

THESIS

EXPLORING THE APPLICABILITY AND UTILITY OF A SUBJECT CENTERED  
INTEGRATIVE LEARNING MODEL IN FIELDWORK EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

### EXPLORING THE APPLICABILITY AND UTILITY OF THE SUBJECT CENTERED INTEGRATIVE LEARNING MODEL IN FIELDWORK EDUCATION

Fieldwork education is mandated by world's standard for occupational therapy and comprises a significant portion of student education as they prepare to practice as occupational therapists. Currently fieldwork education is guided by professional reasoning and learning theories, but there are no occupational therapy-specific tools to support fieldwork educators in this endeavor. Due to the significance of fieldwork, it is vital that fieldwork educators have ample training and tools to ensure quality learning experiences. Currently, the materials that direct fieldwork education and the attention to occupation within fieldwork are both limited. Without materials that consistently relate educational experiences back to occupation, students may be ill prepared as occupation-based practitioners. This study introduced the Subject-Centered Integrative Learning Model for Occupational Therapy (SCIL-OT) as a tool to guide fieldwork educators on the centrality of occupation in education. The purpose of this study is to address how the concepts and principles of the SCIL-OT are reflected in teaching in fieldwork education; how occupational therapy fieldwork educators experience the concepts and transactions of the SCIL-OT; how the model leads fieldwork educators to design and employ occupation-centered learning experiences; the limits of SCIL-OT; and recommendations for its refinement.

A theory building approach was coupled with basic qualitative research to evaluate the utility of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education in hopes of developing occupation-centered

educational practices. Purposive sampling was used to recruit six exemplar fieldwork educators who had supervised at least three Level II fieldwork students. Practice settings included hand therapy, inpatient psych, schools, acute care, home health, and outpatient pediatrics. Three 60-90 minute individual or group interviews were conducted to illuminate the applicability of the SCIL-OT in a variety of fieldwork education settings. Open-ended and follow-up questions were used to explore current fieldwork education and discuss how the SCIL-OT may be used to enhance this practice. In interview one, participants discussed current fieldwork education experiences. In interview two, researchers presented the SCIL-OT and collected the educators' initial responses to the model. The final interview gave fieldwork educators the opportunity to discuss their experiences applying the SCIL-OT and offer suggestions for the model's refinement. Data analysis occurred through coding and developing themes based on similarities of comments made within the text.

Results of this study showed that the SCIL-OT prompted a change in language and served as a discussion tool to expand the understanding of topics, the knowledge community and the value of occupational therapy. When incorporating the SCIL-OT into fieldwork education, supervisors were more intentional about including occupation into learning experiences. After learning the SCIL-OT, there was a difference in the vernacular fieldwork educators used to describe practice and education. Additionally, there was a deliberate focus on occupation and how the connection back to occupation can enhance the learning experience for students.

Application of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education enhanced the fieldwork experience for both students and educators in three significant ways. First, the SCIL-OT broadened the conception of the knowledge community and reminded fieldwork educators to incorporate additional materials and individuals into the fieldwork education experience. Next, the SCIL-OT

served as a reminder that occupation is the center of occupational therapy practice and should direct education. Finally, after fieldwork educators applied the SCIL-OT to their fieldwork education practices, personal values and pride in the practice of occupational therapy resurfaced, leading to enhanced practice and education that more closely represented the core values and mission of occupational therapy. This is the first model in occupational therapy education to support occupation-centered education in fieldwork education. It has power to convey the nature of occupational therapy's distinctiveness and to strengthen the tie between curricula and practice for fieldwork students.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Fieldwork education is mandated by occupational therapy educational standards around the world. In the United States, fieldwork placements comprise over six months of the educational experience, either integrated into the curriculum or completed after coursework. The World Federation of Occupational Therapy defines fieldwork education as a “supervised practical experience with different age groups, different health conditions and a focus on person, occupation, and environment” (Hocking & Ness, 2002, p. 24). By the completion of these internships, each student is expected to have gained the skills necessary to function independently as an occupational therapist. Thus, fieldwork education is of utmost importance in producing graduates who can address the occupational needs of service recipients.

Occupational therapists have a unique role in health care due to our focus on and use of occupation in assessment and intervention. Occupation has been defined as what humans do with their time (Dickie, 2014). Although this definition appears simplistic, occupation not only includes what one does, but also the meaning embedded in those activities, and one’s ability to participate in society. Examples of occupations include brushing your teeth, getting dressed, participating in the preparation and consumption of meals, taking care of a loved one, and being active in the community (AOTA, 2014). The primary concern of occupational therapy is to promote engagement in the occupations that are meaningful and relevant to participants using occupation as both the mean and end of treatment (Dickie, 2014). Therefore, since occupation is at the center of practice, it should be centered throughout occupational therapy education, including education during fieldwork.

As stated above, it is widely supported in the literature that occupation is the central concern of occupational therapy. However, the concept of occupation is sometimes obscured in fieldwork education (e.g. Fisher, 1999). Recently, students on fieldwork identified that systematic constraints of the practice setting did not allow the necessary time or resources to perform quality practice centered on clients' occupations (Kinsella, et al., 2008). Consequently, students may struggle to become proficient in communicating and applying the philosophical core of occupational therapy. Thus, a need exists for tools to help fieldwork educators focus fieldwork education on occupation.

One tool that may help address this need is the Subject Centered Integrative Learning Model for Occupational Therapy (SCIL-OT). The SCIL-OT was created to remind educators to relate content and learning experiences back to occupation on a consistent basis. This model was developed as a tool for academic educators, but has not yet been explored for use in fieldwork education. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to assess the applicability of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education using feedback from current occupational therapy fieldwork educators. Throughout this application process, we hope to either confirm or disconfirm the SCIL-OT's utility within fieldwork education. The primary research questions for the study are: 1) How are the concepts and principles of the SCIL-OT reflected in teaching within the context of fieldwork education? 2) How do occupational therapy fieldwork educators experience the concepts and transactions of the SCIL-OT? 3) From the perspective of the participants, how might the SCIL-OT guide fieldwork educators in designing and implementing occupation-centered learning experiences? 4) What are the limits of SCIL-OT, and what recommendations do fieldwork educators have for its refinement.

## CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### Literature Review Process

To establish background for this study, I conducted a thorough literature review using articles retrieved from the following databases: CINAHL, PsychINFO, Academic Search Premiere, MEDLINE, PsychARTICLES, Science Reference Center, SPORTDiscus, and TOPICSearch. A combination of the terms *occupational therapy, education, model, fieldwork education, clinical instruction, practice education, and fieldwork supervision* was used to locate articles. Additional sources were found by searching citations from key articles.

After locating applicable articles, I organized and evaluated content through the scope of my specific research topic, fieldwork education. My initial scan of the literature led me to develop the following categories of analysis: models used to guide instruction during fieldwork experiences, models used to further promote learning on fieldwork, basic educational approaches applied to fieldwork, fieldwork educator characteristics, and roles and responsibilities of fieldwork educators. During this initial read through, I also began to highlight important quotations or topics to address within my paper including definitions of fieldwork, major challenges educators face, student perspectives, any promotion for a change or an identified need in fieldwork education, and the history of fieldwork education.

Based on a critical analysis of the literature, I collected pertinent information and created an Excel spreadsheet further detailing the following information for each article: approach to teaching, use of models, relevant findings, intended audience, and relation to the SCIL-OT. This spreadsheet was used to synthesize the extensive body of literature, extract relevant statements, and identify themes. Throughout this process, I sought out additional research to elaborate

important areas of focus and attempted to saturate my collected knowledge on the topic of fieldwork education. Additional topics that required further research included adult learning theory, knowledge translation, experiential learning, and conceptual models.

In this literature review, I will present primary themes existing in fieldwork education. I will first present research supporting the statement that occupation is the center and core concept in occupational therapy and should be the central concept in occupational therapy education. Next I will explain how fieldwork education serves as a bridge between academic education and clinical practice. I will then explore how the field currently uses models and theories to support and enhance fieldwork education. Finally, I will address how an occupation-centered educational model may guide learning in fieldwork education and discuss the purpose, need, and significance of this study.

## **The Focus on Occupation within Education**

### **Presence of Occupation in Academic Education**

Because occupation is an essential component of occupational therapy practice, scholars have identified the need to prioritize this concept in academic education (e.g. Fisher, 2013; Mitcham, 2014; Yerxa, 1998). Schaber (2014), in her keynote address, encouraged the use of educational techniques to more strongly identify and connect to the core beliefs of the profession. The core philosophy of the profession is grounded in the belief that occupation is a biological requirement for humans and “through occupation, people transform and are transformed by their actions and their environments” (Hooper & Wood, 2014b, p. 39). Connecting to the core beliefs of the profession places occupation at the center of practice and education. To centralize a concept, such as occupation, means to consider it as “cardinal importance” and the source from which something else originates (Fisher, 2013, p. 163). In

occupational therapy, occupation is the source from which professional reasoning, clinical skills, foundational knowledge, and theoretical models originate (Fisher, 2013). When concepts, interventions, and education are linked closely to occupation, they are transformed to better reflect the philosophical core of occupational therapy. Specifically, in academic education, this centralization of occupation can be referred to as occupation-centered education, which Hooper (2015) defined as “curricular designs and teaching approaches that explicitly place occupation at the center of all learning” (p.1). Occupation-centered education has the potential to help students distinguish the unique perspective, role, and philosophy of occupational therapy. Students in academic settings are expected to understand the concept of occupation and how it directs clinical reasoning and affects intervention. If educational techniques do not obviously centralize occupation, students may be less likely to centralize occupation in their individual practice. Without a focus on human occupation in occupational therapy practice, service recipients may not experience the power that occupation has to influence health, well-being, and quality of life (Yerxa, 1998). An in-depth understanding of occupation allows practitioners to better transform concrete tasks into meaningful and functional activities, ultimately improving motivation, participation, and engagement (Hooper, 2006b). It is imperative, then, that students are educated about the use and importance of occupation.

### **Presence of Occupation in Fieldwork Education**

Fieldwork placements are designed to expose students to occupational therapy practice. During fieldwork placements, students often begin to model their own practice after that of their fieldwork educator (Garrett & Schkade, 1995). In order to create occupation-centered practitioners, fieldwork educators have the responsibility of instructing using occupation-centered language and learning activities. However, occupation is not a centralized concept

discussed in literature addressing fieldwork education. Rather, studies consistently addressed learning theories employed in fieldwork education (e.g. Bagatell, Lawrence, Schwartz, Vuernick, 2013; Cohn & Crist, 1995), the structure of fieldwork education (e.g. Hanson & DeJuliis, 2015; Precin, 2007), and the role and characteristics of fieldwork educators (e.g. Brown, Williams, & Lynch, 2013; Donnelly & Murphy, 2013). A systematic mapping review on the state of fieldwork education research concluded that, “while many educational approaches were described as matched to the nature of fieldwork, no papers addressed occupation-based practice or occupation-based learning” (Roberts, Hooper, Wood and King, 2015, p. 115). Seemingly, education within fieldwork does not explicitly emphasize occupation in the structure or application of learning and teaching, as it does in academic education.

While there is a significant lack of attention to occupation in fieldwork education literature, occupation was discernable in a few articles, though seldom a key focus. Specifically, the following examples display how occupation was evident in definitions of fieldwork experiences and present in occupational therapy practice. First, occupation was included in various definitions of fieldwork, but only as it related to practice (AOTA, 2009; Garrett & Schkade, 1995). These definitions demonstrated consistent attention to the value of occupation as a therapeutic tool, and the importance of integrating theory and practice through clinical reasoning. For example, the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (2011) defined fieldwork as: “an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupation and research, administration, and management of occupational therapy services” (p. 35). An additional definition stated that fieldwork experiences should facilitate the development of “competence in applying the occupational therapy process and using evidence-based interventions to meet the

occupational needs of a diverse population” (AOTA, 2009, p. 821). These definitions support the incorporation of occupation into practice, but fail to recognize the importance of addressing occupation in an educational context. It is encouraging to note that occupation was mentioned while describing the purpose of fieldwork; however, due to limitations in current fieldwork education models and inadequate attention on occupation, a gap exists between these definitions and the implementation of occupation-focused fieldwork education.

Next, occupation was mentioned in articles that discussed how occupation was observed by fieldwork students during client services. These references typically related to the practitioners’ values of practice rather than their educational techniques (Forsyth, Mann, & Kielhofner, 2005; Gaipman & Anthony, 1989). Experienced practitioners often execute interventions with engagement in occupations as the end goal. However, engagement in occupation could feel like an intangible concept while students are involved in facilitating non-occupation-specific activities such as electrical stimulation, range of motion, and transfers. It is inaccurate to assume that students will connect these activities to the client’s occupations. Therefore, it is critical that fieldwork educators reason with students and create learning opportunities that intentionally connect practice back to occupation. One example of how students perceived occupation was seen in a study conducted by Bagatell et al. (2013). Findings from this study represented how students’ understanding of occupation was enhanced during the transformative experiences of fieldwork in mental health settings. Specifically, there was a gained appreciation for “occupation, occupation-based practice, and the uniqueness of the profession” as students observed their fieldwork educator’s clinical practice (p. 193). The students recognized that focusing on meaningful engagement, or occupation, gave them a deeper appreciation of the power of occupation. Yet, fieldwork educators did not make intentional

connections back to occupation nor did they clearly present instructional strategies used to help students focus on occupation. Rather students were left to make these connections on their own.

