

WEST COAST UNIVERSITY



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM FIELDWORK EDUCATION MANUAL

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The entry-level MSOT Program at WCU received accreditation in December 11, 2014 from the **Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)** of the **American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)**, located at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510 E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is 301-652-6611, and their web address is Acoteonline.org. Program graduates will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, most states require licensure to practice; however, state licensure is usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

The entry-level OTD Program at WCU received accreditation on July 26, 2019 from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510 E, Bethesda, MD 20814. Program graduates will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, most states require licensure to practice; however, state licensure is usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure. For further questions, one may reach ACOTE by phone c/o AOTA, at (301) 652-6611, and their web address is www.acoteonline.org. The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) can be reached at www.nbcot.org.

INTRODUCTION

This manual is a reference prepared to assist in your understanding of the policies and procedures of fieldwork education at West Coast University. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) will be available to provide further clarification on any information presented in this manual. For successful collaboration in placing students, communication is imperative prior to, during, and following any fieldwork experience.

The provisions provided within this manual are subject to changes as a result of official administrative directives. The occupational therapy program reserves the right to make changes at any time in the Fieldwork Education manual, or in the requirements for fieldwork. This manual is neither a contract nor an offer to enter into a contract, but serves as a guide for fieldwork education. A current version of this manual is posted on the West Coast University Occupational Therapy programs' websites:

<https://westcoastuniversity.edu/programs/master-science-occupational-therapy> or
<https://westcoastuniversity.edu/programs/doctor-occupational-therapy>

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WCU OT Website

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<https://westcoastuniversity.edu/programs/doctor-occupational-therapy>

AOTA Fieldwork Website

<https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Fieldwork.aspx>

AOTA Vision 2030

“Enriching life for ALL individuals and society through meaningful engagement in everyday activities.”

AOTA Centennial Vision

“We envision that Occupational Therapy is a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, and evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society’s occupational needs.”

University Mission

At West Coast University, we embrace a student-centric learning partnership that leads to professional success. We deliver transformational education within a culture of integrity and personal accountability.

We design market-responsive programs through collaboration between faculty and industry professionals. We continuously pursue more effective and innovative ways through which students develop the competencies and confidence required in a complex and changing world.

MSOT Program Mission

West Coast University's Occupational Therapy Program is based on the belief that all humans are occupational beings in nature, and in the healing power of occupation whereby humans can influence their own health status. Occupational engagement and thus occupation-based interventions are therefore the central theme of the curriculum.

Our mission is to develop caring and competent entry-level generalists who are lifelong learners and who can develop into advocates and leaders for the Occupational Therapy profession in diverse local and global communities. Through a student-centric and inter-professional curriculum, the students will be prepared to be reflective practitioners by applying principles of evidence-based practice, research, and critical thinking to facilitate the well-being of consumers through engagement in valued occupations and as it relates to health promotion, prevention, and wellness.

OTD Program Mission

Our mission is to provide doctoral-level education to develop caring and competent Occupational Therapy practitioners through the integration of theory, research and practice. These scholars of practice will be lifelong learners and can develop into advocates and leaders for the Occupational Therapy profession in diverse local and global communities. Through a student-centric and interprofessional curriculum, the students should be prepared to be reflective practitioners by applying principles of evidence-based practice, research, and critical thinking to facilitate the well-being of consumers through engagement in valued occupations and as it relates to health promotion, prevention, and wellness.

FIELDWORK PREPARATION

Fieldwork Education Sites provide the student the opportunity to engage in critical thinking beyond the information learned in the classroom in order to identify further meanings and relationships within the profession. Based on the Blueprint for Entry-Level Education from the American Occupational Therapy Association, sites are chosen for their ability to create learning situations that encourage the student to expand their knowledge and skills by applying clinical reasoning. Students are further educated on how principles of fiscal responsibility influence delivery of healthcare services to consumers and institutions. Fieldwork experiences are designed to expose students to a range of real practice environments. These site based learning placements are designed to reinforce and further build the student's understanding of key professional concepts: person-centered, environment-centered, and occupation-centered practice, and professionalism, psychosocial cultural concepts. Supporting this learning is additional emphasis on and exposure to interdisciplinary communication, documentation, problem-solving in the ethical, medical, and legal aspects of healthcare, and support personnel supervision.

