

Updates from ACOTE and the AOTA Accreditation Department

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CHEA Committee on Recognition

In April 2002, ACOTE gained recognition from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) for the full 10-year period (2002–2012) with no areas of concern. All recognized agencies, including ACOTE, are required to submit a standard 5-Year Interim Report.

ACOTE's 5-Year Interim Report was submitted to CHEA in September 2007. The report was successfully reviewed by the CHEA Committee on Recognition in November 2007. The Committee's report will be submitted to the CHEA Board of Directors at their January 2008 meeting.

CHEA identifies itself as a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation. CHEA is an association of 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes 60 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations.

Use of ACOTE logo

ACOTE-accredited programs are invited to use the ACOTE logo when reflecting the program's ACOTE accreditation status in written or Web-based publications. However, the use of the logo is governed by the following guidelines:

1. The ACOTE logo may only be used by currently accredited occupational therapy and occupational

therapy assistant educational programs. The logo may NOT be used by programs that have applied for, but not yet received, accreditation, including programs granted Developing Program Status.

2. When programs or program levels are included in the publication or Web page that are not accredited by ACOTE, the accompanying text must

clearly indicate which programs or levels are ACOTE accredited.

3. Use of the logo is subject to revocation and withdrawal by ACOTE when, in its sole judgment, its continued use would not serve the best interests of ACOTE or the public.



ACOTE to defer action on new certificate programs

“ACOTE voted to defer...new OTA programs submitting Letters of Intent to seek accreditation at the certificate level.”

At its December meeting, ACOTE voted to defer action on any new OTA programs submitting Letters of Intent to seek accreditation at the certificate level.

The Council acknowledged that there has been an increase in the scope and complexity of practice at the OTA

practitioner level. This deferral will allow further investigation of whether the certificate meets the expected level of knowledge required in practice and delineated in the ACOTE 2006

Accreditation Standards for an Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Currently there are 128 accredited OTA programs. Two programs are offered at the certificate level and the remaining 126 programs are accredited at the associate degree level.

ACOTE to defer action on new additional locations

To strengthen ACOTE’s role in ensuring quality for its various constituents, including students, the public, and consumers, ACOTE voted to defer the acceptance of any new applications for accreditation of additional locations (e.g., satellites) until more clearly defined policies and procedures for accreditation of additional

locations can be developed.

The Council noted that the current policies and procedures were developed when additional locations were primarily developed within the same geographical location as the primary campus. With advances in distance

education and technology, many different models are now proposed. The revisions to the policies are to address these developments.

It is anticipated that the new policies and procedures will be finalized at the ACOTE meeting in mid-April 2008.

2008 Biennial Reports

“The completed biennial reports are due no later than Friday, May 2, 2008.”

Biennial report templates will be distributed by February 2008 for programs located in states starting with the letters N–W. The completed biennial reports are due no later than Friday, May 2, 2008.

Each biennial report is reviewed by two

reviewers and submitted to the full Council at its August meeting. Programs will receive notification of the review outcome in the early fall.

The purpose of the biennial review is to assess the program’s compliance with the Standards. It is suggested

that programs use the Compliance Guides available at www.acoteonline.org when preparing the report.

The 2008 template will include additional questions pertaining to those areas that have changed significantly in the new Standards.

Professional development plans

At the December meeting, ACOTE added the following interpretive language to Standard A.5.1. of the Doctoral-Degree-Level, Master's-Degree-Level, and OTA-Level Standards.

THE PLAN SHOULD REFLECT THE INDIVIDUAL FACULTY MEMBER'S DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITIES

(E.G., EVERY PLAN DOES NOT NEED TO INCLUDE SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY IF THIS IS NOT PART OF THE FACULTY MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES. SIMILARLY, IF THE FACULTY MEMBER'S PRIMARY ROLE IS RESEARCH, THEY MAY NOT NEED A GOAL RELATED TO TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS).

Collectively, the faculty plans should demonstrate how they contribute to attaining the program's strategic goals.

All plans MUST be documented on Form F, which is available at the following link:

<http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Forms/GeneralUse/FormF.aspx>

"REFLECT THE INDIVIDUAL FACULTY MEMBER'S DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITIES"

Clarification of AFWC/experiential coordinator position

The Council approved the following changes to the interpretive guide regarding Doctoral-Degree-Level and Master's-Degree-Level Standard A.2.7. and OTA-Level Standard A.2.9. These changes were made in response to questions from program directors seeking clarification on whether an academic fieldwork coordinator (AFWC)/experiential coordinator can still teach if he or she is designated as a professional staff

position by the institution.

"THE ACADEMIC FIELDWORK OR EXPERIENTIAL COORDINATOR POSITION MAY BE DESIGNATED BY THE INSTITUTION AS A FACULTY OR A PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITION. IF THE FIELDWORK COORDINATOR IS NOT DESIGNATED AS FACULTY AND THE MAJORITY OF HIS OR HER RESPONSIBILITY

IS FIELDWORK COORDINATION, HE OR SHE MAY TEACH COURSES THAT TOTAL 50% OR LESS OF A FULL-TIME TEACHING LOAD AS DEFINED BY THE INSTITUTION WITHOUT MEETING THE FACULTY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS OF STANDARD A.2.9. (DOCTORAL & MASTER'S) OR STANDARD A.2.11. (OTA)."