Fieldwork educators have a crucial role in developing future occupational therapists and are thus in need of additional educational materials to help guide how they educate students (Opacich, 1995; Roberts et al., 2015). Responsibilities of fieldwork educators include modeling exemplary occupational therapy practice, creating fruitful learning opportunities for students, and “bridg[ing] the gap between classroom and clinic” (Cohn & Frum, 1988, p. 326; Cohn & Crist, 1995; Richard, 2008). Due to the weight of these responsibilities, educators often seek out supplemental materials to direct their educational efforts (Banks, Bell, & Smits, 2000). While these materials may enhance teaching strategies, a deficit remains in creating more occupation-centered education. It is widely recognized that the inclusion of and attention to occupation in therapy produces positive outcomes for service recipients (e.g. Clark et al., 2012; Jackson, 1998). Therefore, it would be valuable for fieldwork educators to emphasize how they are addressing occupation within interventions, documentation, and goal setting. The implementation of a new educational model would help ensure that students are receiving fieldwork education that is accurate, consistent, and focused on occupation.

### **Fieldwork Education Is a Bridge between Academic Education and Practice**

Scholars have recognized the importance of integrating academic learning and clinical practice (Evenson, 2013; Matheson, 2003). Banks et al. (2000) found that the ability to integrate academic learning during fieldwork was dependent on “the fieldwork learning environment, preceptor influence on student learning, and the student learning process over time” (p. 93). Integration of academic education into practice has been described as one of the main purposes of fieldwork and has received attention in the literature (Banks et al., 2000; Matheson, 2003). For



example, one approach to increase integration between classroom and fieldwork is the incorporation of learning contracts (Matheson, 2003; Whitcombe, 2001). Both fieldwork educators and academic fieldwork coordinators use learning contracts as measurement and accountability tools where the student is responsible for creating his or her own learning goals in collaboration with the fieldwork educator. Learning contracts were brought into fieldwork education to ensure that self-identified learning goals are met (Whitcombe, 2001). These contracts were created using principles of andragogy, the study of adult learning (Matheson, 2003).

Results from Matheson (2003) and Whitcombe's (2001) empirical studies showed that learning contracts ultimately provided a link between theory and practice, which promoted the "transfer of knowledge, clinical reasoning, and reflection skills from the classroom into the fieldwork setting" (Matheson, 2003, p. 268). This educational approach guides the learning and instructional process. However, goals are self-identified and learning outcomes can vary from participant to participant. Due to this individualization and self-direction, a consistent relation to occupation is not guaranteed. Richard (2008), through phenomenological interviews, investigated the experiences of three fieldwork supervisors to better understand the connection between occupational therapy theory and practice. Findings supported the close connection of fieldwork supervision and adult learning theories including "constructivist and situated learning theories" (p. 169). These theories were evident specifically in the supervisors' beliefs about knowledge as fieldwork transformed academic learning into "real world learning" and required constant connection of academic knowledge to practice (Richard, 2008, p. 165). Additional findings support that the integration of academic and clinical knowledge relied on the dedication

of the student, the learning opportunities created by the educator, and the alignment with occupational therapy's foundational theories (Richard, 2008).

While it is clearly supported that fieldwork experiences serve as the bridge between academic education and clinical practice, educational practices in both settings are not currently aligned. As discussed above, there is a significant lack of attention on occupation throughout fieldwork education, despite its stated importance in the field. This inconsistency between educational contexts could potentially lead to disjointed and insufficient education as students struggle to connect academic principles to hands-on experiences. A tool that ensures consistent attention to and application of occupation could provide a standard by which all educational practices are formed, assessed, and measured.

### **Types of Models and Theories Used to Support Fieldwork Education**

Fieldwork educators use a variety of models and theories to enhance educational experiences. Such models and theories are used to deepen the students' level of thinking and to apply theory to build competence and prepare for future practice (Bagatell et al., 2013; Roger et al., 2014). Based on my review of the literature, I developed three classifications of theories and models discussed in fieldwork education: learning theories, structural models, and setting-specific models. The following section summarizes current models and theories applied to fieldwork in order to identify areas of strength and potential gaps in current fieldwork education.

#### **Learning Theories Used to Support Fieldwork Education**

Learning theories include any theoretical or pedagogical framework used to guide the teaching and learning processes on fieldwork. Adult learning theories have been embedded in the fieldwork literature as guides for the instructional and supervisory experience (e.g. transformative learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, self-directed learning,

etc.). Adult learning theories encompass all theoretical frameworks established and used to promote self-directed, experiential, problem-centered, and internally motivated learning (Knowles, 1975). For example, the transformative learning theory promoted a critical analysis of clinical practice scenarios in a fieldwork setting according to Roger et al. (2014). Costa (2009) described transformative learning as “when the assumptions that students have are clarified and changed, leading them to adopt new ways of doing things” (p. 19). Bagatell et al. (2013) used qualitative methods to empirically study the transformation of students during a 12-week Level II mental health fieldwork placement. Data collection and analysis were conducted under the assumption that students “actively construct their experiences and engage in reflection,” mirroring concepts of transformative learning (p. 183). Findings supported that students undergo significant transformations during fieldwork experiences and that the transformative learning theory can help both fieldwork educators and students better understand and respond to those significant transformations.

Another learning theory under the umbrella of adult learning, self-directed learning, promoted professional reasoning within an applied context. Gaipman and Anthony (1989) explored the model of self-directed learning as a framework for fieldwork education. This paper did not use empirical data to explore how self-directed learning affected fieldwork education, but rather discussed how the model of self-directed learning could be used to structure and develop fieldwork education programs. According to Gaipman and Anthony (1989), the model of self-directed learning promoted learning in fieldwork as it supported the creation of an “optimal learning climate” and the active role of the student in all stages of learning (p. 11). This article supported the application of adult learning principles throughout fieldwork education, but it offered limited direction for how to specifically develop and implement occupational therapy-

specific learning activities in fieldwork. A model or learning theory that better aligns with occupational therapy tenets would ensure that students are learning and applying concepts that would translate into effective, occupation-centered practice. Table 1 presents additional learning theories found either to be used in or influence fieldwork education.

Adult learning theories and other educational philosophies have a valuable place in fieldwork education as they promote learning through the application of previous personal experiences, problem-centered learning, and personal motivation (Gaipman & Anthony, 1989). Additionally, adult learning theories and educational philosophies, like problem-based learning, emphasize the active role of the student in the construction of knowledge (Matheson, 2003). Lastly, such theories and philosophies place much importance on “the process of learning as opposed to the content alone” (Whitcombe, 2001, p. 552). These components of learning propel students to become more involved and invested in the learning process. This investment creates a more productive learning outcome and a stronger collaboration among those contributing to the knowledge creation, which is consistent with the premises of the SCIL-OT, the focus of this research. However, the majority of these theories have been adopted from other disciplines without translation for use in occupational therapy-specific learning contexts (Hooper, et al., 2013). While the use of such learning theories can enhance learning outcomes, they are not by themselves sufficient for guiding occupational therapy fieldwork education. One limitation to these theories is the lack of explicit recognition of the centrality of occupation in occupational therapy (Gaipman & Anthony, 1989). A study conducted by Banks et al. (2000) concluded that “mutual valuing of occupational therapy theory by both the preceptor and student strengthened the experience” (p. 96). Therefore, without a focus on occupation-specific content and theory, the richness of the fieldwork experience may be compromised.

Table 1:  
*Learning Theories Used to Support Fieldwork Education*

<b>Name of Model</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Transformative Learning Theory</b>	Bagatell, Lawrence, Schwartz, Vuernick, 2013	“The process of how learners reformulate the meaning of experience...when students are faced with a disorienting dilemma...[students] engage in a process that includes exploring options, planning a new course of action, acquiring new knowledge and roles, and incorporating change into everyday life” (p. 182)
<b>Problem-Based Learning</b>	Cohn & Crist, 1995; Evenson, 2013; Matheson, 2003; Whitcombe, 2001	“Teaching method that emphasizes active student-centered learning in a small group format. Information is organized and presented as integrated clinical problems or cases rather than separate content areas such as neuroanatomy and orthopaedics” (Walton & Mathews, 1989, as cited in Matheson, 2003)
<b>Social Constructive Perspective</b>	Cohn & Crist, 1995; Richard, 2008	Acknowledging that knowledge belongs to a community, encouraging engagement in collaborative knowledge construction, and then applying that knowledge to practice
<b>The Pyramid of Occupational Therapy Learning</b>	Fisher, 1999	The pyramid is comprised of the following ideas: at the base – student-teacher commitment, trust and communication; next – medical/scientific knowledge; third – holistic OT theories of human performance; and finally – application of OT theory to patient cases
<b>Self-Directed Learning Model</b>	Gaipman & Anthony, 1989	“A process in which individuals take the initiative...in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes” (p. 11)
<b>Learning Contracts</b>	Gaipman & Anthony, 1989; Matheson, 2003; Whitcombe, 2001	An agreement between a learner and an educator that details learning objectives; resources to accomplish objectives; evidence to demonstrate objectives have been accomplished; and the specific criteria for evaluation (Matheson, 2003)
<b>Reflective Practice</b>	Hitch, Rowan, & Nicola-Richmond, 2014; Richard, 2008	Encourages a student to describe, evaluate, analyze, draw conclusions, and plan for future action after considering a specific experience.
<b>The Situational Leadership Model</b>	Natasi, 2013; Richard, 2008	Educators and students alike learn in a transformative context using different leadership styles to reach the different needs of the student – “a two-way learning process” (Richard, p. 157).

## **Structural Models Used to Support Fieldwork Education**

Numerous models described the structural set-up of fieldwork. Structure refers to the supervisory arrangement detailing the type and number of supervisors and students. The original

and most common structure used during fieldwork, as revealed in the literature, was the one-to-one apprenticeship model of education (Gaipman & Anthony, 1989). This model paired one student with one educator for individualized and focused education. However, due to financial and time constraints in occupational therapy education, the field has begun to explore additional structural models to promote effective learning throughout fieldwork placements (Roger et al., 2014). Recent models introduce a new combination of educators, students, and professionals. One example is the Collaborative Fieldwork Model where two or more students were supervised by one fieldwork educator. As stated by Hanson and DeJuliis (2015), the Collaborative Fieldwork Model created opportunities for the student to practice “positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, group interaction, interpersonal and team work skills, and group processing” (p. 225). The structure of this model was most effective when the student was an independent learner and able to collaborate within a team. After the implementation of this model, students at The Mayo Clinic showed advancements in professional development by honing skills in both independent learning and teamwork (Rindfleisch et al., 2009).

Additional structural models that deviated from one-to-one supervision include the aggregate fieldwork model (Precin, 2007), the group model (Farrow, Gaipman, & Rudman, 2000), and the Interagency Model (Thomas, Penman, & Williamson, 2005) (see Table 2). Such structural models often required students and educators to communicate more clearly about expectations and learning objectives, as the supervisory role of the educator was not as constant or focused. Furthermore, students had the opportunity to take a leadership role in the educational experience by exploring self-initiation, problem-solving, and reasoning (Farrow et al., 2000). Students and supervisors alike praised non-traditional structural models as they decreased stress levels for educators, encouraged more efficient communication, and increased professional

development for the students (Farrow et al., 2000; Hanson & DeLuliis, 2015; Jung, Martin, Graden, & Awrey, 1994).

While studies have documented positive outcomes related to the use of non-traditional fieldwork structural models, these models simply addressed how supervision was designed during fieldwork, yet did not address the education content to be incorporated into fieldwork placements. An educational technique that has a clear focus on the foundational elements of practice, in this case occupation, would help nurture a student to become competent and occupation-centered. Such occupation-centered techniques could be applied in any of the structural models to ensure that occupational therapy practice is aptly emphasized.

### **Setting-Specific Models Used to Support Fieldwork Education**

Finally, I reviewed two models that were developed for application within a specific practice setting. In the first one, Griswold and Strassler (1995) developed the School Fieldwork Model for implementation strictly in the school setting after identifying the needs of fieldwork educators. A panel of seven occupational therapy educators with several years of experience identified “general needs,” “administrative-logistical needs,” and “supervisory skill needs” as areas where they sought improvement and further suggestions (p. 129). Specific issues included outlining student learning needs, judging students’ capabilities, understanding liability coverage for students, and dealing with student problems. The authors found this process and the application of the model very useful for meeting the needs of the educators and students.

