Interprofessional Preparation of Occupational and Physical Therapy Students for Early Intervention (EI) and School-based (SB) Careers
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**NEED FOR PROJECT**
- Shortages of Occupational and Physical Therapists for employment in EI and SB settings
- Increased hiring of inexperienced new graduates
- Graduates need greater content in EI and SB therapy
- Lack of training opportunities focusing on natural environments, family centered practice, and inclusive school based intervention

**PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF PROGRAM**
- Provide OT and PT students specialization in early intervention (EI) and school-based (SB) practice.
- Participate in interprofessional training to enhance effectiveness as team members in EI and SB practice.
- Create an interprofessional model for entry-level OT/PT students to achieve EI and SB competencies (Chiarello & Effgen, 2006) based on evidence based practice.
- Embed specialization program within OT and PT core curriculum
- Provide interprofessional didactic and field-work/clinical experiences emphasizing practice in natural environments and inclusive school settings.

**STUDENT COMMENTS**
- “…really great to start getting our feet wet in what we will actually use in the clinic”
- Regarding family interaction, “…wonderful, exceeded expectations”
- On interactive exam, “…benefitted from the experience of working with and learning from other students”

**PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1: Interdisciplinary Seminars</th>
<th>Year 2: Self-guided Modules</th>
<th>Year 3: Clinical Experiences Together</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Introduction to EI/SB issues; Natural environments; family and school systems; team and group process; clinicians role</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Evidence Based Practice; Increased Experiences in homes, schools; IFSP/IEP Observations, Evaluations, Goals, progress monitoring: understanding behavior</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Joint PT/OT Clinical Fieldwork, special site Clinical Care Plan: Inter-professional Course</td>
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<td><strong>Seminars:</strong> Focus on Competencies</td>
<td><strong>Observation of IFSP/IEP and multidisciplinary evaluation:</strong> Interaction with clinicians, families, and school personnel</td>
<td><strong>Opportunities/Outcomes:</strong> Leadership Workshops, Shadow EI/SB Therapists, Interaction, yr1/Yr. 2, (EBP), Portfolio</td>
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**DESIGN**
- Interdisciplinary monthly seminars
- Self-study group work
- Interaction with community service providers
- Interprofessional clinical/field work experiences
- Portfolio–Self-reflections based on experiences
- Leadership Development Opportunities

**COMPETENCIES : EI and SB**
- Rules and regulations, family-centered services, knowledge of other professions
- Practice in education settings
- Practice in early intervention
- Examination and evaluation
- Planning and intervention
- Administration issues
- Research
- Professional Development

**OUTCOMES**
- Observation of IFSP/including Multidisciplinary evaluation, and IEP
- Interaction with clinicians, families, and school professionals

**CLINICAL EXPERIENCES**
- Observation of IFSP/including Multidisciplinary evaluation, and IEP
- Interaction with clinicians, families, and school professionals

**EVALUATION METHODS**
- Portfolio: based on experiences guided by competencies
- Student comments based on: Feedback of individual seminars, Answers to questionnaire asked by independent evaluator
- Competency matrix, goals and activities
- Interactive exam: Apply, integrate, and synthesize information as developed in interprofessional groups

**REFERENCES**