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Strategies for Integrating Health Literacy into Entry-level OT Curricula: A Comprehensive Approach

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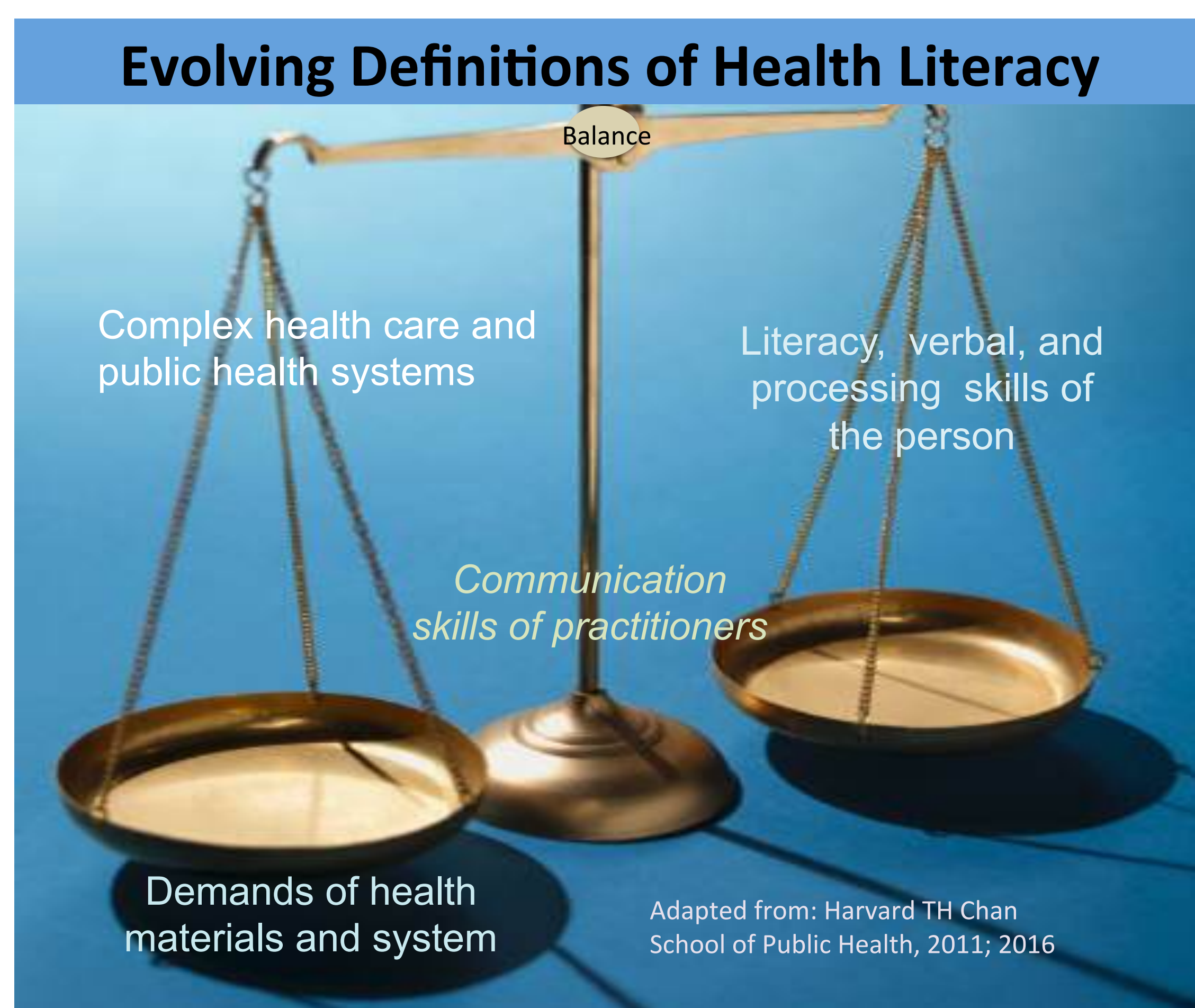
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Strategies for Integrating Health Literacy into Entry-level OT Curricula: A Comprehensive Approach

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Background: Why Does Health Literacy Matter?

