

**AGENDA
LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

September 7, 2000

1. Report on Academic Planning Council by Dr. Robert Reid
2. Proposal for the Master of Health Administration by Mrs. Carol Hermes
3. Proposal for the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy by Dr. Aimee Luebben

Abstract
Master of Health Administration (MHA)
University of Southern Indiana

Objectives:

The mission of the Master of Health Administration program is to educate students for administrative leadership roles in health-care delivery. Program goals are as follows:

- The Program will place curriculum emphasis on the acquisition of the necessary skills of contemporary health care administration, the knowledge to use them effectively, and the ethics and values that are essential for addressing the unique problems and humanistic goals of the rapidly changing health-care environment.
- Creative program and course design will be emphasized, balancing a desire for maximum immersion in the offerings while accommodating the schedule and time commitments of students.
- Research into aspects of health-care administration will be supported and encouraged among program faculty and students.
- Recognizing the value of shared expertise, the program will seek to appropriately collaborate with other programs in the university to further student learning outcomes and improve health-care delivery.
- Recognizing the program's desire to serve the health-care community that supports it, faculty and students will provide consultation and other services as appropriate.

Population To Be Served:

The Master of Health Administration program is designed for individuals with a baccalaureate in health services, business, or a related field who are seeking to prepare for a health-care administrative position. It is anticipated that most of the students enrolled in the program will be working in health care. The primary area for program delivery will be southwestern Indiana; however, the use of a distributive education model will make the program available to students throughout Indiana.

Curriculum:

The MHA program requires the completion of 39 credit hours: 36 hours of graduate academic course work in health-care administration, and a 3-credit-hour capstone semester-long health-care administrative residency. The curriculum is designed to meet the accreditation standards of the Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration. Prior to matriculation, students will be expected to have course work or demonstrated competency in the fundamental principles of economics, statistics, and accounting.

Employment Possibilities:

The Master of Health Administration program will prepare students for a wide variety of professional positions in the public and private sectors, including careers as executive and mid-level managers, planners, policy analysts, and consultants. Typical health-care opportunities include positions in hospitals, long-term care facilities, physician practices, outpatient facilities of all kinds, the health insurance industry, medically related equipment and supply companies, pharmaceutical firms, wellness/health promotion programs, consulting firms, government, and local/regional public health agencies.

Abstract
Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
University of Southern Indiana

Objectives:

The University of Southern Indiana proposes a 39-hour curriculum for a Master of Science degree in occupational therapy. Designated by the occupational therapy profession as a *postprofessional* master's, this degree program is designed primarily to provide opportunities for credentialed occupational therapists to have an opportunity to complete the Bachelor of Science in occupational therapy, followed immediately by completion of the proposed Master of Science degree program.

This proposed master's degree will be the third component of the Occupational Therapy Program at USI. In 1992 USI began the journey to become a comprehensive institution for occupational therapy educational training in southern Indiana. At this time, USI is one of 11 universities in the United States (and the only one in Indiana) with educational training programs for both types of occupational therapy practitioners: certified occupational therapy assistants and occupational therapists. The first degree program, the Bachelor of Science in occupational therapy (for persons who desire to be occupational therapists) began enrolling students in 1992, was accredited in 1993, and graduated the first cohort of students in 1994. The second degree program, the Associate of Science in occupational therapy assisting (for individuals who wish to become occupational therapy assistants) began enrolling students in September 1997, was accredited in August 1998, and graduated the charter cohort of students in December 1998. For the occupational therapy program, this proposal delineates the third strategic planning objective: to design a postprofessional Master of Science in occupational therapy degree curriculum that articulates with the existing professional baccalaureate degree curriculum.

