Post-Professional Education and the Occupational Therapy Practitioner

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Maryland Occupational Therapy Association Conference — November 2, 2018
Objectives

Following attendance at this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify current status of post-professional education opportunities for occupational therapists in the US including curricular focus and instructional delivery method

2. Self-assess personal strengths and needs relative to post-professional education
Influences on doctoral education in OT

• AOTA Vision 2025
• “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, 2017)
• Four guideposts:
  – Accessible
  – Collaborative
  – Effective
  – Leaders
Environmental Influences re: ELOTD

- ACOTE statement mandating ELOTD by 2027 (AOTA, 2017)**
- Complex health care system
- Current MS programs often similar in number of credits to entry level clinical doctorates
- Other allied health professionals entry-point is clinical doctorate: Audiology, PT, Pharmacy
- Potential limits to advancement such as rehab director or clinical researcher in larger medical systems/higher education
- Projected national job growth 27% (Bureau Labor Statistics, 2014)

**Recognizing abeyance for this decision at the present time
What does the literature say?

• Mixed reviews on entry level DPT but support for post professional clinical doctorate (Mistry, et al, 2014)

• Awareness that post professional clinical doctorate enabled advanced practice and other complex professional opportunities with more confidence and competence (Salis, et al, 2012)

• Our needs assessment indicated strong interest among current practitioners with relatively even interest in peds and adult rehab. Many interested in academic options. Some indicated interest in MS/OTD bridge program.
Definitions

• **OTD (Doctor of Occupational Therapy)** – clinical degree for therapists (Pages & Persch, 2016)
  
  — **Entry Level OTD (ELOTD)** – requires bachelor’s or master’s degree; for individuals who are not recognized by regulating body for the profession
  
  — **Post Professional OTD (PPOTD)** – for licensed occupational therapists with a bachelor’s or master’s degree (program specifies entry level criteria) who wish to advance their practice/knowledge of the field

• **PhD (Doctor of Philosophy)** - research degree intended for those pursuing academia and/or non-clinical settings (Pages & Persch, 2016)

• **ScD (Doctor of Science)** – applied research degree that includes all aspects of the traditional research experience including the creation and defense of knew knowledge through the dissertation process.
U.S. Post-professional Program Statistics

- Clinical doctorate PPOTD in US 120+% growth
- 2016: 19 PPOTD
- 2018: 42 PPOTD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PPOTD Programs</th>
<th>PhD Programs (n=24)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
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Differences

• PPOTD
  – Length/rigor /format /focus /cost/cohort v indiv admit

• PhD/ScD
  – Rehab Science
  – Occupational Science
  – Occupational Therapy
  – Education
  – Policy/public health

Lawson et al., 2017  AOTA Annual Centennial Conference
Considerations

- **Format**: in person/online asynchronous /synchronous/hybrid
- **Focus**: area of specialty defined by program versus student; discipline specific versus interdisciplinary
- **Time commitment**: part versus full time. Clinical versus research
- **Cost**: in state versus out of state/public versus private
- **Flexibility**: continuous enrollment/waiving credits/ residency/self designed-directed versus prescribed curriculum
- **Rigor**: personal eligibility/writing requirements and support/research requirements—group v indiv v capstone v dissertation
- **Program Longevity** – establishes positive reputation
### Dept Occupational Therapy & Occupational Science - Post-Professional Clinical Doctorate (PPOTD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Practice Courses (credits)</th>
<th>Occupational Science Base (credits)</th>
<th>Inter-professional Courses (credits)</th>
<th>Research Capstone Courses (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adv Occup Ther Assessment (3)</td>
<td>Origins &amp; Evolution of Occupational Science (3)</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Advocacy (3)*</td>
<td>Capstone Research Project I (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv Occup Ther Intervention (3)</td>
<td>Participation Quality of Life People in Context (3)</td>
<td>Health Care Systems Admin (3)*</td>
<td>Capstone Research Project II (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
<td>Participation Quality of Life Commun Pop (3)</td>
<td>Program Evaluation and Grant Funding (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Credits = 9</td>
<td>Total Credits = 9</td>
<td>Total Credits = 9</td>
<td>Total Credits = 6</td>
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**TOTAL OVERALL CREDITS = 33** [Graduates of Towson’s MS program may waive courses with asterisk (27 remaining credits)]
# Doctor of Science in Occupational Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements (42 units)</th>
<th>Electives (minimum of 18 units)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Choose one of the following:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Science of Human Occupation</td>
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<td>Occupation in Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>600 level courses</strong>: Theory, Education, &amp; Issues (9 units)</td>
<td>• Occupation-Based Research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>700 level courses</strong>: Occupational Science and Ethics (12 units)</td>
<td>• Occupation-Based Theory for Education and Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>800 level courses</strong>: Applied Research Methods (9 units)</td>
<td>• Occupational and Social Justice and Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>900 level courses</strong>: Dissertation (12 units)</td>
<td>• Advanced Practice</td>
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<td>• Evidence-Based Practice &amp; Research</td>
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<td>• Practice-Related Education</td>
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<td>• Practice-Based Advocacy and Policy</td>
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Discussion Points

What is the right program for me?
Clinical versus research
skill set strengths and needs
ability to focus and have time to complete program of choice
potential barriers
time
cost
personal phase of life

When is the right time for me?
Self assessment

• Serves to identify strengths and weaknesses

• Awareness of Weaknesses-
  – we self limit practice
  – We set learning goals
• Awareness of strengths:
  – Enables confidence
  – Enables persistence in face of obstacles
  – Enables establishment of challenging learning goals

• The literature indicates that self-assessment is only one component of self-improvement. Others include:
  • seeking feedback from a knowledgeable source,
    – peer review,
    – Instructor
    – online self-administered test
    – Formal education provides this type of feedback. (Eva & Regehr, 2005)
Self – Assessment Worksheet

• Reflection
• Related to Current Practice
• Related to Future Goals (AOTA, 2003)
References