Requirements for Participation in Fieldwork

To protect the students' health during fieldwork, as well as the health of the clients/consumers they serve, and in addition to compliance with the contractual agreements with the fieldwork sites, students are required to meet the following requirements prior to their fieldwork experience:

- Immunizations
- Approved criminal background check and drug screening
- Digital fingerprinting
- Health insurance coverage
- **Must be able to travel to fieldwork sites**

Prior to fieldwork, and throughout their fieldwork, students must be compliant with the above mentioned, as well as:

- Successful completion and maintenance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification
- Training in universal precautions
- HIPAA requirements

Proof of compliance will be required for the above mentioned items by the Fieldwork Education department, and may be required by the Site Fieldwork Supervisors/Fieldwork Education Coordinators prior to attending a fieldwork assignment. Students who do not remain compliant with these requirements may be subject to dismissal from the fieldwork site, as well as from the program at WCU. At a minimum, non-compliance with this policy may delay the student's graduation date.

- *Any other specific health requirements, drug testing or criminal background checks that are required by a particular site, will need to be completed prior to participation in that fieldwork opportunity. **These requirements are the responsibility of the student to complete.***
- A student must complete all course work before a student can enter Fieldwork Level II.
- The Fieldwork Level II A and B (12 credits each; total 24 credits) must be completed to graduate.
- Students are allowed a maximum of 3 attempts to complete Fieldwork Level II.
- Students have maximum timeframe of 9 trimesters for MSOT and 12 for the OTD to complete the didactic and fieldwork components of the program which is compatible with WCU Leave of Absence Policy.
- Successful completion of the OT Program will require satisfactory fulfillment of all program requirements, including fieldwork, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, and adherence to the standards for professional conduct upheld by the Program, University, and the OT field.
- Students are required to complete 1080 hours total for their level II fieldwork. This requirement is fulfilled within two 12-week fieldwork rotations.

Essential Skill Standards for Occupational Therapy Students

The Occupational Therapy program is committed to enabling students with disabilities to complete the course of study of the OT Programs by means of reasonable accommodations consistent with the

American with Disabilities Act (ADA). These essential skill standards outline the requisite abilities and requirements essential for Occupational Therapy students to become primary providers of OT services. All students admitted to the OT programs are required to be able to demonstrate these abilities throughout the program through graduation.

Verbal/Written Expression:

Students are required to demonstrate the ability to communicate verbally and in written format with clients and their families, team members, fieldwork supervisors, insurance representatives, etc. Their communication must be appropriate with individuals regardless of socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. English language skills in written and verbal communication must be demonstrated as functional for others' understanding in a client-centered and therapeutic approach.

Conceptual Intellect:

A student must display the ability to problem-solve during all didactic and fieldwork components of the program. This includes but is not limited to carrying out instructions in a timely manner, being able to follow and, understand policies and procedures, interpreting information from verbal, environmental, interpersonal, and written sources. Subsequently, a student should be able to demonstrate the ability to read complex information and be able to accurately and descriptively write consistent with program standards and guidelines e.g. error free use of therapeutic terminology. Critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills should be utilized for data gathering, as well as problem identification in order to present with spontaneous decision-making strategies or plans of action that require thinking under pressure with time, environmental, and workload changes.

Sensory Processing for Observation:

A student must demonstrate functional proprioceptive, vestibular and tactile abilities required to receive and analyze input while interacting with a client during any therapy session involving evaluation and treatment. Further, a student should demonstrate visual and auditory abilities at a functional level for accurately interacting and observing clients.

Professional Behaviors:

A student is required to demonstrate emotional intelligence; incorporating good judgment, using ethical behavior during interactions with their clients and team members, and completing all required responsibilities within given time constraints. As fieldwork opportunities encompass a variety of settings with multiple demands, courtesy towards others, respect for a client's dignity, and compassion during treatment process is required while providing therapy in changing environments. Students must be able to work collaboratively as a member of the team, while modifying behavior in response to feedback received. Personal dress and hygiene must be maintained as appropriate for classroom and fieldwork settings.

