

Rebecca Cohen, OT/s, Liz Canter, EdM, & Mary Alicia Barnes, OT, OTD
rcohen13@tufts.edu, elizabeth.canter@tufts.edu, mary.barnes@tufts.edu

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Straying From Our Artistic Origins...

- A product of the European & North American **Arts & Crafts movement** of 19th & 20th centuries, early occupational therapy (OT) blended medicine with the arts to heal clients' bodies, minds & **creative spirits**.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾
- US OT later shifted toward a **medical model** of practice to garner scientific credibility, weakening the link between between contemporary OT practice/education & the field's artistic roots.⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾⁽⁶⁾

B. ...When Our Artistic Origins Have Much to Offer

- Arts-Based Education (ABE)** for healthcare professionals is the use of art (e.g., visual arts, drama, music, dance, literature) in teaching to build trainees' clinical reasoning & interpersonal skills.⁽⁷⁾
- ABE is an **effective educational tool** in healthcare training that can support many vital professional capacities, including:⁽⁸⁾⁽⁹⁾⁽¹⁰⁾⁽¹¹⁾⁽¹²⁾⁽¹³⁾⁽¹⁴⁾

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Attention to detail | Cognitive flexibility | Comfort with uncertainty | Creativity |
| Cultural humility | Empathy & emotional reasoning | Interpersonal communication | Passion for practitioner role |

C. Project Site: Tufts University Department of OT

- Situated in a **liberal arts institution** with robust connections to the arts.
- Offers **limited formalized/routine opportunities** for students to engage in ABE, which occurs sporadically throughout foundational coursework & rarely if ever in practice coursework. Estimated frequency = 1-2x/program enrollment.⁽¹⁵⁾

Project Aims

Purpose: Investigate & support Tufts OT student/faculty interest in ABE as a practitioner training tool

Aim 1: Develop, present & assess experiential ABE programming for Tufts OT students

Aim 2: Educate Tufts OT students & faculty about ABE benefits/tools

2. METHODS

A. Educational Material Learning & Development

- Sources:** Art educators & ABE literature/resources, notably Artful Thinking & Visual Thinking Strategies⁽¹⁶⁾⁽¹⁷⁾⁽¹⁸⁾
- Deliverables:** Experiential in-person pilot groups for OT students & virtual resource toolkit for OT educators

C. Pre- & Post-Pilot Group Surveys for Students

- Resources:** Kirkpatrick Model for program evaluation & survey development literature⁽¹⁹⁾⁽²⁰⁾
- Data collection:** Reactions & takeaways; application within the OT curriculum; & feedback for further ABE programming

B. Art & OT Educator Interviews

- Format:** Semi-structured via Zoom or in-person, ~60 min
- Key topics:** Value of ABE, application of ABE within healthcare/OT curricula & best practices in ABE for professional education

D. Mixed Methods Data Analysis

- Quantitative:** Descriptive statistical analysis of pre- & post-survey data
- Qualitative:** Thematic & content analysis of students' written responses to pilot group reflective exit tickets & fieldnotes from stakeholder interviews

3. PARTICIPANTS & STAKEHOLDERS

A. Student Participants (n = 43 Quant, n = 33 Qual)

Quantitative: Pre- & post-survey respondents (n = 43 EL-OTD; 19 Year 1, 19 Year 2, 5 Year 3)

Qualitative: Participants who submitted exit tickets (n = 33 EL-OTD; fully de-identified)

I. Pre-Survey (10 min, Qualtrics)

II. ABE Pilot Group (80 min, in-person)

Guest lectures in 1st & 2nd year courses

Open Meeting in OT Classroom

Open Meeting at TUAG

III. Exit Ticket (10 min, written responses)

2 reflective prompts

IV. Post-Survey (15 min, Qualtrics)

B. Art & OT Educator Stakeholders (n = 7)

Institutional Affiliations:

