

Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program Student Fieldwork and Capstone Manual



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INTRODUCTION

The Student Fieldwork and Capstone Manual is designed as a guide to assist students in understanding policies and procedures related to Level I, Level II Fieldwork (FW), and Capstone experiences. Information included in this guide does not serve in any manner as a contract. Changes and exceptions to this manual may be made by the University of Arkansas Fayetteville (UAF)/ University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Occupational Therapy (OT) Department. Questions are welcome and should be directed to the Academic Fieldwork or Capstone Coordinators.

Definitions

Fieldwork and Capstone experiences are a highly regulated and critical component of the OT education process and adhere to the UAF/UAMS OT Curriculum design and the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) standards.

Fieldwork

From ACOTE®:

<https://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/StandardsReview/2018-ACOTE-Standards-Interpretive-Guide.pdf>

“Fieldwork education is a crucial part of professional preparation and is best integrated as a component of the curriculum design. The fieldwork experience is designed to promote clinical reasoning and reflective practice, transmit the values and beliefs that enable ethical practice, and develop professionalism and competence in career responsibilities. Fieldwork experiences should be implemented and evaluated for their effectiveness by the educational institution. The experience should provide the student with the opportunity to carry out professional responsibilities under the supervision of qualified personnel serving as a role model” (ACOTE, 2018, p. 39).

Capstone

“The doctoral capstone shall be an integral part of the program’s curriculum design. The goal of the doctoral capstone is to provide an in-depth exposure to one or more of the following: clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, education, and theory development.”

The doctoral capstone consists of two parts:

1. Capstone project: The student will complete an individual capstone project to demonstrate synthesis and application of knowledge gained.
2. Capstone experience: The student will complete an individual 14-week

capstone experience that must be started after completion of all coursework and Level II fieldwork, and completion of preparatory activities defined in D.1.3 (ACOTE, 2018, p.44).

Our Beliefs

Clinical education (Level I and II Fieldwork) experiences prepare students for successful transition from the classroom to entry-level OT practice and are key components in the development of a student's professional identity and integrity as an *occupational* therapist. The Capstone project and experience allow students in depth exposure to demonstrate future practitioner's ability to be change agents, innovators, collaborators, advocates, stewards, and scholars.

Our teaching philosophy and curriculum design align with occupation-centered values that guide the profession of OT and the discipline of Occupational Science (OS). Integrative classroom and clinical education enable students to enact our distinctive view of humans as occupational and social beings who learn and adapt in and through their associations and contexts across the lifespan (AOTA, 2018). Through didactic and real-world experiences, students come to understand authentic OT practice, which utilizes occupation as a therapeutic modality to facilitate adaptation, well-being, restoration, and health. Exposure to a wide range of traditional and emerging practice domains allows students to explore the transformative potential of OT in a variety of environments with diverse populations across the lifespan.

Fieldwork and Capstone Personnel

Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

Danielle Acurio, OTD, OTR/L
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Doctoral Capstone Coordinator

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Academic Fieldwork Coordinator/Doctoral Capstone Coordinator

Carrie Hamblin
Administrative Coordinator
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*All faculty may participate in Fieldwork and Capstone as needed/assigned.

Fieldwork and Capstone Database: EXXAT

A list of sites with an ACTIVE contract with UAF/UAMS is available on the FW and Capstone database, EXXAT. Students will use this database to manage personal information, maintain required fieldwork and capstone documents, and identify preferences, as instructed. Instructions for accessing the database are provided during EXXAT training early in the first semester of the curriculum.

Site Selections and Areas of Practice

The UAF/UAMS OTD Program has contracts with fieldwork and capstone sites around the country. Sites include, but are not limited to hospitals, community agencies, schools, private practices, outpatient programs, and complimentary/emerging practice settings. Per ACOTE® (2018) standards, all fieldwork and capstone experiences must be at sites where the UAF/UAMS OTD Program has an active Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOUs are managed by the AFWC/DCC and can be found in the EXXAT database.

The OT Program is always seeking new Level I or II fieldwork sites and capstone sites. However, **students may only select from the available sites found on the current FW database.** In collaboration with the AFWC and/or DCC, students will utilize EXXAT to select their preferred sites/geographic preferences by identifying and ranking areas of potential interest, and meeting all posted deadlines. It is expected that students will take into consideration all personal needs as well as all financial and family responsibilities prior to identifying their fieldwork preferences (location or site). See additional information under “Site Selection Policy”.

Areas of OT Practice as defined by our program:

Traditional: Traditional practice areas include sites that regularly employ occupational therapists to address the medical or educational needs of individuals, groups, and populations throughout the lifespan. Examples include - adult hospitals (acute care, inpatient rehab), inpatient rehab facilities, adult outpatient clinics, pediatric outpatient clinics, home health, skilled nursing, and school-based practice.

Non-traditional: Non-traditional practice areas include sites that employ a limited number of occupational therapists to address the needs of individuals, groups, and populations, throughout the lifespan, with specific modalities or specialty services. Examples include – aquatic therapy, hippotherapy, and women’s health

Emerging: Emerging practice areas include sites that do not employ occupational therapists. These sites employ social workers, licensed professional counselors, and behavior support personnel that address the mental health of individuals, groups, and populations, throughout the lifespan. Examples include - residential and day treatment facilities for clients with severe mental illness; residential programs for foster children; safe housing for women who have experienced trauma, addiction, and/or incarceration; workshop programs, and the homeless

population. Additional sites may not employ any medical professionals. Examples may include homeless shelters, centers for refugees, and/or state parks and recreation sites. Additionally, our program has identified programs that support the Marshallese population as an emerging area of practice. Examples include – the UAMS IPE Marshallese clinic, and SOAR Afterschool.