Motor Skills:

Fine and gross motor skills are required to safely execute the physical tasks associated with service delivery during an occupational therapy session. This includes strength, range of motion, and functions

associated with the sensory system during therapeutic interventions, including but not limited to: performing transfers, bed mobility, dressing skills, therapeutic exercise, postural control, splinting/orthotic fabrication, and assistive technology or computer use. These skills must further be performed while maintaining effective body-mechanics to prevent injury to self or of the client.

Attainment of Essential Skill Standards:

If a student is unable to fulfill and perform these essential skills, the outcome may result in failing a course. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their disabilities with the Program Director and/or AFWC in order to assess for the accommodations that may be needed. After enrollment, a student with a disability may directly contact the Director of Student Affairs if they wish to request reasonable accommodations. ***Verification and documentation of the disability by a qualified professional, e.g. physician, psychiatrist, psychologist will be needed prior to the determination of reasonable accommodations.*** Accommodations will not be considered reasonable if they affect the substance of the occupational therapy educational program, compromise the OT program or West Coast University's educational standards, and/or negatively affect the safety of students and/or other individuals, including clients/consumers, with who they may come into contact in the course of their studies. All information submitted on accommodations provided is considered confidential and will be treated as such.

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Program and Services:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), West Coast University abides by the regulation that "no otherwise handicapped individual" shall be excluded from participation in programs and services offered by the University "solely by reason of the handicap." West Coast University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations. Below is an example of some of the responsibilities of the West Coast University Disability Office.

Services:

- Disability Office maintains confidential records
- Disability Coordinator(s) conducts initial intake meeting with student to review services and if required, supporting documentation
- Disability Coordinator(s) receives request form from student and conducts initial review and evaluation (verifies appropriate forms/documentation, verifies disability, if needed consults with faculty, program chair, administrative departments, etc.)
- Disability Coordinator(s) meets with student to review request and appropriate/ reasonable accommodations
- Disability Coordinator(s) certifies approved accommodations
- Provides student with "Letter of Accommodation (s)"
- Student signs "Letter of Acknowledgement and Student Responsibility"
- When available, provides student with additional disability information and resources;
- Disability Coordinator(s) may conduct follow up meetings with students to maintain up to date records and reasonable accommodations.

The above list of responsibilities is not all inclusive and may be affected by the timeliness of the student request and the nature of the accommodation requests. ADA does not require institutions to provide

accommodations that result in undue burden or fundamentally alter the nature of the course or relevant academic program. Students should submit written requests with supporting documentation (if required) at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the first day of classes or as soon as practical. To request reasonable accommodations, please contact the Student Services Office in Suite 386, 323-454-5043 and speak with the Student Affairs Director. Each case will be reviewed by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator pertaining to fieldwork accommodations to determine best fit for each student.

Student Conduct/Professional Behavior:

Students enrolling at West Coast University assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the university's function as an educational institution of higher learning and suitable to a member of an academic community. The university, therefore, expects its students to conduct themselves as responsible individuals, considerate and respectful of the rights and interests of others. Furthermore, since a great deal of emphasis within West Coast University is in the development of professionals within the health care field, one's honesty and integrity is of great importance since in the field, peoples' lives are dependent on ethical behavior.

If, in the judgment of the administrative officers of the University, a student's conduct does not conform to the above-stated standards, poses a threat or danger to self and/or others, or potentially disrupts the WCU community, the University will follow a policy determined course of action deemed appropriate up to and including dismissal from a course and potentially suspension or dismissal from the University.

To prevent any breaches of confidentiality or potential unprofessional behaviors, The Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Education office discourages students to interact with clients, co-workers, supervisors or faculty via social networks while on fieldwork. This includes social networking through electronic media such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, Instagram or Snapchat. ***If a student's professionalism is of concern, this may impact your grade for fieldwork or fieldwork-related courses.***

Please refer to the WCU Catalog for the complete policy on Student Conduct.

