

Chair's letter

Greetings from North Dakota,

We are enjoying a reprieve from frigid winter temperatures as the holiday season approaches. It is amazing how fast the year goes! I think I blinked this fall and we are already in December!

It was a busy fall and a lot of fun. We kicked off the semester with a workshop on civility and diversity at both campuses. Dr. Malika Carter facilitated a beginning discussion on how we as a department can focus on our core values of inclusion, diversity and respect, and use these in establishing our vision for program growth. A committee of students from both campuses is finalizing a document outlining our department's philosophy on these important values. I am hopeful that by the spring we can share this document with all of you!

We had a wonderful Homecoming in October, celebrating 60 years of OT at the University of North Dakota. Celebrations included a workshop on assistive technology and the Americans with Disabilities Act implications for education and work (did you know that this year is the 25th anniversary of this important legislation?). We also had a breakfast and hands-on lab on Friday in the department, a Friday evening celebration at the North Dakota Museum of Art, and sporting events all weekend. It was fun to stop and reflect on the many changes and growth that we have experienced as a program based in two locations. We have much to be grateful for as we grow and respond to healthcare changes!

Speaking of growth, we now have two new faculty members

who joined us this summer. This brings our full-time faculty total to 15 (three in Casper and 12 in Grand Forks). The School of Medicine and Health Sciences has been wonderful in supporting our growth and helping us meet the growing needs for occupational therapists in North Dakota and Wyoming. We will be admitting 42 students in Grand Forks and 18 in Wyoming this summer, and admissions are definitely gearing up for the start of the 2015-'16 school year.



I want to thank each of you who represent our profession and are committed to helping people engage in the occupations they value and find meaningful. We make a difference for both individuals and society. It is wonderful to be part of the occupational therapy profession but most wonderful to be part of the University of North Dakota's awesome legacy in preparing high-quality occupational therapy professionals!

Wishing you the best for the holidays!

Janet Jedlicka
Chair and Associate Professor
UND Department of Occupational Therapy

New Faculty



Bobbie Carrlson, MOT, OTR/L, is a new faculty member with the UND Occupational Therapy Department at the Grand Forks campus. She graduated with a B.S. degree in Physical Education from Northern State University in 2000 and earned her Master of Occupational Therapy degree from UND in 2010. Bobbi primarily practices in pediatrics and continues to work as an occupational

therapist for the Anne Carlsen Early Intervention Program in Grand Forks. During the past few years, Bobbi has initiated collaboration between Anne Carlsen and the UND OT Department to run activities including social skills camp and Sensory Santa.



Nicole Harris, MOT, OTR/L, is a new faculty member in the UND Occupational Therapy Department, teaching at the Casper, Wyo., campus. Nicole is an alumna from UND's Master of Occupational Therapy Program. Previously, she completed her undergraduate coursework at the University of Wyoming, where she obtained a B.S. degree in Kinesiology and Health Promotion. Prior to

joining the faculty at UND, Nicole worked in home health, providing therapy services. Since 2012, Nicole has served as the secretary and treasurer for the Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association. In 2014, Nicole received the service award for Wyoming therapists, providing outstanding service to her association and profession. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, especially her two sons who are 6 and 3 months old. Her plan for the near future includes beginning her coursework toward a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) with a concentration in Curriculum and Instruction.

Library Access + Fieldwork Student = Cutting-Edge Practice

The value of evidence-based practice (EBP) or using research evidence to support cutting-edge practice is well-established in the occupational therapy profession. However, for many practitioners, this ideal cannot be realized because of such factors as lack of time, lack of access to a medical library, or limited knowledge of technology use.