LEVEL I and II FIELDWORK and CAPSTONE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of clinical learning (fieldwork & capstone) is required by our accrediting body, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) to graduate from this program. Therefore, students who cannot complete clinical learning cannot graduate from this program.

Students are responsible for meeting site-specific requirements as outlined on the Fieldwork/Capstone Database (EXXAT) on the site's Data Form. Such requirements may include, but are not limited to, drug screenings, criminal background checks, proof of immunizations, and CPR certification.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for obtaining and reporting to the OTD Department:

- Annual 2-step TB test or blood titer and annual flu shot (*Note: Annual TB tests are required by the OT Department until all affiliation agreements are updated to reflect UAMS policy changes that does not require annual TB testing. The AFWC/DCC will notify students when this process is completed.*)
- A 10-panel drug screen **before** starting the program in January
- American Heart Association BLS certification/re-certification
- Background check **before** starting the program in January
- Updated background checks IF needed or required by the site
- Standard fingerprinting IF needed or required by the site
- Additional immunizations described below. These must be completed **before** starting the program in January

Immunizations

Guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention

- 1.) HEPATITIS B VACCINE with dates of each injection or declination completed. Three (3) hepatitis B injections are needed. At least the first two of three injections must have been completed before clinical practice in a student role
- 2.) TUBERCULOSIS SKIN TEST with date and result or T-Spot TB test results completed annually. (*Note: The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences does not currently require this test. However, most of our affiliation agreements require a two-step test or negative blood titer.*)
 - a. IF a TB skin test is positive, it should be verified with a T-Spot.

- b. If the T-spot is positive or if only a positive skin test is submitted, a chest x-ray must be completed and updated annually.
 - c. If a skin test is positive and the T-spot is negative, a T-Spot must be updated annually.
 - d. Students that present with documentation of completed treatment should have an annual review of symptoms by physician/advanced practice nurse and provide that documentation to AFWC.
- 3.) MEASLES, MUMPS, and RUBELLA: Date of illness, serologic evidence of immunity, or vaccination dates as recommended by CDC.
 - 4.) TETANUS-DIPHTHERIA-PERTUSSUS (Tdap) VACCINE: Routine booster of Td vaccine should be given at 10-year intervals.
 - 5.) VARICELLA (chicken pox): A two injection series; reliable history of varicella disease, a positive titer, evidence of immunity, or vaccination dates.
 - 6.) COVID-19 Vaccines
 - 7.) Any other immunization that may be required by clinical agencies or CDC guidelines.

Drug Screen Results

The purpose of the drug screen policy outline in the OTD Student Fieldwork and Capstone Manual is to comply with regulations of area health care agencies, to provide optimal care to clients, and to support the university's zero tolerance policy related to illicit use of substances as stated in the [University of Arkansas Student Handbook: Student Standards of Conduct.](#)

- If students have inconclusive results on the 10-panel drug screen, they will be responsible for taking the test again, at their own cost.
- If inconclusive results are obtained on the second test or positive results are reported, students will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of possible exclusion from clinical learning due to drug screen policies of partnering clinical sites.
- Students who are unable to complete clinical coursework due to results of the drug screen cannot progress in the curriculum, resulting in a delay in graduation (see progressions policies in the OTD student handbook).
- Confirmation of a positive drug screen may result in dismissal from the program.

Background Check Results

- All students must satisfactorily complete a criminal background check before the program begins in January and annually IF required by the clinical facility prior to beginning clinical experience. A background check may take up to one month to complete. The background checks are conducted by PreCheck, Inc, a firm specializing in background checks for health care workers. Orders must be placed online through StudentCheck. Information detailing the steps to follow for the submission of the background check will be emailed to students after admission to the OTD program.
- Results of the background check are reported to the Academic Fieldwork and/or Capstone Coordinator.

- An unsatisfactory background check:
 - May impede or halt the student's progression in the program
 - May result in the student being moved to another clinical site OR asked to withdraw from the course if other sites are not available.
 - May prohibit the student from sitting for the National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) exam (See [NBCOT Certification Examination Handbook for OTR and COTA Candidates](#)). Students are encouraged to request an Early Determination Review from NBCOT to know if they will be allowed to sit for the national board exam. All states require passage of the NBCOT exam to become a licensed occupational therapist.
 - May prohibit the student from obtaining an occupational therapy license ([See Arkansas Medical Practices Act – Occupational Therapy 48-53](#))
 - **NOTE:** If the background check reveals a positive history of any type, it will be reviewed by the academic fieldwork coordinator and the student will be advised as to the potential consequences, based on the nature of the offense. Consequences can include difficulty obtaining clinical placement and/or potential dismissal from the program. Students are required to review a positive history with potential fieldwork sites and obtain written clearance for placement that is submitted to EXXAT and the AFWC/DCC. Students who are rejected by a clinical site on the basis of criminal background check results are not guaranteed an alternate placement.
 - Failure to disclose changes in criminal history/status present ethical concerns and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
 - An unsatisfactory background check may lead to potential delay in graduation or dismissal from the program. If not dismissed, and the student wishes to continue in the program, the student will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of possible exclusion from clinical learning, exclusion for sitting for the board exam, and/or acquiring state licenses.

Eligibility

Eligibility to participate in clinical rotations will not be final until the completion of a criminal background check and drug testing with results deemed acceptable to the applicable clinical sites. If students are unable to participate in clinical placements due to unacceptable results of the background check or drug test, they will fail the course and may be dismissed from the program.

Falsifying Information

Students who refuse to provide necessary information or who provide false or misleading information in regard to the background check will be dismissed from the program due to violation of ethical principles.

