

Program Director News

Updates from ACOTE and AOTA Academic Affairs

ACOTE Web-Based Accreditation System Launched

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AOTA has purchased a Web-based accreditation management system that will organize, document, and manage the entire accreditation process online.

Key Features:

Academic Program Portal:

- *Annual Survey* and *Interim Report* preparation and submission
- *Self-Study Report* preparation and submission
- *Compliance Plans of Correction and Reports* preparation and submission
- Reporting *Substantial Change; New Program Director*, etc.

Reviewer's Portal:

- Self-Study Review
- Report of the On-Site Evaluation

Council Portal:

- Council Reviews
- Letters of Decision
- Tracking program plans of correction.

Accreditation Staff Management Portal

Database:

Integral to the system will be the development of a **database** that will be populated through the annual data report from the programs. This database will be able to generate trend data for the programs' ACOTE reports and allow them the opportunity to benchmark their outcomes against other programs. All data will be housed in a secure data center.

Timeline:

Year One - 2011

- Launch the Web-Based Annual Survey (January 2011)
- Launch the Application and Self-Study Report Sites for New Programs (late 2011)

Year Two - 2012

- Launch Benchmarking Web Site
- Launch a system to Report and Track all Minor and Major Changes, etc.

- Launch Reviewers Portal and Council Portal for New Programs (late 2012)

Year Three - 2013

- Launch Self-study, On-Site Visit & Followup Program Tracking for Continuing Programs
- Launch Interim Report

Next Steps: In early January, we will be contacting programs with information on how to log on to your confidential portal and how to access and complete the Annual Data Survey. At the meeting in April in Philadelphia, we will be providing more information.

Questions: Please direct any followup questions to Neil Harvison at nharvison@aota.org.

ESRC – Standards Revision Update

“the draft standards will be released in January to all interested stakeholders”

At the December 3-5, 2010 meeting of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE), the Council approved draft revisions to the accreditation standards for doctoral- and master’s-degree-level educational programs for the occupational therapist and associate-degree-level standards for the occupational therapy assistant. The draft standards will be released

in January to all interested stakeholders. Stakeholders will be able to provide feedback via a Web-based survey and at open hearings conducted at the AOTA Annual Meeting and Conference in Philadelphia in April. The feedback will be used by the Educational Standards Review Committee to make further revision to the proposed standards. The revisions will be forwarded to ACOTE for consideration by the

Council. At that time, the Council may choose to distribute the second draft for further comment or adopt the new standards as written. Once the Council adopts the standards, educational programs will have **at least** 18 months to come into compliance.

Check ACOTE’s Web page for further information:
www.acoteonline.org.

Revised Application for New Programs

“The new application is optional for programs with January 14, 2011 submission dates and required for programs with May 16, 2011 submission dates.”

At the December meeting, the Council adopted revisions to the Application for Developing Program Status.

The revisions focused on identifying the standards and evidence needed to evaluate an applicant program’s potential to move on to Step 2: Developing Program Status.

Note: The application is not intended to address all of the 2006 Accreditation Standards and it is the institution’s responsibility to become thoroughly apprised of each Standard as it progresses through the 3-step process.

The revised application forms are available online at
<http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Forms.aspx>.

The new application is optional for programs with January 14, 2011 submission dates and required for programs with May 16, 2011 submission dates.

Additional questions can be forwarded to
accred@aota.org.

Revised Policies for New Additional Locations

“The task force noted that due to wide variations in additional location delivery models, a multi-step process is required.”

Last summer, the Council appointed an ad hoc task force to revise the policies and procedures for accrediting new additional locations of an accredited program. The Council subsequently approved the new procedures which are

available online at
<http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Policies.aspx>.

The task force noted that due to wide variations in additional location delivery models, a multi-step process is required. An initial

review step was added to ensure that the proposed model meets the Council’s new definition of an additional location before the program proceeds to the application step.

Implementation Date for Definition Change

As reported in the Summer PD News, the Council approved a revised definition of an “additional location”. At the December meeting, the Council set dates for compliance with the new definition. All **new** applications for additional locations must meet the new definition effective July 1, 2011. **Existing** additional locations must be in compliance effective July 1, 2012.