This becomes a problem for students completing fieldwork, as they are highly influenced by the value placed on EBP in their settings. They feel prepared to use EBP during fieldwork but are not likely to initiate discussions of current best evidence if this is not a common practice (Stronge & Cahill, 2012). And students need the help of practitioners in effectively using evidence in practice! They are most competent in identifying clinical questions, searching the literature and appraising the research evidence, but using the evidence for clinical decision-making and evaluating intervention effectiveness in relation to client-identified needs is easier for experienced clinicians. Authentic client situations are essential for practicing the steps of EBP, with students taking the lead in identifying questions and bringing in research evidence and clinicians applying their knowledge and experience to apply evidence to clients (Thomas, Saroyan & Snider, 2012).

A large obstacle to evidence use by clinicians is access to library resources. The good news is, access to the UND Harley E. French Library of the Health Sciences is available to all occupational therapy fieldwork educators [upon request](#). You will notice that selected resources of interest to occupational therapists are listed. You can learn how to navigate the library website, complete an interlibrary loan, familiarize yourself with how to select an appropriate database, and learn what mobile resources are available to you. A wide selection of full-text journals are available through the library. If you need assistance, contact [Kelly Thormodson](#). Since students like to partner with their supervisors in addressing challenges to EBP in the practice setting (Stube & Jedlicka, 2007) and since students learn to access the library resources in school, they can be an excellent resource for fieldwork educators who are learning to navigate the technology; in fact, consider making this a student assignment!

Keep in mind when applying research evidence that students are not likely to recognize practitioners' subtle integration of EBP into clinical observations or client interactions (Stube & Jedlicka, 2007). You can help them recognize evidence use by using research to guide the student learning experience. For example, integrating EBP into student learning modules offered during the first four weeks of student placement helps fieldwork educators and students learn to incorporate research into their understanding of common site interventions. When this is done, students and fieldwork educators can reflect together on clinical decision-making and interventions through the perspective of research evidence (Van Lew & Singh, 2010). Another option, journal clubs, which involve meeting regularly in a group to critically discuss applicability of research evidence to practice problems, have been identified as a helpful tool to promote skills in reading, critiquing and discussing research among students and professionals (Stern, 2008).

[Read more](#)

A Role-Emerging Fieldwork Placement: Would It Benefit Your Facility?

In your daily practice, do you ever consider the need for new programs or revised programming to meet client needs, yet you just don't have time to develop the programming? If yes, you might be interested in exploring with the UND OT Department the potential for hosting a student for a role-emerging fieldwork placement.

Historically, role-emerging placements are described in literature as occurring in settings that do not currently offer OT services (Bossers, Cook, Polatajko, & Laine, 1997; Mulholland & Derald, 2005; Wood, 2005). However, role-emerging placements have taken on a variety of purposes or intent in recent years. At UND, we have defined role-emerging fieldwork as placements where students engage in the development of new programming. Therefore, the placement itself can be at a facility with already-established OT services where a need to expand or modify programming is present, or it can be in a facility that currently does not offer OT services. The intention is that the student engages in promoting and increasing awareness of the profession, identifies the potential demand for OT services, and develops programming that may or may not result in the actual emergence of an occupational therapy role (Prigg & Mackenzie, 2002; Mulholland & Derald, 2005). Students will also engage in direct practice as they pilot the programming they develop. We have piloted three role-emerging fieldwork placements, which included (1) a residential treatment center with the student completing needs assessment, determining possibilities for OT services, and developing one potential program, (2) a hospital where OT services were available for physical disabilities, but programming was developed for the inpatient psychiatric unit, and (3) a hospital with an emphasis on program development in the administrative role.

The beauty of role-emerging fieldwork placements is the benefit realized by the facility, the student, and hopefully future OT clients. Consistent with the literature, facilities that have partnered with UND have identified benefits in regard to expanding the visibility of OT services, establishing new programming, and creating or expanding OT and OTA positions (Fortune & McKinstry, 2012). Students completing this type of placement have identified greater confidence, a strong sense of professional identity, and strengthened communication skills for professional work (Thew, Hargreaves & Cronin-Davis, 2008). Future clients benefit by the increased confidence of the novice practitioner.