Table 2:  
*Structural Models Used in Fieldwork Education*

<b>Name of Model</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>The Group Model</b>	Farrow, Gaipman, & Rudman, 2000	Involves a group of 2 or more students supervised by 3 or more therapists in related areas of practice with emphasis on collaboration, increased student responsibility for learning, and a broad exposure to clinical practice.
<b>The Collaborative Model</b>	Hanson & DeJuliis 2015; Thomas, Penman, & Williamson, 2005; Rindflesch et al., 2009	Two students complete fieldwork together being supervised by one educator.
<b>A Shared Supervision Model</b>	Jung, Martin, Graden, & Awrey, 1994	The Shared Supervision Model was adapted from the Group Model. A group of five students was supervised by two educators.
<b>An Aggregate Fieldwork Model</b>	Precin, 2007	Combines clinical project publication, cooperative learning, and interdisciplinary intervention.
<b>Role Emerging Supervision</b>	Thomas, Penman, & Williamson, 2005	Students complete fieldwork in a setting where no true occupational therapist is employed.
<b>The Interagency Model</b>	Thomas, Penman, & Williamson, 2005	Fieldwork experiences combine the traditional 1:1 model and the role-emerging model creating a partnership with community agencies.

In the second study, Natasi (2013) developed a model for fieldwork supervision in low vision rehabilitation that promotes best practice. Specifically, this model addressed “site-specific objectives, a competency checklist, and a developmental timeline” for low vision rehabilitation using principles from the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (p. 363). Two occupational therapists were trained in low vision rehabilitation using the best-practice model and “both occupational therapists fully met competency in all of the



indicators on the competency checklist” (p. 369). According to the study, application of this best-practice model resulted in complete competency and an increased understanding of the role of occupational therapy in low vision rehabilitation. Training using this model was done through a pre-/post-test knowledge examination and PowerPoint tutorials addressing intervention strategies and necessary components of evaluations. Natasi (2013) developed an extremely effective model and training program to support fieldwork education in low vision rehabilitation and provided an excellent template for further fieldwork education models. The components of this model directly correlate with topics – an element of the SCIL-OT model to be introduced later in this paper. Unfortunately, the development of this model including the instructional manual, the tutorials, and the site-specific objectives would require significant adaptation to apply to other settings. Additionally, such materials will take time to create, limiting the applicability of such promising fieldwork education techniques.

## **Summary**

Current studies have explored models and theories aimed at the integration of academic and clinical learning (e.g. Banks et al., 2000; Matheson, 2003), the application of adult learning and educational philosophies (Gauptman & Anthony, 1989; Whitcombe, 2001), the adjustment of the structural approach to fieldwork (e.g. Hanson & DeJuliis, 2015; Jung et al., 1994), and the transformation of fieldwork within specific settings (Griswold & Strassler, 1995; Natasi, 2013). The studies included in this literature review represented a small sample of fieldwork education literature, but I am confident that no fieldwork education model addresses the benefit and importance of centering fieldwork education on occupation. Because centering education on occupation introduces and develops a “clear appreciation for the core subject of the profession,” it is a critical perspective to incorporate into fieldwork education (Hooper, 2010, p. 100).

## **Subject Centered Integrative Learning Model for Occupational Therapy (SCIL-OT)**

Hooper (2010, 2015) synthesized the work of Palmer (1998) and Yerxa (1998) to develop the SCIL-OT. The original purpose of this model was to guide academic educators in occupation-centered education practices. The SCIL-OT incorporates principles of integrative learning to emphasize the importance of a student's personal connection to the material. Integrative learning promotes a more extensive understanding of content as it challenges learners to connect content to personal experiences, other curriculum, the core subject, and to principles of practice (Hooper, 2010, 2013). The combination of multiple individual perspectives can create a richer understanding of content and can help students in fieldwork develop a deeper understanding of occupation. The SCIL-OT was developed using principles from various education theories including subject-centered education (Palmer, 1998), integrative learning (Hooper, 2013), and adult learning theories such as transformative learning theory (Hooper, 2006a).

Four key components make up the SCIL-OT: *subject*, *topics*, *knowledge community*, and *interactions* (or links) occurring among the elements (Hooper, 2006a). The subject is defined as the primary concern of teaching and learning and is specific to the profession itself. In occupational therapy, occupation is the core subject and therefore centered in the SCIL-OT, as shown in Figure 1, with links extending out to various topics and members of the knowledge community representing the interactions among the elements. The proposition to center occupation within practice and education is continuing to gain importance in the field, as I discussed earlier. In hopes of creating occupation-centered practitioners, scholars have begun to recognize the necessity of creating occupation-centered education experiences (e.g. Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001).

Topics make up another element of this model, and they exist to “help explain the subject” (Hooper, 2006a, p. 552) (see figure 1). Topics refer to the content addressed during education that is related to, but separate from, occupation. Often times, this content is more visible in curricula and more easily accessible for students (Hooper et al., 2014). Topics are not entirely profession specific, and may include such items as anatomy, developmental milestones, activity analyses, and theory. The theories and models currently supporting fieldwork education have been mostly drawn from disciplines outside of occupational therapy and are related to content other than occupation. Therefore, fieldwork educators consistently applied concepts and theories related to topics, somewhat devaluing the primary focus of occupation. For example, principles of problem-based learning might be used to propel the student’s understanding of spinal cord injuries as the student is responsible for accumulating pertinent knowledge of how to treat an individual with a spinal cord injury. However, because problem-based learning was originally applied to disciplines other than occupational therapy, occupation is not the central focal point of the knowledge accumulation. Within the SCIL-OT, topics reinforce the central subject. It is the fieldwork educator’s task to draw the connections from the topics to occupation in order to paint the full picture of occupational therapy practice.

Knowledge community refers to individuals who are participating in any aspect of the learning or education process (see figure 1). In the case of occupational therapy and fieldwork education, this community includes all those who “teach and study aspects of human occupation” (Hooper, 2006a, p. 552). Knowledge community members may include the student, the fieldwork educator, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, the client, the family, and members of the interdisciplinary team. Rather than simply receiving knowledge, all learners are encouraged to assist in the creation of ideas relating to the subject and various topics. As the need for

fieldwork placements expand into non-traditional sites, the knowledge community will begin to play a more prominent role. Fieldwork education experiences that take place in collaborative or aggregate settings require students to tap into additional resources such as other disciplines or students as they are no longer solely collaborating with one primary occupational therapist. The representation of the knowledge community in the SCIL-OT supports the expansion and wide variety of individuals who contribute to the creation of knowledge.

Interactions (or links) among these elements reveal the teaching and learning process, and make up the final element of this model (see figure 1). Interactions occur on the lines connecting the core subject—occupation, with the topics and the knowledge community. Numerous methods can be used to create these interactions. For example, in order to teach a student about the occupational effects of a spinal cord injury, an instructor might use problem-based learning, modeling, or explanation. Therefore, one member of the knowledge community is “teaching on the lines” to address a topic relevant to occupational therapy (Hooper et al., 2015). The interactions among the elements represent the way information is dispensed and accumulated.

Thus far, the SCIL-OT has been studied through a qualitative case study exploring how faculty members apply the principles of occupation-centered education in their classroom. Findings offered suggestions of how to better structure education to reflect the central subject of occupation and supported that the SCIL-OT assisted faculty members in refocusing curriculum and classes onto occupation (Hooper, 2006a). However, the principles of the SCIL-OT may also have application outside the classroom. A significant amount of learning takes place during fieldwork, and these educational experiences would gain value by being tethered to occupation.



*Figure 1.* The model of Subject Centered Integrative Learning for Occupational Therapy (SCIL-OT). Hooper, 2015.

### **Need and Significance of Proposed Study**

Currently, there is a significant and detrimental lack of focus on occupation throughout the fieldwork education literature. As students are exposed to clinical practice, they begin to develop habits and values related to occupational therapy practice. Without an intentional focus on occupation, students may leave fieldwork experiences ill-prepared to practice as occupation-based practitioners. In order to address the need for materials that consistently focus on occupation, this study presents a model developed to centralize occupation throughout educational experiences.

The purpose of this study is to look more specifically at the utility of the SCIL-OT within the context of fieldwork education based upon the perspectives and experiences of occupational therapy practitioners who supervise students during fieldwork. This is part of a larger study assessing the applicability of the SCIL-OT in the additional contexts of client/family education and academic education in the United States. By understanding the how application of the SCIL-OT influenced various educational practices, the utility of the model will begin to be evident and the concepts and theory embedded within will be confirmed.

Applying the SCIL-OT to the context of fieldwork education would remind fieldwork educators to keep occupation at the forefront of education, resulting in increased attention to occupation within fieldwork education. Thus, my research has potential to support occupational therapy fieldwork educators in connecting more consistently to occupation, and therefore reflecting this valuable central concept to fieldwork students.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### Study Design

This study used a theory-building approach coupled with basic qualitative research to evaluate the utility of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education. Theory-building is the “ongoing process of producing, confirming, applying, and adapting theory” (Lynham, 2002, p. 222). Lynham (2002) divides theory building research into the stages of conceptual development, operationalization, confirmation/disconfirmation, application, and ongoing refinement and development. This study exists within the phases of confirmation/disconfirmation, application, and ongoing refinement. The confirmation/disconfirmation phase of theory building research exists to “purposefully inform and intentionally confirm or disconfirm” basic tenants of a theory (Lynham, 2002, p. 233). As participants apply the SCIL-OT to practice, the concepts presented within the model will either align or detract from the purpose of fieldwork education. If participants recognize that the concepts align with their current practice, I considered the elements of the model to be confirmed. This study used the confirmation/disconfirmation stage to elaborate and explore the concepts of this model and their interactions (Hooper et al., 2015; Lynham, 2002). Additionally, this study built the theory of the SCIL-OT through the application phase. Participants were asked to use the model during fieldwork education in order to test its applicability. After the application phase, participants were then asked to describe their situation applying the model and offer suggestions for improvement – beginning the process of ongoing refinement.

To support a theory-building research study, a basic qualitative research approach was used. Sandelowski (2000) explains basic qualitative research as exploring an experience or

occurrence “*in terms of* a conceptual, philosophical, or other highly abstract framework or system” (p. 336). This methodology is appropriate for this study as we are looking to analyze practitioners’ experiences with the SCIL-OT to find recurring patterns or themes. Through an in-depth analysis of their description of experiences, the relevance of the conceptual and philosophical framework of the SCIL-OT will become evident. For example, as the educators integrate the SCIL-OT into their educational practices, they might begin to identify how the model might impact the learning experience and the fieldwork education process overall. I am seeking out the feedback and opinions of the fieldwork educators to validate the applicability and utility of the SCIL-OT in their various educational settings.

### **Sampling and Participants**

Purposive sampling was used to recruit the most “informative people possible to illuminate the topic of interest” (Kielhofner, 2006, p. 522). Exemplar fieldwork educators were selected using the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at Colorado State University as a key informant. Invitations to participate were sent out via e-mail (see Appendix A). Additional participants were recruited from the Fieldwork Educator Certificate Program (FWECP) that was held at Colorado State University. Fieldwork educators attending the FWECP were given a flyer explaining the study, and were invited to participate in person by the student investigator (see Appendix B). A total of nine participants were recruited, but due to scheduling and personal circumstances, six individuals completed study. No participants dropped out of the study once interviews began. All participants met the inclusion criteria of educating at least three Level II fieldwork students and were available for interviews via videoconference and conference calls. Participants represented a wide variety of practice settings including hand therapy, inpatient



psychiatric, school-based, acute care, home health, pain management, and outpatient pediatrics. All participants provided written consent for participation (see Appendix C).

### **Data Collection**

Participants were involved in three, 60 to 90 minute individual or group interviews. The original intent of this study was to collect data through focus groups; however, due to the difficulty of coordinating seven different schedules, interviews became the most plausible method for collecting data. Refer to Table 3 for a description of which interviews were conducted individually and which were conducted as a group. The first interview session began with a discussion of the study and established shared goals and expectations for the study. This was important, because we wanted each individual to understand their role as active participants in the research process. The first interview existed as a platform for the educators to discuss their current fieldwork education experiences (see Appendix D). The researchers then used open-ended questions and follow-up questions to explore each group's or individual's satisfying and dissatisfying fieldwork education experiences. Information gained from the participants in this initial interview provided a baseline for understanding the various educational styles and experiences of the participants. We found it important to gather stories that were not filtered through the SCIL-OT in order to determine if any parts of the model were already present in their educational practices.

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Allie</b>	<b>Florence</b>	<b>Gloria</b>	<b>Heather</b>	<b>Mary</b>	<b>Olivia</b>
<b>Practice Setting</b>	Inpatient Psychiatrics	Hand Therapy	Home Health	School-Based	Acute-Care	Outpatient Pediatrics
<b>Interview 1</b>	Individually	Grouped with Heather and Olivia	Individually	Grouped with Florence and Olivia	Individually	Grouped with Heather and Florence
<b>Interview 2</b>	Grouped with Florence	Grouped with Allie	Individually	Grouped with Mary	Grouped with Heather	Individually
<b>Interview 3</b>	Individually	Individually	Individually	Individually	Individually	Individually

The second interview introduced the SCIL-OT. The researchers presented the model and facilitated a discussion exploring participants' initial responses to the model, including how the model was perceived to relate to their current education practice. As the researchers presented the model, participants were encouraged to ask questions and begin to contemplate how they saw the elements of the model present in their current setting. Educators were asked to list the various topics and knowledge community members represented in their setting and discuss instructional processes that they currently use throughout fieldwork education to help students make the connections inherent in the SCIL-OT.

