

FAREWELL TO SONIA ZIMMERMAN

After 36 years of teaching in the UND Occupational Therapy Program, inspiring students and faculty alike, Sonia Zimmerman, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, professor of University of North Dakota Department of Occupational Therapy, has retired from full-time teaching.

Dr. Zimmerman's contributions to the department include phenomenal faculty mentoring and the development and success of the following OT degree programs at UND: Bachelor's, transitional Master's, full Master's, and Doctorate (beginning fall of 2019).

Dr. Zimmerman values service and advises faculty to "get out of their offices" and be a part of our larger community. She chaired the SMHS CPT Committee, served in the University Senate, and as an Alice Clark Faculty Mentor, just to name a few of her service endeavors. Likewise, for 23 years Dr. Zimmerman advised the UND chapter of Pi Theta Epsilon, the occupational therapy honor society, and during that time received national recognition for her work. She has also been a member of the Prairie Harvest Mental Health Board of Directors since 1993. At a national level, Dr. Zimmerman served NBCOT in product

development and certification exam item writing. She also was bestowed the Fellow of American Occupational Therapy Association award in 2005.

Dr. Zimmerman's expertise includes mental health, theory, and history in occupational therapy. Students and colleagues respect and admire her smarts, tenacity, straightforward honesty, and sense of humor.

We are going to miss her expertise, those discerning looks through the glasses perched at the end of her nose, and her candid comments. Whether it be a student, colleague, or mentee, everyone in the department grew to love Sonia's desire to teach us right and help us grow into the best professionals we could be.

Thank you, Dr. Zimmerman, for all you have done.



OT NEWS

CHAIR'S LETTER

Greetings from North Dakota,

Spring has flown by, and big changes are on the horizon for the OT Department!

This summer is filled with faculty working on the last stages of the new OTD curriculum, which begins this fall. Through weekly department meetings, we are coming together as a department to finalize orientation, course and syllabi accessibility, and the addition of the doctoral experiential semester. For those interested in working with us as an experiential placement location, or a Level I or Level II fieldwork placement, check out the article in this issue for curriculum design and contact information.

Admissions for 2019 also brought the change-over to the OTCAS national application system. We have 60 students who will start classes this fall in Grand Forks and Casper. We have added online training for the incoming class on professional identity and ethics, and faculty are currently in the process of experiencing this training to view it from the students' perspective.



This past fall also saw the 25th anniversary of the Wyoming satellite, highlighted in the fall 2018 newsletter. With longevity brings change to our department as well, in the retirement of Dr. Sonia Zimmerman, and new professional horizons for Dr. Debra Hanson. Their long-standing commitment and dedication has made the department the outstanding experience that it is, and they will be greatly missed. At the same time, we are in the process of hiring new faculty, which brings the opportunity to build on the success we have already seen.

As always, I am extremely grateful for our students, alumni, staff, and faculty. We are so thankful to have a support base of alumni who provide clinical experiences and financial support through scholarships. Your efforts help us build new generations of therapists dedicated to the health and well-being of clients. Thank you also for your support as we move toward new academic experiences, and we look forward to working with you in exciting new directions for our doctoral students!

Janet Jedlicka, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Chair, Department of Occupational Therapy
UND School of Medicine & Health Sciences



SUPER BIRTHDAY

Grand Forks faculty help 3rd year student Tiana Brown celebrate her birthday by showing their "true" superhero identities!

Back Row (left-to-right): Mandy Meyer, Anne Haskins, Tiana Brown ('19), Julie Granbanski, and Sonia Zimmerman

Front Row: (left-to-right) Deb Hanson, Cherie Graves, Sarah Nielsen, and Louise Diers

INTRODUCING UND'S OTD PROGRAM!

It is with great pleasure that we formally announce the launch of the new Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) program offered at your Alma Mater, the University of North Dakota, beginning fall 2019. As you might imagine, this change has been a long-time coming! Our journey toward curriculum revision began four years ago with an intensive review of our current Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program. Using information from multiple sources, we sought to build upon existing program strengths such as our students' strong foundation in the sciences, an emphasis on effective communication and leadership, and understanding the impact of mental health on occupational performance.

You can expect that graduates from our new OTD program will emerge with the same solid entry-level skills across practice settings that you have come to expect from UND graduates, just as you all demonstrated! However, there will be changes to the learning experiences offered in the new curriculum. The conceptually based curriculum will be eight semesters in length and will focus on professional concepts rather than content or specific separate practice areas such as mental health or physical rehabilitation. For example, when students learn about assessment they will apply their learning throughout the lifespan and across practice contexts. With an ever-broadening knowledge base, it has become virtually impossible to teach students about all of the populations they might eventually encounter. With a conceptually based curriculum, students are introduced to exemplars across many practice areas and taught to generalize their learning across practice contexts and populations.