To foster successful placements, the UND OT Department mandates that a role-emerging fieldwork be a second or third Level II experience, and has initiated separate criteria and a student assessment process to assure student compatibility with fieldwork requirements for increased autonomy. The departmental academic fieldwork coordinators will also meet with interested sites in advance to determine appropriate objectives and outcomes of the experience. If you would like more information on role-emerging placements, including further definitions and sample objectives, or if you would like to discuss ideas you have for the development of new programming, please contact [Debra Hanson](#) or [Cherie Graves](#), 701.777.2218, to learn more. [References](#)

The Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) through the University of North Dakota campus at Casper College has implemented a new program this year called Student Organization for Accessibility and Resources (SOAR). The purpose of this program is to provide additional services to Casper College students who are currently receiving disability services. This program aims to help educate students, peers, and college faculty regarding resources, assistive devices and interpersonal communication skill development. The SOAR program is also designed to help increase students' participation in events and activities at Casper College.

The program is currently made up of five teams of occupational therapy students. Each team currently has a minimum of five occupational therapy students on it. Each team has been assigned to one Casper College student. Each team will only be assigned one student to ensure that each Casper College student is getting the best one-on-one service that the occupational therapy students can provide. Since the occupational therapy students are

still receiving their education, the purpose of SOAR is to not provide therapy services, but instead to help Casper College students with homework, attending extracurricular activities or anything else that may help students fully enjoy their college experience.

Currently SOAR is servicing five Casper College students in a variety of ways. Some teams are helping their student become more organized in their homework schedules or providing them with homework services. Others are working on finding ways to help with adaptive equipment to promote learning in and out of the classroom. The teams encourage the Casper College students they are working with to meet with them at least one time per week to see what else the Casper College student may like help with or how the occupational therapy students may provide additional services. SOAR, thus far, appears to be a success and we hope to continue to serve Casper College students.

Brier Van Valin, OTS
President of SOTA at UND at Casper College

Alumni Updates

Mark and Lori Ritter, both BSOT '95: Lori is the owner of her own private pediatric practice Verde Valley Occupational Therapy in Cottonwood, Ariz. Mark works for [Verde Valley Medical Center's EntireCare Rehab and Sports Medicine Experts](#) as the lead occupational/certified hand therapist managing the satellite clinic in Sedona, Ariz.

Samantha Schepers, MOT '07: Samantha works in St. Cloud Minn., at [St. Benedict Senior Community](#) (CentraCare) as director of therapy after four years as director of RehabCare. She's working alongside several other UND OT alumni.

James Hill, BSOT '89, is working as the OT supervisor in Psychiatry at [Rush University](#) in Chicago, and has recently presented at the Association of Contextual Behavioral Science World Conference on acceptance and commitment therapy.

The UND OT Department is looking for alumni to represent its program and the profession in your local communities. Materials and talking points will be provided. If you would like to serve as a community ambassador, please contact [Breann Lamborn](#).

Upcoming Events

Friday, Feb. 20, 2015

Mild to Moderate Cognitive Impairment
Connecting the dots between research, clinical practice and patients
Joette Zola, OTR/L, STAR/C
UND Memorial Union, Grand Forks
Contacts: [Jan Stube](#) or [Anne Haskins](#)

April 10, 2015

UND at Casper Annual OT Conference
Union Building, Casper College Campus
More information will be available in early spring.

April 16-20, 2015

AOTA Annual Conference & Expo
Nashville, Tenn.
Date of alumni and friends reception to be determined.

Parting Shots



Events held during Homecoming 2014 celebrated 60 years of the OT Department at UND.

Left: Janet Jedlicka, Breann Lamborn and Sue Morrison with service dog Buddy

Below: Dean Wynne with OT faculty Sonia Zimmerman, Mary Lou Wittmann, Jan Stube, Sarah Nielsen, Sue Morrison, Bobbi Carrison, Gail Bass and Janet Jedlicka

