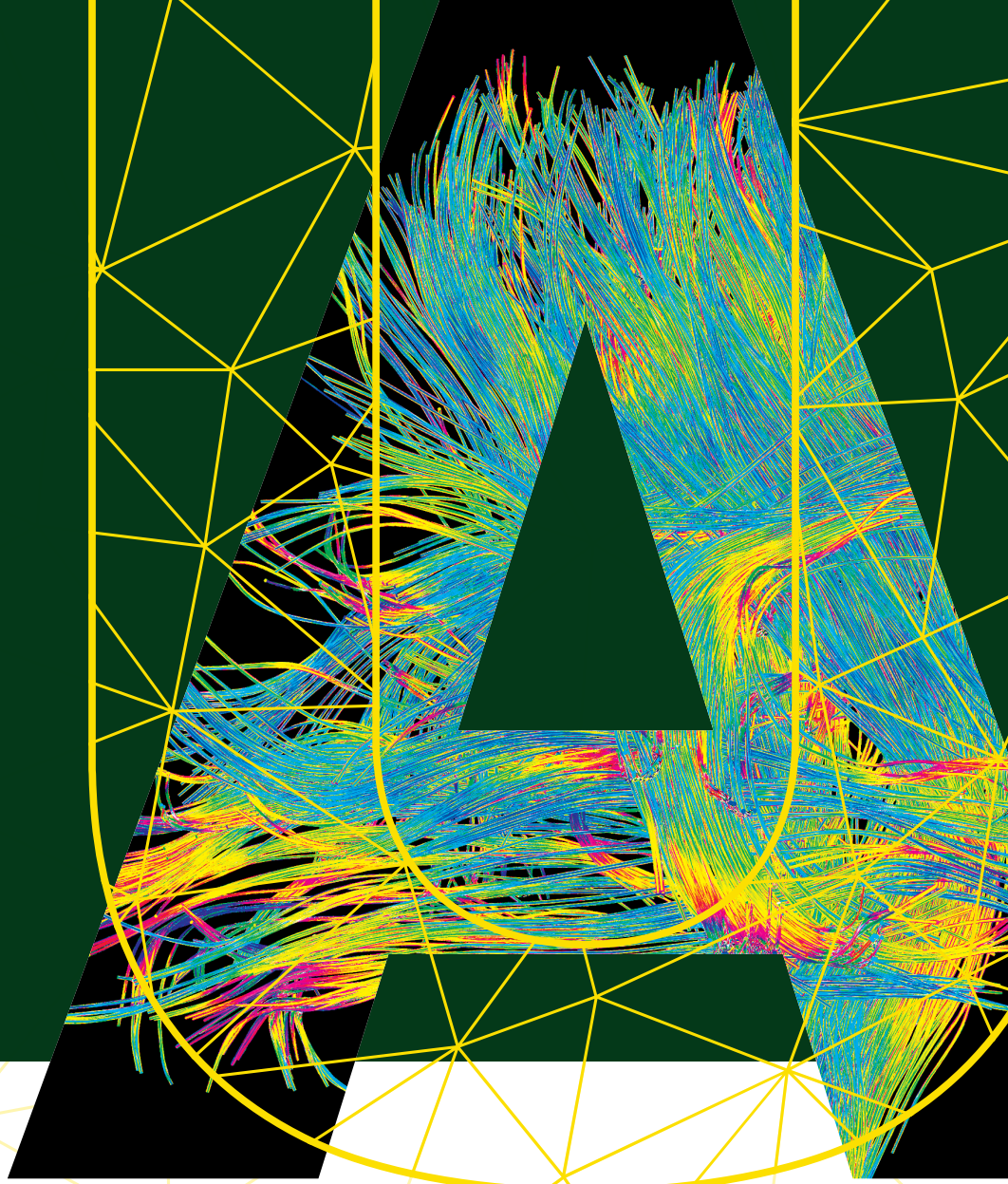




UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA



2022-2023

Occupational Therapy

Department of Occupational Therapy
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
College of Health Sciences

DECEMBER 2023



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Message from the Department

As we draw close to the end of another academic year, it is with great pride and enthusiasm that we share with you the accomplishments and milestones of the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Alberta.

This year has been a testament to the growth and recognition of our program. We have welcomed an increased number of students, now totalling 130, due to the Government of Saskatchewan funding an additional five student seats for our September 2023 cohort. This expansion reflects the growing demand for occupational therapists. We are also excited to be part of a program expansion in 2024, with the Government of Alberta's approval to establish a satellite program at the Augustana campus in

Camrose. This initiative will add 15 new seats each for occupational therapy, physiotherapy and communication sciences and disorders, marking a significant expansion of our rehabilitation presence in rural Alberta. Our first Augustana cohort will be admitted in September 2024, and preparations are well underway, including the submission of a substantive changes report to the CAOT Academic Credentialing Council.

Our main objective this year has been to revise the curriculum by implementing our new "Education for Capabilities" framework. The redeveloped curriculum is scheduled to launch with the September 2024 cohort. These changes are in line with the new Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada (CAOT 2021), and they are crucial to maintaining our commitment to excellence and relevance in OT education.