Professional Code of Ethics:

It is imperative that all students review the Occupational Therapy Profession's Code of Ethics (2010). The principles that are discussed in this document serve as the basis for a student's professional development as an occupational therapist. There are seven core concepts covered: *Altruism, Equality, Freedom, Justice, Dignity, Truth, and Prudence*. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is described as follows:

- Identify and describe the principles supporting the OT profession
- Educate the public and members on the principles for which OTs are accountable
- Delineate expected standards of conduct for OT personnel
- Assist OT personnel when dealing with ethical dilemmas

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) has this documented posted at the following website: <https://www.aota.org/Practice/Ethics.aspx>.

Safety Policies and Procedures:

It is imperative for students to ensure the safety of their clients. Each student will be responsible for learning the safety and emergency policies and procedures at each fieldwork site. These site specific practices include but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuation procedures
- CPR provisions
- First-Aid instructions
- Emergency response guide
- Fire procedures/location of fire extinguishers
- Universal precautions
- Infections control
- Fall prevention

Fieldwork sites, per AOTA guidelines, may terminate a fieldwork experience if they find a student does not ensure the safety of the client/consumer with whom they are working. ***A student's grade in courses with a fieldwork component may be affected by failure to maintain a site's safety policies and procedures.***

In order to ensure the student's health and safety, and in the event of a student getting injured while on fieldwork or attending class, West Coast University requires the student to complete a student incident report. This includes any accident or exposure to blood or bodily fluids. These documents serve to confirm the nature of the injury, protect the student, provide risk management analysis, as well as ensure necessary follow-through in response to the incident.

If the incident occurs while on fieldwork, the student should additionally report according to the fieldwork site policies.

Attendance:

Fieldwork attendance is **mandatory** at all assigned fieldwork sites. Tardiness is unprofessional, reflects poorly on you and the university, and will affect your grade. If the site has to cancel a visit unexpectedly, you are to inform the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator so that a make-up day can be scheduled. If you are ill on an assigned day of fieldwork, you are to contact both the site and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator so that a make-up day can be scheduled. **Request for vacation during fieldwork will not be approved during fieldwork.** For information on the University's Attendance Policy, please refer to the WCU Catalog.

Professional Dress:

Students are judged by their dress as a reflection of their professionalism. The following attire is required for students when attending fieldwork:

- West Coast University student name tag

- Full-length pants, ***no jeans or sweat pants***
- Shirts with sleeves and no exposed midriff areas
- Closed toed shoes with socks
- Lab coat, if required by fieldwork site
- No scrubs, unless specifically required by the fieldwork site

For safety reasons, large earrings, rings, or necklaces that can get caught in clothing, accidentally scratch clients, or grabbed, are not allowed. Site-specific dress code takes priority, so please check requirements stated on site information. ***Fieldwork sites have the discretion to refuse or terminate a fieldwork experience if a student does not follow site-specific or above stated dress code. In addition, improper professional attire may impact your fieldwork grade.***

Fieldwork Documentation:

The student designation for signing off on all documentation is as occupational therapy students, or **OTS**. Since West Coast University's OT program conducts fieldwork as part of an AOTA and Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) requirement, documentation must be aligned with the AOTA Roles document and the guide to practice. The **MSOT/OTD** degrees represent West Coast University's programs, and should not be used when signing off documents until student has graduated. The following is a link to the AOTA Roles document:

<https://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/Advocacy/State/Resources/Supervision/MSRSOTA.pdf>

Living and Transportation Arrangements for Fieldwork Experiences:

When necessary, students will be responsible for making housing arrangements for each level I and level II experience. **A student will not be allowed to cancel a placement based on the inability to find housing or reliable transportation to and from the site.** Please contact the Director of Student Affairs at 323-454-5043 for potential resources for Los Angeles and the surrounding areas.

Program Policy for Fieldwork Supervision:

West Coast University encourages sites to incorporate a variety of supervision models when providing student fieldwork experiences. The traditional 1-to-1 educator to student model may be used, also known as the apprenticeship model. A 1-to-2 educator to student model or a 2-to-1 educator to student model is also an option. These supervision models are dependent on the facility's preference, site needs and layout, and student's learning needs. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator is available for questions and consultation regarding both the facility's and student's supervisory needs. If the AFWC is unable to complete a site visit, a phone call and/or email is scheduled to discuss supervision requirements and to review, modify, and develop objectives as needed. The collaborative relationship between the AFWC and site helps ensure a positive experience for all.

