

**Elizabethtown College**  
**The 20<sup>th</sup> Occupational Therapy**  
**Graduate Research Symposium**  
**2024**



**“Continuing Our Legacy:  
Building Occupational Therapy Practice  
through Research”**

**April 22, 2024**  
**Sponsored by**  
**Pi Theta Epsilon**  
**Upsilon Chapter**

**The Occupational Therapy Faculty and Graduate Students  
welcome you to**

***The Occupational Therapy Graduate  
Research Symposium 2024***

**Elizabethtown College  
April 22, 2024**

**(Closed Captioning provided for all sessions.)**

5:00-5:50

**Opening Remarks**

Nancy Ann Carlson, Ph.D, OTR/L  
Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy

**Keynote Speaker**

**Kristina DiGaetano, MS, OTR/L**



Kristina DiGaetano, MS, OTR/L, graduated from Elizabethtown College in 2014 with her master's degree in OT. She works in an outpatient hand therapy clinic in South Jersey. Kristina is currently a third-year PhD student at Nova Southeastern University. Her areas of research interest include psychosocial impacts and hand injury.

**Masters Project Presentations will be held  
concurrently in virtual format via the Zoom links  
listed in each Graduate Project**

**Recording, downloading and/or photographing  
of the OT Graduate Research Symposium  
events is strictly prohibited.**

***SPECIAL NOTE:* Up to 2.70 Contact Hours will be awarded to attending clinicians  
who have registered for this Graduate Symposium  
on the evening of April 22, 2024 only.  
Registration will be available at 4pm on the  
evening of the Symposium at**

<https://www.etown.edu/depts/occupational-therapy/index.aspx>

Time		PDU
5:00-5:50 Gibble Aud	<p>Welcome and Opening Remarks; Keynote Address</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/96039716539">https://etown.zoom.us/j/96039716539</a></p>	.70
Time	MASTERS PROJECT PRESENTATIONS	PDU
6:00– 6:30 E373	<p><i>Educational Technology's Impact on Special Education Students' Academic Achievement in a Blended Classroom</i></p> <p>Graduate Students: Nathan Tindell, Katrina Gambone, Madison Nowatnick Faculty Mentor: Nicole Brackman, MS, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this study is to understand special education instructors' perspectives on the use of educational technology in blended learning classrooms and how it impacts student's academic achievement.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812">https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812</a></p>	.50
6:00– 6:30 E360	<p><i>Occupational Therapist Perspectives on Addressing Visual Impairments with Patients in Inpatient Rehabilitation Settings</i></p> <p>Graduate Students: Rebecca Epps, Caitlin Henning, Emma Mesko Faculty Mentor: Richelle Walker, OTD, MOT, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this study was to gain perspectives from practicing occupational therapists on barriers to addressing vision impairments within the inpatient rehabilitation setting. Through a mixed-methods survey prominent barriers to vision assessment and treatment were identified.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729">https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729</a></p>	.50
6:00– 6:30 E370	<p><i>Discovering the Gaps in Care for Adults with Congenital Heart Disease</i></p> <p>Graduate Students: Kayley Ambrose, Mikayla Close, Erin Wittenberg, Cassie Wyatt Faculty Mentor: Debbie Waltermire, DrPH, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> This study aimed to identify gaps in healthcare services for adults with congenital heart disease (CHD). Using a mixed methods design, we collected and analyzed data from surveys and semi-structured interviews. Results suggested opportunities to improve holistic care for individuals with CHD especially as they transition into adulthood.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513">https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513</a></p>	.50

Time		PDU
<p>6:00– 6:30 E382</p>	<p><i>The Effects of Mother's Voice on Maternal Stress and Preterm Infants in the NICU</i> Graduate Students: Olivia Eason, Alyson Houska, Alex Reid Faculty Mentor: Erica Wentzel, OTD, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this pilot study was to examine the effects of playing one mother's recorded voice on the stress levels of the mother and her infant during admission to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/92087368882">https://etown.zoom.us/j/92087368882</a></p>	<p>.50</p>
<p>6:40-7:10 E373</p>	<p><i>Occupational Therapy Practitioners' Knowledge on the Role of Interoception in Occupation-Based Activities</i> Graduate Students: Leah Deppen, Devin Riss, Ainsley Thimes, Kevin Whalen Faculty Mentor: Kelly Mahler, OTD, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Interoception is a growing topic of research as it influences participation in a variety of occupations. The purpose of our research was to explore the extent to which OTPs acknowledge interoception research into practice, and the extent to which this knowledge influences approaches to interventions.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812">https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812</a></p>	<p>.50</p>
<p>6:40-7:10 E360</p>	<p><i>The Use of Motion Capture Technology and the eTherapy App in Patients with Post-concussion Visual Gaze Deficits: A Case Study</i> Graduate Students: Elizabeth Hice, Conlin Shellenberger, Shannon Young Faculty Mentor: Dan Panchick, D.Sc., OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The project aimed to analyze the utility and efficiency of the etherapy app in occupational therapy treatments for clients with post-concussion visual gaze deficits and determine whether the app could be used in a home exercise program.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729">https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729</a></p>	<p>.50</p>

