

Operationalizing DEI in an Occupational Therapy Advocacy Course Using a Discovery Process of Student Identified “A-ha DEI Moments” from Level II Fieldwork

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Introduction

In an effort to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the OTD curriculum, 3rd year students in an OT Advocacy course engaged in active class dialogue to identify DEI clinical experiences from level II fieldwork. Utilizing a discovery process to identify “real life” advocacy opportunities, students were encouraged, but not required, to verbally share and write about “A-ha DEI moments” via a digital bulletin board (Padlet). Students were then provided an additional opportunity to share with pre-OT and 1st and 2nd year OTD students through the Gator Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) chapter’s social media platforms (Instagram, UF OT student-faculty listserv) and the Student Occupational Therapy Association listserv.

Participants & Assumptions

Participants: 3rd year OTD students enrolled in Spring 2022 OTH6700 Advocacy and Interprofessional Skills

Assumptions:

Students understand that professional values and principles are meant to guide culturally responsive interactions with others

Students were exposed to clinical experiences related to lack of inclusivity and/or discrimination on Level II Fieldwork

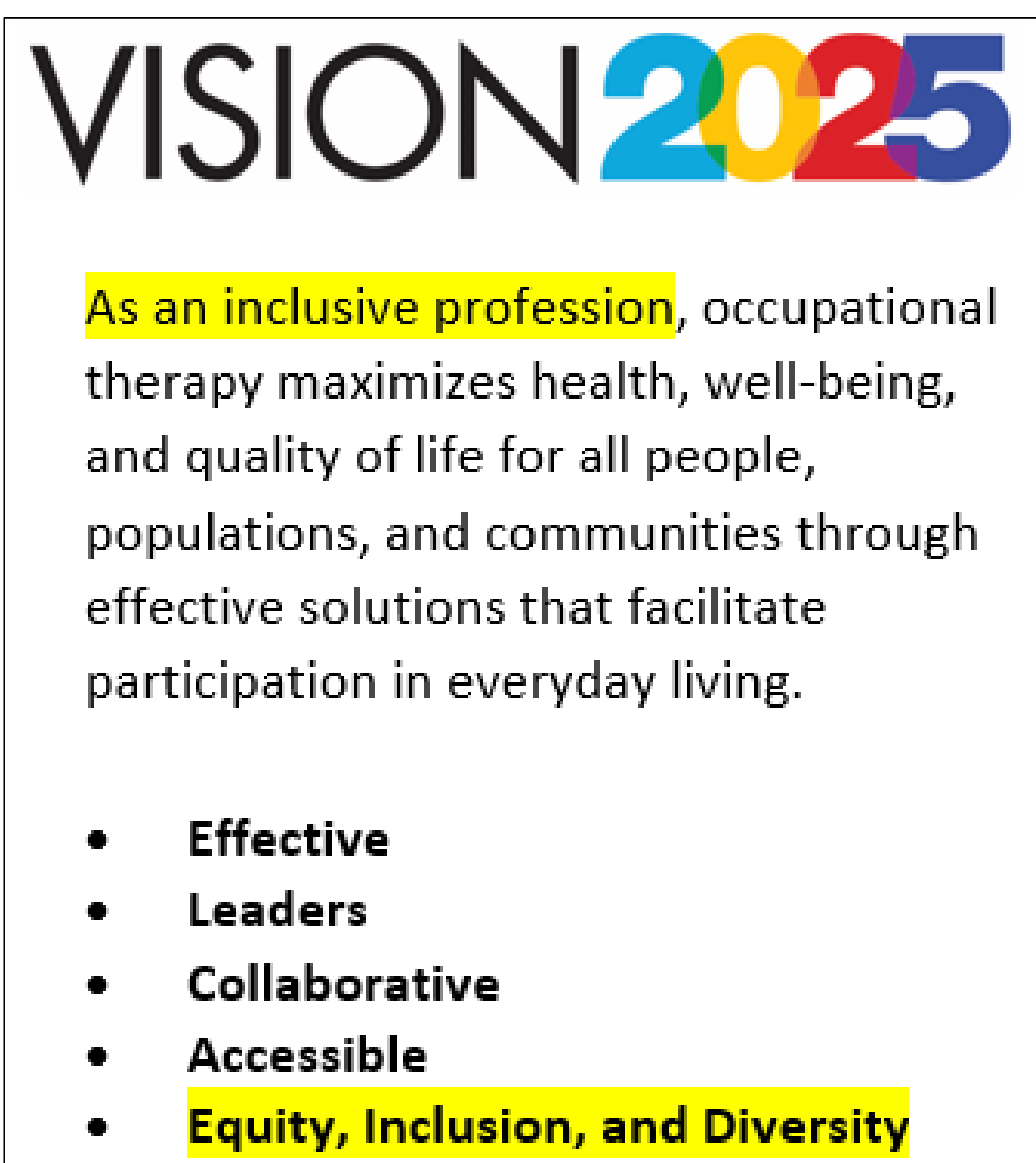
Creating space for semi-structured class conversation facilitates student participation

DEI discussion facilitates course objectives, aligning clinical behaviors to “everyday advocacy” practice patterns