Upon meeting with the fieldwork educator during an initial site visit, the AFWC reviews the requirement that all supervising occupational therapists must have a minimum of one-year experience before they are permitted to supervise students. This is documented on the Faculty Site Visit Form and Level II Confirmation Form. Additionally, and in cases where initial site visits by AFWC were not completed, all facilities considered for fieldwork are asked to provide work experience for all staff occupational

therapists on the AOTA Fieldwork Data Form, which is required by the OT Department prior to assigning students to the site and is regularly updated.

During the initial site visit, the AFWC and Fieldwork Educator(s) collaborate in establishing fieldwork objectives based on the needs of the clients and student responsibilities. If the Fieldwork Educator(s) already has(have) established fieldwork objectives, then the AFWC will review and modify if needed as outlined on the Faculty Site Visit Form. If the site is new and does not have established objectives, the AFWC and Fieldwork Educator(s) discuss the needs of the site, the expectations for the student, and the goals of the rotation to develop collaborative objectives together. Objectives are tailored to the unique context and needs of individual sites and are reviewed and modified as needed.

Prior to initiation of any placements, the AFWC will collaborate with the site Fieldwork Coordinator (FWC) on the site Fieldwork objectives/mission/philosophy/fieldwork manual and WCU OT program philosophy, mission, Fieldwork Handbook/ fieldwork course objectives. This is to ensure the combined knowledge and support of the didactic portion of the curriculum and the site's fieldwork objectives. The Fieldwork Site Acknowledgement form will be signed by the AFWC and FWC to signify the collaborative fieldwork objective review and discussion by the AFWC and FWC. The AFWC will provide the facility with written and online (via COREelms) resources to ensure the establishment of site-specific objectives if none exists at the time of contact, fieldwork mentoring, and current research articles pertinent to fieldwork and O.T. practice.

To promote communication between the AFWC and the Fieldwork Supervisor (FWS) on student performance, for level II fieldwork, progress forms are to be completed by the FWS and submitted to the fieldwork department via email at 3 days, 3 weeks, and 9 weeks; these forms are available COREelms website. The midterm and final evaluation will be sent directly to the FWS via Formstack and submitted online. FWSs will be provided with the AFWC's email and phone number and they are encouraged to contact the AFWC about any questions or concerns that arise.

Psychosocial Fieldwork Components:

The OT Programs at WCU requires that at least one fieldwork experience has as its focus psychosocial factors that influence engagement of occupational performance. This can be accomplished during either the level I or II fieldwork experiences and in settings providing specific mental health services, medical/clinic settings, or non-traditional and emerging practice settings. In other words, the type of setting does not determine the compliance with this standard, but rather the focus of the fieldwork, as represented through objectives or expectations that will be required from the student during the psychosocial fieldwork. These psychosocial learning objectives for level I and II and will be communicated to the fieldwork educator in advance. The objectives will guide the site in focusing a student's learning experience on this area even when the main clinical focus of the site is defined differently.

LEVEL I FIELDWORK

Facilitation Process

Starting in the first trimester of the program, students are exposed to traditional and emerging practice settings and complete assignments that are aligned with their experience. Level I placements will correspond with the lifespan period being addressed within that trimester as shown below:

- Trimester I - Emerging Practice, non-traditional settings
- Trimester II - Older Adult
- Trimester III - Adult
- Trimester IV - Children and Adolescents

In accordance with ACOTE 2023 standards, level I fieldwork is facilitated by the university and may be met through one or more of the following instructional methods:

- Virtual or Simulated environments
- Standardized patients
- Faculty-led site visits
- Supervision by a fieldwork educator in a practice environment

