

Towards a model for Promoting occupational therapy students' Appreciation for Research-Related Activities (the PARRA Model).

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A model for promoting students' appreciation for research-related activities (PARRA), or opportunities to promote research literacy, was developed at the University of the Free State (UFS) in South Africa. This presentation describes how the PARRA Model could promote a research culture in a four year undergraduate occupational therapy program at UFS and could contribute preparing students to engage in evidence-based practice.

The PARRA Model is proposed in response to the request of Lencucha et al. (2007) for a 'systematic approach to integrate evidence into the community of therapists' rather than attempting to transfer research into practice unilaterally and simplistically. By promoting roles, values and habits the PARRA Model endeavours to foster in a community of occupational therapy students a greater appreciation of research-related activities and use of evidence to guide practice.

There are four successive phases depicted in the PARRA Model:

- Pre-foundational phase - promote an openness (value) to research, discovering (habit) the nature of a research culture by being an observer (role).
- Foundational phase - promote an acceptance (value) of a research culture, following (role) more mature peers and lecturers in order to explore concepts (habit) inherent to a research culture.
- Practical phase - promote interdependence (value) where students contribute (habit) as team players (role) to the research process.
- Reflexive phase - promote the ability to nurture (value) fellow students by being a leader (role) in fostering (habit) a research culture.

The PARRA model represents a uniquely occupational therapy approach to developing students' appreciation and utilization of research. The PARRA Model is based on concepts from the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008). It views research involvement as an occupation influenced by the student's motivation, routines of research-related activities, and performance skills for understanding and utilizing research. The PARRA model takes students through different levels of engagement so that each student would be influenced by his/her selection, organization and undertaking of research-related activities. Moreover, the PARRA model establishes a culture of research in which students learn to value and utilize research through collaborative engagement and development of a sense of belonging to the professional community.