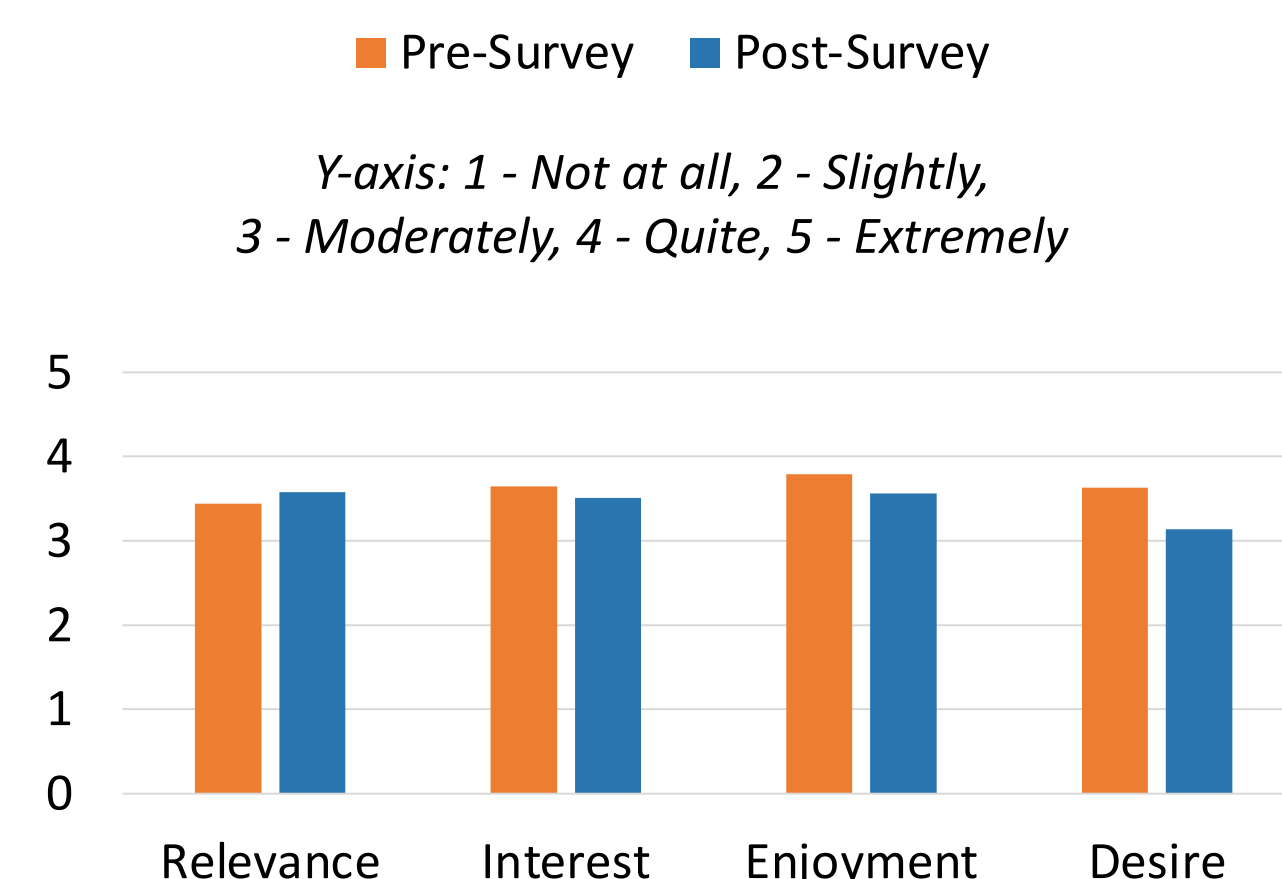
Tufts UNIVERSITY | GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Occupational Therapy