Level I Fieldwork Evaluation Process

Level I fieldwork is conducted in-house through a simulated environment. The occupational therapy department utilizes Simucase for Level I fieldwork, a patented simulation technology, where students can observe, assess, make recommendations, and provide intervention for virtual patients <https://www.simucase.com>. The program has clearly documented student learning objectives expected for Level I fieldwork. Students are supervised by faculty within the department, which include formal evaluation of the student's performance. Level I fieldwork occurs in the 14th week of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th trimester so that students can incorporate the didactic information obtained in class. (For example, FW I in trimester 2, students focus on the older adult population which coincides with the didactic class "Occupational Performance in the Older Adult" OCC 520). A similar process is repeated at the end of the Occupational Performance course in the third (adults) and fourth (children and adolescents) trimesters. Under the supervision of faculty, students are provided with opportunities for observation and participation of all areas of the occupational therapy process, including evaluation, intervention, and discontinuation of services for the older adult, adult, and pediatric populations, and levels of care. Experiences include addressing the psychosocial aspects of the client, caregiver, and families. The level I fieldwork week concludes with a debriefing session to review all objectives and intended outcomes.

Student Responsibilities

The following responsibilities are expected from all students during level I fieldwork:

- Due to the limitation of a week a student has to be in fieldwork, **punctuality and attendance** are essential for professional behavior presentation. Unavoidable absences do occur, but making up the time is the responsibility of the student, as well as notifying the AFWC of said incidence
- Complete and turn in all required assignments
- Attend mandatory debrief meeting on scheduled day and time

LEVEL II FIELDWORK

Site Selection

Site selection is determined by the overall curriculum design, its educational value to the curriculum, and by the scope of OT services encompassing physical, psychosocial, cognitive/perceptual, and emerging practice areas. Selecting a site is also based on the particular population served, the type of therapeutic interventions rendered, the availability of supervising team members, the physical environment, and the site-specific objectives. In selecting a new site, the following criteria should be considered:

- OT Fieldwork Educator (FWE) to be NBCOT certified for at least one year prior to supervising a Fieldwork II student, and licensed in the State in which they practice
- FWE who completed the AOTA FWE Certification is preferred
- Site agrees with WCU's OT philosophy and mission, curriculum design, and fieldwork objectives
- Site can articulate fieldwork objectives
- Site uses evidence-based assessment and treatment
- Site uses client-centered interventions
- Site uses occupation-based practice
- Site has a caseload sufficient to support student learning
- Site offers opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork
- FWE has sufficient release time to supervise student
- FWE or designee is onsite
- Site must consider the psychosocial components of the client
- FWE promotes clinical reasoning and model values and beliefs that enable ethical practice
- Sites should value and implement culturally effective practices

A fully executed agreement (MOU) between the university and facility will be established and kept on file.

Starting in the 5th trimester followed by the 6th trimester, the student will complete two twelve-week fieldwork experiences in traditional and/or emerging-practice settings. Each twelve-week experience totaling 540 clinical hours, 45 hours per week. Students may complete Level II fieldwork in a minimum of one setting providing it encompasses more than one practice area, or in a maximum of three different settings.

The AFWC is responsible for each student's Level II fieldwork placement. Prior to the 3rd trimester, the AFWC will meet with all the students to review the placement process at a Level II orientation to fieldwork. Individual meetings are encouraged if a student has a specific concern following this group meeting.

To schedule an appointment, contact Dr. Ronnie Dallatorre at RDallatorre@westcoastuniversity.edu

As a fieldwork placement is guaranteed for each student, West Coast University encourages a site to be chosen for the experience it offers, as opposed to its geographical location. Students are informed during the initial interview, as well as during the new- student orientation, to ***plan and discuss financial, travel, and housing arrangements with family and significant others.***

Hardship Policy:

West Coast University recognizes that in certain instances, a student may have personal circumstances (health issues or family situations) that would preclude their being able to leave the immediate area. The determination of hardship is based on a situation which involves a medical need of the student, medical/caretaking need of minor offspring or other dependent family member where no other individual is available to fill in during student's fieldwork rotation. Situations that would warrant a "hardship" can include: single parent with dependents, or receiving chemotherapy or other specialized medical care that cannot be duplicated. In these cases, students should submit a Hardship Form to the AFWC for review. Hardship forms will only be considered if submitted within the provided deadline. The timeline will be received during the Level II fieldwork orientation in the second trimester.

Please note that the additional cost of attending fieldwork is not considered a hardship.

Placement Process

There will be a level II orientation during the 1st trimester where the placement process will be discussed. Students will have the opportunity to submit their preferences.