The participants were then asked to apply the SCIL-OT to their interactions with fieldwork students for an average of twelve weeks, as feasible for each participant. We encouraged participants to suggest adjustments to the model according to how they found it to best fit within fieldwork education as they practiced applying the model. Participants had the freedom to apply the concepts of the model in whatever way they chose and direct their experiences with the SCIL-OT. Fieldwork educators who did not have a fieldwork student at that time were asked to hypothetically apply the model to previous or future interactions with students. One suggested implementation of the SCIL-OT was to use of a blank worksheet of the model to personalize the SCIL-OT for that setting. This model allowed space for educators to fill

in the blanks and discuss personal instructional strategies with students (see Appendix E). Completed worksheets were collected as artifacts and coded as data. An example application is included in the findings section.

After the period during which participants applied the model to practice application researchers conducted the final interview. Researchers posed interview questions that explored the participants' experience of using the model in their fieldwork education practices. Guided discussions displayed the model's congruence or lack of congruence with the participants' educational practices. Participants were given the opportunity to both affirm the current model and recommend changes. This interview session was essential as the incorporation of a new model into current practice requires time and we sought out feedback from the participants to ensure the feasibility of integrating the SCIL-OT into current fieldwork education practice.

### **Data Analysis**

The audio from each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim using a professional transcription service. It was then uploaded to a secure server to which only the researchers had password access. Transcripts were read line by line, labeling important statements, segments, and text fragments of relevance to the research questions. The labeled text was then coded using a combination of a deductive and inductive codes. Deductive codes were generated from the existing elements of the model, including subject, topic, knowledge community, and interactions (links) among elements. For example, a comment made about a transfer would be coded as a topic. If that transfer was explained in terms of how it enabled participation in daily living, that comment would also be coded as a link to occupation. Inductive codes were derived as investigators read through the text and identified consistent messages and concepts expressed by participants. Examples of inductive codes included positive student

behaviors, cooperative learner-educator interactions, roadblock to engagement, context, and expectations for learner.

The analysis process began with co-coding a segment of data with three other researchers involved in the investigation of SCIL-OT. The inductive codes were confirmed by the researchers as the text continued to reveal and repeat these concepts. The researchers then created a codebook where each code was defined and explained through use of an example. The codebook was used to guide the coding process and to ensure consistency in coding within the research team. As researchers continued to analyze the data, codes were transformed and elaborated. An inductive code was only approved by the research team if there was widespread pertinence of the code related to the majority of the participant's responses. After each transcript was coded, similar codes were grouped together to develop themes. Themes were developed to better understand and compare the experiences of the participants. The themes were supported in the data and discussed with the research team for clarification and organization. NVivo, a qualitative analysis software program, was used to manage the data and served as the analysis tool to maintain codes, themes, and overall findings. This process parallels the common qualitative analysis process of open, axial, and selective coding outlined by Creswell (2012).

Data were analyzed to explore how the model influenced occupational therapy fieldwork education. Specifically, researchers were interested in scouring the text to identify which concepts and principles of the SCIL-OT were present and for how the participants were able to understand and apply the concepts of the SCIL-OT. Finally, researchers sought to understand how the participants applied the SCIL-OT as they designed learning experiences and what suggestions they had to improve the model.

## **Trustworthiness**

Peer debriefing, member checking, and theoretical positioning were used to ensure the rigor of this study (Creswell, 2012; Kielhofner, 2006). Peer debriefing occurred as “multiple investigators simultaneously but independently engag[ed] in the analytical process” (Kielhofner, 2006, p. 353). The research team, consisting of three student researchers and one faculty advisor, met weekly to develop codes and discuss findings. Peer debriefing involved all researchers reading sample data and discussing the concepts until disagreements were negotiated and consensus was met.

Throughout the interview sessions, feedback from fieldwork educators was collected and applied in coordination with the true nature of the recommendations offered. Adjusting the model throughout the research process allowed the participants to adapt the model to best reflect their practice and ideology of fieldwork education. This process resembles member checking, as the researchers and participants were able to reflect upon what had been said and openly discuss any misunderstandings in order to ensure the information was received accurately (Creswell, 2012). Because this study sought to explore the applicability of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education, it was imperative that the model be accessible and understandable by that population. Member checking ensured that fieldwork educators found the concepts and interactions among elements of the SCIL-OT useful in their educational practices.

Finally, bracketing was employed to remove any bias or personal opinions from the data collection and analysis process. Bracketing requires researchers to be accountable for personal beliefs, motives and experiences that may have impacted interpretation of the data (Caelli, Ray, & Mill, 2003). I was intentional about putting my beliefs aside when interpreting data and evaluating statements made by fieldwork educators. Because I only have experience as a

fieldwork student, not a fieldwork educator, it was important for me to keep an open-mind while listening and analyzing the data related to fieldwork education. I have only been exposed to fieldwork education in three settings and do not have a complete understanding of best practice. Therefore, when listening to the stories provided by participants it was necessary that I ignored my personal experience with fieldwork education and only relied on the data to support my findings.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

During interview one, before the SCIL-OT was introduced, fieldwork educators described their educational practices in terms of how students performed and what effort the educators put forth to increase success; that is primarily in terms of the knowledge community. The other elements of the SCIL-OT were present, however, even though the linkages were weak and occupation was primarily implicit when educators discussed interventions, not in relation to the education process. Furthermore, the most explicit links among the elements existed between the knowledge community and topics. For example, one participant said:

I think it's helpful for [students] to see me give cognitive tests, and interpret the results, check goals...and then just do [evaluations] so that [students] can be part of it...we just had a client that needed to get to [alcoholics anonymous], so kind of planning all those things for him...we have to do a lot of preparation. (Gloria)

This statement demonstrates how elements were addressed individually without connection to the bigger picture or blatant and intentional connections among the elements. Although this educator knew nothing of the SCIL-OT, she inadvertently referred to the knowledge community (the client, the student, the educator), topics (cognitive tests, client goals), and occupation (participating in AA) when describing a teaching moment.

In the second and third interviews, when educators were introduced to and asked to comment on the SCIL-OT, the discussion consistently included links to occupation and the model seemed to help fieldwork educators clarify the importance and existence of topics, the knowledge community, and the distinguishable value of occupational therapy. While introduction to and application of the SCIL-OT did not necessarily alter fieldwork educator's

teaching practice or values, it did highlight the elements of fieldwork education already present in their teaching within a particular setting and seemingly reminded them about occupation as the central focus of occupational therapy. Furthermore, the SCIL-OT helped educators draw explicit connections from topics back to occupation, which they believed could enhance the learning experience for the student. Multiple fieldwork educators believed that the SCIL-OT did not present new ideas or concepts per se, but it offered a new way to think about what they already do and think throughout fieldwork education. It also offered an organized way to discuss each element with the student both within a therapy session and during reflection afterward. Below I present the findings according to the elements of the model, interweave the study's major themes within the discussion of the elements, and conclude with the most relevant and frequent suggestions participants made for modifying the model.

### **The Knowledge Community**

Considering the elements of the model—the knowledge community, topics, subject, and interactions between the elements—fieldwork educators emphasized the knowledge community most frequently throughout interview one as they recalled various educational interactions they had with students. The knowledge community refers to all those who contribute to learning or teaching the core subject of occupation and the collaborative effort used to assemble knowledge. In the initial interviews, the participants listed themselves, the student, other members of the interdisciplinary team, the academic fieldwork coordinator, and the patient as individuals contributing to the accumulation of knowledge throughout fieldwork. Comments coded as “knowledge community” included those related to the students (e.g. student behaviors and age/developmental stage), the educators (e.g. educator's expectations for the learner and



frustration they experienced while instructing), and the interactions between the two (e.g. instructional processes and a cooperative learning environment).

The knowledge community was the most frequently applied code in the first interview, indicating it was the most emphasized element of the model when educators shared their stories of teaching. Descriptions of the knowledge community included in the initial interviews were often in reference to a single member, such as the student or fieldwork educator. Narrowing the focus on individual members of the knowledge community contrasts the collaborative definition and purpose of the knowledge community depicted in the SCIL-OT. The depiction of the model represents collaboration as all members are connected to one another and connected to the central concept of occupation. Therefore, a complete understanding of occupation is dependent upon the input from a wide variety of knowledge community members. Initial interviews with participants revealed a limitation in the amount of knowledge community members involved in the student's construction and application of knowledge, but these interviews were effective in painting a picture of the student and educator roles both individually and as a team.

The comments made about the individual role of both the student and the educator do carry value; it is essential that students and educators are fully prepared for and proficient in their individual roles to promote a sustainable learning environment. The current representation of the SCIL-OT does not include descriptions of the characteristics or roles of individual members of the knowledge community. Throughout the first round of interviews, the educators agreed that the student is responsible for self-directed learning and developing the appropriate skills to gain competence in a particular practice setting. Additionally, educators described their own role as the one responsible for manufacturing challenging and enlightening educational experiences through appropriate modeling of practice etiquette. When educators noted the collaboration

among students and themselves, they described a more productive and successful fieldwork placement, though their description suggested a narrowed knowledge community, the student and the educator. I next further explain the role of the student, the educator, and the collaboration between the two as described by participants in interview one. I will then discuss how the concept of the knowledge community took a new shape in interviews two and three.

### **The Student Is Responsible for Learning During Fieldwork**

In the first round of interviews, the discussion surrounding the knowledge community frequently included the characteristics and behaviors of students and their level of commitment to the fieldwork placement. Students were represented as having a large responsibility for their own learning, and their readiness was considered foundational to the learning experience. Without the appropriate preparation, fieldwork experiences were described as unsuccessful or limited. One educator described this level of responsibility by stating, “everybody sort of starts on day one in the same shoes and where they will be towards midterm is really up to them, but really where they’re going to be at the end is very much up to them” (Gloria). Another educator said this of the student role: “I put ownership on the students to say what’s going to work best” (Mary). This represented the expectation that the educator placed on the student to direct the learning experience or at least play a significant role in it.

Further, participants believed student’s characteristics and level of professionalism strongly influenced the success of a fieldwork placement. The student, through appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and qualities, was often seen as the primary predictor of success or struggle in a fieldwork placement. Examples of appropriate behaviors included “taking initiative” (Olivia), “engagement” (Gloria), and “obvious and evident growth toward independence” (Gloria). Educators identified unproductive behaviors as a “lack of awareness, a

lack of responsiveness, a...lack of growth” (Gloria), “disengagement, non-initiation...non-engagement” (Heather), and “lack of enthusiasm and passivity” (Florence). Overall, fieldwork educators valued when students were highly engaged and showed progress; the opposite behaviors were seen to put the fieldwork experience in jeopardy.

Beyond the way that students demonstrated their attentiveness, educators in the first interviews also conveyed that students’ reasoning abilities predicted successful placements and successful educator–student interactions. An educator called it frustrating when she worked with

Students that just don’t get it...they can’t reason and put it into their treatment plan or implement it to the patient...they don’t take ownership...still struggling with the

foundations of occupational therapy and how it relates into real life and practice. (Mary)

The educators valued when a student was able to step up to the plate, so to speak, and evaluate each situation in order to devise appropriate suggestions and treatment approaches. Educators also mentioned their appreciation of self-directed and motivated learners who sought out further instruction to make the most of the fieldwork experience. Ultimately, these educators placed high expectations on students for having appropriate behaviors, initiating learning, and excelling at clinical reasoning. In essence, educators discussed the many attributes of a student (a member of the knowledge community) that contributed to the learning experience.

### **Fieldwork Educators Are Responsible for Creating Learning Experiences**

During initial conversations with fieldwork educators, they often spoke of their role to facilitate learning and to address pertinent information. Educators discussed how they are required to set up educational experiences, model appropriate behaviors, instruct in the moment, and adjust to meet the student’s personal learning preference or need. Statements made by the fieldwork educators in the initial interview represented a part of collaborative learning as they

recounted their role in working alongside their student to promote success. One educator specifically mentioned her role as a balance of coaching and pushing the student towards independence. She explained that coaching occurs before, during, and after a treatment session and is often done through discussion. Another educator reported:

I usually do explaining a little bit prior to the treatment...do explaining about the next person plus reflecting on it...So we have a lot of verbal dialogue...a lot of discussion...then I do a lot of demonstration of different skills myself so that they can watch. (Gloria)

Fieldwork education was depicted as both discussion and modeling. These instructional processes are supported by the SCIL-OT as they require students to make connections between various topics and their clients. Another educator illustrated her instructional method of questioning:

The way I teach is I question...my first thing that I always say is, so how do you think that went? Did you get what you wanted from the patient? Were your goals achieved as far as that single treatment session? What went right? What went wrong? How did the patient respond to you? (Mary)

These questions prompted students to think through their session and grow from the experience. Instructors recognized their efforts towards pushing students to solve their own problems and connect all the elements of the model through internal reasoning and external dialogue.

Overall, the findings supported that education in fieldwork placements is dependent upon how the supervisor structured each day, the interactions with clients, and the student's level of preparedness. Collaboration is supported by the SCIL-OT, but collaboration within the first interviews only existed between the student and the educator, as described in the next section.

## **The SCIL-OT Supports Collaboration between Students and Educators**

Ultimately, educators expressed that success was most often found when educators and students worked together, or collaborated. Throughout interview one, educators often described successful placements as a team effort. The connection of one member of the knowledge community to another was represented in the text as stated above, and as shown below, through the acknowledgement of a symbiotic relationship among students and fieldwork educators.