Center for Visual Arts in Healthcare at Brigham & Women's Hospital

Tufts University Art Galleries | SMFQA TUFTS

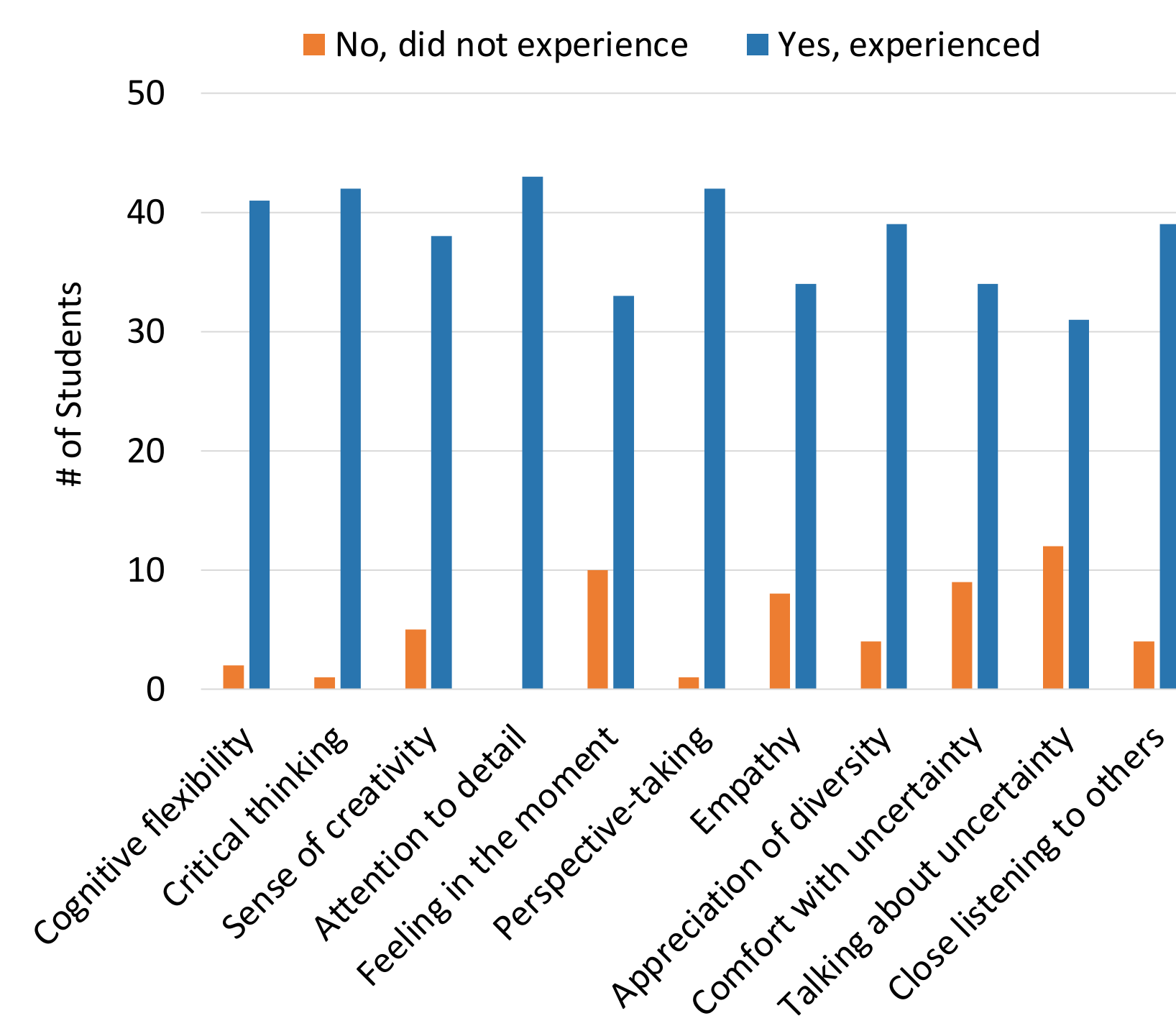
4. QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

