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## A Glance into the Roles of Higher-Level Academia

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# A Glance into the Roles of Higher-Level Academia

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## Introduction

- The primary purpose of this capstone experience was to gain knowledge and experience in education, teaching in the doctoral level program at Nova Southeastern University. Additionally, this capstone explored best practices and approaches for passing the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination.
- The primary roles fulfilled during this capstone experience are as follows:
  - Assist with the teaching responsibilities for OTD 8102 Foundations of Occupational Therapy under the direction of Dr. Beverly Murphy, OTD, OTR/L, CAPS
  - Assist with the teaching responsibilities for OTD 8141 Development of Occupation Across the Lifespan under the direction of Dr. Joanne Flanagan, ScD, OTR/L
  - Assist with revising the course shell for the Fall Pediatrics course, OTD 8272
  - Assist faculty with revision of course curriculum to reflect new 2023 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standard revisions.

## Site Description

- This capstone was completed in a hybrid nature on the campus of Nova Southeastern University in Clearwater, Florida within the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program.
- Focus Area: Education
- Mentors: Dr. Beverly Murphy, OTD, OTR/L, CAPS and Dr. Joanne Flanagan, ScD, OTR/L
- Population: Students in the OTD program of Nova Southeastern University



## Summary of Needs

In effort to fulfill a desire to eventually pursue a full-time roll in higher education, experience was needed to gain a complete understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a full-time faculty member. Faculty members of an occupational therapy program aim to see all students complete the program and go on to have successful careers in the field of occupational therapy. In order for this to become a reality, the students must first pass the board certification exam given by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). As such, an understanding of best practices is needed.



(NBCOT Launches New Website and Refreshed Look, n.d.)



(Your Certification Has Gone Digital!, n.d.)

