

USC Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching

The Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is committed to excellence in teaching through the use of evidence-based, inclusive pedagogies that foster the knowledge, skills, relationships, and values necessary for students to succeed in a rapidly changing world. USC Chan embraces an inclusive spirit that values the enrichment diversity brings to students' understanding, leading to greater opportunities to improve the lives of all people. It fosters a convergent spirit, teaching students to see problems and solutions from multiple viewpoints, to move fluidly across disciplines, and to work comfortably in disparate teams. It empowers students to innovate and find creative approaches to solving complex problems. USC Chan prepares students to navigate ambiguity, critically evaluate evidence, reflect deeply, utilize intellectual curiosity to identify and realize opportunities, and evolve into visionary leaders who seek impactful and ethical solutions for the contemporary local, national, and global challenges to occupational participation.

1. Respectful and Professional

- a. Conveys commitment to learning through demonstrated effort in, and enthusiasm for, the teaching process
- b. Cultivates professionalism in students through modeling and expecting respectful, mindful, reflective, ethical, and responsible behavior
- c. Recognizes the power differential between professor and student, and acts with integrity toward students
- d. Fosters professional identity development through supporting student use of occupational therapy and occupational science terminology, frameworks and theories

2. Challenging and Supportive

- a. Creates learning objectives and experiences that are challenging yet attainable, incorporating the "just-right-challenge" principle
- b. Models and fosters critical, analytical, and creative thinking
- c. Encourages student curiosity, reflection, exploration, and self-directed learning through an environment that is conducive to intellectual risk-taking
- d. Cultivates a belief that mistakes and failed experiments further knowledge and understanding
- e. Fosters a mindset where growth is always possible, and ability is not fixed
- f. Provides encouragement, positive reinforcement, and support
- g. Guides students to university support services according to university policy

3. Inclusive and Accessible

- a. Creates an environment conducive to open dialogue on marginalization and power related to race, social class, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, disability, immigration status, and/or other aspects of identity
- b. Includes all students' strengths, experiences, and identities in the learning process
- c. Provides materials, cases, or applications that examine diverse experiences, perspectives, and/or populations, as well as address equity and access
- d. Applies multiple techniques and strategies to reach all students in a culturally-responsive way

- e. Ensures equitable access to course materials, grades, and other feedback, utilizing educational technologies (e. g., LMS) as relevant
 - f. Follows guidelines of Universal Design for Learning and accessibility best practices
- 4. Relevant and Engaging**
- a. Uses content that is current, rigorous, and informed by theory, research, evidence, and context
 - b. Uses active learning strategies to promote development of mastery
 - c. Fosters transfer of learning and problem-solving skills to address real-world challenges
 - d. Models and incorporates use of multiple media and technologies aligned with learning objectives and experiences
 - e. Fosters student participation in academic discussions and fosters peer-to-peer collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and feedback
 - f. Facilitates student engagement in inquiry and research
- 5. Prepared and Purposeful**
- a. Uses instructional plan aligned with learning objectives that includes assessment of student prior knowledge, instruction followed by application, and shared reflection of what was learned
 - b. Fosters self-regulation to help students to assess their own learning and adjust their strategies
 - c. Manages learning effectively: plans activities, uses routines, and manages time, behavior, and participation
- 6. Fair and Equitable**
- a. Establishes clear expectations and learning objectives
 - b. Uses formative assessments to evaluate student progress and provide feedback, as well as summative assessments to evaluate mastery
 - c. Uses transparent assessment processes with clear criteria tied to learning objectives
 - d. Provides specific, regular, and timely feedback tied to performance criteria
 - e. Maintains reasonable course policies that are applied uniformly and fairly
- 7. Evidence-Based**
- a. Pursues continuous improvement of teaching and course design by applying research-based best practices
 - b. Uses results from formative and summative peer and student teaching evaluations to inform teaching practice
 - c. Demonstrates effectiveness of instruction through measures of student mastery of learning objectives