

## Occupational Therapy Department Strategic Plan Narrative 2019

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 1: SMHS Units that offer educational programs will expand their curricula to include learning outcomes that align with UND's Essential Studies goals.**

**Critical Inquiry and Analysis**

**Quantitative Reasoning**

**Written Communication**

**Oral Communication**

**Information Literacy**

**Intercultural Knowledge and Skills**

OT: In the OT curriculum, the majority of the Essential Studies are completed during the pre-requisite coursework required prior to admission to the OT program, including quantitative reasoning, oral and written communication, information literacy, global diversity (Intercultural Knowledge and Skills), and critical inquiry and analysis.

Advanced communication, a special emphasis area, is currently being fulfilled through OT 458 *Qualitative Research Methods for OT*. OT 458 also serves as an approved Capstone course. A second course, OT 480 *Scholarly Writing*, is also approved as a Capstone. U.S. Diversity is currently fulfilled by OT 451 *Multicultural Competency in OT*.

In the transition to the OTD, beginning in fall 2019, the majority of the Essential Studies will again be required prior to acceptance to the OT program. The Advance Communication and capstone requirement will be fulfilled by OT 403 *Clinical Research Methods in OT*. The U.S. Diversity requirement, Essential Studies Goal #4, will be fulfilled by OT 400 *Culture and Occupation*. (Department Goal 1, 9). We will be tracking outcomes of the Critically Appraised Topics with feedback from clinicians, and with rubrics designed for the courses. This will occur in the first year of the program but we will also address all of the areas with later coursework in the OTD (Department Goal 1, 2). The experiential component will be the ultimate capstone of the program.

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 2: SMHS Units will expand their current systems of student support to ensure continued high graduation rates and improve student satisfaction with the overall quality of their education.**

OT: The department has developed a strong assessment process with regard to retention and satisfaction both in the program and following graduation from the MOT. Students are assessed for academic progress at midterm each semester, during the last undergraduate didactic semester in preparation for Level II fieldwork, at midterm during both Level II fieldworks, and at the end of the graduate didactic semester. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences in the program during these advising meetings and provide feedback for improvement. Students are also anonymously surveyed throughout their didactic coursework for the same. Graduates receive a survey following completion of the program, assessing their satisfaction with the curriculum, fieldwork, environment,

faculty and advising, and resources. Areas where improved satisfaction need to be addressed are brought to the full faculty for strategic planning. Increased opportunities for Casper students to connect main campus were implemented, including use of Zoom, Facetime, etc. for more direct contact, increases in structured access to library personnel through coursework and routine meetings with students for assistance (Department Goal 4, 15, 30).

A specific time where retention traditionally had the potential to decline was following the first summer of the program, when students completed OT 422 *Gross Anatomy*. This outcome was present in the summer of 2018, where the two locations lost a combined 4 students. Assessment of drop-outs from previous years indicated that students who came to the program with lower GPAs, particularly in the required science pre-requisites, were more likely to be unsuccessful in this course. Overall, the OT program consistently remains in the upper 90% of retention based on admitted numbers of students. The final offering of OT 422 was summer of 2018.

Applications through OTCAS for the OTD were lower than expected. 225 total applications were started, of those only 111 completed the application process, 9 students were denied due to not meeting specified prerequisites, and 7 withdrew applications prior to interview. We anticipate accepting a full class for the fall 2019 semester (Department Goal 15, 28).

We are looking at creating a prediction model to identify how to refine the OTCAS application process. Subcommittees have been established to review application processes. Reports are due to department staff April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and faculty will review at the mid-April 2019 department faculty meeting (Department Goal 20, 27, 28).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 3: The SMHS will identify opportunities to employ state-of-the-art technologies to enhance education.**

OT: The OT program has long been on the cutting edge of technology use in the SMHS, due in large part to the establishment of the Wyoming satellite location. Through distance technology formats, the OT program delivers synchronous instruction, advising, and department contact through dedicated distance classrooms and a dedicated distance conference room in Wyoming, and comparable distance availability on the main campus. Technology is routinely used for instruction, department meetings, service work, scholarly activity, trainings, student advising meetings, and special events. Additionally, students and faculty have access to online formats (Blackboard Collaborate, Facetime, Zoom) to meet between campuses. Students at both locations also extensively access Blackboard, UND Libraries, and Citrix online. Strong efforts are made to assure that technology between the campuses is comparable, and SHMS IT department works to train personnel, update systems, and troubleshoot technology to maintain smooth operations. Maintenance by the IT department is being scheduled onsite in Wyoming for early summer 2019 to review the current distance system in preparation for the first OTD class in fall 2019 (Department Goal 14, 15, 16).