Transportation & Housing

Each student is responsible for transportation and housing expenses while on FWI, FWII, and Capstone Experiences. If the student identifies a specific city on the Preference Form, the Program presumes the student will be able to arrange for their own transportation to any site in that city. The AFWC, DCC, or their designated staff are not responsible for arranging FW or Capstone placement around transportation or housing-related issues.

Dress Code

Students are required to know and follow the accepted dress code for their assigned site. Appropriate Dress is MANDATORY while on FW or while participating in other professional activities (ie conferences, service learning, etc.).

****Refer to the Occupational Therapy Student Handbook, page 5 for more information.***

Health Emergency or Work-Related Injury or Illness at a Fieldwork or Capstone Site

If a student becomes ill or injured while on fieldwork or during capstone experiences, the student must seek medical attention immediately. The contract with each site ensures that the site will arrange emergency medical care while the student is on site. However, the site is not responsible for assuming any injury-related cost. Please refer to your personal insurance for additional coverage information. Student Health Insurance information can be found here <https://health.uark.edu/billing-insurance/insurance.php>

Once the student's situation has stabilized, and the emergency contact has been reached, the student or their designee, must notify the AFWC or DCC and Student Health at The University of Arkansas at <https://health.uark.edu/>. This is especially important in cases of exposure to bodily fluids. The student, OT program, and FW Educator will assist in determining continuation of the fieldwork or capstone experience in cases of severe illness/injury.

*The UA/UAMS OTD Program will follow federal, state, and institutional guidelines as well as clinical site-specific requirements related to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. The goal is that students complete all didactic, fieldwork and capstone experiences on time. The AFWC and DCC will work with students on an individual basis to complete required coursework and clinical hours per ACOTE standards if absences occur due to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. However, delays in a student's progression may extend the student's expected graduation date.

Websites have been created to provide UA and UAMS student information related to COVID-19:

<https://health.uark.edu/coronavirus/>

<https://academicaffairs.uams.edu/covid-19-guidelines-for-students/>

Please review this information carefully and remember that this page is updated regularly as the evolving situation warrants.

Termination of the Fieldwork or Capstone Experience

Decisions to terminate any fieldwork (Level I or II) or capstone experience are completed in consultation with and approval of the AFWC or DCC. If a site requests to terminate a student placement due to professional behavior issues, safety concerns, or ethical violations, the student will be referred to the OTD Progressions Committee to determine course of action (see Occupational Therapy Student Handbook, 16 - 29). The AFWC and/or DCC will consult with the OTD Progressions Committee to determine if termination from the site results in a failure of the course.

If the student placement is terminated due to circumstances beyond the student and department's control or at the request of the student, the AFWC and/or DCC will attempt to place the student at another appropriate site. Any disruption of or termination of fieldwork or capstone experiences may result in a delay in graduation and may impact financial aid. Students are responsible for contacting the graduate school and financial aid for more information.

Site Evaluations

Students will complete a Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE): Level I and Level II form about the fieldwork experiences and a Student Evaluation of Capstone Experience form. This is exchanged AND discussed with the FW/or Capstone Educator during the performance review. The student will return this form signed by the FW/ or Capstone Educator to the AFWC or CC by the date designated in the syllabus.

Placements

Level I: Students participate in three, Level I Fieldwork Experiences. These experiences are selected and assigned by the AFWC with some collaboration with student. Every effort is made to complete the placement process at least 1 month before Level IA, 3 months before Level IB and IC. See specific information for each experience below.

Level II: Students participate in two, Level II Fieldwork Experiences. Students collaborate with the AFWC in selecting areas of practice. Students rank their preference from available locations in the EXXAT database. The EXXAT support team sends an automated report that assigns each student to the highest rank location possible while considering all other student rankings. Every effort is made to complete the placement process at least 3 – 4 months before the rotation begins. See specific information for each experience below.

Contacting Fieldwork Placement: Student

Level I Fieldwork Experiences: Students should seek permission to contact the fieldwork site from the AFWC, 2 weeks prior to the start date. Once permission is received, the student should send his/her EXXAT profile link and a follow-up email.

Level II Fieldwork Experiences: Students should seek permission to contact the fieldwork site, from the AFWC, 4 weeks prior to the start date. Once permission is received, the student should send his/her EXXAT profile link and a follow-up email.

Communication with the Level I, Level II FW, and Capstone placement site:

- Ask for the contact person listed on the assignment form or the Student Coordinator
- Introduce yourself, tell them what school you are from, and confirm dates with the sites Fieldwork Coordinator/ contact person.
- Ask for the name of your supervisor for the fieldwork experience and the contact information – email will probably be the best way to communicate.
- Ask specifics for the fieldwork: parking, location of center, hours, dress code, etc.
- **Confirm requirements** specific to that site: CPR certification, background check, drug test, etc. Requirements are listed for each site in the database and on the FW Data Forms.
- If you do not receive an answer via email in a week, try again OR call the site! Email the AFWC and/or DCC if you are unable to reach the contact person after a 2nd attempt.

Criteria for Changing Sites after Confirmation

If a student finds they are unable to participate in fieldwork (FWI or FWII) at their designated/chosen site, the student must contact the FW Administrative Coordinator or AFWC immediately to discuss the nature and reason for their inability to do so. Requests for changes based on personal needs will be considered on an individual basis. Proof of hardship may be required.

Criteria to Change Timing of Level I, Level II Fieldwork, or Capstone

All requests for changes in the Level I and/or Level II FW experience are made directly to the AFWC. Requests for changes in Capstone are made directly to the DCC. Students acknowledge that due to the integrative nature of the OT curriculum, any change in the timing of fieldwork or capstone placements are at the discretion of the AFWC or DCC in consultation with the OTD Program Director and Progressions Committee Chair and may result in delayed graduation. Students are not to contact sites individually to request a change unless authorized by the AFWC or DCC in writing.