A. OT Students' Perceived Relevance, Interest, Enjoyment & Desire for ABE Programming

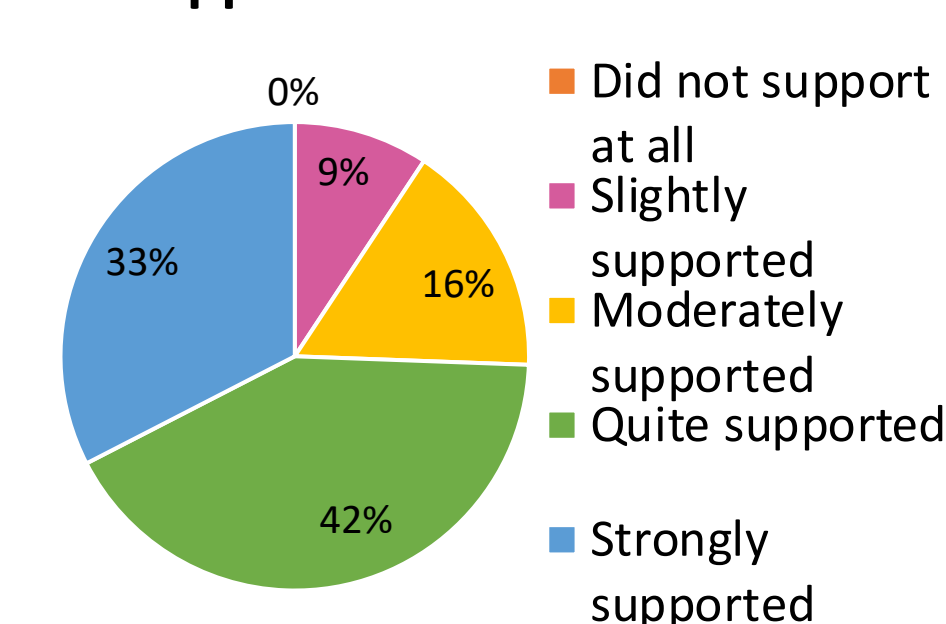


| Measure | Wilcoxin Signed-Rank Z | p value | Kendall's W |
|-----------|------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Relevance | -0.915 | 0.360 | 0.001 |
| Interest | -0.630 | 0.529 | 0.007 |
| Enjoyment | -0.913 | 0.361 | 0.033 |
| Desire | -2.200 | 0.028 | 0.037 |

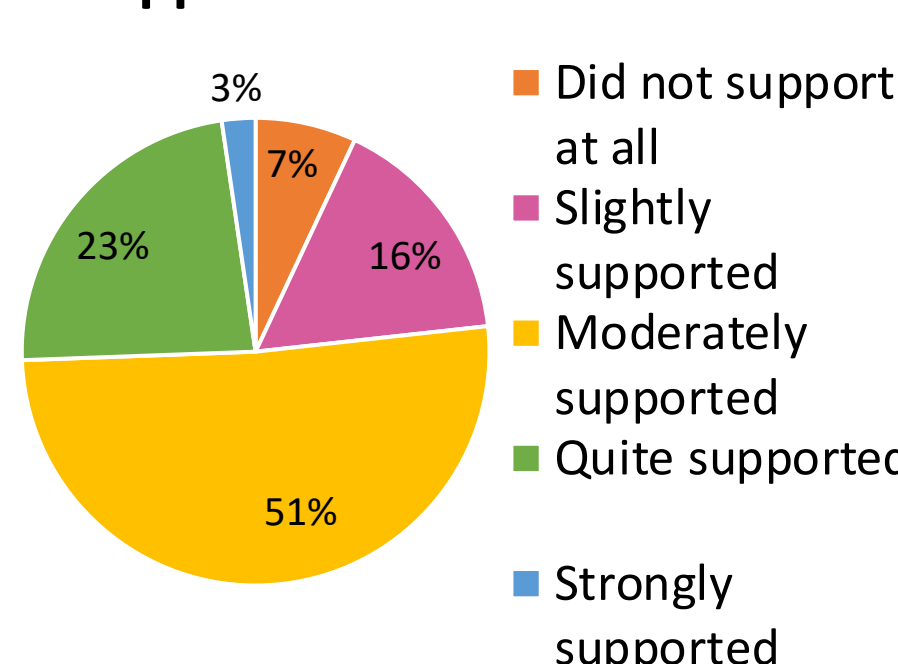
B. Through Pilot Group Participation, Did OT Students Report Experiencing Capacities That ABE Supports?