The primary purpose of the proposed Master of Science in occupational therapy curriculum is the preparation of graduates for employment in shifting practice arenas of health care, education, industry, and community programs with an emphasis on southern Indiana. This master's degree will prepare students for advanced practice in occupational therapy across three roles: a central role of specialization (selected by the graduate student) supported by two required roles, educator and researcher. For students graduating from this proposed program, objectives include:

1. To develop and provide evidence-based specialized occupational therapy service (central role of specialization selected by the student).
2. To design and provide formal and informal educational offering related to occupational therapy (required educator role).
3. To conduct and disseminate scholarly work, primarily outcomes research (required researcher role).

A secondary purpose of the proposed master's degree curriculum is to anticipate changes that are occurring in the occupational therapy profession at the national level. Although this master's degree in occupational therapy has been part of the School of Nursing and Health Profession's strategic planning for more than five years, current events in the occupational therapy profession have made the timing of this new degree critical. In April 1999, after a debate lasting more than 40 years, the American Occupational Therapy Association's Representative Assembly (the legislative body of the national professional organization) raised the entry degree for the

occupational therapist to a level beyond the baccalaureate degree and in August 1999, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Education set the deadline for postbaccalaureate degree entry. By January 1, 2007, educational programs that train occupational therapists must redesign their existing baccalaureate degree curricula into (a) combined BS/MS degree programs, (b) basic master's degree programs, or (c) entry-level clinical doctorates. Universities that continue to offer only the baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy beyond January 1, 2007, will lose their accreditation status from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education and their students will be ineligible to sit for the national certification examination administered through the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

At this time, Indiana has training curricula for the occupational therapist in one private (University of Indianapolis) and two public universities (Indiana University and USI). The University of Indianapolis offers two degrees: a professional (basic) master's degree for persons who wish to become occupational therapists and (b) a postprofessional (advanced) master's degree for occupational therapists who desire specialized training. In September 1999, the occupational therapy department of Indiana University replaced the postprofessional master's degree in occupational therapy with a master's degree in therapeutic outcomes research. Indiana University is planning to transform the existing occupational therapy baccalaureate degree curriculum to comply with requirements of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. Offering only an undergraduate degree in occupational therapy, the existing occupational therapist training curriculum at USI will not be viable in the future.

Although the mandate of changing to a postbaccalaureate degree entry by January 1, 2007, appears to provide a long time frame, the deadline is actually deceiving. Beginning March 2000, USI must submit to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education materials (as part of the standard biennial report process) that indicate movement toward the postbaccalaureate degree level in occupational therapy. These materials must provide enough evidence to begin the process for continuing accreditation, scheduled at USI for review by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education in the 2005-2006 school year following completion of the self-study process during the 2004-2005 school year. Before beginning the self-study process and writing the self-study document, however, occupational therapy faculty must have students in the process of completing the proposed degree program. So that occupational therapy faculty have students in the process of completing the proposed degree program before beginning the self-study process during the 2004-2005 school year, USI proposes to move from offering a baccalaureate degree separate from the proposed postprofessional master's degree program to implement fully a curriculum design known as a combined BS/MS degree program, starting with the cohort of occupational therapy students accepted in 2002. With students in the process of completing the combined BS/MS degree curriculum to train the occupational therapist prior to the time faculty begin the self-study process in 2004, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education will make the regularly scheduled on-site evaluation at USI in the 2005-2006 school year. Failure to implement the combined BS/MS degree occupational therapy curriculum at USI by the time the self-study document is submitted in 2005 is likely to result in the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education either (a) revising the accreditation status to probationary and conducting a second on-site evaluation when the program has been fully implemented or (b) withholding accreditation and refusing to conduct the scheduled on-site evaluation.

Population To Be Served:

To provide increased access to educational resources for more prospective students in southern Indiana, USI occupational therapy faculty determined the optimal design was a postprofessional (advanced) master's degree in occupational therapy which articulates with the existing baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy. This is the only design that will serve the primary purpose of meeting the advanced training needs of practicing occupational therapists while serving the secondary purpose of anticipating the changes within the occupational therapy profession and becoming a combined BS/MS degree curriculum for individuals who want to become occupational therapists in the future.