Level I: Level I FW experiences are integrated into the curriculum and scheduled by the AFWC. These dates are published on the Department Academic Calendar and in EXXAT.

Students will complete their fieldwork at the scheduled times unless:

- They meet the criteria for changing sites outlined previously
- A site has requested and the AFWC has approved students during an alternate time

- The change in time is deemed necessary by the AFWC.

Level II: Level II FW experiences are scheduled by the AFWC. These dates are published on the Department Academic Calendar and in EXXAT. In unusual circumstances, students may request to modify the dates of their scheduled Level II FW.

Requests are required to be in writing (e-mail) to the AFWC and should include:

- The name of the student
- Date of the request
- Requested dates to be changed (beginning and ending date)
- The name of the assigned Level II Fieldwork site

After consulting with the Program Director and Chair of the Progressions Committee, the AFWC will contact the site for the student and request the date modification. If the site is unable to accommodate the student, the AFWC will do everything reasonably possible to ensure students complete the FW experience in a timely manner. However, if FW Experiences cannot be completed on time, the student may have tuition costs for enrollment in additional semester(s).

Capstone: Capstone experiences are scheduled by the DCC. The dates are published on the Department Academic Calendar and in EXXAT. In unusual circumstances, students may request to modify the dates of their scheduled Capstone experience.

Requests are required to be in writing (e-mail) to the DCC and should include:

- The name of the student
- Date of the request
- Requested dates to be changed (beginning and ending date)
- The name of the assigned Capstone experience site

After consulting with the Program Director and Chair of the Progressions Committee, the DCC will contact the site for the student and request the date modification. If the site is unable to accommodate the student, the DCC will do everything reasonably possible to ensure students complete the Capstone experience in a timely manner. However, if Capstone Experiences cannot be completed on time, the student may have tuition costs for enrollment in additional semester(s).

It is the fieldwork and capstone site's prerogative to change the date of the experience or deny the request. The student will be notified of request acceptance or denial. IF changed dates are suggested, the student must immediately contact the AFWC or DCC before any commitments are made.

LEVEL 1 FIELDWORK SEMINAR

- Each Level I FW Seminar course will be taken concurrently with a Level I FW Experience:
 - OCTH 53501 Level I Fieldwork Seminar: Physical Conditions, Fall year 1
 - OCTH 54501 Level I Fieldwork Seminar: Neurology, Spring year 2
 - OCTH 56501 Level I Fieldwork Seminar: Behavioral and Mental Health, Summer year 3

These seminar courses are designed to intentionally connect fieldwork experiences to didactic coursework through individual reflection and peer discussion. Please refer to these syllabi for specific objectives and assignments.

LEVEL I FIELDWORK

Fieldwork I Requirements

All students must earn permission to progress to fieldwork experiences. Permission is obtained upon successful completion of coursework and program requirements preceding the fieldwork experience. During all fieldwork and professional activities, students are expected to adhere to the AOTA Code of Ethics (2020 <https://ajot.aota.org/article.aspx?articleid=2767077>).

Note: Because the development of clinical skills & professional behaviors is the ultimate goal of our clinical educational program, students must pass each fieldwork experience to progress into the next semester. Students who do not pass a Level 1 fieldwork experience will be referred to the Progressions Committee who will work with the student & faculty advisor to develop a remediation plan in preparation for repeating the Level 1 FW experience. If students do not successfully complete the remediation plan and second attempt at Level 1 FW, they will follow procedures outlined in the Student Handbook request a leave of absence from the program. Additionally, Level I fieldwork will NOT be substituted for any part of the Level II fieldwork.

In the rare circumstance of unforeseen hardship, every reasonable effort will be made to reschedule the fieldwork within the current semester, allowing a second Level 1 FW attempt, but it may not be possible.

Learning Objectives & Assignments:

Course syllabi are the official documents for **all** learning objectives and assignments.

Integrated Physical Disabilities/Rehabilitation experience

This required experience exposes students to practice with a general medical, orthopedic, or complimentary/emerging practice across the lifespan

Options include hospitals – pediatrics or adult (acute inpatient, inpatient rehab), skilled nursing facilities, outpatient, home health, rural health clinics, and complimentary/emerging practice

settings, etc. This fieldwork will be scheduled Fall of Year 1 to coincide with didactic learning specific to physical conditions.

Integrated Neurologic Disabilities/Rehabilitation experience

This required experience exposes students to practice with a neurology focus across the lifespan

Options include hospitals – pediatrics or adult (acute inpatient, inpatient rehab), skilled nursing facilities, outpatient, home health, community-based programming, and complimentary/emerging practice settings etc. This fieldwork will be scheduled Spring of Year 2 to coincide with didactic learning specific to neurologic conditions.

Integrated Behavioral and Mental Health experience

This required experience exposes students to Behavioral and Mental Health practice across the lifespan

Options include hospitals – pediatrics or adult (acute inpatient, inpatient rehab), skilled nursing facilities, outpatient, home health, mental health facilities, community-based programming, and complimentary/emerging practice settings etc.

This fieldwork will be scheduled Summer of Year 2 to coincide with didactic learning specific to behavioral and mental health.

Level I Supervision Requirements

*Note with Level I FW, per accreditation standards, there does not need to be an occupational therapist on site. If there is no occupational therapist on site, OTD student supervision is provided by another licensed or otherwise regulated professional who has knowledge of OT roles (i.e. social worker, counselor, special education teacher, physical therapist, physician, nurse practitioner, etc.). The seminar course that accompanies each Level I FW experience will guide student reflection and ensure students effectively integrate knowledge and competencies from OTD coursework. (C.1.8)

Student Performance Evaluation

The evaluation of Level 1 Fieldwork performance is based largely upon the mastery of site-specific objectives and professional behaviors. See course syllabi for more information.