As you might expect, we will emphasize the core values and principles of the profession across the curriculum, including client-centered, occupation-based, evidence-based, and culturally relevant practice ideals. Practical learning experiences will be offered throughout the curriculum, with the first Level I fieldwork occurring in semester one of the program. Students are encouraged to apply, evaluate, and reflect on their learning experiences throughout the curriculum to enhance critical thinking and learning. A short video outlining some of

our key curricular changes can be viewed under the "fieldwork" link on our department's website: <https://med.und.edu/occupational-therapy>. Here you will also find further details on the OTD curriculum.

We invite you to consider the information provided and where you might like to partner with us in offering learning experiences for UND OT students. For those of you who are already at an established fieldwork site for UND students, thank you for all you do and we look forward to continued partnerships. If you are not currently established as a fieldwork site for UND students, we would love to visit with you to explore the many roles you might play in both extending student learning as well as benefiting your site.

We thank you, alumni, for your many past contributions to the MOT program and look forward to many future opportunities for collaboration as we launch the inaugural occupational therapy doctorate program at the University of North Dakota.

Best,

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Chair, Occupational Therapy Department

For more on the new OTD degree at UND and how this new offering impacts our fieldwork educators, see our video online at: <https://med.UND.edu/occupational-therapy>.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT ANNIE SCHLECT

Thanks for your time, Annie. How did you become interested in OT?

My dad was in a life-threatening motorcycle accident my freshman year of college. He experienced a TBI and I got to sit in on many of his OT sessions. Watching my father re-learn simple tasks such as reaching for a glass of water, getting dressed, and counting money inspired me to pursue this career.

Where are you practicing and how did you come to that setting?

I began my career in early intervention in the Jamestown, N.D., area. I worked in "EI" for almost six years before starting my own practice (Zen Sleep Consulting) as a sleep consultant. I was seeing first-hand how poor sleep was impacting the development of the babies and toddlers I was working with and I wanted to help. I am proud to be the first sleep consultant in the state.

What do you remember about your time in UND's OT Department?

Let me grab my tissues first as I get teary just thinking about that beautiful journey. The three words that come to mind when I think about my time in the OT Department are family, growth, and grit! The program was challenging on all levels. We weren't just there to learn the facts and read from books. We opened up and learned who we were as humans so we could better help our future patients. The professors

and my classmates became my family. We supported each other through the good and bad and I walked away with not only a stellar education and the skills needed to be an OT, but the friendships, confidence, and emotional intelligence to thrive as a human.

What do you most enjoy about OT as a profession?

Being able to help people master skills that are meaningful to them and the ability to pivot to different settings.

What else are you doing?

I run my business from home so that I can spend more time with my family. We have two little girls, Ruby and Pippa, who keep an endless smile on my face. I became a Reiki practitioner (Japanese healing technique) and adore helping my clients on more of a spiritual level. My journey has definitely been unconventional, but I wouldn't be where I am now without the foundational knowledge and guidance of the UND OT Department!



FAREWELL TO DEB HANSON



Fieldwork education expert, prolific writer, theory guru, conceptual thinker, and best of all, enthusiast of living LIFE, Debra Hanson, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, professor in the UND Department of Occupational Therapy, is stepping down from her role at the UND Occupational Therapy Program after 31 years. Dr. Hanson's expertise includes teaching, research, theory, mental health, professional identity, and fieldwork education. Her work in connecting student fieldwork experiences to the curriculum has been foundational to understanding student learning on fieldwork and to supporting fieldwork educators in facilitating a student's integration of curricular concepts into practice. In 2014, Dr. Hanson was recognized for her contributions to the profession by being named to the Roster of Fellows of the American Occupational Therapy Association.

Dr. Hanson provided valuable contributions and service to the past and present success of the occupational therapy program at UND. Her contributions to the University, School of Medicine & Health Sciences (SMHS), and to the Occupational Therapy Department have been remarkable. She served on the Senate University Assessment Committee for two years, being elected chairperson for an additional two years. For the past 14 years, she has served as Faculty Advisor to the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship Student Organization, where she was recognized as the UND Outstanding Student Organization Advisor in 2015.

We are going to miss her expertise, mentorship, conceptual understanding, inspirational teaching, listening ears, and sage advice, among many other things. While many students didn't always get a chance to know Dr. Hanson until the third year of the program, they immediately grew to admire her. Thank you, Dr. Hanson for all you have invested into each of us, the OT program, the University, and the profession!