

Globalization of Occupational Therapy Education through E-Learning: Promise for International Collaboration

Cindee Quake-Rapp¹, Jaclyn West-Frasier²

¹*University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States,* ²*Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, United States*

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Occupational Therapy Practice Framework recognizes the growing impact of information technology in everyday life and on occupation. The practice framework defines the context of virtual environments as "interactions in simulated, real-time, or near-time situations absent of physical contact."

Many tools are available for occupational therapy educators for transformative teaching and learning that reduce barriers to information access while increasing opportunities for learning with colleagues and peers from around the world. As more information is freely available online through open source, and tools of discovering and networking with others (social network resources) become more popular, substantial change can be expected in education.

Technology has become more prominent in most aspects of society. The participative web (also known as web 2.0), mobile phones, social networking services, and netbooks have given individuals greater control over information creation and sharing. Information services like Google Search, Google Scholar, GPS-enabled devices, e-books and translation software, are improving access and communication for learners. Technological innovations in bandwidth, storage, processing speed, and software directly impact occupational therapy education, creating new opportunities for learner-learner/educator and learner-information interactions across international borders.

This workshop will highlight how occupational therapy education can be transformed through e-learning to be a collaborative and global model of sharing of learning objects and pedagogy. The technology will be demonstrated through powerpoint and the use of the internet. This workshop has no limit on number of participants.

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will be shown technology available on broadband internet that would facilitate sharing and publication of information such as online journal systems, blogs and wikis, iTunesU, and teleconferencing that permit more rapid sharing of face to face or asynchronous lectures, and learning objects
2. Participants will be asked to join an international collaboration between occupational therapy educators and schools to facilitate sharing through e-learning activities and teleconferencing.
3. Participants will learn how to use information technology for clinical education.
4. Participants will be shown how information technology is being used in occupational therapy programs at the University of Minnesota and Western Michigan University.