LEVEL II FIELDWORK

Level II Fieldwork is an integral part of the OT educational experience. Students will integrate and operationalize their knowledge and skills with the assistance of clinical mentorship. This 12-week experience prepares students for successful transition from the classroom to entry-level OT practice and is a key component in the development of a student's professional identity and integrity as an ***occupational therapist***.

Fieldwork II Requirements

All students must earn permission to progress to fieldwork experiences. Permission is obtained upon successful completion of coursework and program requirements preceding the fieldwork experience. During all fieldwork and professional activities, students are expected to adhere to the AOTA's Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2020 <https://ajot.aota.org/article.aspx?articleid=2767077>).

Learning Objectives & Assignments:

Course syllabi are the official documents for objectives and assignments. However, students should **expect** to have additional learning objectives and assignments that are required from their fieldwork site.

Length

Each OTD student must successfully complete 24 weeks of Level II Fieldwork experiences in order to complete the requirements for progression toward graduation from the UAF/UAMS OTD Program. These 24 weeks are usually completed in two, twelve-week experiences.

Level II Fieldwork experiences may be completed on a part-time basis of no less than 0.5 full time equivalency (20 hours per week) in the rare circumstance of unforeseen hardship(s). Students must make a written request to the AFWC when the hardship arises. This letter must include justification of hardship and request for part-time completion of the fieldwork experience. After consulting with the Program Director and Chair of the Progressions Committee, the AFWC will work with the student and fieldwork educator to determine if a part time experience is feasible. The fieldwork site must approve and agree to support a part-time experience including student timelines, learning outcomes, plans for supervision, and plans for evaluation. If the site is unable to support a part time experience, the AFWC will attempt to find an alternative site. A part-time fieldwork experience may result in a delay in graduation from the program and in additional financial obligations. Students must sign an acknowledgement stating that completing the fieldwork experience on a part-time basis may delay graduation and impact financial aid. Students are responsible for contacting the graduate school and financial aid for more information. All **program requirements** must be completed **within 5 years** of the student's **original** semester of enrolment (see Student Handbook) C.1.10.

Supervision

There are multiple sources of supervision guidelines that are applicable to Level II fieldwork. The first source are state laws and state practice acts that govern the practice of occupational therapy. These documents will specify if there are any specific requirements for supervision that need to be upheld in that state. Another source of supervision guidelines are federal regulations such as Medicare that specify what type of supervision must be provided to fieldwork students in certain healthcare settings and with certain types of Medicare coverage.

Traditional Settings

The AOTA Web site <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Fieldwork/StuSuprvsn.aspx> is a good source for the most up-to-date information on Medicare regulations for student supervision. The ACOTE Standards specify that during Level II fieldwork, students must be supervised by a licensed or credentialed occupational therapy practitioner with at least 1 year of experience who is adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator. Further, the Standards state that supervision should initially be direct, and then progress to less direct supervision as is possible given the demands of the fieldwork site, the complexity of the client's condition being treated, and the abilities of the fieldwork student (C.1.13). The AFWC provides fieldwork educators with resources that outline suggested caseload progression and supervision guidelines. *If a student has concerns that the level of supervision from a fieldwork educator does NOT meet state or federal standards, they should contact the AFWC immediately.* If a site provides their own suggested caseload progression, this information will be reviewed by the AFWC and provided to the student prior to the fieldwork experience via EXXAT.

Role Emerging

Specific to the role-emerging fieldwork placement, where the site does not employ an occupational therapist on staff and the fieldwork is designed to promote the development of occupational therapy services, supervision guidelines specify that students be supervised daily on site by another professional familiar with the role of occupational therapy. Additionally, 8 hours of direct supervision should be provided weekly by a licensed occupational therapist with at least three years of experience. The AFWC and/or the student's faculty advisor will be available via email and phone during all working hours. The contact information will be provided to the on-site supervisor designee and student before the fieldwork experience begins. In the event that the AFWC or faculty member are not available, they will designate another member of faculty or the Program Director to take calls from FW supervisors.

In addition to the direct supervision, the student, occupational therapy supervisor, and on-site supervisor will meet for no less than 30 minutes per week. During this time, the team will complete the "Level II Emerging Practice Site" fieldwork form. The student will receive specific instructions about the expectations for this fieldwork once they are assigned by the AFWC. The student and AFWC will meet to discuss the requirements to ensure that the student understands that they must contact the AFWC and/or their faculty advisor if the supervision on-site or by the OT supervisor differs in any way than what is required by ACOTE Standard C.1.14.

Adapted from: AOTA. (2012). COE Guidelines for an Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Experience - Level II Fieldwork. Retrieved from <https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Educators/Fieldwork/LevelII/COE%20Guidelines%20for%20an%20Occupational%20Therapy%20Fieldwork%20Experience%20--%20Level%20II--Final.pdf>

Setting

FWII experiences will occur in at least two different practice domains and must include exposure to individuals and populations at varied lifespan stages. Typically, the experiences

occur in different facilities; however, FWII experiences can be completed in the same facility IF they involve different practice areas (for example one hospital may offer both adult psychiatric services and pediatric acute care). However, FWIIs cannot be in more than four different settings per ACOTE standard C.1.10. (2018).

Course Credit

The Level II fieldwork experiences are credited courses (six credit hours each). All OTD academic work (including all assignments, exams, papers, etc. and Level 1 FWs) MUST be completed and all course grades must be entered before FWII experiences can begin. Failure to complete all required work & Level 1 FW will result in the student not being able to begin FWII on schedule.