Completion of Placement Process

Students will not be permitted to contact their fieldwork site until permission is granted from the Fieldwork Education Office. This permission is contingent on the items below having been completed:

- Once students are assigned their individual placement and contact information has been provided, the student will sign the Assignment Agreement Form and submit to AFWC prior to the due date;
- Final fieldwork assignment will be posted via email
- A packet of student information can be accessed on CORE and will be emailed to the site

Placements are final, with no changes allowed. The exceptions to this rule are 1) if a site cancels, or 2) if a student fails to complete any required course prior to Level II Fieldwork, or 3) if a student has been sent to the Judicial Affairs where a decision from that committee affects the student's placement.

See link for Judicial Affairs Policies and Procedures: <https://westcoastuniversity.edu/current-students/judicial-affairs>

Site Cancellation

If the situation of a cancellation arises, the student will be contacted by the AFWC. All other cases necessitating a change in fieldwork placement will be reviewed by the AFWC on a case-by-case basis, however, these cases will ***require submitting a written request to the Program Director and the AFWC for approval.***

Remediation Policy for Termination, Withdrawal, or Cancellation from Fieldwork

Students are allotted three opportunities to successfully complete their level II fieldwork rotations. Students who withdraw or are asked to withdraw from a level II fieldwork (FW) rotation due to inadequate performance will receive a failing grade (F). There will be no credit for partial time completed at the FW site when the withdrawal or termination is due to inadequate performance.

Students who withdraw from a level II FW rotation due to an illness are required to provide a physician's letter documenting the student's ability to resume full duties before being rescheduled for another level II FW rotation. Acceptable performance termination may result in an incomplete grade (I). A student who develops a serious health problem preventing successful completion of the FW rotation in the scheduled time frame will also receive an incomplete grade (I).

In the case of an incomplete grade (I), the AFWC would attempt to have the student finish their FW rotation at the same site; however, this is not guaranteed. Student withdrawal from a FW rotation is strongly discouraged, should only be considered in extreme circumstances, and can only occur with permission from the AFWC. Failure to follow the proper withdrawal procedure will result in a failure of the fieldwork rotation.

Termination of the FW rotation once it is initiated should be a rare occurrence. The most common reason would be inadequate student performance or unprofessional behaviors, both of which will result in a failing grade (F) for the FW rotation. There is no credit given for partial time completed in a FW rotation that has to be terminated. All FW sites have the right to request termination.

If a student is terminated from a FW rotation, remedial work will be required. Remedial work will help the student to address problems observed during the FW rotation and allow the student to optimize their success during a future FW rotation. If a student is terminated from their FW rotation, the student must meet with the AFWC to create an action plan that outlines remedial work and student learning objectives. Make up times for a new FW rotation may not follow the typical course schedule and therefore may result in a delay in the student's graduation, as well as involve additional costs for tuition.

Once a FW placement has been confirmed, student requests for a change in FW site will not be agreed to unless there is an unforeseen hardship, such as death of a family member. Documentation of the extreme circumstance will be required. In other situations, the student will be expected to provide written documentation to the AFWC explaining their reasoning for altering the initial FW placement. The AFWC will review the documentation and determine if a change in FW placement is acceptable. If it is deemed acceptable, the following procedure will take place: 1) the student must meet with the AFWC to

discuss their FW placement, 2) the AFWC will assign student to a new FW site, and 3) all involved parties and the Program Director will be notified.

If a FW site needs to cancel a confirmed placement, the following procedure will be implemented: 1) student will be notified of the cancellation, 2) the student must meet with the AFWC to discuss new FW site options, 3) the AFWC will assign the student to a new FW site.

Cancellation of a FW placement, whether student or site initiated, may delay a student's completion of the level II fieldwork requirements. Neither West Coast University or the site is liable. It is possible that the cancellation may delay graduation.

Procurement of Sites for Fieldwork

The AFWC is continually seeking quality sites that support and compliment the OT curriculum and expand fieldwork educational opportunities. Students can assist in locating new sites by submitting a request via CORE. **Students are NOT allowed to contact any site CURRENTLY listed in the Fieldwork Education website as WCU already has agreements established with those specific sites.** This is to avoid a site from feeling pressured by being inundated with numerous phone calls or emails. The procedure to be used will be outlined during the Level II Fieldwork Orientation in the 2nd trimester.