Participants discussed the collaborative learning environment as both aiding student learning and enhancing their own practice. According to the data collected in interview one, fieldwork experiences benefited the fieldwork educator in the following ways: students offered a fresh perspective, added new intervention ideas, and helped with updated technology and therapeutic modalities. This educator spoke about this symbiotic relationship by stating:

Yep it's mutual...the number one reason why I do it is because it keeps – I think it makes me a better therapist. I have to explain what I'm doing, and sometimes I'll catch myself thinking like why am I doing this? And it makes me remember the theory behind OT, why I'm an OT, and it helps me make it meaningful for the student...I'm going to perform at a higher level. (Gloria)

Another participant claimed that her involvement as a fieldwork educator actually elevated her personal performance, demonstrating the value of the collaboration between the student and the educator. Yet another educator expressed it this way:

Part of that relationship too...is that giving back...one big way we stay current is by taking students and they are then giving back to us more relevant and current information and that's that part of that collaboration, that giving back and you're giving too. (Heather)

It was perceived that students were often more up to date with practice as schooling offered exposure to the most recent intervention suggestions. One educator stated that she valued having a student because “on top of just sort of mutually learning...it helps me kind of stay up on kind of things that are changing in the OT world from an academic point of view” (Gloria). Educators incorporated student knowledge and experience into the placement to enhance the learning experience. The connection and teamwork between the educator and student represents a small portion of how knowledge community members can work together to learn about and understand both topics and occupation. It was not until the second and third interviews that additional members of the knowledge community were incorporated into fieldwork education.

### **The SCIL-OT Enhanced Educators’ Application of the Knowledge Community**

Once the educators learned the concepts within the SCIL-OT and considered its application with students, references to the knowledge community were more closely related to how educators could use the knowledge community as a resource to enhance student learning and treat interactions as collaborative learning experiences. When they used the SCIL-OT model, educators explicitly created connections between students and the knowledge community for the purpose of co-creating knowledge. Therefore, their intentional efforts to connect students to other members of the knowledge community, as noted in the second and third interviews, aligned with the purpose of the knowledge community in fieldwork education. One educator recognized, “I would need to teach my student/provide them resources, reading materials, etc. so they could gain the knowledge and understanding” (Allie, Interview 2). She also reported that her students have the opportunity to be a part of an inextricable “treatment team” and should therefore utilize those individuals as resources (Interview 2). Building on the role of the knowledge community for assisting in the educational process, this educator later declared, “[The SCIL-OT] is super

helpful in recognizing the importance that other people can play in a student's development of knowledge and skills" (Interview 3). Education and learning are group efforts, and the SCIL-OT allowed educators to connect students to the many resources and knowledge community members necessary for expanding the educational experience. The SCIL-OT helped one educator better describe and list potential resources for clients, as well. She stated:

[The SCIL-OT] gives them an idea of okay, not only are we working on this occupation, but here's all my resources, here's everybody I need to collaborate with to make sure we're bringing it back to occupation, and how do I fit into that. I think it just gives people a visualization of that...it helps the dialogue between fieldwork educators and students.

(Gloria, Interview 3)

The previous quote also supports how educators used the SCIL-OT to identify and explain their role in fostering relationships with other professionals as members of the knowledge community. One educator agreed with the statement that "connecting students to other people is just part of the fieldwork education process" (Allie, Interview 2). Another fieldwork educator noted, "I do think that some of the pieces that I feel like we do is connecting, kind of understanding the whole piece between all the other professionals that the student's going to be working with" (Gloria, Interview 2). It is the responsibility of the fieldwork educator to involve the student in the greater knowledge community. Educators offered examples of how this was done, including instructing students to "observe", "attend day-long trainings", "talk with other disciplines" (Allie, Interview 2; Florence, Interview 2). The application of the SCIL-OT effectively revealed to educators the value of the knowledge community and facilitated conversation about the resources and individuals who can contribute to the student's education. One fieldwork educator described the SCIL-OT as an interprofessional communication tool,

“that’s what is very unique about this model...promotes that interdisciplinary learning” (Allie, Interview 2). It takes a village to create knowledge about a topic or subject, and after learning about the concept of the knowledge community, fieldwork educators were more intentional about encircling students with additional resources and members within the knowledge community to enhance their compilation of knowledge. Their embrace of the knowledge community as delineated in the model provided affirmation of this element of SCIL-OT.

### **Topics**

Inevitably, there is content that must be addressed during fieldwork that is related to, but separate from occupation. These topics in the context of fieldwork education included both clinical skills (e.g. transfers, medication management, log rolls) and professional skills (e.g. therapeutic use of self, interprofessional communication). There were many similarities in how fieldwork educators discussed topics in the initial interviews and in the second and third interviews. For example, topics were consistently addressed in relation to student performance and as stepping stones to understanding the complete role of occupational therapy. One educator stated, “you have to master foundational skills to be successful” (Allie, Interview 1). Throughout the first interviews, topics were mostly named when explaining a clinical situation or sharing a fieldwork education story. Students were connected directly to topics throughout fieldwork education stories, a connection not made explicit in the current SCIL-OT graphic. In the second and third interviews the purpose of topics was elaborated on and more consistently related back to occupation. After learning about the SCIL-OT model, this participant noted her role in facilitating the understanding of topics by saying, “if they have trouble with the topic, then that’s where we would identify it and try to facilitate that connection from the outside of the circle to the center” (Florence, Interview 3). This educator chose to make a connection back to



occupation, the center of the circle, in order to help the student understand a misunderstood topic. The SCIL-OT promoted this relation back to occupation and served as a reminder to consistently connect back to the core of occupational therapy.

### **Topics Are Related to Professionalism and Clinical Performance**

Professional development is an integral piece of fieldwork for students. In interview one, educators described necessary skills, or topics, related to intrapersonal development. These included self-understanding, clinical reasoning, integration of reasoning, flexibility, and self-awareness. While these skills were not necessarily specific to the practice of occupational therapy, they aligned with general professionalism. Fieldwork experiences may have been a student's initial introduction to a professional setting, and throughout the experience they were expected to demonstrate and grow in their professional skills. These professional topics were sometimes addressed in the classroom, but truly took shape during fieldwork. One educator reflected, "we spend a lot of time on communication...we also teach a lot about how to work within a professional team" (Gloria). These characteristics are essential to excel in fieldwork placements and should be addressed directly with students. Educators used a variety of instructional processes to help connect students to these topics. For example, when learning how to keep clients safe [topic], one educator discussed "having a written checklist to be sure that these are the items that you really need to be sure about before you see a client so that you're not caught off guard during the treatment" (Gloria). This educator recognized that there were pieces of the treatment session that were difficult for the student to understand so they created a checklist to ensure that the student was aware of those elements. No matter what topic is being addressed, fieldwork educators expressed that they are constantly exploring different ways to connect students to these topics and promote learning.

Along with professional skills, fieldwork educators also discussed numerous clinical skills that the students were responsible for mastering during fieldwork. This participant commented that the clinical skills would sometimes take precedence over professional skills. She specified that topics are more about:

Clinical reasoning and taking book knowledge and the foundations of occupational therapy and transitioning it to real practice, so the hands on practice with the patient...to log roll, teach that patient how to log roll, how to get up out of bed as they have to” rather than displaying the ability to “verbalize it” or “tell me every theory in the book. (Mary)

The topics related to hands on practice varied from setting to setting and were consistently identified as areas that students must master in order to succeed in fieldwork. Educators expressed those topics by offering examples of successful and unsuccessful fieldwork performances. One fieldwork educator gave the example of safety as a major barrier to progressing in fieldwork. She elaborated:

I worked really hard to help her learn how to be safe, and plan better as she went along...as we continue through our fieldwork we wanted to be able to help her step back from that a little bit and I couldn't because I was nervous about people's safety. (Gloria)

Students were also expected to become proficient at various procedural items by the end of the fieldwork placement. Some examples of procedural topics were documentation, handling a complete caseload, setting up a treatment plan, and Medicare (Gloria). Educators were able to list and identify specific topics that needed to be addressed in their setting in order for the student to gain competency and ultimately pass the fieldwork placement. Although fieldwork educators were not familiar with the SCIL-OT in initial interviews, they discussed both hands on and professional skills which can be mapped out as topics on the model.

## **Topics Are Related to the Learning Process and Occupation**

After fieldwork educators began to apply the SCIL-OT in their educational context, the discussion around topics was more consistently tethered to occupation, and was occasionally addressed as a progression leading back to occupation. One educator stated, “to me, the teaching has to begin with the topic and then integrate into the occupation” (Allie, Interview 2). Fieldwork educators often taught students about specific topics in their setting before they expected students to link that topic back to occupation. Another educator echoed this progression of knowledge acquisition by observing, “the teaching methods that we involve our students in are all basically on these topics...you know, separate topics” (Florence, Interview 1). The educators recognized that topics represented the areas that were more explicitly addressed within many teaching and intervention environments. One educator listed a number of topics that she addressed in her setting including coping skills, frustration tolerance, and social skills, and then she concluded with the final example of “sensory based work” justifying that it was a topic because “it’s preparatory and supports occupational engagement and performance” (Allie, Interview 2). After understanding the SCIL-OT, fieldwork educators mapped out various topics from within their setting, and understood that those are the pieces that led to and supported occupational performance for the clients, creating a more complete picture of fieldwork education and occupational therapy practice.

### **Subject**

Occupation is the element that separates occupational therapy practice from other health care professions. The SCIL-OT helped participants describe the relationship among the elements and foster discussion with students about the elements. But ultimately, participants used the SCIL-OT to draw the focus back to occupation, the subject, when considering its application in

fieldwork education. This was evident as the use of the word occupation greatly increased after fieldwork educators were introduced to the SCIL-OT. In the first round of interviews, educators only used the word occupation once and implicitly referred to human occupation when describing desired outcomes for treatment. Furthermore, according to the data collected from the first interviews, educators did not discuss occupation in relation to the educational experience with fieldwork students. For example, one educator stated, “you’re teaching [the client] how to put on their socks and shoes with a reacher” (Gloria). This example demonstrates how comments associated with occupation were made in relation to treatment sessions rather than the educational process. Another reference to occupation was made when Gloria said, “they can get dressed, wash their face, get in and out of the shower”. While these areas of occupation are essential for the client, the SCIL-OT presents occupations as a focal point in the educational process, as well. Yet educators often failed to explicitly include the term occupation when they shared their personal teaching stories and described fieldwork education and the components of occupational therapy practice with which the students must become familiar.

In interviews two and three, discussion around the subject took a new shape. Educators were able to use the SCIL-OT to create intentional dialogue about how various topics and educational sessions could relate back to occupation. Frequent vernacular used by the participants to illustrate this relationship included “to bring it back,” “linking it back,” and “bring it back home to the center”. Educators were compelled to audibly draw connections back to occupation in order to ensure that both students and clients were aware of the greater purpose of the treatment sessions. The purpose of the SCIL-OT is to center education on occupation and ensure that there are consistent and explicit links back to occupation throughout education. These

connections are demonstrated in the following quotes from participants. One fieldwork educator was asked how she makes connections between topic and occupation. She responded:

I think I bring it back to what is the occupation of a child. And the occupation of a child in school, what is that? And...how do we make that more purposeful and engaging for the child. (Heather, Interview 2)

This quote demonstrated that occupation was, in this educator's view, the focal point of practice and therefore deserves attention when working with a fieldwork student. Another educator was able to relate to the organization of the SCIL-OT and said, "the things that make the most sense to me are the topics that are related back to the central occupation subject. That makes sense to me. So that's very congruent to my practice" (Florence, Interview 2). Again, this quote represents clinical practice rather than education, but it is important to note how the SCIL-OT supported the use of the term occupation and seemed to remind educators to incorporate it more frequently in discussion about practice and education. Yet another educator connected clients (knowledge community), stress management (topic), and grocery shopping (subject) to demonstrate how all elements worked together to enhance occupation. "I ran a group on stress management and now based on my client's responses within that group how do I think they're going to be able to perform next time they go to the store (Allie, Interview 2). The treatment session with clients addressed stress management, with the hope of impacting the occupation of grocery shopping. The educator used the SCIL-OT as a template where she and the student were able to specifically place the elements according to a specific treatment plan, increasing the potential for the student to comprehend the relationship back to occupation. This educator went on to say that she used the SCIL-OT as an educational tool by "picking an occupation and defining what all those little pieces and parts of the model were in relation to this occupation"

(Allie, Interview 3). Involving a student in that process could allow students to be more aware of the purpose of the treatments session and the connection back to occupation.