An additional location is defined as a facility that is geographically separated from the primary location that offers a significant didactic portion of the educational program (excluding fieldwork). All additional locations must meet the following criteria:

1. Additional locations may only be established at ACOTE-accredited programs holding no areas of noncompliance. Applicant or developing programs are not eligible to submit an application for developing status
2. Additional locations may only be established at ACOTE-accredited programs demonstrating successful student learning outcomes.
3. The additional location must demonstrate the same institutional sponsorship and governance as the accredited program.
4. The program must provide evidence of all necessary approvals to offer the new location from the institution, the educational licensing and/or governing board(s) of the state(s) in which the program is to be offered, and the institutional accrediting body. In cases where no approval is needed, statements to that effect from the relevant body are required.
5. Students from the additional location must graduate with a degree awarded from the accredited program’s sponsoring institution.
6. The program director must be responsible for the administration and operation of all locations offered by the accredited program.
7. The site coordinator must be hired and physically located at the additional location prior to the start of coursework by the first class of students who have been accepted into the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program.
8. The faculty at the additional location must be considered to be faculty of the accredited program.
9. The faculty at the additional location must report to the program director.
10. The additional location must have the same mission, philosophy, and curriculum design as the accredited program.

*“**new** applications for additional locations must meet the new definition effective July 1, 2011. **Existing** additional locations must be in compliance effective July 1, 2012.”*

2011-2012 On-Site Schedule

The 2011-2012 academic year ACOTE on-site schedule will be distributed to programs by the second week of January. It will be another busy year with 70 on-site visits scheduled. This includes 44 reaccreditation and 26 initial on-site visits. Remember each volunteer evaluator devotes on an average 4 days’ travel and 2 days’ review time for an on-site! To meet the increased demand, many are taking personal leaves of absence.

“It will be another busy year with 70 on-site visits scheduled. This includes 44 reaccreditation and 26 initial on-site visits.”

Changes to Policy on Notification of a New PD

At the December meeting, the Council approved the following changes to the policy on the notification of program director changes. The changes clarify that when the position is vacant and an institutional administrator is acting as contact, that individual's qualifications must be submitted for review.

Excerpts from the policy:

A requirement for maintaining accreditation is that prompt notification be sent to the AOTA Accreditation Department if the program director of an accredited occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program changes. (Programs must inform ACOTE within 30 days of the resignation of the program director or appointment of a new or interim program director.) If the position is vacant, written notification should include the plan for filling the position **and the name, credentials, and contact information of the individual who will serve as the primary point of contact for the program.**

Upon the appointment of an acting or permanent program director or individual who is primarily responsible for handling the duties of the program director, the following written notification **must be submitted to ACOTE c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department (3 copies each):**

1. The name, credentials, title, contact information (mailing address, telephone, fax, e-mail address), and effective date of appointment of the new program director **or the individual who is primarily responsible for handling the duties of the program director.**
2. The curriculum vitae **of the new program director or the individual who is primarily responsible for handling the duties of the program director.** The curriculum vitae should detail occupational therapy experience, and should give particular attention to experience and qualifications in clinical practice,

administration, and teaching.

3. A summary of experience and qualifications that are pertinent to the *ACOTE Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, a Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, or an Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant*. See the "Summary of Program Director Credentials" form in the "[Accreditation Surveys, Forms, and Templates](#)" section of the ACOTE Web site (www.acoteonline.org).

The policy and procedures manual is available at <http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Policies.aspx>.

"when the position is vacant and an institutional administrator is acting as contact, that individual's qualifications must be submitted for review"

Number of Programs

	<u>Accredited</u>	<u>Developing</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Total</u>
OT				
Masters Programs	142	4	1	147
Doctoral Programs	4	1	1	6
Masters Additional Locations	11	2	0	13
Doctoral Additional Locations	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total OT Locations	158	7	2	167
OTA				
Programs	141	21	24	186
Additional Locations	<u>19</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>28</u>
Total OTA Locations	160	28	26	214
Totals				
Programs	287	26	26	339
Additional Locations	<u>31</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>42</u>
Total Locations	318	35	28	381
2007	<u>289</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>309</u>
Change	29	30	13	72

¹ Developing Programs have proceeded to the second step and can admit students, but will not gain accreditation until successful completion of a report of self-study and on-site visit.