- Healthcare practitioners often work with persons with low health literacy without realizing that this issue limit the success of their interventions. They may also lack awareness of the serious impact that low health literacy can have, since it is associated with lower reported health status, increased hospitalizations, and increased morbidity (Levasseur & Carrier, 2011).
- The current US healthcare system places increased demands on consumers to manage their own health (Smith & Gutman, 2011).
- Educators in the health professions must instill a sense of responsibility in future practitioners to understand the important role they play in promoting health literacy.
- Students in the health professions must acquire the tools necessary to empower their clients using health literacy principles.

Audit: Health Literacy Content Related to Standards

Process

- Created worksheet with the 3 primary standards related to Health Literacy and boxes to fill in course(s) linked to each of these standards
- Results summarized into a report and presented at Faculty Retreat

Results

14 courses address ACOTE Standards related to Health Literacy

STANDARD	COURSES/LEARNING ACTIVITY COMPONENT
B.5.18 Demonstrate an understanding of health literacy and the ability to educate and train the client, caregiver, family and significant others, and communities to facilitate skills in areas of occupation as well as prevention, health maintenance, health promotion, and safety.	OT321, <i>Foundations of Occupation-Centered Practice I</i> ; OT322, <i>Foundations of Occupation-Centered Practice II</i> ; OT552, <i>Interventions: Enhancing Human Performance</i> ; OT561, <i>Environmental Competence Lab</i> ; OT562, <i>Environmental Competence In Action</i> ; OT670, <i>Advanced Research Seminar</i> . Health literacy content thus starts early in curriculum and is carried through to completion
B.5.19 Apply the principles of the teaching-learning process using educational methods to design experiences to address the needs of the client, family, significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public.	OT 322, OT 336, OT552, OT 560, OT 562 (see course names above)
B.5.20 Effectively interact through written, oral, and nonverbal communication with the client, family, significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public in a professionally acceptable manner.	OT302, OT321, OT330, OT340, OT341, OT440, OT441, OT357 (see course names above)

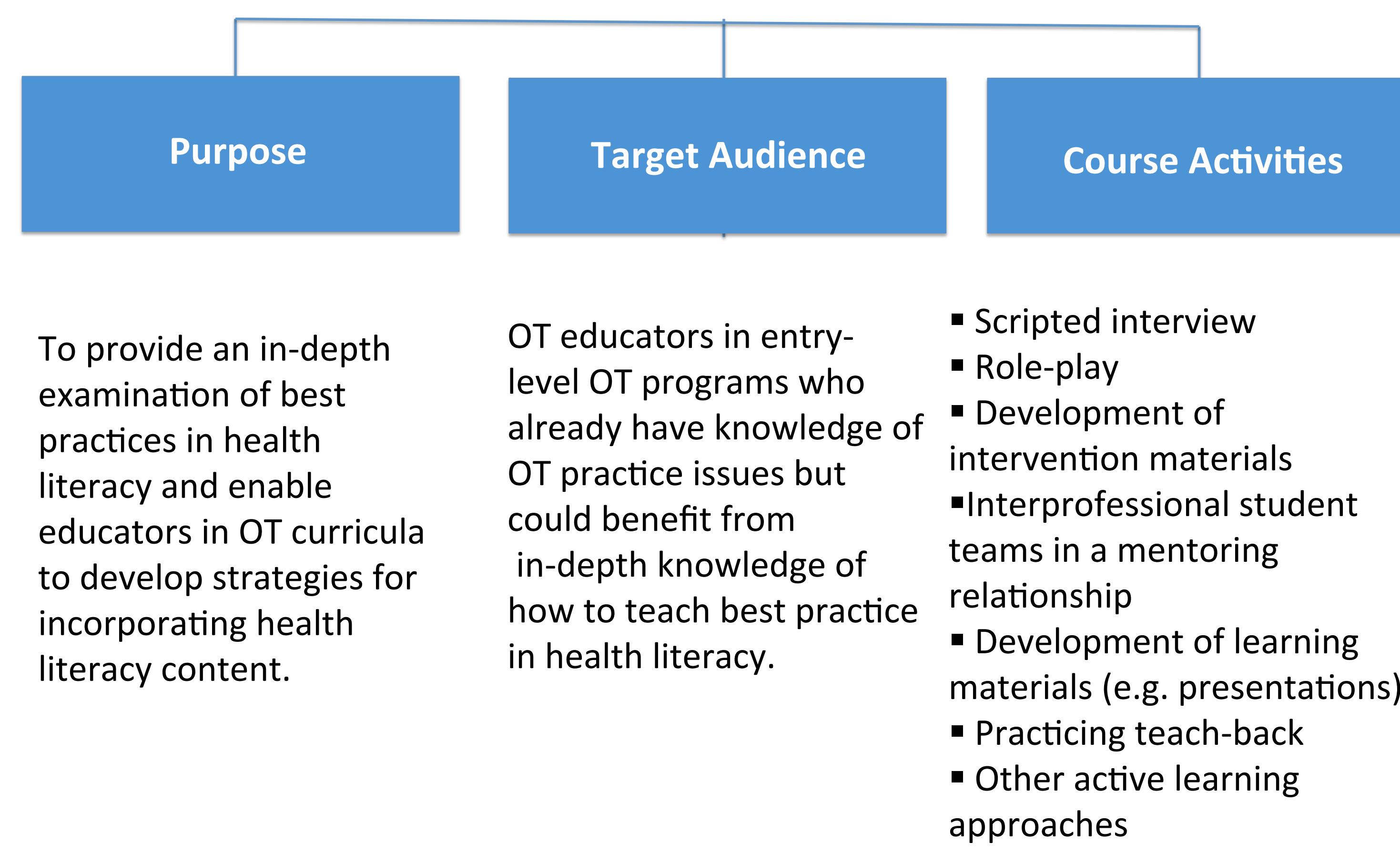
Synopsis: Health literacy is a significant factor impacting the efficacy of healthcare services. Initiatives related to health literacy demonstrate that **OTs have unique opportunities to promote health literacy and facilitate its integration into practice.** It is therefore critical to explore ways in which health literacy content can be incorporated into entry-level OT curricula. Doing so will help ensure that future practitioners are **prepared to meet key standards** related to health literacy, including those established by ACOTE. This session will highlight strategies and methods to incorporate health literacy into entry-level OT curricula.

