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## Gaining Experience in Academic Setting of Entry-Level Doctoral Program

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# Gaining Experience in Academic Setting of Entry-Level Doctoral Program

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## Introduction

- Project focused on incorporating more hands-on learning experiences for OTD 8271: Interventions in Psychosocial and Community Health within an entry level doctor of occupational therapy program to facilitate occupational therapy (OT) student's learning and engagement.
- Existing relationship between A Kid's Place (AKP) located in Brandon, FL and NSU where up to 15 children from AKP travel to NSU on the Saturday of Institute for 2 hours
- Assisted with implementation of the course OTD 8271 and OTD 8102: Foundations of Occupational Therapy



## Site Description

- Capstone experience implemented at Nova Southeastern University, Occupational Therapy Department Tampa Bay Regional Campus
- Focus area in education.
- Mentors were Dr. Beverly Seredick, OTR/L, OTD and Dr. Mariana D'Amico, FAOTA, OTD, OTR/L

## Needs Assessment

Lack of client interaction within OTD 8271

AKP children attending every Saturday during on-campus institutes

Need to revise institute schedules to allow for hands-on interactions between students and children from AKP

Need for coursework to incorporate presence of AKP children into course material

Need to revise course schedule/syllabus to reflect all activities and coursework

## Literature Review Summary

- OT student learning types fall primarily in 2 categories
  - “converger”- emphasis on active experimentation
  - “diverger”- preferring realistic experiences (Brown et al., 2008)
- Value opportunity for clinical practice skills in coursework and program (Doucet & Seale, 2012; Karp, 2020)
- Students rate clinical reasoning skills higher after engaging in an active learning experience with clients (Knecht-Sabres, 2013)
- Delivery of interactive experiences increases recall of information, understanding of curriculum materials, and engages students in better discussions (Hearns, 2009; Doucet & Seale, 2012; Wagner, 2014)
- Engagement in active learning activities increases students' confidence for fieldwork and job seeking (Evanson, 2013; Zylstra et al., 2020)
- Students show statistically significant improvement in their clinical reasoning and critical thinking, including skills involving clinical protocols, decision making, judgement, creating hypotheses, and intervention strategies (Coker, 2010; Lie et al., 2016)
- Experiences contribute to increase in cultural effectiveness (Whiteford & St. Clair, 2002)



## Capstone Project Description

Worked with Dr. D'Amico and Dr. Lopez to develop activities and curriculum to engage the children volunteers from AKP and students in OTD 8271

Primary goal for children volunteers:

- Participate in therapeutic activities that are engaging
- Provided with safe space for children to feel comfortable

Primary goal for students to gain clinical experience through:

- Understanding trauma informed care
- Direct interactions with children
- Leading children in group activities
- Understanding documentation options for group sessions

Plan for Institutes:

- Children from AKP visit campus
- Students implement group protocols with children
- Complete documentation such as Occupational Therapy Task Observation Scale (OTTOS) forms, clinical narrative, and Subjective-Objective-Assessment-Plan (SOAP) notes
- Reflect on clinical experiences
- Develop protocols for self care for cohort and for mental health groups with AKP children



### Institute 1

No children from AKP present  
Students began planning self-care group protocols for their peers  
2 lectures on trauma informed care

### Institute 2

Students visited AKP in Brandon  
Children engaged in social games and activities  
Students completed clinical narrative notes  
Students attempted to complete Interest Checklist for an AKP child

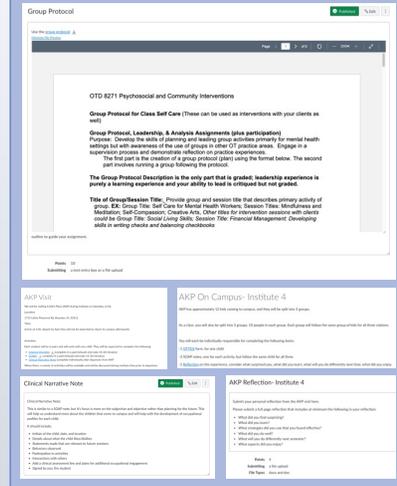
### Institute 3

AKP children visited NSU campus  
Students stayed one of three stations (cooking, crafts, sensory gym) and engaged children  
Students completed OTTOS and SOAP notes for two children

### Institute 4

AKP children visited NSU campus  
Students traveled to all 3 stations with children, each lead a session  
Students completed an OTTOS and SOAP notes for one child

## Examples of Capstone Project



## Learning Objectives Achieved

- Goal 1: Experienced all aspects of being a full-time faculty member by attending relevant meetings, completing work, and developing necessary teaching skills by the end of 16 weeks.
- Goal 2: Assisted in the creation of activities that allow OTD students to gain practical experience that is based on observations or interactions with children from AKP within the OTD 8271
- Goal 3: Independently created 2 assignments that address course objectives and ACOTE standards, while furthering knowledge of students, within 12 weeks.

## Implication for OT Practice

- Students enter field as with more clinical experience, increasing quality of care
- Students continue through coursework with more confidence and experience
- Curriculum now exists for future semesters
- Continued development of relationship with AKP

## REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

References Available Upon Request

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