As educators imagined inserting occupation into discussion with students, it appeared that the SCIL-OT could be used to help clarify the unique role that occupational therapy has in each practice setting. For example, one educator explained the difference between occupational therapy and physical therapy using the SCIL-OT. She stated, “These are the same things that any hand therapist despite being an OT or a PT would do, but the difference is we do it based on human occupation” (Florence, Interview 2). This is how another fieldwork educator conveyed it:

The biggest thing that I feel like this supports is again having a better understanding of an occupation from a variety of different disciplines’ perspectives because when you can really understand what everyone else is doing to provide that intervention, all it does is help you better tailor your interventions to supplement what other disciplines are doing and it allows for us as OTs to really promote the distinct value of how we approach something versus how other disciplines may be approaching it. (Allie, Interview 3)

Occupational therapists are constantly working in collaboration with other disciplines, and referring to the SCIL-OT seemed to clarify how occupational therapy practice may differ from other professions. The SCIL-OT also reminded fieldwork educators why they belong in a specific setting, “The center circle of it, the subject, is kind of the beginning of why are you even here. What’s your role?” (Heather, Interview 3). Overall, the use of the word occupation was used frequently in the second and third interviews. Rather than just offering examples of occupation or saying “what people need to do”, educators incorporated the word occupation into their descriptions of the role of both therapists and fieldwork educators. This educator mentioned how the SCIL-OT was a valuable professional tool to explain what occupational therapy is:

I know how I explain occupational therapy, I use the word occupation, but sometimes you do forget, you're not saying it out loud to people, even though...you are working with occupations all the time, you're not always using that terminology, which I think is really important. It's always the biggest middle star. So it's nice that it's at the center of everything. (Olivia, Interview 2)

This quote represents how this educator used the SCIL-OT as a reminder to practice with a focus on occupation and explicitly used the term occupation when describing her role as an occupational therapist. Using the SCIL-OT, fieldwork educators began to make explicit connections back to occupation. If this practice continues, the SCIL-OT has potential to enhance students' understanding of the unique practice of occupational therapy. Occupation is the focal component of our field, and the SCIL-OT highlights this fact by centralizing occupation and relating all other components back to it.

### **Confirmation of the SCIL-OT in Fieldwork Education**

Quotes confirming the use of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education described SCIL-OT as both a conceptual framework used in discussion about fieldwork education and as a physical learning tool to be implemented throughout fieldwork education. Comments were also made that explained how the SCIL-OT parallels the educator's current occupational therapy practice. Fieldwork educators continually expressed their excitement about the use of SCIL-OT and five out of the six participants specifically discussed their intentions to use the SCIL-OT to help guide fieldwork education.

### **SCIL-OT Provided a Conceptual Framework for Discussion about Fieldwork Education**

Many participants described the SCIL-OT as a guiding framework that helped them understand the big picture of fieldwork and reflect how each experience and concept tied

together. One educator reported, “the visualization of this model, it really has helped me to better categorize in my mind the different ways to support student education to facilitate the best outcome” (Allie, Interview 3). This participant recognized the usefulness of the model to better organize the various components that are included in fieldwork education in hopes of helping the student gain a better understanding. Other fieldwork educators found the SCIL-OT useful to frame and connect all the components of fieldwork education. One educator claimed:

Innately we’ve done this as fieldwork educators, but it’s so nice to see it written down and clearly written down based on the premise of occupational therapy and what we do. And also I think it’s going to help with the student understanding really what is the big picture to fieldwork...It really ties everything together. (Mary, Interview 2)

Some educators used the SCIL-OT to make connections among elements and recall the bigger purpose of their work as occupational therapists. The hope is that when educators more explicitly make these connections, students will grasp the big picture and develop into more occupation-centered practitioners. To expand on this concept, still another educator said, “the more theoretical model that I have, I think the better for the student...I might have a better overall picture of how it should look...it gives me a better background...and it makes me try to connect everything.” (Olivia, Interview 2). Drawing connections among elements of fieldwork education is a unique concept represented in the SCIL-OT. The connecting lines represent the dynamic nature of fieldwork education. Educators recognized that using a conceptual framework allowed them to better manage the numerous components of fieldwork education, as expressed here: “I think the model can be helpful in how do we look at things the same and then how do we look at things maybe a little differently. And how is that influencing my treatment, my goals, my objectives” (Allie, Interview 2). It could be assumed that the model will then improve fieldwork



educator's ability to represent the various components to students, and ultimately draw connections back to occupation.

### **SCIL-OT was a Physical Learning Tool Implemented in Fieldwork Education**

During the study, we gave the fieldwork educators blank models to fill in according to their specific setting. Not only did educators report that completing the worksheet was beneficial to better understand all the elements within their setting, but many also expressed their intention to continue to use the worksheet to stimulate learning with students. Educators noted the potential value of sitting down with a student and talking through each element of the model together. One educator remarked:

[The SCIL-OT] would actually be a really helpful tool for fieldwork educators...in the beginning to go over that with their student, because it makes the fieldwork educator think about what that looks like, and then maybe review that partway through the fieldwork. (Gloria, Interview 2)

This educator not only spoke to the value of working through the model with a student, but also described how it required the educator to be more intentional as they thought through what their focus should be both as an educator and a practitioner.

Educators also discussed the way that they intend to have the student complete the worksheet, to gain a full understanding of how occupational therapy is carried out in that particular setting. One educator was looking forward to having a student over the summer and she plans to use the SCIL-OT. "Giving her...a blank page and saying, what would you fill in for this patient, for this treatment, for this diagnosis. What are we really looking at, as far as occupational therapy?" (Mary, Interview 3). In this scenario, the educator recognized that the SCIL-OT is applicable in every experience with a patient and that it will be helpful in mapping

out what the unique occupation, topics, and members of the knowledge community are for that individual. These two fieldwork educators also spoke about using the SCIL-OT as a tool for further identifying all the pieces that must come together when working with a client:

This kind of helps...for a student to be able to have the tools to say okay this is part of the treatment. It's reaching out to these people that know and finding resources...to be able to develop that skillset instead of just watching an OT do it...I think it's different when the student then can actually understand what they're doing. (Gloria, Interview 3)

Seeing it and having it available as a tool where either you and the student fill in the blanks at the end of the day on a particular patient or situation you know? It's just so...it's really clear and easy to understand. It puts on paper what a lot of us have been doing as far as fieldwork supervisors over the last years. (Mary, Interview 2)

Within these examples, the educators envisioned using the SCIL-OT to help the student fully understand the role of occupational therapy in individual treatment sessions and to further promote a thorough thought process about intervention.

One educator also explained how she plans to use the SCIL-OT as an evaluation tool to track student's progress and competence throughout the placement:

It's a process of here's what we're going to learn, here are the activities we're going to do, and by the end of it, you should have a clear understanding of what all this is. You should be able to take this sheet and tell me and show me that you can do these skills, and that I'd be able to see that they have the knowledge and skills that they need to be an entry level OT. (Heather, Interview 3)

She went on to say, “I think too there are some components here that link really well to the fieldwork performance evaluations” (Heather, Interview 3). Because the SCIL-OT is so comprehensive and flexible in terms of the concepts that can be included in it, these quotes reveal how its application can demonstrate the level of understanding a student has in one particular setting. This fieldwork educator also presented a thorough document detailing learning activities that she intends to use with students structured around the SCIL-OT. She also presented a completed worksheet (see Figure 2) labeling all the elements within her setting, and expressed immense value in the SCIL-OT as a whole.

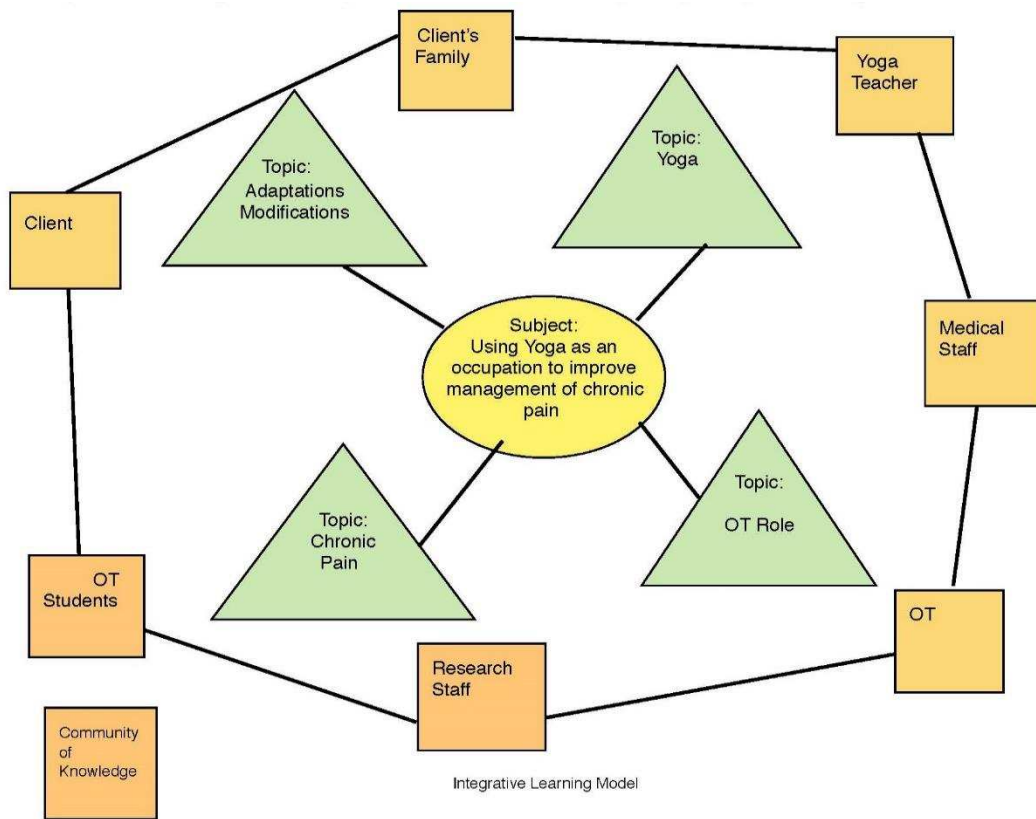


Figure 2. Completed SCIL-OT Worksheet by Heather

## **SCIL-OT was Parallel to Occupational Therapy Practice**

Finally, educators offered comments about the general application of SCIL-OT to occupational therapy practice. One educator acknowledged that the SCIL-OT was helpful in refocusing her practice to better align with the overall occupational mission of occupational therapy. She stated, “it really brought me back to what do I do for the patients...to kind of get back to that core of occupational therapy in order that the patient then can be successful” (Mary, Interview 3). Because the SCIL-OT centralizes occupation and connects all the other elements back to it, this educator recognized that introduction to the SCIL-OT refreshed her view of occupational therapy practice and encouraged her to ensure that her practice is congruent with the purpose of occupational therapy. Furthermore, the same fieldwork educator noted the flexibility of the model and stated, “this really brings to light the strength of OT with every client imaginable” (Mary, Interview 3). The SCIL-OT has properties that allow it to be transformed depending on the client, practice setting, and educator, and for those reasons the fieldwork educators in this study supported its use throughout fieldwork education and occupational therapy practice.

### **Suggestions for Improving the Model**

In order to continue to develop and refine the model, we asked the participants for their perspectives on how to improve the model. Educators offered valuable feedback regarding the expansion of the model, the organization of the model, and the application of the model. First, educators made suggestions regarding the amount and utility of the space within the model. Examples included allowing more room to add more topics, labeling the lines with different educational or teaching strategies, and inserting space around the topics and knowledge community to make room for more detail: “where you have the [topics] maybe another box for

the activities that you're going to use specifically under those [topics]...I could write [interaction strategies] in the little hexagon if you had lines for me" (Heather, Interview 3). Educators believed that the SCIL-OT had potential to become a very detailed educational tool.

Next, educators recommended a slight alteration of the organization of the model. For example, a couple educators agreed that more of a 3-dimensional model may be appropriate. The new model would have occupation in the background and imply that you must look through topics and the knowledge community in order to understand occupation. Another suggestion was to add a key at the bottom with definitions to clarify each element. Furthermore, educators requested that we offer them completed examples of the model to help them complete the illustration on their own or with students. One fieldwork educator explained that "giving an example of what this means for this occupation and here's some examples of what topics would be" would have helped her in the application process (Allie, Interview 3). Another educator proposed creating "the school model and then the hospital model...you could give a couple examples like that" to better represent how it might be applicable in various settings (Olivia, Interview 2).

Finally, participants discussed how they imagined applying the model to help disperse the ideas. Some examples included: adding the SCIL-OT to the fieldwork supervision certification workshop, drawing connections back to the fieldwork performance evaluations, inserting the model into the fieldwork educator handbook, and encouraging students to bring the model to fieldwork placements and introduce it to their instructors. All of these suggestions would help increase the utility of the model in fieldwork education. By continuing to use the SCIL-OT to instruct fieldwork educators and evaluate students, the concept of occupation will remain central and encourage occupation-centered education.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Findings from this study supported that educators used the SCIL-OT to expand on the integration of knowledge community members, identify and define essential topics in each setting, and create a stronger and more explicit connection to occupation. Fieldwork educators identified a personal connection with the SCIL-OT and stated that it aptly aligns with their beliefs about occupational therapy practice and includes all necessary elements for fieldwork education. Furthermore, educators suggested unique ways of applying the model when working with students and confirmed its applicability in fieldwork education. In this discussion I will expand the findings in order to better demonstrate the utility of the model within fieldwork education. I will start by explaining how the SCIL-OT reminded educators that the knowledge community is broader than just the student and the educator. Then I will discuss how the SCIL-OT highlighted the valuable concept of occupation. Finally, I will state how the SCIL-OT helped rejuvenate the values and integrity of occupational therapy practice for these participants. Within each section I will expand outside of this study to bring in support for each claim in order to draw attention to the potential impact that this study and the SCIL-OT can have within fieldwork education.