OCTH 56606 Level II Fieldwork A and OCTH 57606 Level II Fieldwork B

These courses provide fieldwork experiences in a variety of clinical or community-based settings under the supervision of an occupational therapist. Students participate in supervised clinical placements to demonstrate professional behaviors, clinical reasoning, and professional competencies required for entry-level general occupational therapy practice. In interdisciplinary partnerships, students will complete occupational therapy evaluations, interventions, and discharge planning that is occupation-centered, aligns with clients' capabilities and strengths, and complies with institutional policies/reimbursement systems. Critical and self-reflexive examination of service provision is expected. Duration is typically twelve weeks.

Level II fieldwork is graded with a Credit/Fail grading scale. The grade of "Credit" is earned when a student earns a 111 or higher on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE). Per AOTA guidelines, students must receive a 3 or above in the areas of ethics and safety and receive a final evaluation without a score of 1 (Unsatisfactory Performance) on any section of the FWPE. Fieldwork Experience courses with the Credit/Fail grading are not included in the semester GPA calculations.

CAPSTONE PROJECT AND EXPERIENCE

The Doctoral Capstone is designed to allow students to apply knowledge and skills gained across the curriculum through an individualized in-depth exposure to one or more of the following: clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, education and theory development.

The doctoral capstone aligns with the department's vision and mission and serves a dual purpose: to broaden the knowledge base of OT by building evidence through faculty and department research agendas, and to equip students with the requisite mindset and skill set to advance their particular areas of interest. The curriculum design prompts students to begin thinking about areas of interest in all foundational courses. Multiple courses each term will inform an occupation-centered perspective of the Capstone while keeping in mind the intended progression of student

learning. Exposure to a wide range of traditional and emerging practice domains allows students to explore the transformative potential of OT in a variety of environments with diverse populations across the lifespan.

Capstone consists of two parts, the Capstone Project and the Capstone Experience. The capstone project is a proposal completed prior to the experience and includes individualized learning objectives, activities to meet those objectives, proposed timelines and supporting evidence, a plan for supervision, and a plan for evaluation. This project demonstrates synthesis of in-depth knowledge in the designated area of interest prior to the 14-week experience.

Capstone Experience Requirements

All students must earn permission to progress to capstone experiences. Permission is earned upon successful completion of coursework and program requirements preceding the capstone experience. During all capstone and professional activities, students are expected to adhere to the AOTA's Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2020).

The DCC verifies and documents the site mentor's area of expertise aligns with the student's area of focus during OETH 696V, prior to the onset of the doctoral capstone experience. The DCC documents any licensure or certifications held by the site mentor and confirms expertise via recent resume or curriculum vitae. These documents are managed and audited in EXXAT.

Capstone Course Sequence

There are three courses that make up the entire Capstone process:

1. The sequence begins with OETH 57801 Capstone Seminar. In this course, students work with their Capstone Mentors and DCC to establish expectations, timelines, and responsibilities in preparation for OETH 6960V Occupational Therapy Capstone. Students map out a comprehensive strategy for successful completion of the capstone project that reflects the department mission and vision. Upon successful completion of OETH 57801, students may progress to OETH 6780V Capstone Independent Study.
2. In OETH 6780V Capstone Independent Study students complete a pre-needs assessment, literature review, learning objectives, and plan for evaluation for OETH 6960V Occupational Therapy Capstone experience in collaboration with the DCC and members of the Capstone Committee. The Doctoral Capstone Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plan must be successfully completed to progress to OETH 6960V Occupational Therapy Capstone.
3. In OETH 6960V, students complete the Capstone Experience and Project
4. In OETH 7000V students complete the project/experience report and disseminate outcomes.

Please see individual course syllabi for learning objectives and policies. All OTD academic work (including all assignments, exams, papers, fieldwork experiences, etc.) MUST be successfully completed and all passing course grades must be officially entered before the capstone

experience can begin per ACOTE Standard D.1.0.

The Capstone Coordinator will meet with Faculty Capstone Chairs and students each semester to ensure adherence to established capstone guidelines and policies/procedures of the department and UAF Graduate School. Compliance with policies and procedures are included in OCH 58701 and OCH 678V course requirements.

Learning Objectives & Assignments

Course syllabi are the official documents for objectives and assignments. However, students should **expect** to have additional learning objectives and assignments that are individualized to their Capstone Experience and Project.

OCH 57801 Occupational Therapy Capstone Seminar I

OCH 57801 Occupational Therapy Capstone Seminar is available each semester and requires departmental consent for enrollment, allowing students to individualize their progression toward capstone if an opportunity presents earlier in the curriculum. In this course, the Doctoral Advisory Committee will be identified. This Committee is led by the Faculty Capstone Chair and will include a site mentor. Students, in collaboration with their Capstone Committee, must complete assigned components of the **Doctoral Capstone Experience and Project Proposal Form** in OCH 57801.

OCH 6780V Capstone Seminar II

To progress to OCH 6780V, students meet the remaining components of the Proposal form, which includes the Doctoral Capstone Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plan. This must be signed by all parties prior to initiating OCH 6960V The Occupational Therapy Capstone and OCH 7000V Capstone Project.

OCH 6960V Occupational Therapy Capstone

OCH 696V Occupational Therapy Capstone Independent Study is offered as variable credits, meaning it can be taken in a variety of semesters. The DCC, faculty mentors, and students are responsible for documenting this process on the **Capstone Progressions Form**. Each student will have a Capstone Committee, as required by the UA Graduate School
<https://catalog.uark.edu/graduatecatalog/procedures/>

Students will collaborate with faculty and content experts to develop individualized learning objectives, plans for supervision, evaluation, and dissemination of project outcomes. Successful completion of the capstone experience will be determined based on individual project evaluation criteria.

