**Background:** All children should have the opportunity to live productive lives and feel like an accepted member of the community. However, children with disabilities have difficulty accessing and interacting in community environments. Children with disabilities have been found to get less exercise, have less occupational choices, and less opportunities to recreate with other children and their families. Occupational therapy’s role in addressing barriers to participation for children with disabilities is noteworthy, but a focus on examining the benefits of community-based programs where occupational therapy can play a vital role is needed. Participation is needed to foster the development of peer and family relations and improve quality of life for these children and their loved ones.

It is also an exciting time to be in occupational therapy education. In 2014, the occupational therapy profession developed an educational research agenda to increase scholarly activity to determine the best methods to educate occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students. Because of the increasing demands in higher education for accountability, and our own evolutionary changes in degree requirements, it is vital to have an educational workforce with the requisite skills to prepare future clinicians for ever-changing health care delivery systems. Many occupational therapists become faculty members without the necessary educational background to effectively instruct students. While we have experienced faculty members here at ECU – I want to explore how to help all occupational therapy faculty members to be great teachers. This exploration is needed to determine best practices in occupational therapy education improve our ability to prepare our students to enter and thrive in their careers.

**Research Interests:** A primary interest is examining participation of children with disabilities and their families in community contexts. A secondary interest is in the scholarship of teaching and learning with a focus on universal design for learning, and instructional design methods to enhance student learning.

**Research Skills:** Quantitative research, mixed-methods research, quasi-experimental designs

**Research Directions:**

- Investigate the efficacy of occupational therapy in equine assisted activities.
- Explore how occupational therapy educators use universal design for learning principles in the classroom, as well as how occupational therapy practitioners can use these same principles to teach clients/patients when working on independence in daily living tasks.