To meet the advanced training needs of prospective students, this proposed graduate program offers two entry routes: *OTR-Entry* or *OTS-Entry*. The *OTR-Entry* is designed for the credentialed occupational therapist who desires postprofessional educational opportunities. Planned as the primary route into this proposed postprofessional (advanced) master's degree program, particularly for the first few years, *OTR-Entry* will be comprised of commuting, nontraditional students who have full-time jobs as credentialed occupational therapists and want to take graduate courses on a part-time basis. *OTS-Entry* is the second route into the master's degree program. This route is designed for any occupational Bachelor of Science degree. The *OTS-Entry* student can complete the combined curricula of the existing baccalaureate degree and the proposed master's degree. The composition of *OTS-Entry* will be traditional as well as nontraditional students who are expected to desire a combination of full-time and part-time educational opportunities. Although developed primarily for students geographically bound to the southern Indiana area, this postprofessional (advanced) master's degree curriculum in occupational therapy incorporates an innovative instructional delivery system. With the proposed instructional delivery system, USI has the potential to deliver educational services on a statewide basis.

Even after the postbaccalaureate degree entry change takes effect, the *OTR-Entry* is expected to remain the same in terms of student composition and preference for part-time coursework completion. Starting with the student cohort accepted in 2002, however, traditional and nontraditional students in *OTS-Entry* will likely choose a full-time option. Because once the combined BS/MS degree curriculum completes the process for continuing accreditation in the 2005-2006 school year, they will not be eligible to sit for the national credentialing examination until they have completed both curricula.

Curriculum:

Required Courses

USI proposes a 39-hour curriculum for the postprofessional master's degree in occupational therapy. The basis for the design of this proposed graduate program is three advanced practice roles: a central role of specialization (selected by the graduate student) supported by two required roles, educator and researcher. Of the 13 courses (39 hours) in this postprofessional (advanced) master's degree in occupational therapy proposed by USI, 10 will be common to all students. Each student will complete the same three courses for the required educator role (8 hours); the same two to four courses for the required researcher role (11 hours); and the same three courses, specialized clinical reasoning strategies (3 hours), specialized role internship seminar (3 hours), and synthesis (5 hours), for the central role of specialization. Since students will choose different central roles of specialization, the three didactic courses (9 hours) for this role may vary from student to student. At this time three central roles of specialization have been identified—(a) the advanced practitioner track, (b) the administrator track, and (c) the entrepreneur track. The

proposed postprofessional master's degree at USI will open with one area of the advanced practitioner track as the central role of specialization.

For this graduate program in occupational therapy, courses will be offered on a full-time or part-time basis to OTR-Entry and OTS-Entry students, and instructional delivery will be provided through a combination of traditional and nontraditional methods with an emphasis on distance education. Nontraditional methods will suit OTS-Entry students who are required to own computers when they begin the existing baccalaureate degree curriculum and receive assignments on disk and via e-mail. These students will leave the baccalaureate curriculum, which emphasizes technology and self-directed lifelong learning, well prepared to enter the proposed master's in occupational therapy curriculum that will be delivered utilizing various distance education pedagogical strategies. Instructional strategies identified thus far include but are not limited to self-study materials, videotaped class sessions available for check-out, virtual seminars via web-based chatrooms, e-mail communication with faculty and other students, and electronic submission of papers and projects. In addition, the USI Occupational Therapy Program proposes to use a course format model in which students have directed, independent study requirements at the beginning of the semester, meet one weekend per semester for class, and have directed independent study requirements until the end of the semester.

Prerequisite Undergraduate Preparation.

