

PRE-OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY NEWSLETTER

FALL EDITION 2021

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Student Spotlight!

My name is Melanie Walsh and I am a 2nd year OT student at the Ryan Center, and I did the 5 year OT program at Bay Path. I will be graduating next year after completing my Level II Fieldwork. I became interested in OT as a senior in high school when I was thinking about how I could make an impact in people's lives through my career. The person who inspired me to pursue OT was my sister, Annie, who has Down syndrome and is 1.5 years younger than me. Growing up with Annie showed me how much potential people with disabilities have to really make a difference in their community and in the world. I hope to use OT as a tool to create meaningful changes in my future clients' lives and also to continue developing myself personally and professionally. The program at Bay Path is very difficult but it is excellent for really stretching your mind and constantly keeping you in a state of learning, which can feel uncomfortable but in the end, shows you that anything good comes from outside of the comfort zone. I am the first daughter (out of 7) in my family to earn a college degree, and I will be my parent's first child (out of 10) to earn my Master's degree.

My advice to Pre-OT majors is to be open to learning and testing your knowledge, keep going, and always remember why you started!

Faculty Spotlight!



Dr. Sheila Foley began her teaching career as an adjunct professor in 2002, and was appointed associate professor in 2019. She teaches in the Psychology Department and the Criminal Justice Department and is a member of the Honors Program faculty. Foley's interdisciplinary view provides a foundation for teaching throughout many disciplines including criminal justice, psychology, sociology, and liberal arts, focusing on research and writing. In addition, she serves as the Chair of the IRB Committee.

Dr. Foley received her master's degree from Westfield State University. She completed a PhD in Business Administration with a specialization in Criminal Justice at Northcentral University. Dr. Foley brings 22 years of experience working in state government. Her work included involvement with a number of initiatives committed to social change; identifying challenges faced by young people and developing comprehensive strategies to address those issues. In addition she has worked in police training providing education and policy development. Dr. Foley continues to work with the State 911 Department training emergency dispatchers.

To ensure students learn the fundamental content of a course and develop a strong foundation for lifelong learning, her teaching emphasis is placed on fostering critical thinking skills and engaging in experiential learning opportunities. Dr. Foley's passion for research and writing is evident throughout her teaching. She recently developed a new program titled HHS 400:Health and Human Services Capstone. This exciting new course provides students from all majors in HHS the opportunity to synthesize knowledge learned in previous courses through the development of a community health/human service initiative that aligns with their career goals. Partnering with a mentor from a local organization, students are guided through every aspect of program development from the research and planning phase to the presentation and evaluation.

Dr. Foley is a member of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Honor Society for Women Educators, the Golden Key International Honor Society, and the National Criminal Justice Honor Society. She is also a member of the American Psychological Association, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and the Western Mass Chiefs of Police Association. Dr. Foley enjoys rooting for the home team, has a soft spot for animals, and most importantly treasures the time spent with her daughter.

SOTA is Busy!



SOTA is a group of highly motivated and dedicated MOT students looking to make our community better! As future occupational therapists SOTA is a first step in practicing advocating for others within our community. We participate in student political advocacy, community service, fundraising, and development! Furthermore, promoting health and wellness within the community and helping support those in need is the essence of OT!

In addition, participating in Bay Path University's (BPU) Earth Day helps branch us out in the community and make connections. Several community events that we have participated in this past year include BPU's Earth day clean-up, the JCC Keillah block party fundraiser, the Western MA's Buddy Walk for Down syndrome awareness, and a Bay Path Ryan Center food drive!

This has allowed us to practice teamwork and collaboration with other clubs such as Physician Assistant (PA) club to maximize donations. In addition, we work hard to facilitate the growth of knowledge surrounding OT for our MOT students and beyond!





Annual Career & Networking Event

Wed Dec 1 @ 6-7:30 pm, via Zoom. Join Dr. Kathy Wiezbicki-Stevens and a panel of OT and healthcare professionals who will share their career journeys and offer advice for making the most of your time while at Bay Path.

Monthly Speaker Series: Conversations with an Occupational Therapist

Have you ever wondered what an Occupational Therapist does? Or what kinds of settings, populations, and needs they serve? The Master's Program in Occupational Therapy at Bay Path offers a virtual event each month by inviting an OT to share their work with our students! Some of our past speakers addressed pediatrics and nature-based programs, driving rehabilitation, mental health, addiction, and international work. Registration is required. For more information, please contact MOT faculty members Andrea Cordis and Tiffany Foster (acordis@baypath.edu; tfoster@baypath.edu)



Zoom workshop on Mental Health: More than the Individual

Did you know that nearly 1 in 5 Americans experience a mental illness? This workshop was offered Oct 20 by Ysabel Garcia, MPH and a BPU alum, to help students build awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity to this important issue. Topics included:

- Expanding our definition of mental health through a social justice lens
- Understanding the concept of oppression and its multiple forms
- Recognizing practical examples of how oppression and its multiple forms influence mental health
- To learn more about the important work that Ysabel does for our community, visit her website: www.estoy-aqui.org

AOTA Student Resources

For more information, visit <http://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Students.aspx>



The Occupational Therapy Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOT, is (301) 652-AOTA. Student Resources fLyer? Check out the OT Job Link where you can find resume-building skills, interviewing tips, employment opportunities, and more! <http://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Advance-Career/OT-Job-Link.aspx>

Dia's Corner

Hi, my name is Dia Arias and I am the Student Assistant in the Psychology Department. I am currently a junior majoring in Communications and minoring in Sociology and I enjoy traveling whenever I have the opportunity. I am very involved here at Bay Path I am currently the President of the Alana Club, a multicultural advocate Please feel free to email me if you have any questions at preot@baypath.edu.

