

OCC1 626 MENTAL HEALTH: CHILD AND YOUTH

Credits 3

Prerequisites

Successful completion of all U2 courses including clinical affiliation requirements. Completion of OCC1-551 and OCC1-618 or professor approval.

Instructor Melissa Park, MA OT, PhD (Coordinator)

Access to the Instructor

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Course Description

Orientation to children and youth with psychiatric disorders and/or psychosocial issues of concern related to neurodiverse experiences (e.g., bullying, trauma). There will be a focus on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other sensory-related mental health challenges for neurodivergent populations as an emerging practice area. This course will focus on occupation-based and relationship-centered approaches as particularly effective for children and youth, including: evaluation, intervention, and practical strategies to address structural and systemic inequities related to mental health.

Course Objectives

Course objectives are to prepare students to work closely with neurodiverse youth and/or family members of children and youth who are neurodiverse. Thus the course will consist of current neuroscientific evidence and professional reasoning seminars to innovate person and relationship centered interventions for classroom and community. We will also use hands-on-workshops to practice applying basic neurological principles using the sensory processing frameworks most encountered in child and youth settings, while using occupation-based assessment (e.g., photography, arts-related, etc.) and intervention approaches.

Course Structure: This course consists of three (3) hours of lectures, clinical observations, case-based and narrative analysis and seminar-style discussions done in small groups and/or individually, once a week over a full semester.

Student Learning Objectives:

Student will be assigned a youth¹ mentor during the semester to understand a primary issue of concern and elaborate an appropriate intervention plan using the youth's experiential knowledge and evidence-based knowledge with the following objectives:

¹ This may be a parent of a child and/or other facilitator, such as a teacher. This may also consist of pre-existing narratives, followed by one meeting with the youth, parent and/or other mentor.

1. Be able to actively listen to and understand the impact of neurodiversity on the experiences of children and family members, in addition to youth (e.g., guest speakers) as well as their primary concerns (relationship-ship centered);
2. Conduct formal evaluations and clinical observations to identify sensory processing challenges and their relationship to psychosocial issues of concern, including the ability to design and improvise child & youth friendly and directed assessments;
3. Identify and grade specific occupation-based interventions and anticipated outcomes;
4. Assess and design environmental and community-based interventions to promote mental health for neurodiverse individuals; and
5. Identify and collaboratively develop strategies using policy to address structural and systemic inequities related to mental health for children and youth.

Upon completion of this course, the student will have the following competencies:

1. Identify the characteristics (signs and symptoms) of the most commonly encountered psychiatric and psychosocial conditions in childhood and adolescence related to sensory processing in Occupational Therapy;
2. Identify the functional consequences related to these conditions;
3. Discriminate between and apply the most commonly used frames of references used in youth mental health that use or incorporate body-based and sensory processing theories.
4. Conduct relationship-centered assessments, occupation-based goals and interventions;
5. Refine therapeutic uses of self, including advocacy skills.

Course Content:

Course Materials:

Assigned e-texts, short films, transcripts and digital media (podcasts, videos, etc.)

Suggested texts:

- Ayres, A. J. (1979). *Sensory integration and the child*. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.
- S. S. Roley, E. I. Blanche, & R. C. Schaaf (Eds.), *Understanding the nature of sensory integration with diverse populations*. U.S.A.: Therapy Skill Builders.

Student Assignment and Evaluation:

1. Personal journals	30 %
2. Quiz to review reading materials	20 %
3. Class presentation of a case study ²	35 %
4. Final portfolio (includes journals)	15 % TBA

² This presentation will integrate personal narratives of the mentor/s and provide evidence-based relational, and community-based interventions (e.g. school, everyday environments outside of the home), and advocacy components (e.g. letter to local policy maker). It will be designed to be presented to the public, administrators, and/or policy makers.

Special Requirements for Course Completion and Program Continuation:

In order to pass the course, a grade of at least C+ (60%) must be obtained as a total course mark. Please refer to Section 8.4, Student Evaluation and Promotion, pages 132 to 136 of the 2008/2009 McGill University Health Sciences Calendar for information on University regulations regarding final examinations and supplemental.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning of consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

Dress Code: Professionalism with respect to dressing is encouraged throughout the course of the semester. It is each student's responsibility to have appropriate attire during all class assignments and learning activities.

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is expected. Absences for reasons of sickness or family tragedy must be documented.

Right to write in (English or in) French: "Every Student has a right to write essays, examinations and theses in English or in French except in courses where knowledge of a language is one of the objectives of the course."

Consequences of not completing assignments as requested: All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

Disability: "If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 398-6009 before you do this."