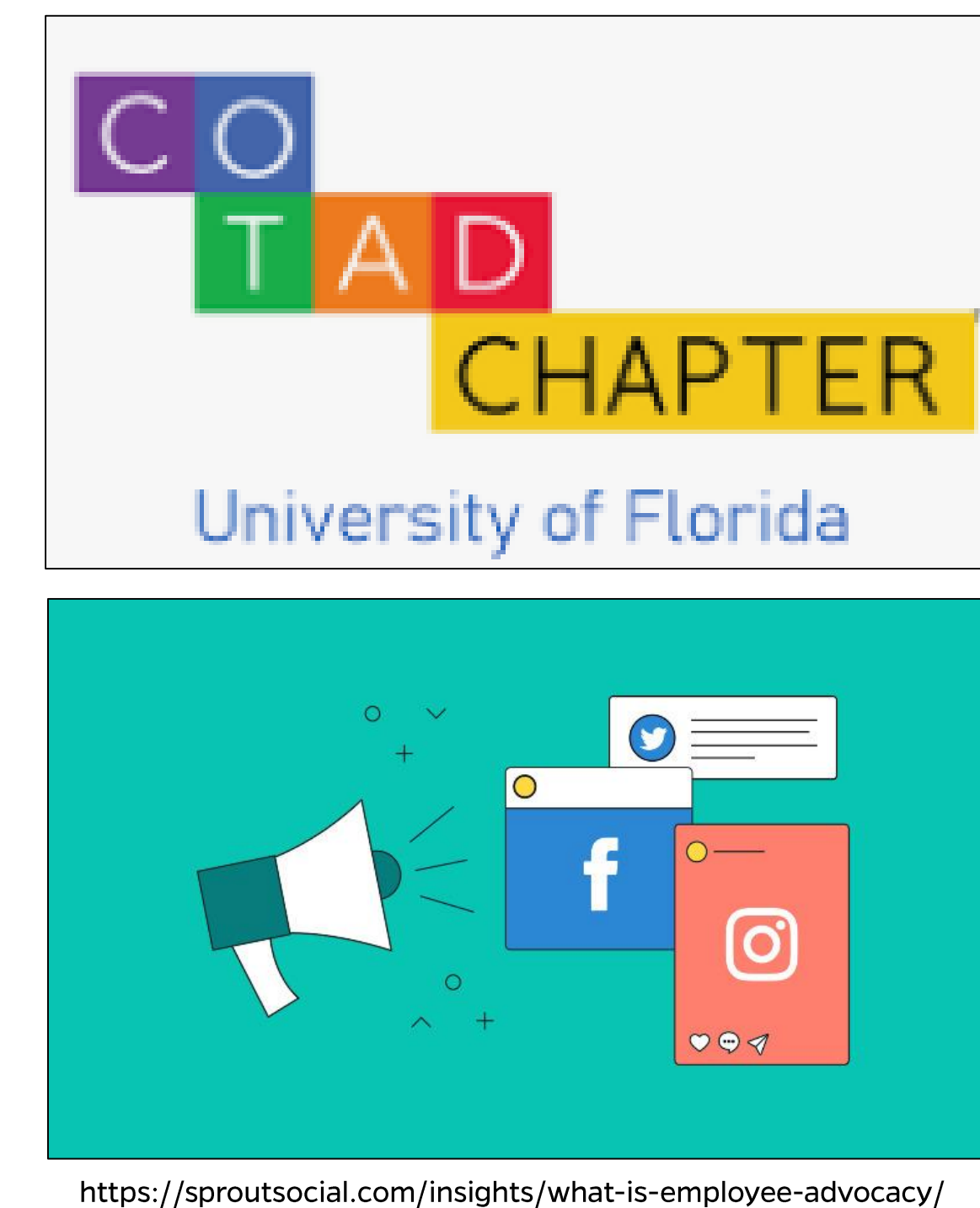
Pedagogical Aim

To create an optional OTH6700 Advocacy active learning opportunity for students to analyze and evaluate Level II Fieldwork clinical experiences related to the curricular themes of *valuing of human occupation and health*, *critical thinking for practice and scholarship*, and *valuing of diversity* to identify “A-ha DEI Moments”

AOTA 2020 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics



Valuing of Diversity
Everyday Advocacy Efforts
Vocalize Lived Experiences



Pedagogical Process

Steps	Why Step Was Done	Details
Prime DEI conversation	To situate DEI Conversation in context of the mission, vision, and ethics of AOTA and COTAD, the OTD curriculum, and advocacy course objectives	Facilitate psychological safe space and recognize advocacy opportunity amongst learning communities (<i>undergrad and grad</i>)
Identify multi-modal platforms for student identification of “A-ha” DEI moments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Various learning preferences and communication stylesVarious comfort levels with topicAdvocacy via efficient dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Personal reflectionIn class discussionPadlet (https://padlet.com/)COTAD social media platforms
Non-graded participation	To facilitate authentic reflection and peer colleague dialogue willingly and freely	Prompted additional participation (<i>identifying and discovering with others</i>)
Optional assignment	To provide professional development incentive	2 curricular artifacts for Portfolium (<i>Valuing of Diversity</i>)

Outcomes

- 15 students shared “a-ha DEI moment(s)” in class with peers **(31%)**
- 25 out of 48 students posted Padlet responses **(52%)**
- 9 out of 48 submitted to COTAD hosted social media platforms **(19%)**

“A-ha DEI moments” Experiences Identified:

- Limited client access to interpretive/translation services for non-English speaking and hearing impaired
- Discriminatory yet “standard” therapy practice and discharge planning norms for individuals who are blind, homeless, incarcerated, low SES, non-white LGBTQ+, transgender, and racial discrimination
- Recognition of cultural preferences improved client participation (dress, food, family roles, collectivist cultural values, participation versus refusal of normal plan of care)

Conclusion

Being observant, reflective, and critical of client clinician and interprofessional collegial interactions in context of Occupational Therapy’s professional Vision, Mission, and Code of Ethics, which drive UF OTD curriculum, allows students to develop cultural humility and better rapport with their clients and colleagues, becoming better clinicians and client advocates .

References

American Occupational Therapy Association. [AOTA]. (2020a). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (4th ed). The American Journal of Occupational Therapy, Vol. 74(Supplement_2), 7412410010p1-7412410010p87. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001> (Links to an external site.)

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