Time		PDU
6:40-7:10 E370	<p><i>Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus and Quality of Life: Analysis of the SF-36</i>  Graduate Students: Kate Santangelo, Logan Smith  Faculty Mentor: Nancy Carlson, PhD, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this research was to evaluate the improvement in Quality of Life for Individuals with Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus using a tool developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) called the SF-36.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513">https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513</a></p>	.50
6:40-7:10 E382	<p><i>Occupational Therapists' Perceptions of ADL Intervention Completion in Pediatric Acute Care: A Qualitative Case Study</i>  Graduate Students: Angela Gydik, Kaylin Nolt, Kursten Schill,  Gabriella Stawinski  Faculty Mentor: Sarah Hodgson, MS, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Our research aims to better understand what ADL implementation occurs in the hospital setting for children to become more independent. Specifically, the research will describe occupational therapist perspectives on ADL/self-care completion in pediatric acute care and the roles that the rehabilitation team plays in increasing independence in this occupation.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/92087368882">https://etown.zoom.us/j/92087368882</a></p>	.50

Time		PDU
7:20-7:50 E373	<p><i>Assessing the Impact of a Trauma-Informed Professional Development Training and Pocket Guide Amongst School-Based Personnel: A Feasibility Study</i> Graduate Students: Zoe Bender, Hannah Cressman, Morgan Bellavia, Megan Thomas Faculty Mentor: Hilary Sauder, OTD, OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> The study occurred in two separate school districts (n=66) as a voluntary professional development opportunity. It employed a pretest-posttest design to look at education feasibility and attitudes towards trauma-informed care (TIC). All participants received a trauma-informed pocket guide geared towards school personal.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812">https://etown.zoom.us/j/99686269812</a></p>	.50
7:20-7:50 E360	<p><i>Evaluating the Efficacy of Occupational Therapy Based Preventative Education Regarding MSD Pain: Mothers' Initial Perspectives</i> Graduate Students: Meghan Giusti, Sydney Savvas, Julia Thistle, Olivia Young Faculty Mentor: Gina Fox, OTD, OTR/L, BCPR</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> New mothers are at heightened risk for development of musculoskeletal pain secondary to engaging in childcare tasks that involve repetitive motions and lifting. Specific occupational therapy interventions for this population have not yet been described. The purpose of this research was to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of evidence-based education for preventing musculoskeletal pain in new mothers.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729">https://etown.zoom.us/j/96102452729</a></p>	.50
7:20-7:50 E370	<p><i>Impacts of Sensory Processing on Occupational Performance and Stress of Emerging Adults in Higher Education</i> Graduate Students: Olivia Baker, Madelyn Box, Jamie Evans, Haleigh Palutis Faculty Mentor: Terri Reichley Dennehy, DEd., OTR/L</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Evidence of the impact of sensory rooms in other populations has been shown, but it has yet to be explored within the emerging adult population. Understanding the influence of sensory rooms on the stress of higher education students will empower them with an additional stress management tool.</p> <p>Join us via ZOOM LINK: <a href="https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513">https://etown.zoom.us/j/92165717513</a></p>	

*Thank you for attending the 2024 Elizabethtown College Occupational Therapy Graduate Research Symposium.  
We look forward to seeing you again next year.*

*This is the twentieth anniversary of the  
Occupational Therapy Graduate  
Research Symposium.*

No effort of this magnitude is possible as a solitary pursuit.  
To that end, please thank the OT Graduate Research Symposium  
Committee for their efforts in making this celebration of scholarship  
and occupational therapy possible.

Faculty Committee Members

*Nancy Ann Carlson, PhD, OTR/L*

*Debbie Waltermire, DrPH, OTR/L*

Administrative Assistant

*MaryAnn Sluzis, BSW*

*A special thank you to all members of  
Pi Theta Epsilon  
for assisting this evening.*



For more information on the  
Occupational Therapy Program  
at Elizabethtown College  
visit our website at:  
[www.etown.edu/ot](http://www.etown.edu/ot)

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