



GRADUATE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM

Fieldwork educators: Many thanks to all of you for your dedication and everything that you continue to do year after year to support our program and the next generation of occupational therapists.



Reaccreditation

Hard work rewarded! ACOTE virtual site visit in June resulted in a ten-year reaccreditation.



OT/PT Reunion

We celebrated our 25-year reunion in June. It was a great evening reconnecting with alumni of the OT and PT programs. Joan Toglia, Ph.D., OTR, FAOTA, founding Program Director of the Occupational Therapy Program, provided the keynote address.

Faculty Updates

Elizabeth A. Dixon, MS Ed, OTR/L, joined our faculty in January 2023 with 25+ years of experience as a pediatric occupational therapist. She has experience managing staff and treating clients in outpatient, school, and early intervention settings. Elizabeth continues to manage, evaluate, and treat clients primarily in early intervention. In addition, Elizabeth has been teaching various occupational therapy courses since 2014 in person and asynchronous environments. She has developed and managed fieldwork opportunities for OTA students.

Kathleen Golisz OTD, OTR, FAOTA continues to serve the School of Health and Natural Sciences as the Interim Dean. She also teaches the Leadership and Management course in the OT Program.

Sonia Moorehead, OTD, MA, OT/L Director of Clinical Education, is co-chair of the Clinical Education Committee. The committee is focused on streamlining processes and increasing understanding of the needs of our clinical partners. Mercy College has several professional programs including CD, OT, OTA, PA, PT, and several nursing programs. *Please contact Sonia if you would like to meet with our committee or are interested in pursuing clinical affiliations with any of our programs.*

Sonia continues to be involved in the Interprofessional Education Committee and developing varied activities, with an emphasis on increasing student understanding of the roles and responsibilities of health professionals and working as part of a team. Activities vary term to term and target multiple issues. Activities have included acute care and home care simulations, client interviews, discharge planning, and book talks discussing topics pertinent to multiple health professions. Book talk topics have included

epilepsy, autism spectrum disorder, trauma, co-occurring disorders of substance abuse/mental illness, and many others. *Please contact Sonia for further information if you are interested in participating in any of these activities, or as a panel member for a book talk event.*

Francine Seruya, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, Program Director has 28 years of experience working with children and their families across the continuum of pediatric settings with an emphasis on school-based practice and early intervention. Francine is well published and has presented nationally in her area of expertise as well as authored several chapters in academic texts related to her work. She most recently is an editor of a new text on school-based practice and is joining the editorial team for the newest edition of the Kramer Hinojosa Frames of Reference in Occupational Therapy text.

Jeanine Stancanelli, OTD, MPH, OTR/L, Associate Program Director, has 30+ years of experience as an occupational therapist. She specialized in adult physical rehabilitation and has worked in all settings of the continuum of care. Jeanine teaches the neurorehabilitation and geriatric content and manages the Level I adult fieldwork course and placements. Jeanine conducts research projects related to older adults, falls, meaning of home and health promotion.

Debra T. Zizik, OTD, OTR/L is an alumna of the Mercy College Occupational Therapy Graduate Program. She teaches anatomy, kinesiology, pathology, splinting and the orthopedic content. Deb oversees the problem-based learning courses in the second year of the program. Her extensive experience includes working with individuals with burns and upper extremity injuries, and women with breast cancer. She mentors student capstone projects focused on promoting healthy habits and routines in cancer survivors and on the impact of caregiving on occupational engagement, participation and quality of life. Deb has taught anatomy workshops for physicians who utilize botulinum toxin to treat individuals with spasticity. The workshops were designed to increase physicians' knowledge of anatomical landmarks, muscle location and orientation to enhance their botulinum toxin injection skills. She has presented both locally and nationally.

Staff Update

Maria Renzo Carapella joined Mercy College in August 2022 as the Clinical Placement Coordinator for the OT/PT programs. Maria works closely with Sonia on all fieldwork related processes. Please reach out to Maria and/or Sonia to discuss fieldwork placements, and/or if you need assistance or support, at smoorehead@mercy.edu and mrenzocarapella@mercy.edu



Multidisciplinary Clinical Educator Appreciation Event

*In July, we welcomed our 2021-2022 clinical educators to our annual **Wine and Cheese at Sunset on the Hudson** event. It was wonderful to get together in person and catch up with everyone. The OT Program recognized Todd Faude, and Dan Holbrook of the NYC DOE, and Judith Wilson and A-Lian Lim of Bellevue Hospital for their commitment to clinical education.*