

OPENING

Prof. Dr. Sergio Santos del Riego, Dean FCS/UDC and President CNDEUTO, 15 October 2009

Welcome to Spain and Galicia. Traditionally, the Meeting of the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education has been based on the theme for the European year: this year, that theme is “two thousand and nine, Creativity and Innovation”. It represents an excellent opportunity to celebrate the start of a new and historic period in Spanish Occupational Therapy.

On the nineteenth of June two thousand and nine, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of the Bologna Declaration, we held the graduation ceremony for the first students in Spain from all five major fields of knowledge to obtain the new university qualification: the Degree in Occupational Therapy awarded by the University of A Coruña. The collective challenges of Occupational Therapy in Spain are met through the reasoned actions of its universities and professionals in four spheres: political, scientific, professional and academic.

1. - To date, the political sphere of Occupational Therapy is relatively limited. There are no occupational therapists on the Spanish National Council for Health Science Specialists. The Act for the Promotion Autonomy and Care of Dependent Persons and Social Services are implemented in the various autonomous communities in an unequal manner.

2. - As for the scientific sphere, the Spanish Professional Association of Occupational Therapy (APETO) is carrying out some extremely useful work. The modernisation of APETO is a gradual process, requiring the ongoing incorporation of large numbers of occupational therapists.

3. - In professional terms, and with five official colleges (Aragón, Navarra, the Balearics, Extremadura and the Basque Country), the core of the National Council of Occupational Therapy Colleges and professional associations in the autonomous communities are also calling for greater commitment and involvement from Spain's occupational therapists.

4.- In the academic sphere, we have the Spanish Association of Deans of Occupational Therapy (CNDEUTO), which drew up the White Paper for the Degree Course for ANECA, Spain's National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation, and the Ministerial Order specifying the ENOTHE training competences for Occupational Therapy in Spain. This association is made up of the eighteen (18) university schools of Occupational Therapy that are currently immersed in adapting their courses and qualifications to the principles that govern the European Higher Education Area. Nine (9) Degrees in Occupational Therapy have now replaced the former Diploma Courses, and the remaining nine will be implemented during the next academic year. The Degree in Occupational Therapy provides students with access to postgraduate study and research through the Official Masters and PhD programmes.

I would like to end by thanking you all for your presence here. Thank youj. Thank you very much!!! and,...ij>Welcome at the city of A Coruña and our University!!!.