OCH 7000V Capstone Project

The Occupational Therapy Capstone project provides students with an in-depth exposure to one or more of the following: clinical skills, research skills, administration, program development and evaluation, policy development, advocacy, education, and leadership. Students engage in project implementation while participating in onsite experiences. The culminating project reflects the student's integration of occupation centered knowledge, skills, and ability to engage in critical and self-reflective inquiry. This course is taken concurrently with [OCTH 6960V](#) Occupational Therapy Doctoral Capstone Experience.

OCTH 6960V and OCTH 7000V The Occupational Therapy Capstone concludes with dissemination of a culminating project reflecting the student's integration of occupation centered knowledge and skills and ability to engage in critical and self-reflective inquiry. Please see course syllabus for specific learning objectives. Length

The capstone *experience* is an individual, 14-week (560 hours) full-time experience that is initiated after successful completion of all other coursework and Level II Fieldwork requirements (D.1.0). No more than 20% of the 560 hours can be completed off site from the mentored practice setting(s) (D.1.5). The time off site may be used to complete independent study, research tasks, and other activities that directly support the experience.

All students are required to submit a written report (i.e. program manual, article, conference proposal, etc.) upon completion of the capstone experience and participate in the OTD Capstone Colloquium or approved equivalent activity to disseminate project outcomes related to the capstone experience. Additional products may be required based upon individualized learning objectives. Prior fieldwork or work experience may NOT be substituted for the doctoral capstone experience (D.1.5).

The doctoral capstone experience may be completed on a part-time basis of no less than 0.5 full time equivalency (20 hours per week) in the rare circumstance of unforeseen hardship(s). Students must make a written request to the DCC when the hardship arises. This letter must include justification of hardship and part-time completion of the capstone experience. In consultation with the Program Director and Progressions Committee Chair, the DCC will work with the student and site mentor to determine if a part time experience is feasible. The capstone site must approve and agree to support a part-time experience including student timelines, learning outcomes, plans for supervision, and plans for evaluation. If the site is unable to support a part time experience, the DCC will attempt to find an alternative site to support the student's individualized plan as closely as possible.

Part-time Capstone

A part-time Capstone experience may result in a delay in graduation from the program and additional financial obligations. Students must sign an acknowledgement stating that completing the Doctoral Capstone Experience on a part-time basis will delay graduation and may impact financial aid. Students are responsible for contacting the graduate school and financial aid for more information. All degree requirements must be completed **within 5 years**.

This time frame includes all Level II fieldwork and the doctoral capstone which must be completed **no longer than 2 years** from the end of didactic coursework.

Setting

The doctoral capstone is designed to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of one or more of the following: clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, education, program and policy development, leadership, advocacy, and theory development. This may occur in a variety of settings and does not have to be directly supervised by an occupational therapist.

Capstone Committees

Each capstone committee must include a faculty mentor, site mentor, and a secondary content expert. Capstone site mentors must be experts in the student's identified area of focus and obtain Graduate Faculty Status from the UA Graduate School. The **Doctoral Capstone Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plan Form** identifies agreed upon roles for each member of the capstone committee. Per this document, any significant changes that occur during the capstone experience must be reported to the team, including the DCC and Faculty Mentor.

Course Credit

The Capstone experience is six credit hours. Students must successfully complete OCH 6960V, The Occupational Therapy Capstone, and the University of Arkansas **Record of Progress-Professional Doctorate Form to the Graduate School** form must be signed by the Program Director and submitted to the Graduate School. This form indicates final approval of the student's completed capstone and degree requirements (see attached).

Course grades will be determined as Credit (CR) /Fail (F) upon the conclusion of the semester in which students enroll in OCH 6960V. Upon successful completion, a mark of CR is given. This means credits are awarded toward the degree with no grade points earned. If students are unable to successfully meet the criteria for CR, they will receive an "F" due to unsatisfactory work.

If students do not meet all criteria for the capstone experience and/or degree requirements of the Graduate School, graduation will be delayed and there will be additional financial obligations. Students are responsible for contacting the graduate school and financial aid for more information. Students receiving an "F" may reenroll in OCH 696V up to 3 times to complete course requirements. Students and the DCC will coordinate with the Progressions Committee to determine if a remediation plan is required due to professional behaviors or incomplete/unsatisfactory coursework.

All students will be required to work with the DCC, capstone committees, and site mentor to revise the Doctoral Capstone MOU and Action Plan prior to resuming the experience. All students who receive an "F" can reenroll. If a student receives an "F" following the 3rd reenrollment, they will be dismissed from the program.

Please note: Students can earn the designated credits for completing part of the Capstone Experience, but if all components are not completed, students must re-enroll for an agreed upon credits to complete the experience.

Site Selections

The UAF/UAMS OTD Program has contracts with sites around the country and will work to develop new site agreements, as needed, to individualize the Capstone Experience. Students will receive specific instructions on the timeline and procedures for the Capstone development and selection process throughout the curriculum.

LEVEL I AND II FIELDWORK AND CAPSTONE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Program will negotiate arrangements for fieldwork and capstone placements with designated staff from each fieldwork and/or capstone site. Electronic information including learning objectives, student health records, student assignments, procedures, evaluation forms and additional documents related to learning objectives are sent to the site's Fieldwork Educator or Capstone Mentor using EXXAT.

Students are oriented to learning objectives, procedures, and related protocols early in the curriculum. Students will contact their Fieldwork Educator or Capstone Site Mentor after the placement has been finalized to confirm requirements, site logistics, and expectations. (ie, location, schedule, etc.).

