

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FIELDWORK NEWS

Penn State DuBois OTA Program

Spring 2018

Another Fall semester has concluded with successful Level I and II placements. Thank you to all of the clinics that have educated our students. We graduated a class of 12 new OTA's in December. For Spring, we have 11 students completing Level I placements. We appreciate all of the opportunities that are provided to the students. As you read this, we are reaching out to begin the process of securing Level II placements for Fall 2019 and level I placements for 2018-19.



The PSU DuBois OTA program is accredited by ACOTE through 2024. There are specific standards that the program is bound to address throughout the curriculum to maintain accreditation. Based on the current standards implemented in 2011, there are 19 FW related standards to be addressed. This newsletter will be a communication tool to facilitate campus and clinic communication and compliance with the standards.

## Keeping Occupation in OT

OT practitioners and academic programs realize that the demands and limited resources of OT practice are often pulling practitioners from an occupation-based focus. These are often limited budgets for materials, productivity demands, and professional burnout. Despite these barriers, OT practitioners must continue to protect our professional identity and uphold our ethical standards by providing client-centered (not cookie cutter) services that utilize occupations/activities as our primary means of intervention. According to the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain & Process, 3rd ed.*, preparatory methods/tasks (ther ex, modalities, sensory programs, etc) should be used as “*part of a treatment session in preparation for or concurrently with occupations and activities*” (p. S29). Students are being prepared to enter the clinics with an occupation focus. They have developed the skills and knowledge to address strengthening through IADL tasks of laundry/cooking, endurance while gardening, and fine motor skills during crafts/games (these are just some examples). There is a need for therapeutic exercise, modalities, and sensory programs, but how is the client's function being addressed in conjunction with them? The PSU DuBois students have been actively involved in creating occupation kits for clinics for several years. The students are encouraged to seek the kits (if available) during FW and utilize the resources in their treatment interventions. As these kits are completed each spring, we reach out to clinics that have never received one prior and donate to them. As fieldwork educators it is your responsibility to model all professional behaviors for the student and choosing occupation-based interventions is one of the most essential needs.

### In This Issue

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# What's New?

In our on-going effort to best meet the needs of our students, accreditation, and clinics we are always reviewing and updating our curriculum, processes, and communication.

Most recently we reviewed our actions relating to [ACOTE standards](#):

## C.1.14:

### Verification of Supervisor's Certification & Licensure

“Ensure that the student is supervised by a currently licensed or otherwise regulated occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant (under the supervision of an occupational therapist) who has a minimum of one year full-time (or its equivalent) of practice experience subsequent to initial certification and who is adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator. The supervising therapist may be engaged by the fieldwork site or by the educational program.”

## C.1.16

### Consumer Protection Statement of Agreement

“Ensure that supervision provides protection of consumers and opportunities for appropriate role modeling of occupational therapy practice. Initially, supervision should be direct and then decrease to less direct supervision as appropriate for the setting, the severity of the client's condition, and the ability of the student.”

**Both of these standards require that we communicate in a systematic manner with those who will be directly supervising our students for level I and II fieldwork. Based on the interpretations provided to us, we felt that a comprehensive letter/signature page was the best option to document the communication between campus and clinic.**

**So, moving forward, with each confirmation letter mailed, this letter will be included. It MUST be signed and returned to Amy Fatula, AFWC prior to the students' start date. If there are multiple supervisors at a site for a specific student rotation, each must return a form.**

**Information that will be required on the form is: facility name, clinician's name, month and year of initial NBCOT certification, state of licensure, license number, and expiration date of license.**

2018

## Fieldwork Educators Continuing Education Opportunity

In response to the decreased ability for clinicians to attend the yearly on-campus FW Workshop, an online continuing education module was created to offer free contact hours related to a FW topic.

The 2017 module was created to address Evidence-Based Practice in OTA FW education.

Participants have the opportunity to earn up to 3 contact hours. There are 3 tasks to complete (each for 1 contact hour). All 3 do not have to be completed.

The module is a Google page and a free Google account is required.

Participation is self-paced, and once the survey is submitted a certificate for contact hours will be provided.

The module can be accessed through this link:

<https://sites.google.com/site/psuduboisotafwworkshop2016/>

This module is still available in 2018.

# Fieldwork Educator Preparation

As fieldwork educators you are accepting a very important responsibility to educate and prepare an OTA student for entry-level practice. This is a professionally and ethically challenging opportunity for all clinicians. Based on this importance, ACOTE has specific standards relating to the qualifications and preparation of supervisors/educators. Per ACOTE standard C.1.14 (see previous page), PSU DuBois must ensure that each of you are “adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator”. PSU DuBois continually addresses this standard by creating opportunities for information sharing/education as well as providing outside resources for your use. We have offered on-campus workshops with discussions regarding student assessment, ethics, and handling student issues. We have an on-going online module available (see box on left) to address EBP. Newsletters are an additional tool to provide information and updates for best practice as a supervisor. We maintain a comprehensive “Fieldwork Resources” page (<http://dubois.psu.edu/fieldwork-resources-ota>) that provides links to several resources to assist in the education of our students.

Additionally, AOTA provides webpages dedicated to student supervision, articles in *OT Practice*, and CE opportunities focused on fieldwork education (see newest courses below). As always Amy Fatula, AFWC is available to meet with clinicians for education and guidance as it pertains to FW education.

AOTA Fieldwork Education Resources Include:

[Fieldwork Workshops](#)

[Continuing Education Modules](#)

[Electronic Publications](#)

Don't forget.....with your NBCOT certification/registration you have FREE access to continuing education opportunities through NBCOT Navigator.

## Frequently Asked Questions:



- ◆ What is an OTA student “allowed” to do on a level I FW?

Students on a level I placement should always be directly supervised. It is primarily observation for OT 195 A (Fall—3rd semester), but during OT 195 B (Spring 4th semester) the students are capable and eager to participate in hands-on opportunities as appropriate based on the supervisor’s clinical judgment. Packets for OT 195 B include a checklist prompting participation for those experiences.

- ◆ OT census is low or it is a slow day, should I send the student home?

Students are required to complete a full-time placement for level II FW. This means that as much as possible, they should be present in the clinic. Encourage the student to review charts, observe other disciplines (PT, SLP, nursing), clean/organize the clinic, or practice documentation. Create a student manual with supplemental activity plans for the unexpected downtime.

## OT Ethics Resources:

AOTA:

### **Promoting Ethically Sound Practices in Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Education**

<https://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Ethics/Advisory/Promoting-Ethically-Sound-Practices-in-OT-Fieldwork-Education.pdf>

AOTA:

### **Frequently Asked Questions About Ethics**

<https://www.aota.org/Practice/Ethics/FAQ.aspx>

AOTA:

### **Resources for Ethical & Legal Practice**

<https://www.aota.org/Practice/Ethics/Resources.aspx>

## **Contact Us**

For more information regarding the PSU DuBois OTA Program please contact :

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<http://dubois.psu.edu/ota>

(see link for fieldwork resources)