² Applicant Programs have submitted a letter of intent to start a new program or additional location.

Policy on Extending Terms Revised

At the December meeting, the Council approved changes to the policy related to extending terms of accreditation when a program with no more than 2 areas of noncompliance has corrected the areas within one year of being cited by the Council. The following changes are included in ACOTE policies IV.A.3. "Accreditation Actions"; IV.E.1. "Plans of Correction", and IV.E.2. "Progress Reports".

Excerpts from the revised policies:

If the Progress Report is determined by ACOTE to correct all cited areas of noncompliance, it may be accepted with no further report. Accreditation terms for programs that were cited with no more than 2 areas of noncompliance may be extended if the areas are corrected within 1 year of ACOTE's action on the Report of On-Site Evaluation.

For initial programs, terms may be extended from 5 to 7 years; for reaccredited programs, terms may be extended from 5 to 7 or from 7 to 10 years. This decision will be based on ACOTE's review of the Plan of Correction or Progress Report submitted by the program and a determination that the program has fully resolved the cited areas of noncompliance. ACOTE will also consider any pre-existing areas of noncompliance or program changes that have occurred subsequent to the on-site evaluation that affect or are likely to affect the program's full compliance with the Standards, **including student learning outcomes. ACOTE may decline to extend the accreditation term of a multi-site program if one or more of the program locations was accredited for a shorter term than the primary location.**

The policy and procedures manual is available at <http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Policies.aspx>.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.acoteonline.org

Important dates...

- ACOTE Spring Meeting
April 16-17, 2011
Philadelphia, PA
- ACOTE Summer Meeting
August 4-7, 2011
Baltimore, MD
- Team Chair Training
August 7-8, 2011
Baltimore, MD
- ACOTE Winter Meeting
December 2-4, 2011
Savannah, GA

Resources...

Available at

www.acoteonline.org:

- Accreditation Surveys, Forms, and Templates
- Announcements & Newsletters
- Current ACOTE Accreditation Standards
- Overview (ACOTE History, Meetings, Members)
- Policies and Procedures (ACOTE Manual)
- Workshops

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Interpretive Guide Change for Standard A.5.0

At the December meeting, the Council approved an addition to the Standards Interpretive Guide for Standard A.5.0. Strategic Plan and Program Assessment.

The new interpretation states: *"FOR PROGRAMS THAT ARE OFFERED AT MORE THAN ONE LOCATION, THE PROGRAM'S STRATEGIC PLAN, EVALUATION PLAN, AND RESULTS OF ONGOING EVALUATION MUST ADDRESS EACH PROGRAM LOCATION."*

Changes in Sponsorship or Institution's Name

As required by Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Accreditation Standard A.1.5, institutions must submit notification of the transfer of program sponsorship or change of the institution's name to ACOTE, c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department, within 30 days of the sponsorship transfer or change of the institution's name. This notification must include details of the transfer or change, the impact on the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program, and the regional/national accreditation status of the new sponsoring institution.

This information will be forwarded to the ACOTE reviewers assigned to the program and the program will be notified if any additional information is required. There is no separate accreditation action necessary for such changes.

Accreditation Fees Reminder

As indicated in the current fee schedule (available online at <http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/Policies/Procedures/38143.aspx>), the annual accreditation fees for 2011 will be:

- \$3,250 for accredited main program locations
- \$3,250 for each accredited additional location

These fees will cover academic year 2011/2012. Invoices will be mailed by July 1, 2011 and payment is due no later than October 15, 2011. If early notification is required to facilitate processing of a purchase order for payment, the AOTA Accreditation Department should be notified. Annual fees are due each year, including the year in which an on-site evaluation is scheduled. For new programs, the annual fee becomes effective with the first full academic year for which the program has accreditation status.