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Sponsor Profile: Auerbach School of Occupational Therapy at Spalding University



Spalding University is an independent, liberal arts, fully accredited doctoral institution located in Louisville, Kentucky. The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth established the school in 1814. Spalding University's Auerbach School of Occupational Therapy (ASOT) was established in 1995. The ASOT's Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) is the only graduate occupational therapy (OT) program in the Louisville region, and one of only two graduate OT programs in Kentucky. The ASOT receives accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. The current mission statement of ASOT states:

The Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy, as part of The Auerbach School of Occupational Therapy, embraces time's essential flow through the *River of Occupation* by creating compassionate occupational therapy leaders who meet the occupational needs of society through advocacy, service, and promotion of peace and justice. (p. 1)

The ASOT overlooks the Ohio River and has adopted a metaphor comparing their OT program to a river (<http://spalding.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MSOT-Curriculum-Design.pdf>). The program itself flows like a river, connecting theories, application skills, concepts, and evidence-based practice to the liberal arts and sciences. When the students begin the program, it is comparable to an individual learning to kayak: The faculty serve as guides for the students, instructing the students on how to navigate through the water. This process is

collaborative in nature and geared toward the active participation of the students in order to promote learning. Eventually, toward the end of the program, each student learns to navigate through rigorous waters on his or her own to achieve professional accountability.

Spalding's OT faculty places a strong emphasis on teaching and providing mentorship for the students. The faculty has 150 years of combined experience in clinical and academic practice. In addition, faculty members either have a doctorate or are currently in the process of obtaining their doctorate. The faculty holds specializations and certifications in numerous areas, including sensory integration, hand therapy, assistive technology, neuro-developmental treatment, pediatrics, and lymphedema. Occupational therapists at Spalding also hold leadership roles. Professor Laura Schluter Strickland is the associate dean of the Kosair Charities College of Health and Natural Sciences, and Professor Randy Strickland is the university provost and also teaches the leadership and management course. This course is taught along with the dean of the college, and thus provides valuable expertise in the field.

The MSOT has a unique curriculum sequence and design that promotes an integrated education. The curriculum combines classroom education with real life experiences to maximize the students' learning potential and prepare them well for clinical practice. The MSOT consists of eighteen 6-week sessions, with a one-week break between each session. Beginning with the 6th session, the students take an evaluation and intervention course on a specific population. During the coursework, they have an associated level I fieldwork with the population of study (<http://spalding.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MSOT-Program-Sequence.pdf>). This fosters learning, as the student has the opportunity to implement classroom information in a fieldwork setting. This model also corresponds to the American Occupational Therapy Association's

(AOTA) Centennial Vision, as it ensures a well-prepared workforce for diverse roles and establishes consistent competencies for education and practice (AOTA, 2006).

Dr. Cindee Quake-Rapp, professor and program director of Spalding's MSOT program, is pleased to sponsor the Fall 2015 issue of *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Dr. Quake-Rapp spent 28 years of her career on Western Michigan University's faculty in the OT program, the last nine of which she served as chair. "Western's occupational therapy program, faculty, and alumni, will always have a special place in my heart. I am honored to have known so many extraordinary OT educators and students."

References

The American Occupational Therapy Association. (2006). AOTA's Centennial Vision.

Updated: January 20, 2006. Retrieved from: <http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutAOTA/Centennial/Background/Vision1.pdf>.

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