The prospective OTR-Entry route student will be an occupational therapist who provides evidence of (a) graduation from an accredited curriculum in occupational therapy, showing adequate academic performance; (b) eligibility for state credentialing as an occupational therapist; and (c) initial certification as an occupational therapist. Until the entry-level change goes into effect in the occupational therapy profession, the OTS-Entry student will be a USI occupational therapy major who has completed the existing baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy curriculum, showing adequate academic performance. After the postbaccalaureate degree entry mandate takes effect, the OTS-Entry route will consist of all students accepted into the combined BS/MS occupational therapy curriculum at USI

Practicum Requirements

In this proposed master's degree in occupational therapy, the student will complete a 120-clock-hour educator practicum seminar, a 120-clock-hour researcher practicum seminar, and a 250-clock-hour specialized role internship. Students may arrange internships and practical on a full-time or part-time basis.

Innovative Features

The proposed postprofessional master's degree in occupational therapy has several innovative features. First and foremost is the curriculum design which offers seamless articulation from the existing baccalaureate degree curriculum (OTS-Entry) as well as a second route of entry (OTR-Entry) that features improved access to higher education for credentialed occupational therapists. Uniqueness within the state is the second innovative feature. Because Indiana University replaced the postprofessional master's degree in occupational therapy with a master's degree in therapeutic outcomes research in September 1999, the proposed master's degree in occupational therapy at USI will be the only postprofessional (advanced) master's degree in occupational therapy available to occupational therapists in an Indiana public university. Retention of the existing baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy within the combined BS/MS degree curriculum is a third innovative feature. If USI had chosen the professional master's (basic) degree route for graduate curriculum model, students would be eligible for graduate financial assistance only. Because of the seamless articulation of the existing baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy with the proposed master's degree in occupational therapy, the OTS-Entry

student will be eligible for undergraduate financial assistance as well. Basing the curriculum on three of the occupational therapist's roles is the fourth innovative feature. Both the occupational therapy literature and the occupational therapy program's needs assessment support utilizing these roles as a foundation for graduate curricula. The fifth innovative feature of this proposed master's degree in occupational therapy is the primary method of instructional delivery: distance education. Although intended primarily to accommodate prospective students in rural southern Indiana, the distance education aspect of this proposed master's degree in occupational therapy curriculum is also suitable for students living throughout Indiana. Optimizing existing facilities and resources makes this proposed master's degree program unique in the state. The proposed master's degree in occupational therapy will share facilities with the existing occupational therapy associate degree and the baccalaureate curricula in the USI Health Professions Center. Completed in 1994, this building has bright, airy, and spacious classroom, lab, and office space. There is designated storage for occupational therapy equipment; the Day Learning Resource Center is available for student utilization. In addition to sharing equipment of the existing occupational therapy baccalaureate and associate degree curricula, the proposed graduate degree program will share Rice Library resources.

Employment Possibilities:

Regardless of route of entry, possibilities for employment are strong and varied throughout Indiana, particularly southern Indiana, for graduates of this proposed master's degree in occupational therapy curriculum. The OTS-Entry graduate will have advanced professional competence to deliver services as an occupational therapist in a variety of settings including hospitals and clinics, rehabilitation centers, public and private schools, camps, business and industry, community facilities, home health agencies, nursing homes and residential centers, correctional facilities, mental health centers and private practice. Occupational therapists who enroll through the OTR-Entry route are likely to be full-time employees during the time in which they are part-time graduate students. Upon graduation from this proposed master's degree curriculum, the OTR-Entry route students may seek expanded responsibilities and assume leadership roles in their current places of employment or find new employment better suited to their new professional preparation. Graduates of this proposed master's degree in occupational therapy also will have the capacity to create new positions.

The change to postbaccalaureate degree entry in the occupational therapy profession further increases employment possibilities for graduates of this proposed postprofessional master's degree curriculum in occupational therapy. Although occupational therapists who graduated with baccalaureate degrees will be "grandfathered" and not required to obtain a master's degree in occupational therapy to continue practicing, some occupational therapists likely will choose the OTR-Entry to return for advanced training to attain the same educational level as new occupational therapy graduates. The change also will increase the number of persons in the OTS-Entry, since those students no longer will be eligible to exit and sit for the certification examination with only a baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy.