

*Updates from ACOTE and AOTA Academic Affairs*

## Notes from the department.....

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It was a very busy fall for Accreditation and Academic Affairs at AOTA!

We have continued to see growth in the number of academic programs at all levels. In the two-year period since January 2009, we have seen an additional 5 doctoral-level occupational therapy; 8 master's-level occupational therapy, and 53 associate-degree-level occupational therapy assistant programs enter the system. This does not include the numerous additional locations and cohorts added to existing accredited programs (see page 6).

The rapid growth is placing considerable strain on volunteer resources and creating new challenges in meeting the needs of our community. In November, ACOTE trained a new class of accreditation volunteers (see page 5). Even with the new members, we continue to have difficulty identifying qualified practitioners to serve on the review teams. We are seeking your help in

recruiting practitioners with OTD's and other doctorates who have been practicing for at least 5 years. For more information on the RAE application process, see ACOTE Seeks New Accreditation Evaluators.

After an extensive 2-year process, multiple surveys to the communities of interest, and several open hearings, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) has adopted new accreditation Standards for doctoral-degree-level programs for the occupational therapist, master's-degree-level programs for the occupational therapist, and associate-degree-level programs for the occupational therapy assistant. The implementation plan for the new Standards is outlined on page 2 of this newsletter.

ACOTE recently submitted a petition to the United States Department of Education for re-recognition of ACOTE by the Secretary of Education. Over the next

5 months, the agency will be under review by USDE staff prior to a hearing before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity scheduled for June 25-26, 2012 (see page 2).

This spring will certainly not slow down for any of us as we continue the implementation of the new Web-based accreditation system (see page 4). Within the next 2 weeks, you will receive notification to submit your program's Web-based Annual Data Survey, which is due no later than March 15. All accredited programs must complete the survey.

This fall, we will be providing more details and training on the system as we begin to implement new modules. Demonstrations on the system are being planned to coincide with the regional workshops being planned on the new Standards.

**Neil Harvison, PhD,  
OTR/L, FAOTA  
Director, Accreditation and  
Academic Affairs**

## Implementation of the 2011 Standards

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*“Programs will be required to comply with the new 2011 Standards by July 31, 2013.”*

Following legal review and copyediting, the new Standards will be disseminated to all educational programs and made available on the ACOTE Accreditation section of the AOTA Web site by February 13, 2012. Programs will be required to comply with the new 2011 ACOTE Standards by July 31, 2013.

Until then, educational programs must continue to comply with the current 2006 Standards.

Programs scheduled for on-site visits in the spring of 2013 may request to be evaluated under the new

Standards.

At the 2012 AOTA Annual Conference and Expo in Indianapolis, ACOTE will host two information sessions on the new Standards. One session will be presented at the meeting of the Program Director Councils. The second session is scheduled from 2-3:00 pm on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> in the White River Ballroom of the JW Marriott.

In the fall of 2012 and spring of 2013, ACOTE will provide regional workshops for interested faculty. The workshops will focus on the changes in the

new Standards and strategies that programs could use to ensure compliance. In addition, faculty will be provided with an overview of the new Web-based e-Accreditation system.

For those program directors and faculty unable to attend a live workshop, the Council will be hosting a series of webinars over the year.

If you are willing to host a workshop at your school, please contact Neil Harvison at [nharvison@aota.org](mailto:nharvison@aota.org).

## USDE recognition review

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*“As required by federal regulation, on January 9, 2012, ACOTE filed its petition with the United States Department of Education (USDE) for re-recognition.”*

As required by federal regulation, on January 9, 2012, ACOTE filed its petition with the United States Department of Education (USDE) for re-recognition. It has been 6 years since USDE’s last review of ACOTE.

Over the next 4-5 months, USDE staff will be reviewing ACOTE’s petition and practices in order to ensure compliance with federal regulations. The staff will submit a report to the Secretary of Education and to the National Advisory Committee on

Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI).

NACIQI’s role is to advise the Secretary. NACIQI consists of 6 members appointed by the USDE, 6 members appointed by the United States House of Representatives, and 6 members appointed by the United States Senate.

On June 25-26, 2012, Letha Mosley, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA (ACOTE Chairperson); Ellen McLaughlin, EdD, OTR/L (ACOTE Chairperson-Elect), and Neil Harvison,

PhD, OTR, FAOTA (AOTA) will appear before the NACIQI panel hearing to respond to the USDE staff report and panel members’ questions. Both the USDE staff report and the NACIQI recommendation will be forwarded to the Secretary who will make the final determination of ACOTE’s recognition status.

For more information on the review, contact Neil Harvison at [nharvison@aota.org](mailto:nharvison@aota.org).

## Requirement for minimum number of participants in on-site interviews

At the December meeting, the Council had a lengthy discussion regarding concerns raised by on-site evaluators about the low number of participants available for the on-site interviews with students, graduates, fieldwork educators, and employers.

The interviews with these key stakeholder groups are

an important component of the on-site review. It is essential that the team have the opportunity to meet a representative group.

As per ACOTE guidelines, the optimal number available for each group should be 10 or more participants. If the number of participants should fall

below 6 participants, the on-site visit may have to be rescheduled to allow the team to interview an adequate number of stakeholders.

If you feel that you cannot reach the minimum number of participants, you should contact Sarah Cho at [dji@aota.org](mailto:dji@aota.org) as soon as possible.

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*“As per ACOTE guidelines, the optimal number available for each group should be 10 or more participants.”*

## NBCOT Data Updates

The ACOTE Standards require that *“accurate and current information regarding student outcomes must be readily available to the public in at least one publication or Web page. The following data must be reported as an aggregate for the three most recent calendar years and specify the*

- 3-year time period being reported,
- total number of program graduates during that period,
- total number of first-time test takers of the

*national certification examination during that period,*

- *Total number of first-time test takers who passed the exam during that period, and the percentage of the total number of first-time test takers who passed the exam during that period.”*

Programs are expected to have the 2009-2011 data posted on their Web sites no later than May 15, 2012. At that time, accreditation staff will start their review of all Web

sites to collect data for the summer ACOTE meeting. If the current data is not accurate or not posted in the required format, the program will be found in noncompliance.

**Remember:** The Standard requires that the information is **“readily available”** to the public and should be easily identified on the program’s home page.

If you have any questions, please contact Neil Harvison at [nharvison@aota.org](mailto:nharvison@aota.org).

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*“Programs are expected to have the 2009-2011 data posted on their Web sites no later than May 15, 2012.”*

## Post-Professional degree listings on [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

AOTA maintains a listing of post-professional degree programs, offered by occupational therapy departments, on the AOTA Web site at [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org).

There are direct links to

[master’s degree](#) and [doctoral degree](#) program listings.

To make sure that the listing is as up-to-date as possible, please check it on a regular basis and

contact Sue Graves at [sgraves@aota.org](mailto:sgraves@aota.org) if you need to make any changes or additions.

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*“AOTA maintains a listing of post-professional degree programs.”*

## Are your plans of correction and other aspects of the program being monitored by ACOTE reflected in the program evaluation plan and reports?

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*“most obvious areas for which reviewers would look for evidence would be in the program’s documented strategic plan”*

One major change in higher education that we are seeing reflected in accreditation is the greater focus on student learning outcomes. At ACOTE, we have seen the annual report requirements transition to focus primarily on reporting data collected through program evaluation. At this time, the most frequently cited areas of noncompliance are for the Standards related to program outcomes.

It is important that the program demonstrate that the key student outcomes are being tracked and that concerns identified through the program evaluation are being addressed.

It should be clear in the reports submitted to ACOTE that each outcome is not only being measured, but that the program has a process included in the program evaluation plan and reporting cycle to ensure ongoing program enhancement.

The ACOTE Standards require that programs must routinely secure and document sufficient qualitative and quantitative information to allow for meaningful analysis about the extent to which the program is meeting its stated goals and objectives.

An ACOTE action may state that an outcome will

continue to be “monitored” by the Council. This would indicate that the program is in minimal compliance, but the Council is concerned about the outcome.

The Council would expect to see evidence of a plan to address the identified concern. The most obvious areas for which reviewers would look for evidence would be in the program’s documented strategic plan and minutes of faculty meetings and planning sessions.

If you have any questions, please contact Neil Harvison at [nharvison@aota.org](mailto:nharvison@aota.org).

## ACOTE Online

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*“Project to transition all ACOTE processes to a Web-based accreditation system continues on schedule.”*

The project to transition all ACOTE processes to a Web-based accreditation system continues on schedule.

Next steps include:  
 (1) Spring 2012: second year that the annual data report will be distributed and completed through the Web site;  
 (2) Fall 2012: pilot testing

of the online process for new applicant programs;  
 (3) Spring 2013: pilot testing of the first self-study and on-site visits conducted through the Web-based system.

Training will be implemented over the next 18 months starting with the new Standards workshops this fall.

More information will follow once the training schedule and materials are finalized.

If you have any questions, please contact Sue Graves at [sgraves@aota.org](mailto:sgraves@aota.org).