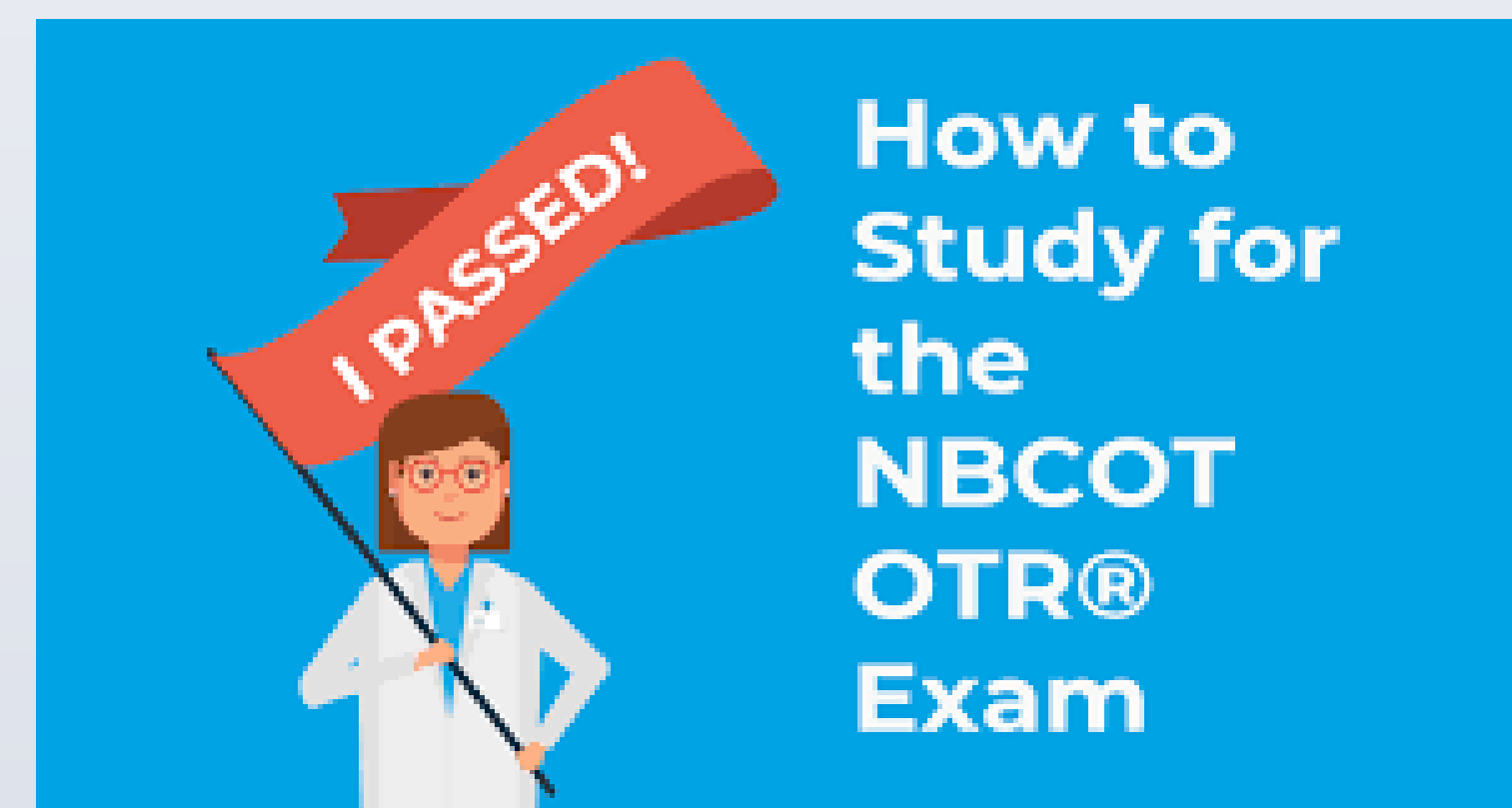


(Caroline, 2021)

## Literature Review

Ultimately, to become certified to practice occupational therapy, one must pass the NBCOT examination. While this requirement is long standing in the field of occupational therapy, like other healthcare professions, not everyone is able to conquer this milestone the first time, or ever. There are many external and internal factors that come into play when referring to passing the NBCOT examination. Two factors that affect students are anxiety and test preparation.

- Anxiety can cause situational avoidance and affect work, school performance, and personal relationships (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).
- The American College Health Association reported that 65.7% of college students suffered from overwhelming anxiety within the calendar year (American College Health Association, 2019).
- Test anxiety can occur even if proper preparation has taken place. Test anxiety can have mental and physical implications, before, during, and after an examination, causing the pupil to not be able to perform at their maximal ability (Unknown, n.d.).
- Studies show that planning and having a definitive goal when studying led to decreased anxiety and increased test scores (Monfared et al., 2016).



(Team, 2024)



(Orlatina, 2023)

## Capstone Project Description

As a full-time faculty member, it is important to be flexible and adjust to the situation at hand as needed. In line with that sentiment, this capstone project incorporated many aspects: classroom education, community education, NBCOT preparation practices, and instructor roles.

### Education:

- Created and presented a “Survival Tips” informational PowerPoint for the class of 2027
- Graded course assignments and provided feedback for improvement
- Involvement in institute course activities for OTD 8102 and OTD 8141
- Facilitated the “Aging Simulation” activity and course discussion in OTD 8141

### Special Projects:

- Revision of pediatric assessment inventory list
- Ordering of pediatric assessments for upcoming courses
- Teaching and engagement in Falls Prevention classes with community agencies
- Research and review of best practices for preparation and passing the NBCOT
- Assisted faculty updating course objectives and ACOTE standards to meet new 2023 revisions,

## Occupational Therapy and our role in fall prevention...



### SURVIVAL TIPS

By Camye White, COTA/L, OTD-S

## Learning Objectives Achieved

- Gained an in-depth knowledge in education in a doctoral level program.
- Gained knowledge and experience in designing and presenting course content presentations to students face to face.
- Gained skills needed to grade student work and provide appropriate feedback to enhance student learning.
- Improved skills working with Canvas from the instructor viewpoint.
- Gained knowledge on the ACOTE standard updating process and how to apply ACOTE standards to classes in the curriculum.
- Gained knowledge and experience in revising a course shell for future courses.
- Gained knowledge and experience in completing community education on fall prevention and the role of occupational therapy.



<https://nohat.cc/f/woman-checking-list-giant-check-list/4525100319637504-201903292316.html>

## Implications for OT

- Every occupational therapy student has to take and pass the NBCOT examination to become an occupational therapy practitioner.
- Understanding the importance and proper strategies to prepare for the NBCOT examination benefits the individual student, the occupational therapy program and the field of occupational therapy overall.
- In order to maintain accreditation, each occupational therapy program must apply and adhere to ACOTE standards within the overall program and course curricula. To maintain compliance, a faculty member must be familiar with the standards, any changes that arise, and ways to meet the standards through education and activities within the course design.
- With exposure to all aspects of the role of a full-time, doctoral level faculty member, a new awareness was birthed providing meaningful insights into the required mental positions and situational flexibility needed for a successful career in higher level education.

## References & Acknowledgments

A resounding “Thank You!” to Dr. Murphy and Dr. Flanagan for stepping in, filling the gap, and providing me with a well-rounded capstone experience by becoming my mentors. My sincerest appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Kane for her continued guidance and spirit of culmination. Thank you to the entire Nova Southeastern University OTD staff. Without your guidance and support, this would not have been possible.

References Available Upon Request