Amplifying the essential value of an occupational lens on wellbeing, health and quality of life

2022-2027 Strategic Plan
The University of Toronto’s Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy is pleased to announce its strategic plan that sets the course for the next five years. Over several months, the Department’s leadership engaged with its diverse community of faculty, students, researchers and clinicians through interviews, focus groups and three Strategy Hives, interactive planning sessions conducted by video conferencing. This resulted in more than 200 touchpoints for consultations on how to move forward.

Our strategic plan comes at a time when the fields of occupational science and occupational therapy are at a unique juncture. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed stark inequities in society and brought questions around participation, inclusion and occupation to the fore of public discourse. Perhaps more than any other time in recent history, a greater awareness of the occupational and health implications of increasing social inequities and oppression has heightened the need to reflect on and to integrate principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion into teaching, research and administrative processes.

What emerged was a clear affirmation that the role of the Department over the next five years is to amplify the essential value of an occupational lens on wellbeing, health and quality of life. We will achieve this through four strategic priorities that seek to grow our research enterprise, better prepare our students for complexities in practice, forge novel intersectional partnerships and nurture the Department’s community.
### Grow occupational science and occupational therapy research to enhance our ability to assert and deliver the value of an occupational lens

**Goal**

*Continue to develop and advance the science of occupation and occupational therapy research to demonstrate how to promote justice, equity, occupational possibilities and quality of life.*

**Objectives**

- Deepen how we define and connect our research to “occupation” and the future of occupational science.
- Be intentional about translating research evidence through an occupational lens to demonstrate the value of occupational therapy and occupational science for funding opportunities by addressing occupational challenges, restrictions, and opportunities for individuals.
- Expand and leverage opportunities for occupation-based research and practice.

### Prepare students to be practice-ready healthcare professionals, innovators and advocates

**Goal**

*Grow the capability of students to be practice-ready, and to be responsive leaders, innovators and advocates wherever they serve.*

**Objectives**

- Further integrate occupational and social justice, human rights and anti-oppressive concepts throughout curriculum content and delivery.
- Increase focused opportunities for students to grow their leadership capabilities within and beyond traditional occupational therapy roles.
- Evolve our teaching and assessment to focus on process, experiential learning, and universal design.
Forge novel intersectional partnerships that deepen the conversation about participation in occupations in our communities

Goal

Partner with others who share a commitment to occupation, participation, and inclusion. Advance research, education, and practice with diverse partners and place occupational science and occupational therapy within a wider conversation of health, wellbeing, participation, and quality of life.

Objectives

- Build a coalition of like-minded professions, health professionals and individuals with lived experiences to advance novel intersectional research and education opportunities.
- Continue to build collaborative and trusting relationships with communities most impacted by health and social inequalities.
- Continue to embed our work and build capacity for occupational therapy and occupational science in the diverse communities that we serve.
- Lead collaborations focused on occupation.

Nurture the Department’s community to enable everyone to thrive

Goal

Advance practices, policies, expectations and space that nurture a culture that supports wellbeing, growth, recognition, inclusion, and connection.

Objectives

- Create welcoming physical spaces for connections and collaborations.
- Support practices for a safe and healthy learning environment and workplace that prioritizes wellness.
- Create an active framework for appreciation and belonging felt by faculty, staff, students and the clinical community through recognition and growth opportunities.
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