

Ian O'Hara

Spring 2021

OT 250: Scientific Writing & Information Literacy in OT (EP)

Nastasi

2/5/2021

9:00-9:50am

Zoom

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In OT 250 students are tasked with writing an in-depth literature review on a pertinent topic within the field of occupational therapy. They are required to utilize library resources to locate appropriate scholarly material on their given topic. Within their literature review they are asked to summarize major contributions of significant studies and articles referring back to the focus of their paper. Students are also required to point out gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.

SLO 1: As a result of this information literacy instruction, students will be made aware of, be able to locate, and utilize sources of information related to occupational therapy.

SLO 2: As a result of this information literacy instruction, students will understand how to formulate an effective database search string from a given research question.

SLO 3: As a result of this information literacy instruction, students will be able to differentiate between different types of research studies encountered in the literature found in database searches.

This was the first semester this course has been offered. I would typically structure this instruction period as a series of mini-lectures followed by active learning activities, which are

the search process by that session of the students in which the concepts addressed in the activities are reviewed again. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this class session was conducted via Zoom. I reconfigured my lesson in order to structure the entire lesson as the typical research process a student would go through in this course, based on a topic related to OT that I chose. I essentially asked for student input throughout the entire process of researching this chosen topic, from deriving a keyword search string from a research question, to choosing databases within which to search, and even on how to access articles when the PDF files are not immediately available within the specific database we are searching in. This allowed me to assess what students knew about the research process as the lesson flowed forward based on their input at each step of researching our class topic. This process allowed me to remediate areas where it was clear students were lacking in either knowledge or experience of the research process at our institution.

The most challenging aspect of structuring this lesson was managing the breadth of material that needs to be covered in order to ensure that students would be successful in completing their research and literature review assignment. This class marks a shift in the OT curriculum: this course replaces a similar course that was previously taught in the junior year to OT students, but this new OT 250 course is taught to sophomore students. I was unsure at what level students would be related to their research abilities at the sophomore level as opposed to where they were when I taught a similar information literacy instruction session related to a similar assignment at the junior level. This made this session an excellent learning experience related to meeting these sophomore level students at their skill level when they arrive in this course. Te