Session Objectives

Describe key ACOTE standards related to health literacy and discuss their application to specific coursework in entry-level occupational therapy curricula

Discuss strategies and teaching tools for systematically incorporating health literacy content into a wide range of courses and at different levels (introductory, advanced) in OT curricula

Apply ACOTE standards and active learning strategies to their own curricula and develop a plan for implementation



ACOTE Standards for Health Literacy and Corresponding Course Activities

B.5.18. Demonstrate an understanding of health literacy and the ability to educate and train the client, caregiver, family and significant others, and communities to facilitate skills in areas of occupation as well as prevention, health maintenance, health promotion, and safety.

Examples of courses addressing the primary content of this standard

- OT 321¹ *Foundations of Occupation-Centered Practice I* (interpersonal focus; scripted role play; practice teach-back get discussion and feedback); do **Ask Me 3**
- OT 552³ *Interventions: Enhancing Human Performance*: at the beginning of course (1st 2 weeks) there is a lecture and lab on the Teaching-Learning process.
- Clinical Simulation experiences - they receive feedback from Standardized Patients about their communication and health literacy skills. Students' patient handouts are evaluated using health literacy standards (e.g., Flesch-Kincaid reading level).

B.5.19. Apply the principles of the teaching-learning process using educational methods to design experiences to address the needs of the client, family, significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public.

Examples of courses addressing the primary content of this standard

- OT 322, *Foundations of Occupation-Centered Practice II* students create a presentation for peers and teaching content – e.g., how to wear an orthosis; running a wellness group and teaching how to engage in the group
- OT 336⁷, *Occupation Through the Life Span* - students do activity analysis; discuss Teaching-Learning process and how to grade and modify activities, which is related to health literacy.

B.5.20. Effectively interact through written, oral, and nonverbal communication with the client, family, significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public in a professionally acceptable manner.

Examples of courses addressing this standard

- OT 302⁸, *Applied Anatomy & Kinesiology* - students receive education (lecture, lab, readings) and are evaluated (lab practicals; performance of palpation & special tests) on their professional behaviors, clinical touch, and ability to explain their actions to the 'client.' They then are asked to explain their clinical findings in clinical language.
- OT 321, *Foundations of Occupation-Centered Practice I* - learning and writing SOAP notes after they interact with consumer instructors; includes an Interpersonal Module in which students do COPM; learn to interview clients