Level II Fieldwork Evaluation

Along with the hands-on learning that occurs during fieldwork, the following assignments will be required to complete as part of a student's evaluation:

- For Level II, a faculty member is assigned as mentor, per area of expertise, to each student. This ensures the student's accurate application of the didactic learning while at a site. Faculty is kept abreast of each student's progress through faculty meetings, where fieldwork is a regularly scheduled topic for review;
- Individual fieldwork sites may have specific assignments, with site specific due dates;
- Student completion of the communication forms at 3 days, 3 weeks, and 9 weeks with their fieldwork supervisor's signature to be emailed, or faxed back to the AFWC.
- Student completion of the Level II Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE) Form during the last week of fieldwork Level IIA and IIB, though data may be collected throughout the fieldwork. This document is to be faxed or emailed back to AFWC, as the information is useful for the AFWC and for future students researching the site for fieldwork. Copies are recommended to be kept for student's professional file;
- Fieldwork Educator completion of the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation Form (FWPE) at 6 weeks into the fieldwork for mid-term and during the last week of Level IIA and IIB. Both copies are to be faxed or mailed back to AFWC to determine student's performance during fieldwork. Copies are recommended to be kept for site's student file;
- Final determination of a student's grade is with the AFWC, recording a grade of Pass/Fail. **The student must score a 3 or higher on all ethical and safety items, and must receive an overall score of 111 or higher on the AOTA FWPE to pass.**

Student Fieldwork “To Do List”

- You are encouraged to use the Fieldwork Environment Assessment Tool (FEAT) to help problem solve difficult situations while on your fieldwork. This tool may be helpful in problem-solving with your Fieldwork Supervisor on issues that may occur.
- If any problems arise, notify the AFWC. This includes, but is not limited to schedule dates, communication with FWS, or professional behaviors.
- Review fieldwork site objectives or policies and procedures manual.
- Maintain notes on caseload, assessments used, and treatments to accurately complete the Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Experience form (SEFWE).
- Contact your Fieldwork Supervisor (FWS) first if any difficulties arise during fieldwork. Be sure to ask questions and work with your FWS in problem-solving. Call the AFWC if input is needed.
- At end of fieldwork, students are encouraged to send a thank you note to the site’s OT staff.

FOR BOTH STUDENT AND FIELDWORK EDUCATOR:

- The objective of fieldwork supervision is to encourage the student’s ability to function independently by the end of the 12 weeks. This is accomplished by the gradual reduction of supervision to independence incrementally each week of the fieldwork.
- The following link from AOTA provides guidelines for supervision, updated Medicare guidelines, and definitions and outcomes desired: <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Fieldwork/StuSuprvsn.aspx>.
- Fieldwork sites should have site-specific objectives to present to student prior to arrival and during orientation. An example of fieldwork objectives may be viewed on the link below. See Link: <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Fieldwork/SiteObj.aspx>

CONTACT THE ACADEMIC FIELDWORK COORDINATOR IF:

1. **The student’s performance is at risk of not passing;**
2. **A problem arises that has not been resolved;**
3. **Support or feedback is desired;**
4. **Any injury that may affect the ability to participate in fieldwork.**

Occupational Therapy Registration and Licensing

Students are responsible for applying in a timely manner to sit for the examination:

- Access the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) web page for information at <http://www.nbcot.org>.
- The NBCOT exam handbook is recommended for preparing for the exam
- Students are responsible for arranging the NBCOT exam
- Applying for a Temporary State License requires reviewing the state’s temporary license rules. For California, go to <http://www.cboc.ca.gov>.
- Graduates will be able to schedule an exam date prior to transcripts being made available. An ACVF form will be required along with the application to take the exam. ACVF’s will be given to graduates prior to the hooding ceremony. Once the OT office receives transcripts all are mailed

in bulk to NBCOT. Graduates will be notified when transcripts have been mailed. Scores will not be released until transcripts have been received by the NBCOT office.

- Transcripts for licensure may be requested through the student portal or through the National Student Clearinghouse at: <http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/>.