## New members of the Roster of Accreditation Evaluators

Eleven new members of the Roster of Accreditation Evaluators (RAE) attended a 2½ day training workshop hosted by ACOTE in November. The new members started their terms on January 1, 2012, and will be joining the on-site teams on the 2012-2013 visits. The new members are listed below. ACOTE continues to actively seek out new volunteer members for the RAE who are doctorally-prepared practitioners. For more information on this year's RAE application process and timeline, see [ACOTE Seeks New Accreditation Evaluators](#).

Shawn Baxter, MS, OTR/L, CIE  
North Kingstown, RI  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

Harriett S. Bynum, MS, OTR/L  
East Liverpool, OH  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OTA Education)

Marian Gillard, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA  
Glenside, PA  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Doctoral Level)

Tammy R. Gipson, MS, OTR/L  
Hanceville, AL  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OTA Education)

Karla M. Lepore, MS, OTR/L  
San Diego, CA  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

Vanna Lombardi-Gillies, MHA, OTR/L  
Gig Harbor, WA  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

Robert B. McAlister, PhD, OTR/L  
Louisville, KY  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Education Master's Level)

Sheri Purdy, CLT, OTR/L  
Woburn, MA  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

Nicole R. Scheiman, MHS, OTR/L, CLT, CKTP, CEES  
DeLand, FL  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

Fonda Scott, BLS, COTA/L  
Norman, OK  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OTA Practice)

Jacqueline C. Tuzon, MS, OTR/L  
Greenville, SC  
(1/1/2012 - 6/30/2015 OT Practice Master's Level)

## Number of Programs

	<u>Accredited</u>	<u>Developing</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>OT</b>				
Masters Programs	144	3	6	153
Doctoral Programs	4	3	4	11
Masters Additional Locations	10	2	0	12
Doctoral Additional Locations	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total OT Locations</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>OTA</b>				
Programs	152	24	28	204
Additional Locations	<u>25</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>29</u>
<b>Total OTA Locations</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>Totals</b>				
Programs	300	30	38	368
Additional Locations	<u>36</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>42</u>
<b>Total Locations</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>410</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

## Have you registered for the spring 2012 Program Directors' Meeting?

**When:** **Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>**  
(7:30-8:30 am Registration/Continental Breakfast; 8:30-5:00 pm Meeting; 5:00-6:00 pm Reception)

**Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**  
(8:30 am-11:30 am. Pre-conference institutes start Wednesday afternoon.)

**Where:** **JW Marriott – Indianapolis, IN** (AOTA Conference Headquarters) - White River Ballroom F

**Registration:** Registration is included on AOTA's Conference registration form (Section 2).

**Deadlines:** March 7: Early Registration Ends; April 11: Regular Registration Ends

**Fee:** \$155 AOTA Member; \$255 Nonmember

## American Occupational Therapy Association

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PO Box 31220  
Bethesda, MD 20824-1220

PHONE:  
(301) 652-6611 Ext. 2914

FAX:  
(301) 652-1417

E-MAIL:  
accred@aota.org

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org)

### *Important dates...*

- ACOTE Spring Meeting  
April 28-29, 2012  
Indianapolis, IN
- ACOTE Summer Meeting  
August 2-5, 2012  
Alexandria, VA

### *Resources...*

Available at

[www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org):

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

## Staff Contacts:

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### **Sarah Cho**

On-site Program Coordinator  
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Phone: 301-652-6611, x2914

## Accreditation Fees reminder.....

As indicated in the current fee schedule (available online at

[http://www.aota.org/-](http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/Policies/Procedures/VA%20Fee)

[/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/Policies/Procedures/VA%20Fee.s.pdf](http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/Policies/Procedures/VA%20Fee.s.pdf)), the annual accreditation fees for 2012 will be:

- \$3,350 for accredited main program locations
- \$3,350 for each accredited additional location

These fees will cover academic year 2012/2013. Invoices will be mailed by July 1, 2012 and payment is due no later than October 15, 2012. 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.

## Save the dates.....

### **Fall 2012 Combined Program Directors' Councils and Academic Fieldwork Coordinators Meeting**

#### **Hilton Bonnet Creek Hotel – Orlando, FL**

- October 3-4** Self-Study Preparation Workshop
- October 4** Orientation for New Program Directors
- October 5-6** Combined PD & Academic Fieldwork Coordinators

*Registration begins in July 2012*

Special Meeting Room Rate: Single/double room - \$164 plus 12.5% tax; additional persons \$20 additional plus tax. Sleeping room rate applies 3 days pre and post based on availability.