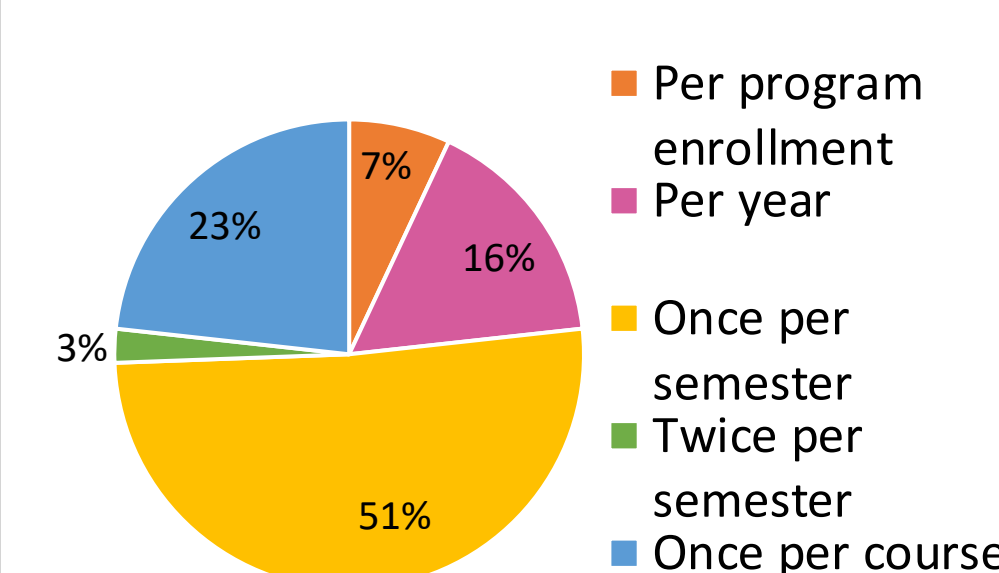
C. Did OT Students Think ABE Supported Observation?



D. Did OT Students Think ABE Supported Communication?



E. How Frequently Do OT Students Want ABE?



98% of student participants likely to participate in **ABE embedded in in-person coursework**.

65% of student participants likely to participate in **extracurricular ABE offered in-person in OT Department**.

5. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

A. Exit Ticket Response Themes & Illustrative Quotes*

- 1. Comparing 2D art to people, occupations & environments**
"Observing art & observing people are very similar tasks. Although most pieces of art cannot walk, talk, or make noise, the observation process is similar."
- 2. Observation process**
"If I open up my definition of art, I can use my observation skills in more nuanced ways clinically. For example, viewing how a person chooses to dress or even move in a similar light as I would observe the type of brushstroke or color an artist chose to use."
- 3. Client-centered care**
"I can view my clients as their own individual works of art, & if they are not able to express themselves verbally or physically, I know there are more details & layers to them underneath."
- 4. Role of assumption & bias**
"I learned that I am fearful to make assumptions..."
- 5. Going beyond the obvious**
"Subjects in art are situated in complex, layered environments that require different considerations, much in the same way occupations/occupational performance is situated so individually & requires us to see past just what is in front of our eyes but also the influences & systems at work."
- 6. Collaboration & communication**
"It's important to listen to our multidisciplinary team members to understand or look at other factors that we didn't notice before. If we listen & work together... we can see how or what the best care for our patient is (like breaking down & analyzing a painting)."
- 7. Supported social & cognitive capacities**
"Coming at a situation with curiosity & without any need to be right... curiosity is important for learning."

*Lightly edited for clarity & brevity

B. Exit Ticket Response Sub-Themes & Frequency



6. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

- Validation of Literature & Site Mission:** Student participants' experiences of ABE validate benefits in literature, with attention to detail, critical thinking, perspective-taking & cognitive flexibility most reported. Students can apply benefits to promoting participation of people, populations & communities.⁽²¹⁾
- Observation Skills & Negative Associations:** Student participants see ABE as a vehicle for practicing & fine-tuning observation skills (more than communication skills). Student reflections reported negative associations (e.g., fear, avoidance & self-shaming) re: hypothesis generation.
- Statistical Shortcomings:** Pre-/post-changes in perceived relevance, interest, enjoyment & desire largely statistically insignificant, with trivial Kendall's W effect sizes. Pre-/post-decrease in desire for ABE, though statistically significant (Z = -2.200, p = 0.028), not practically meaningful as conflicts with survey finding re: most student participants wanting more frequent ABE experiences. Potential influences on statistical results may be ceiling & dosage effects; snapshot measures & sampling; social bias; limitations of pilot group programming &/or inadequate sensitivity of pre-/post-surveys.
- Recommendation & Future Directions:** Embed ABE into curriculum at least 1x/semester. Explore how ABE can target communication & students' comfort with assumptions/hypothesis generation, & methods beyond those used in this project (Visual Thinking Strategies & Artful Thinking with 2D art).⁽¹⁶⁾⁽¹⁷⁾⁽¹⁸⁾

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References & Supplementals