A significant technological change for the OT program was the decision to use the OTCAS online application process in moving to the OTD. This process was launched in summer 2018 for admission for the incoming fall 2019 classes in ND and WY. Applications were submitted online during fall 2018, and this process, although presenting a solid learning curve, did serve to reduce review time for applications by faculty and staff, thereby preserving department resources during this process. We are continuing to revise the OTCAS process as documented above (Department Goal 15, 27, 28).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 4: The SMHS will enhance basic, clinical, and translational health sciences discoveries while focusing on its stated purpose “of discovery of knowledge that benefits the people of this state and enhances the quality of their lives.” The SMHS will support Goal 4 by increasing its extramural funding by 10% per year based on a three year rolling average.**

OT: The OT Department met extensively in the fall of 2018 to develop a concentrated and unified research focus, and has selected the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as the emphasis for department research activity. The selection of the SoTL agenda is consistent with the national research agenda identified by the American Occupational Therapy Association ([Department Goal 23, 25](#)).

Dr. Sarah Nielsen was part of a group of recent grants recipients through the Mountain Plains Technology Transfer Center, a collaboration between UND and WICHE. The grant is a five-year project funded by SAMHSA, which began in August 2018 for \$3.8 Million, plus \$500,000 for a school mental health supplement. The project provides comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners in Region 8 (ND, SD, MT, WY, UT, CO) to develop new resources, and identify existing resources for dissemination. The grant has a specialized focus on rural and frontier mental health to build and maintain strong collaborative relationship with key stakeholders ([Department Goal 23, 26](#)).

Additionally, the department continues to advise students on approximately 30 master’s capstone projects, including student-lead qualitative and quantitative research projects, every year. Students also conducted life-history qualitative studies in OT 458 of prominent OTs and OTAs in ND and WY in the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 AY, and will complete this project for a final time in the 2019-2020 AY.

We are in the process of planning and coordinating the OTD experiential process. Our goal is to plan community based programming, rural projects etc., to expand healthcare to residents of the state. Future plans include tracking processes and outcomes with culminating projects completed in the third program year ([Department Goal 15, 30](#)).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 5: UND SMHS will foster a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment across all campuses.**

OT: The OT Department takes the goal of a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment very seriously. Following the department’s Civility and Core Values statement, all personnel agree to abide by the policy statements indicated ([Department Goal 31](#)).

At the curricular level, inclusion of diversity is a core instructional thread. OT 451 *Multicultural Competency in OT* is taught in the second year of the program, and emphasizes self-reflection and increased knowledge of diverse populations and corresponding cultural norms, the impacts of socio-economic status, food insecurity, intolerance and prejudice, and the relationship of these contexts to delivery of healthcare. Other courses in the program utilize case studies of diverse groups to assist students in developing an understanding of the need for cultural competency in their personal and professional roles. Students are also placed in numerous fieldwork settings throughout their time in the program that address diverse populations. These settings include the New American program, Wyoming Independent Living, the Youth Crises Center, and other facilities that represent diverse community-based populations.

Faculty also participate in education and training to best serve diverse populations. Through events like the annual OT retreat, invited speakers provide opportunities for faculty to engage with diverse viewpoints. Examples of recent trainings include a presentation by Jeff Gibson regarding the services offered through the Pride Center, and a presentation by Deb Glennen regarding student referral to Disability Support Services ([Department Goal 32](#)).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 6: The SMHS will determine how we may better meet the educational needs of active duty and reserve personnel, veterans, and their families.**

OT: The current 2018-2023 OT Department Strategic Plan includes goals and action items to engage military personnel and their families in both ND and WY following the implementation of the OTD. Timelines for direct recruiting at state military bases are identified for the 2020-2021 AY ([Department Goal 33, 34](#)).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 7: The SMHS will achieve the targeted fund raising goals set for the SMHS Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs.**

OT: The OT Department has strong alumni support, as evidenced by the development of 7 student scholarships in the last 10 years, and the development of an additional scholarship in the coming year ([Department Goal 11, 29, 35, 38, 39](#)).

The department uses a variety of methods to remain connected with alumni, including a twice-yearly alumni newsletter, an annual alumni reception at the National OT Conference, and special events, like the Wyoming site 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary reception, held in conjunction with the Wyoming OT Association annual conference last fall. Additionally, the department participates in the monthly birthday card recognition for alumni through both locations ([Department Goal 35, 37, 38](#)).

The commitment of OT alumni is seen not only in funding to the department, but in the strong number of alumni who serves as fieldwork supervisors for students across a broad geographic region ([Department Goal 35, 37](#)).

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 8: The SMHS will enhance its purposes of education, service, and discovery by focusing additional efforts toward achieving the broad goals stated in the School's Healthcare Workforce Initiative.**

We expanded our class sizes with classes at both locations. At this time we are giving preference to students from both states, to better serve needs of the population. At this point, we are not able to further expand our educational programs, but hope to have an impact on the workforce with implementation of the OTD and better meet the needs of residents of our states. Anticipated date to evaluate this goal is 2022.