"MAY TEACH COURSES THAT TOTAL 50% OR LESS OF A FULL-TIME TEACHING LOAD"

We need your feedback!

At the completion of on-site visits, we ask that the CEO, Administrator, and Program Director complete the PROGRAM SITE-VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE (PSQ). This tool provides important feedback on the

process and the team's performance during the on-site. We ask that you answer the questionnaire honestly and provide constructive feedback. The information is used in process improvement and future team assignments.

Please note that all feedback is maintained by the staff and no information is shared with Council members until completion of all actions associated with the self-study and on-site visit.

Number of Accredited Programs

	OT Doctoral	OT Master's	OTA
Accredited	5	142	129
Developing Program Status	0	0	2
Applicant	0	1	6
Total	5	143	137

ACOTE adopts new fee schedule

“The full fee schedule is available online at www.acoteonline.org.”

At its December 2007 meeting, ACOTE voted to adopt a new fee schedule that lists accreditation fees through 2011. The full fee schedule is available online at <http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Policies/38143.aspx>.

The annual accreditation fee for an accredited program will increase \$175 a year for each year listed on the fee schedule. Application fees for new programs and additional locations have also been increased. The modest annual fee increases will allow

ACOTE to continue to enhance the evaluator training processes, strengthen preparation for on-site team leaders, broaden representation of communities of interest on ACOTE, and cover rising expenses for on-site related travel and hotel accommodations.

Defining a mentor

“A SYSTEM TO ENSURE THAT THE MENTOR HAS DEMONSTRATED EXPERTISE”

At the December meeting, ACOTE revised the interpretive language for Doctoral-Degree-Level Standard B.11.3. as follows:

“MENTORING IS DEFINED AS A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE IN WHICH ONE PERSON (THE MENTOR) IS DEDICATED TO THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL

GROWTH OF THE OTHER (THE MENTEE). A MENTOR HAS MORE EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE THAN THE MENTEE. THE PROGRAM MUST HAVE A SYSTEM TO ENSURE THAT THE MENTOR HAS DEMONSTRATED EXPERTISE IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS IDENTIFIED AS THE STUDENT'S FOCUSED AREA OF STUDY: CLINICAL PRACTICE

SKILLS, RESEARCH SKILLS, ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP, PROGRAM AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, OR THEORY DEVELOPMENT. THE MENTOR DOES NOT HAVE TO BE AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST.”

Mandatory forms!

Previous editions of the newsletter have stated that all programs must use the ACOTE forms when completing reports for ACOTE.

Programs have not been consistently using the forms. The forms **MUST** be used for all reports. For example, if a program is carrying an area of non-compliance cited in 2007 under the old Standards for strategic planning, future progress reports **MUST** use FORM G when reporting the

strategic plan. Similarly, any reports on professional development plans must be submitted on FORM F.

FORM A: Fieldwork Sites

FORM B: Course Summary Sheets

FORM C: Comparison of Courses with the 2006 Standards

FORM D: Financial Resources

FORM E: Curriculum Vitae for Occupational

Therapy Faculty

FORM F: Faculty/Program Director Professional Development Plans

FORM G: OT/OTA Program Strategic Plan

All of the forms are available online at the following link:

<http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Forms/GeneralUse.aspx>

Failure to use the reports can lead to an area of noncompliance.

“All of the forms are available online.”

Incomplete Reports

It is essential that all reports submitted for review by ACOTE are comprehensive and include all of the requested materials.

When completing self-studies or biennial reports, ensure that all materials are included as outlined on the checklist provided.

Progress reports must include evidence that the program is making significant progress on the plan. It is not sufficient to state that “the faculty is meeting and working on the plan.” You must include at a minimum minutes or other evidence

of progress according to the approved plan timeline.

Failure to submit a complete report may lead to an area of noncompliance with Standard A.1.5.

“Failure to submit a complete report may lead to an area of noncompliance with Standard A.1.5.”

Additional interpretation for PD requirements

At the December meeting, ACOTE added the following interpretive language to Doctoral-Degree-Level, Masters-Degree-Level, and OTA-Level Standards A.2.1., A.2.2., and A.2.3.

“IF ONE COMPONENT OF THE STANDARD IS NONCOMPLIANT, THE ENTIRE STANDARD WILL BE CITED. THE PROGRAM MUST DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH

ALL COMPONENTS OF THE STANDARD IN ORDER FOR THE AREA OF NONCOMPLIANCE TO BE REMOVED.”

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Resources...

Available at www.acoteonline.org:

- ACOTE Announcements & Newsletters
- ACOTE Standards: Interpretive Guides & Compliance Guides
- ACOTE Policies & Procedures
- ACOTE Forms

Important dates...

New Evaluators Training
Workshop:
February 1–3, 2008

ACOTE Summer 2008
Meeting:
July 31–August 3, 2008

ACOTE Spring 2008
Meeting:
April 10–13, 2008

ACOTE Winter 2008
Meeting:
December 5–7, 2008