### **Remembering That Fieldwork Education Is Broader Than the Student and Educator**

The student and educator both make up a portion of the knowledge community, and are integral pieces in the fieldwork process. Recently, the student's role has shifted to a more active contributor to the accumulation and construction of knowledge during fieldwork placements. In fact, Palmer (1998) stated that "good education teaches students to become both the producers of knowledge and discerning consumers of what other people claim to know" (p. 94). Fieldwork

education is further described as a “mutual undertaking” by both student and educators to foster growth and development (Richard, 2008, p. 155). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the fieldwork educator to support a variety of learning styles, grade the hands on experiences, and facilitate collaboration (Fisher, 1999; Gaipman & Anthony, 1989; Roger et al., 2014). The SCIL-OT appeared to serve as a tool to remind educators to utilize additional resources and members of the knowledge community to enhance student learning and development. Allie recognized the SCIL-OT as a tool that “promotes interdisciplinary learning (Interview 2). Using the SCIL-OT as a reminder to explain the role of occupational therapy within an interdisciplinary team could strengthen the student’s understanding of where they fit in and increase their collaboration with other disciplines.

After understanding the SCIL-OT, educators also discussed the use of resources including conferences, research articles, interdisciplinary team members, and continuing education materials that could be incorporated into fieldwork education to promote a more in-depth understanding of occupational therapy in a particular setting. If the entire fieldwork process remained confined to just the student and the educator, the student might miss out on the richness of interprofessional learning and collaboration. When students are immersed in interprofessional education, the learning experience can prepare students for their role in an interdisciplinary treatment team (Precin, 2007). Furthermore, if students are exposed to appropriate articles and resources within the greater knowledge community, they are more likely to become effective consumers of research and knowledge or evidence-based practice. Educators in this study recognized how the SCIL-OT might be used to encourage the exploration and application of additional members of the knowledge community. Ultimately, the SCIL-OT has

potential to expand the current understanding of interdisciplinary education by promoting the exploration of supplemental resources to guide assessment, intervention, and education.

### **Remembering Occupation as the Center of Fieldwork Education**

Fieldwork educators have a significant impact on their students' understanding of occupational therapy practice and the use of occupation. Additionally, students reported that fieldwork placements play a large role in their decision of where and how to practice as a future occupational therapist (Gaipman & Anthony, 1989; Garrett & Schkade, 1995). The SCIL-OT encouraged educators to center education and practice on occupation; meaning, after fieldwork educators applied the concepts and framework of the SCIL-OT into their educational sessions, they were more consistent and deliberate about including occupation as either the means or the ends to the treatment session. Olivia described how she was able to use the SCIL-OT as a valuable professional tool to explain what occupational therapy is as the model represents occupation as the “biggest middle star” and “at the center of everything”. The centrality of occupation also reminded her to consistently use the term occupation when describing her practice to more completely represent the practice. As educators reflect this value of occupation in practice, students may be more prone to adopt similar patterns and implement practice in such a way as to promote the incorporation of occupation in interventions and goals. Findings supported that the SCIL-OT was used as a tool to more frequently refer to occupation, and as the educators, and potentially the students, continue to relate back to occupation, they more closely align with Yerxa's (1998) definition of “occupation-centered” – using occupation as the central organizing framework.

Additionally, scholars such as Hooper (2010) and Yerxa (1998) have advocated for occupation-centered practice and education for two decades, as occupation-centered education



teaches students about the connection to the healing power of occupation. This connection to occupation allows students and clients to rediscover the true purpose of occupational therapy – to enhance or enable “participation in roles, habits, and routines” through the therapeutic use of everyday life activities (AOTA, 2014, p. S1). Literature supports that a focus on occupation in practice results in positive outcomes for clients, and leads to more meaningful engagement for the people we treat (e.g. Clark et al., 2012; Jackson, 1998). Because occupation is centralized in the SCIL-OT, fieldwork educators in this study supported the use of a blank model worksheet as a reminder to connect every topic, learning objective, or encounter with a member of the knowledge community back to occupation. One participant offered an illustration of the connection back to occupation when discussing how an adapted communication device would improve her client’s ability to engage in the classroom and fulfill the client’s role as a student. The educator ensured that the fieldwork student was able to trace the line back to occupation while exploring adapted equipment and was able to paint a more complete picture of occupational therapy in that educational context. Throughout this example, the educator remembered that the desired outcome for her client was increased participation in the occupation of being student. As the participant recalled this educational moment, she discussed how the SCIL-OT prompted an intentional connection from this intervention back to the occupation. The SCIL-OT, therefore, has potential to impact fieldwork education by centering education on occupation and ultimately leading to more occupation-based experiences for the students.

### **Remembering the Value and Integrity of Occupational Therapy Practice**

Lastly, fieldwork educators found personal affirmation in the application and organization of the SCIL-OT. In other words, fieldwork educators expressed that the SCIL-OT helped confirm their personal practice and re-ignite their value and passion in the profession. As

educators imagined inserting occupation into discussion with students, it appeared that the SCIL-OT could be used to help clarify the unique role that occupational therapy has in each practice setting. Educators were able to use the model to guide discussion about the uniqueness of the profession by relating back to occupation and “to really promote the distinct value of how we approach something versus how other disciplines may be approaching it” (Allie, Interview 3). By including such valuable concepts as occupation, skills and topics necessary for treating clients, and the voices of those individuals involved in the care of the client, the SCIL-OT seemed to highlight the important components of fieldwork education. Participants found it empowering to have a model that so nicely exemplifies the occupational therapy profession. Because occupational therapy is a field that strongly relies on its internal power and devoted alignment with occupation, the SCIL-OT could be used to empower educators and students to tap into that power during fieldwork placements (Peloquin, 2005). Using a model as a consistent representation of the field of occupational therapy could allow the student to grasp a better understanding of occupational therapy’s identity and mission, as a whole. For example, if an occupational therapist and psychologist were both addressing coping skills, the SCIL-OT would provide a framework to clarify that occupational therapy’s unique purpose for addressing the topic of coping skills would be to improve the client’s occupational performance in their career as a barber, in the midst of various triggers. When integrating coping skills into the client’s life, it is the therapist’s duty to describe how those new-found skills would improve the client’s management of day-to-day tasks. Using the SCIL-OT to promote the centrality of occupation appears to make interprofessional conversations more effective and clarify the value and purpose of occupational therapy. In a time when health care is constantly transforming, it is important for

fieldwork educators to remain tethered to occupation to provide meaningful education to students and best represent the power of the profession.

### **Future Directions**

This study served as a stepping stone to confirm the application and utility of the SCIL-OT in fieldwork education. However, the implementation of this occupation-centered education model could find merit in additional contexts needing more formal research. First, although the SCIL-OT was developed as an educational model, the statements of fieldwork educators represented in this paper confirm its applicability in occupational therapy practice. Therefore, future research would be beneficial in seeing how the SCIL-OT might influence clinical reasoning throughout the assessment and treatment process. Next, I believe that receiving the input and feedback of students, both in the classrooms and out on fieldwork, would provide valuable information about the applicability and utility of the SCIL-OT. Lastly, while this study addressed fieldwork education, I see potential for application by academic fieldwork coordinators who select, train, and interact consistently with fieldwork educators. Essentially, I believe that the SCIL-OT has potential to train the trainers of students. One example would be to use the SCIL-OT as a guiding model within fieldwork education certificate programs and to research how fieldwork educators are then able to create and think about occupation-focused learning activities for future students.

### **Limitations**

This study provided valuable information to further guide fieldwork education, but it was not without its limitations. First, no occupational therapy students were actually involved in the application of the SCIL-OT. The original intentions of the researchers were to have all fieldwork educators apply the SCIL-OT in actual educational sessions with students. However, due to the

timing of the study, no fieldwork educators had fieldwork students while participating in the study. Therefore, all findings related to how this model impacted interactions between students and educators were hypothetical based on years of prior experiences engaging with fieldwork students. Another limitation was the time constraints placed on the interviews. Each interview was limited to one hour and in some cases there were up to three participants in one interview. With only one hour of discussion time, participants may not have been able to share their extensive perspectives. Additionally, participants were involved in both individual and group interviews, depending on availability. Using both methods for data collection may have influenced discussion within the interviews. For example, in a group interview, participants often feed off statements made by peers and may not have the opportunity to address unique experiences. Group interviews also limited the amount of time that one participant had to discuss personal experiences as that individual was required to share time in a sixty-minute interview with other fieldwork educators. Overall, the variation of interview methods may have limited data collection by offering fewer opportunities for participants to comprehensively share experiences. Finally, participants were not given a completed example of the SCIL-OT during the application phase of the study. Without a clear-cut example, some concepts might have been misunderstood or interpreted incorrectly leading to misapplication and misjudgment. However, participants were encouraged to ask questions as they were introduced to the model in interview two.

### **Conclusion**

Fieldwork educators reported a meaningful connection to the SCIL-OT and when applying the model to education there was an obvious inclusion of and attention to occupation with both students and clients. Additionally, the SCIL-OT seemed to prompt an expansion of the

understanding and application of the knowledge community, leading to well-rounded and interdisciplinary education. Both with the increased attention to occupation and the increased application of the knowledge community, fieldwork students could continue to expand their understanding of the value and purpose of occupational therapy practice. In order to create occupation-centered education, the SCIL-OT was used as a visual reminder to relate education back to occupation and as a physical tool to challenge the students to draw those connections themselves. Fieldwork education is a complex responsibility requiring in-depth discussion, professional modeling and coaching, and thoughtful creation of impactful learning opportunities (Banks et al., 2000; Hanson & DeJullis, 2015). Incorporating the SCIL-OT into these educational experiences would ensure that there is an intentional relation back to occupation – representing the core value of occupational therapy.

Fieldwork educators identified that the SCIL-OT did not drastically alter current fieldwork education. Rather discussion with participants confirmed that fieldwork education in fact includes addressing setting-specific topics, incorporating various members of the knowledge community, remaining tethered to occupation, and drawing links among each piece – all components of the SCIL-OT model. Fieldwork educators used the model as a guideline to ensure that all necessary conversation topics and practice-related content are addressed throughout the fieldwork experience. Currently, there is no conceptual model used in fieldwork education that can serve as both a guideline to direct education and as an occupation-centered facilitation tool. Incorporating the SCIL-OT into fieldwork education practice could serve as such a tool and ultimately create an environment for promoting the need and mission of occupational therapy practice.

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## APPENDIX A

### Invitation to Participate



#### **Exploring the Applicability of a New Model of Occupational Therapy Education (MOTE) in Four Learning Contexts.**

Dear Fieldwork Educator,

Because you were nominated by Patty Stutz-Tanenbaum as an exceptional fieldwork educator in occupational therapy, we would like to invite you to participate in a research study entitled *Exploring the Applicability of a New Model of Occupational Therapy Education (MOTE) in Four Learning Contexts*.

This model is an occupational therapy-specific teaching and learning model. Its purpose is to guide the conceptualizations, learning outcomes, and instructional processes that OT educators employ to help students and clients learn. Due to a paucity of OT-specific education models, education may fall short of helping students organize all the topics they must learn. Therefore, this study seeks to move the Model of Occupational Therapy Education beyond the conceptual phase of theory-building in applied disciplines (Lynham, 2002). The study uses a participatory research methodology to draw upon OTs in education to review, critique, and hone the definitions and interrelationships of the model's concepts. The primary research questions for the study are: 1) How do occupational therapy educators experience the concepts and transactions of the MOTE 2) How does the model guide educators in designing and implementing learning experiences? 3) What are the limits of the model and what recommendations do educators have for its refinement?

If you choose to participate in the study, you will be asked to participate in three 60-90 minute conference calls with the research team and 4-5 other educators like yourself. It will be advantageous if you have a Level II OT student in the Fall of 2015 are currently in supervision of a student at the time of this study. The focus of the group interviews will be: 1) your approaches to teaching students 2) the Model of Occupational Therapy Education and your responses, critiques, and suggestions for the model, 3) Share your experiences and recommendations after attempting to implement the model in your teaching practices.

Your participation is highly valued and important for the progress of this research. We sincerely hope you will choose to participate, though your engagement is completely voluntary. To let us know of your interest or to ask further questions regarding the study, please contact, Barb Hooper at 970-491-1325 or [barb.hooper@colostate.edu](mailto:barb.hooper@colostate.edu) by Thursday, May 14, 2015. If you choose to participate, please complete and return the attached consent form. Upon receipt, we will contact you to schedule the focus group.

Sincerely,  
Barb Hooper, PhD, OTR, FAOTA  
Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy - CSU

Devin Barth – CSU OT Graduate Student

## APPENDIX B

### Flyer for Recruiting Participants

Have You Taken at Least 3 Level II Fieldwork Students?

What Went Well?

What Was Challenging?

We Want to Hear Your Stories!



Researchers at CSU are seeking to understand more about Fieldwork Education and get fieldwork educators' opinions about a developing model. Will you join us?