As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, we have updated our admissions process for 2024. This change aims to better support students from underrepresented and marginalized

communities in their application process. We believe this initiative is a positive step towards improving the diversity and inclusivity of our student population.

The department's outstanding research productivity has resulted in more than 50 peer-reviewed publications and secured nearly \$8.4 million in funding, reinforcing our significant contribution to the occupational therapy field.

This year, we celebrated Occupational Therapy Month with community-oriented activities, including collaborating with Canadian Blood Services as part of WFOT Global Service Day, a "Light up the Bridge for OT" social event at Kinsmen Park, and providing Wellness Centre services at the 2023 National Gathering of Elders. These events fostered camaraderie and raised awareness about occupational therapy within and beyond our program.

Additionally, we have partnered with Boyle Street Community Services for a joint OT position, highlighting our commitment to community integration and student placement opportunities. And, after significant lobbying by our department, the University of Alberta Dean of Students has created a full-time occupational therapist position to support student academic success across campus, highlighting the growing recognition of our profession's value across a growing number of diverse practice and service settings.

These achievements underscore our dedication to advancing occupational therapy and our commitment to our students, faculty and the broader community. We eagerly look forward to continuing this journey of growth and innovation.

Shaniff Email, PhD, MSc, OT (C)
Chair & Professor
Department of Occupational Therapy

Cori Schmitz, MEd, Reg OT (AB)
Associate Chair &
Associate Teaching Professor
Department of Occupational Therapy

Our Mission

With integrity and ingenuity, our mission is to foster leadership and advance scholarship in occupational therapy students, scientists and educators that contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

Our Vision

To advance the science and practice of occupational therapy through excellence in scholarship, teaching, research and service in order to effectively serve individuals and communities, recognizing that participation in occupations contributes to health and well-being. Our five-year strategic plan is consistent with this vision and is in keeping with the goals of the Faculty and the University of Alberta. We aim to cultivate excellence in scholarship, education and research in a collaborative environment that facilitates innovation and is grounded in the principles and practices of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Our Core Values

Integrity

The Department promotes authentic and professional behaviour in our interactions with students, key stakeholders and each other, and in our pedagogy and opportunities to learn.

Collaboration

The Department believes that cultivating relationships with and across academic and non-academic partners is essential and informs the culture of the Department in terms of the values and beliefs we bring to how we do things, and how we interact with our students, communities and each other.

Evidence-Informed

The Department believes in promoting best practices and actions in education and clinical practice that are informed through critical appraisal of information generated through research, professional and clinical experiences, and through seeking understanding of the lived experiences of those we serve.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The Department values and is committed to the key principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), including human rights, equality, intersectionality, accessibility and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Guided by these principles, the Department aims to make advances in inclusive learning, teaching, research, service and community engagement and to become more diverse and equitable in the work we do. This includes admissions, pedagogy, research, employment and advancement.

Innovation

The Department believes that advancement comes from collective thinking, creativity, pushing boundaries and applying a critical lens to the status quo. This applies to ingenuity taking place in the classroom and clinical education, and in the programs of research led by members of the department.

EDUCATION FOR CAPABILITY

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Beginning in Fall 2024, our new innovative curriculum is aligned with the new Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada (CAOT 2021). This curriculum is Occupation-Centred, Capability-Focused and Inquiry-Driven, reflecting our vision to cultivate occupational therapists ready for the challenges of a diverse and evolving world. It is constructed upon a professional and educational framework that is progressive, aspirational and adaptable, encouraging reflection and engagement with various stakeholders.