Attendance Policy

Attendance at fieldwork and capstone experiences is mandatory. Students will follow the site schedule during their fieldwork/capstone rotation. Students must complete a minimum of 560 hours for the Doctoral Capstone Experience.

Students must report to fieldwork and capstone sites **on time**, as scheduled unless illness or extenuating conditions arise. Students are required to contact the site supervisor **before** their scheduled start time if they are going to be tardy or absent. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a referral to the department Progressions Committee for professional behaviors violation.

Students may request up to 2 days of sick/personal leave during Level 2 fieldwork or capstone experiences without rescheduling this time per department policy. However, the fieldwork educator may request that this time is made-up. The Leave Request form located in EXXAT must be completed for each absence. Students must report any and all planned absences to AFWC, DCC or other specifically designated faculty/staff well in advance. If students must be unexpectedly absent, then they (or their designee, if the student is incapacitated) must report that to the AFWC

or DCC on the day of the absence or as soon as possible. Failure to make up missed time requested by AFWC, DCC, of the fieldwork educator results in automatic failure of the course. Emergency situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the AFWC or DCC in consultation with the Program Director and Progressions Committee Chair.

If all hours scheduled for the FW or Capstone are not satisfactorily completed, the experience will be considered a failure. Extenuating circumstances must be reviewed proactively or as soon as possible with the site educator and the AFWC or DCC. **It is every student's responsibility to ensure all hours are completed.**

Placement Policy

The Program will provide the student with Level I FW, Level II FW and Capstone experiences in settings that have been deemed appropriate for placement and that have agreed to fulfill the responsibilities for Level I FW, Level II FW, and/or Capstone supervision. Students are placed in sites that have a signed MOU (clinical contract) with UAF/UAMS.

Out of State Placements – UAF and UAMS are members of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) which ensures consistency and legality of inter-state education (including fieldwork placements) <http://nc-sara.org/states/AR> . With rare exceptions, students will not be sent to fieldwork sites in non-NC-SARA states. A map of NC-SARA states is available at: <http://nc-sara.org>

As state authorization laws and NC-SARA membership are constantly subject to change, we cannot guarantee that a student will receive a fieldwork placement in any particular state.

Site Selection Policy

Every effort is made to offer students clinical experiences in a variety of practice settings with diverse client populations across the lifespan. Students are highly involved in individualizing Fieldwork and Capstone experiences throughout the curriculum. However, the AFWC and/or DCC reserves the right to override student preferences to ensure students are exposed to variety of clients across the lifespan in a variety of settings.

Students are not permitted to attend fieldwork placements at locations where they have previously been employed or locations in which supervisors or administrators have any personal or professional relationship with the student or his/her family. Students will need to disclose locations where they have completed individual volunteer/service projects and receive permission to add to the placement Wish List. The student should contact the AFWC/DCC if a potential conflict of interest with an assigned or desired site exists. The AFWC/DCC will determine if the student is permitted to complete a placement at the specified location. Any breach of this policy is considered an ethical violation and may result in a referral to the Progressions Committee.

In collaboration with the AFWC and/or DCC, students will utilize EXXAT to select their preferred sites/geographic preferences by identifying and ranking areas of potential interest, meeting all posted deadlines. It is expected that students will take into consideration all personal needs as well as all financial and family responsibilities prior to identifying their fieldwork preferences (location or site). Students who fail to complete this task within the designated time-frame forfeit their fieldwork site selection privileges for the semester and placements will be assigned by the AFWC, DCC or designated staff.

Time to Completion Policy

All degree requirements must be completed within 5 years. This time frame includes all Level II fieldwork and the doctoral capstone which must be completed no longer than 2 years from the end of didactic coursework. * See Academic Policies in the Occupational Therapy Student Handbook.

Reservation Requests

Students are **NOT** to contact a site requesting a placement for fieldwork Level I or Level II unless given permission in writing by the AFWC.

Students are **NOT** to contact sites requesting placement for Capstone experiences unless given permission in writing by the DCC.

If a student makes a request to a specific site for a personal placement through any means (including parents talking to their friends at sites) without prior written permission from the AFWC or DCC, that site will no longer be an option for that student.

Accommodations

Students who may need accommodations for fieldwork or the capstone experience (i.e., OCHT 5361, 5461, 5561, 5666, 5766, 696V) should initiate the request through the Center for Educational Access (CEA) <http://cea.uark.edu/>. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) and Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (DCC) will follow policies set forth by CEA. When the student requests accommodations through the CEA, the student acknowledges that the AFWC/DCC and the fieldwork/capstone educator will be notified of the requested accommodations. The AFWC/DCC will collaborate with the fieldwork/capstone educator to put in place all requested reasonable accommodations at each separate clinical/capstone site.

Accommodation requests can occur at any time. Initial or new requests will be processed as quickly as possible but, due to the timing of when students are assigned fieldwork and capstone placements, students should begin the process of requesting accommodations through the CEA as soon as possible, and preferably at least 2 months in advance of Level I fieldwork experiences and at least 6 months prior to Level II FW and/or Capstone placements. New or last-minute requests may delay the ability of the program to accommodate the requests at a given site, thus

potentially delaying the student's progression in the class and/or program.

HIPPA and Compliance Trainings

Confidentiality of all clients is a professional and legal mandate. Students complete and maintain HIPPA, Title IX, Mandated Child Abuse Reporter, and Bloodborne Pathogens trainings through the UAMS MyCompass system. Record of these trainings are uploaded by the student to EXXAT.

References

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. (2020). *2018 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) standards and interpretive guide*. Retrieved from https://acoteonline.org/?dln_download_category=standards

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