#### **What will you be asked to do?**

- Participate in a group discussion about your experiences as a fieldwork educator
- Listen to a presentation on the Subject-Centered Integrative Learning model for OT
- Try applying the model the next time you have a student
- Tell us if the model was useful or not

The study is led by Dr. Barb Hooper ([barb.hooper@colostate.edu](mailto:barb.hooper@colostate.edu)) and in collaboration with Devin Barth, OT graduate student. Participants who complete the study will receive an Amazon gift card.

## APPENDIX C

### Consent Form

**Outside Consultant  
Consent to Participate in a Research Study  
Colorado State University**

**TITLE OF STUDY: Exploring the Applicability of the Model of Learning Human Occupation in Four Occupational Therapy Education Contexts**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Barb Hooper, PhD, OTR, FAOTA  
[Barb.Hooper@colostate.edu](mailto:Barb.Hooper@colostate.edu)

**STUDENT INVESTIGATORS:** Bill Roberts ([Bill.Roberts@colostate.edu](mailto:Bill.Roberts@colostate.edu))  
Devin Barth ([dbarth@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:dbarth@rams.colostate.edu))  
Addy Brown ([addbrown@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:addbrown@rams.colostate.edu))  
Amanda Zorn ([Amanda.Grigg@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:Amanda.Grigg@rams.colostate.edu))

**WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?** You are being invited to participate in this study because you are recognized as an educator in occupational therapy (OT) either in academic, fieldwork or client/family education contexts.

**WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?** Dr. Barb Hooper is the Principal Investigator for this study. She will lead a team of four occupational therapy student researchers, three of whom are completing their thesis in partial completion of their Master of Science degree in occupational therapy and one is completing this study as one phase of doctoral research.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?** The purpose of this study is to further develop the Subject-Centered Learning Model for application in OT education.

**WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?** This study will involve occupational therapy educators internationally. It will take place over the telephone and through web-conferencing. In total, the study will involve up to 5 hours over a time period of 1-2 years.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?** You will be asked to participate in three group conference calls/interviews with the research team and a small group of educators doing similar work as you. The focus of the group interviews will be: 1) your approaches to teaching students or clients/families, 2) the Subject-Centered Learning Model and your responses, critiques, and suggestions for the model, 3) Share your experiences and recommendations after attempting to implement the model in your teaching practices. All three of these sessions will be audiotaped and transcribed.

**ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?**

If you do not have: a substantial role in teaching students or clients/families at this time, access to technology to enable you to participate in focus groups with participants in diverse geographical locations, if you are not willing to participate in three focus groups or if you are unwilling to be audiotaped.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?**

- It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but you may experience discomfort or fear or worry when asked to share openly about your teaching and to offer contradictory viewpoints on the model under investigation. Every effort will be made to create an open, comfortable environment for dialogue.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** The ultimate aim of the study is to improve the quality of OT education across learning contexts. There is no known benefit for participating, but we hope that contributing to this endeavor could be professionally satisfying and meaningful. Also your own teaching practices may be more deeply affirmed through the study and the study may provide new insights and approaches for your teaching.

**DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?** Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?**

Only the PI and student investigators will have access to the audiotapes and their written transcriptions. We will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. All research records will be kept for at least three years and up until the data are published. We may be asked to share the research files with the CSU Institutional Review Board ethics committee for auditing purposes.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about what we learned from the pilot study we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in these written materials.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, your name will not be kept with your research records and your record will be stored under lock and key.

**WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** You will receive a \$25 electronic gift card for participating in this study. Your identity/record of receiving compensation (NOT your data) may be made available to CSU officials for financial audits.





## APPENDIX D

### Guiding Questions for Focus Groups

#### Exploring the Applicability of the Model of Learning Human Occupation in Four Occupational Therapy Education Contexts

- I. Phase One: Educators' Views of Best OT Education Practice**
  - a. Data Collection Method: Focus Group interviews
    - i. Interview Questions:
      1. Describe the characteristics of teaching that you feel represents best educational practice in occupational therapy.
      2. Consider a scenario from your own teaching practice that you felt went very well and that you were very satisfied with:
        - a. What learning outcomes were you concerned with?
        - b. How did you set up the learning experience to achieve those outcomes?
        - c. How did you implement the learning experience?
        - d. How did you know what the outcomes were for the students?
        - e. What theories or concepts guided your teaching?
        - f. What other factors influenced your teaching?
    - b. Data Analysis: Qualitative analysis focused on mapping practitioners perspectives to the domains and concepts, and their interrelationships, of the Subject-Centered Learning Model
- II. Phase Two: Initial Presentation and Discussion of the Subject-Centered Learning Model**
  - a. Data Collection: Focus group
    - i. Group Process & Structure
      1. Presentation of the Subject-Centered Learning Model by academic-researchers
      2. Opportunity for clarifying questions from participants (practitioner-researchers and academic-researchers)
      3. Initial confirmation/disconfirmation of the LELQ Model by (practitioner-researchers and academic-researchers):
        - a. In what ways does the model represent or not represent what you do in teaching?
      4. Member checking
    - ii. Data Analysis: Qualitative analysis completed by academic-researchers focused on confirming and disconfirming the LELQ Model's domains and concepts and their interrelationships
- III. Phase Three: Confirmation and Disconfirmation of the Subject-Centered Learning Model**
  - a. Data Collection: Focus group

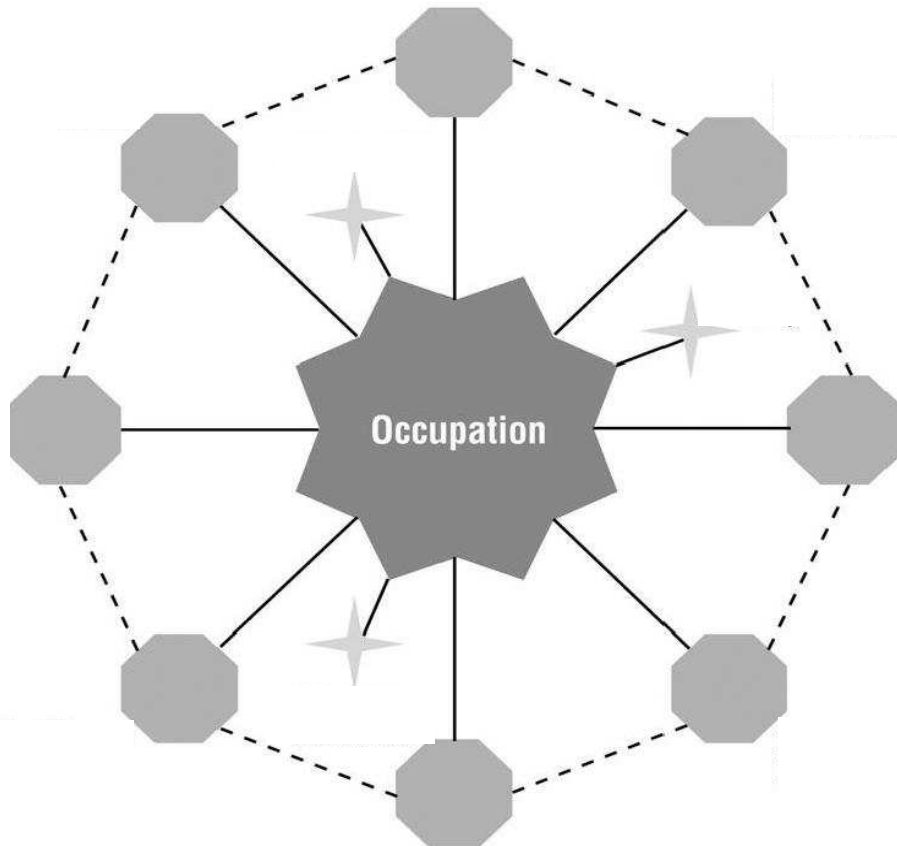
- i. Group Process & Structure
  1. Guided Discussion Questions related to Having used the model as a guide for teaching:
    - a. What are the strengths of the model?
    - b. What are the limitations of the model?
    - c. What implications for teaching does the model have?
    - d. In what ways can the Subject-Centered Learning model be improved?
  2. Guided Discussion Questions related to enhancing the model:
    - a. What learning outcomes best fit the model/which do not?
    - b. What teaching strategies best fit the model/which do not?
    - c. What learning outcome measures fit the model/which do not?
  3. Guided Discussion Questions related to Application of the model:
    - a. Having now become familiar with the model, are there ways in which you would like to change your teaching?
      - i. If so, how? Why do you believe these changes are important?
      - ii. If not, why not?
  4. Reflecting back on our first interview, has your understanding of occupational therapy best teaching practices or approaches changed in any way?
    - a. If so, how and why?
    - b. If not, why?
  5. Member Checking: Review of key points of discussion

## APPENDIX E

### Blank Worksheet

#### Subject Centered Integrative Learning Model Research Worksheet

Please label the topics and the members of the community of knowers that this teaching session involved.



- Explain how you prompted the link between the topics and the subject of occupation:
- Explain how you prompted the links among members of the community of knowers:
- Explain how you prompted a direct and personal connection between the learner/s and occupation:
- What were your observations of the teaching/learning process related to the elements/interactions of the model?

## APPENDIX F

### Learning Activities Based on the SCIL-OT

#### **“Heather” MS OTR/L**

#### **Integrative Learning Model**

**Subject/Occupation:** Accessing Academics and Academic Environment

#### **Topics:**

Role of OT in Educational Model

Assessments used in Educational Setting

IEP Development

Educational Interventions/Assistive Strategies and Tools

#### **Community of Knowers/Stakeholders:**

Student (Client)

Special Ed Teacher

Regular Education Teacher

Related Service Providers

Parent

Specials Teachers

Para Educators

Ancillary

#### **Learning Activities:**

##### ***Role of OT in Educational Model***

- CDE Website to read definition of OT role in educational Model
- Exploration and discussion of educational impact of common disabilities
- Handout on the ‘related service’ role and examples of related goals
- Handout on unique knowledge and interventions that OT brings to the educational table

##### ***Assessments***

- Exploring, discussing, and creating a list of Educational OT Assessments and linking the identified need or possible barrier to the assessment.
- Explore and discuss educational assessments used by other disciplines (SLP, Psych, Interventionist, Special Ed Teacher)
- Using a Task Analysis as an educational assessment tool
- Making the connection between assessment results and possible functional impact educationally
- Generating questions to obtain information from other team members to link OT assessment results with findings from other team member assessments.
- Developing interviewing skills to gain additional information from other community members to explore additional barriers to accessing academics and environment.

##### ***IEP Development***

- CDE Website as a resource for IEP development
- Handout on ‘Golden Thread of the IEP’
- How to use GOAL book for related services as a resource
- Observing collaboration with OT and Sped teacher on developing appropriate related services goals and services
- IEP review of other students and specifically identifying appropriateness of OT assessments, goals, and services

##### ***Interventions/Assistive Strategies and Tools to Use in Education Access:***

- Assistive Technology Tool Box Handout and link to specific students needing AT supports filling out AT Plan template

- Reviewing behavioral strategies to use with students
- Reviewing and identifying specific evidence based interventions to use in an education setting
- Discussing and implementing best practice for OT services that protects the student's LRE and promotes a collaborative consultative model with the special education teacher to support making progress on IEP goals.
- Practicing the skill of scaffolding activities and finding the 'Just Right Challenge' for the student.
- Role playing teaching others strategies
- Identifying and knowing how to use adaptive tools (pencil grips, adaptive paper) and strategies (behavior plans, work task strips) in an educational setting

**Linking topics to subject of occupation:**

Reviewed and discussed the role of OT in an Educational Model as well as looking at the differences between an Educational Model and a Community/Medical Model. Explored possible barriers to accessing academics and the environment related to disability. Reviewed the IEP process and how OT relates to the IEP. Explored assessments used in educational settings related to various identified needs and barriers that were identified in the initial referral. Used a guideline for critical thinking skills to determine OT services.

**Prompting links among members of the community:**

Discussed the process of guided collaboration/consultation of the use of the adaptive strategies and tools. Modeled and developed a system for follow up. Used template for indirect services documentation.

**Prompting Direct and Personal Connection between the (OT Student) learner and occupation**

**Direct:** IEP development, Task Analysis, Scaffolding, Finding the Just Right Challenge, Use of Best Practice

**Personal:** Determining Learning Style, Feedback Style, Strengths and Weakness Identification and Reinforcements, Developing Therapeutic Use of Self and Style, Use of Best Practice

**Ask the student to reflect on and then relate to the central subject:**

How did the OT student engage in occupation to develop the skills they needed to access academics and the academic environment

**Observations related to the elements/interactions of the model**

- Helped with having a structured model to follow that insured all components were addressed and linked together.
- Provided a excellent visual and functional practice outlining using critical reasoning skills to show what, how and why we do what we do and the desired outcome of what OT does in an educational model.
- There are components that link to the FWPE and can provide specific examples for feedback to the student.
- Within the overview there is a progression of beginning knowledge and skills to what a student should know and be able to do by the end that would show that the student has the knowledge and the skills needed to be an entry level OT within the fieldwork setting.

**Suggestions:**

Should include it in the Fieldwork Supervision Certification Workshop

Develop it into a template for use

Give a filled out example

**Comments:**

Learning happens on the line and in the moment

Community members/ Stakeholders are all working on 'the subject'