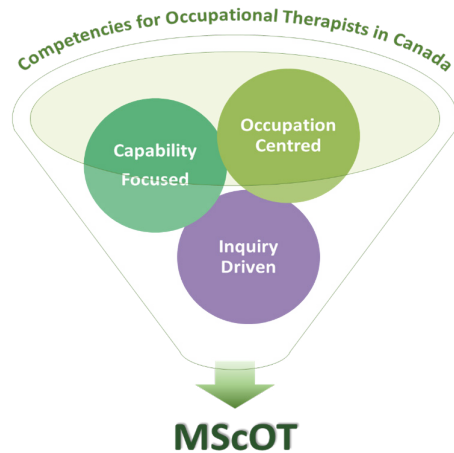


Figure 1: Building capability for inquiry-driven, occupation-focused practice

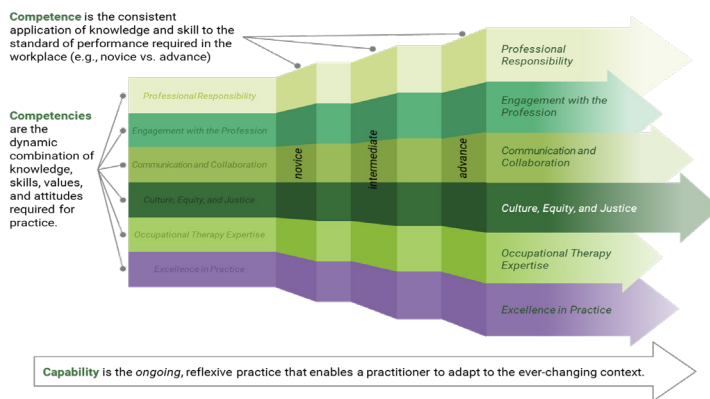


Figure 2: Competencies, competence and capability

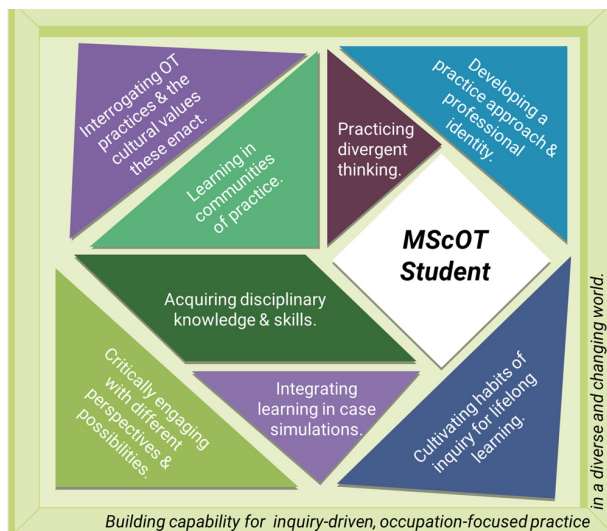


Figure 3: MScOT Education for Capability Model

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Our curriculum is designed to foster graduates who not only are ready for entry-level practice but are also lifelong learners and global citizens, prepared to adapt and contribute meaningfully to ever-changing societal needs. It emphasizes the importance of occupation as the central organizing construct, enabling students to understand and assert their unique professional identity and contribution. Through critical, reflective, creative and social inquiry, students develop scholarly practice habits necessary for continuous learning and professional growth.

Our approach is responsive to the critiques of conventional higher education, advocating for a multidimensional understanding of occupational therapy that considers professional, moral and political dimensions. Students are equipped with capabilities such as adaptive flexibility, creative problem-solving and reflective practice, ensuring they are prepared to deliver services that respond to the dynamic nature of health care and society. Our curriculum is about teaching competence and nurturing capable practitioners who can think critically, act wisely and advocate for change in a diverse world.

Reference:

Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Alberta. (2022). Education for Capability: Building Capability for Inquiry-Driven, Occupation-Focused Practice in a Diverse Changing World.

Occupational Therapy

awards and honours

Dr. Tim Barlott

Dr. Tim Barlott received the Rehabilitation Medicine Student Association Excellence in Teaching Award 2023

Dr. Shu-Ping Chen

Dr. Shu-Ping Chen received the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Graduate Research Supervision Award 2023

Dr. Mary Roduta Roberts

Dr. Mary Roduta Roberts received the 2023 Established Investigator Award

Dr. Antonio Miguel-Cruz

Dr. Antonio Miguel-Cruz received the 2023 Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Innovative Teaching Award & the AHS Cohort 4 Research Challenge Program Winning Project "Say Yes to F.E.S."

Dr. Adriana Rios Rincon

Dr. Adriana Rios Rincon received the 2023 Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine New Investigator Award

Dr. Shaniff Esmail

Dr. Shaniff Esmail received the Indonesian Occupational Therapy Association (IOTA) Lifetime Dedication Award for the development of occupational therapy in Indonesia

Surakarta Health Polytechnic of Indonesian Lifetime Award; Development of Occupational Therapy Education in Indonesia

99%

of graduates successfully completed
the National Occupational Therapy
Certification Examination

53

peer-reviewed
publications

134

conference
presentations

Community engagement highlights

COLLABORATIVE CARE

In April 2023, students participated in a collaborative learning activity with the Therapy Assistant programs at Norquest College and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT).

BOYLE STREET COLLABORATION

The OT department has established a joint position in collaboration with Boyle Street Community Services. As a U of A OT department community liaison, this position will enable the department to establish key connections with Edmonton's inner-city agencies, coordinate student placements, and contribute to the MScOT program.

DEAN OF STUDENTS COLLABORATION

The Office of the Dean of Students is recruiting a full-time Occupational Therapist. This position will be based in UAlberta's Student Wellness Center and Accessibility Resources and provide an additional 8 mental health placements per year.

Grant Funding

\$20,789,952

in ongoing principal and co-principal investigator funding

\$8,385,271

**in new peer-reviewed funding as principal
or co-principal investigator**

\$602,951

in new funding as co-investigators

THANK YOU

The MScOT department and fieldwork team are extremely grateful for the commitment, innovation and effort the clinical community across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the North West Territories invests in our students and future colleagues. Your dedication makes it possible to graduate competent, well-rounded and reflexive practitioners. You inspire all of us.

695

OTs supervised students

733

student placements

264

placement sites

Leading with Purpose.



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2-64 Corbell Hall
8205 114 Street
Edmonton, AB
Canada T6G 2G4

ualberta.ca/occupational-therapy