V. E. STANDARDS REVISION PROCESS

ACOTE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Within 5 years after new accreditation standards are adopted, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) will appoint members to serve on the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee according to that Committee's Standard Operating Procedure. This Committee will conduct a complete evaluation and revision of the *Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, Accreditation Standards for a Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist,* and *Accreditation Standards for an Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant.*

STANDARDS REVIEW AND REVISION TIMELINE

The following is a suggested review and revision timeline. The actual timeline to be followed may be expanded as needed.

Year One:

1. First meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:

   - Develop a timeline and methodology for the Standards revision process.
   - Review recommendations for change made by ACOTE and/or ACOTE's Standards and Ethics Committee.
   - Review other comments and feedback received from stakeholders.
   - Review Standards for compliance with current United States Department of Education (USDE) and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) criteria for recognition.

2. Publish an article on the AOTA Web site, in relevant publications (e.g., OT Practice and OT Advance) announcing the revision of the Standards and describing the process and schedule for Standards review/revision. Disseminate a call for comment (with timeline indicated for comment) to all communities of interest and outline the procedure for those wishing to provide input to the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee.

   Communities of interest include all the bodies within the AOTA organizational structure; related bodies or organizations (the American Occupational Therapy Foundation, the American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee, the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy); OT and OTA educational program representatives (CEOs, deans, program directors, fieldwork coordinators, and student advisors); occupational therapy fieldwork educators; practitioners; consumers; employers; regulators (licensure boards, state higher education commissions); recognition bodies (U.S. Department of Education, Council for Higher Education Accreditation); accreditors (Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, regional, national, and specialized accreditors); students; and the public at large.

3. Second meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:
   - Review the data collected from all evaluation instruments.
   - Review any correspondence, e-mails, or telephone calls received by ACOTE regarding the Standards.
   - Identify Standards determined to have greatest concerns.
   - Prepare draft Standards for ACOTE review and discussion.

4. ACOTE meeting
   - Review and discuss the draft Standards.
   - Provide feedback to the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee.

Year Two:

5. Third meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:
   - Revise the draft Standards based on input from ACOTE.
   - Develop an online survey for comment and feedback on the draft Standards.

6. Publish a draft of the revised Standards on the AOTA Web site and disseminate with a survey instrument to invite feedback from all communities of interest.

7. Hold a Standards Open Hearing that is open to the public and send ACOTE representatives to a variety of meetings (e.g., OT and OTA Program Directors' Council meetings, regional fieldwork council meetings, Faculty Forum, Education Special Interest Section, etc.) to present identified Standards issues and request input on the Standards revision.

8. Fourth meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:
   - Review feedback regarding the draft revised Standards.
   - Revise the draft Standards based on input.

9. ACOTE meeting
   - Review and discuss the draft Standards.

10. Fifth meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:
    - Finalize the draft Standards based on ACOTE input.
    - Develop an online survey for comment and feedback on the draft Standards.

11. Post a draft of the revised Standards on the AOTA Web site and invite comment.

12. Sixth meeting of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee:
    - Review feedback regarding the draft revised Standards.
    - Revise draft Standards (if necessary) based on input.

13. ACOTE meeting:
    - Vote on approval of the new Standards and establish a transition timeline (usually 18 months). During the transition period, programs undergoing accreditation (or reaccreditation) are given the option of using either the current Standards or the new Standards.

14. Post the new Standards on the AOTA Web site and send an e-mail announcement to all communities of interest regarding the new Standards.

Year Three

15. Provide ACOTE workshops to program directors and all accreditation evaluators on implementing the new Standards.

16. Begin assessing compliance with the new Standards as part of the regular on-site and interim report review process.

ONGOING REVIEW

Once the new Standards have been adopted, the ongoing review of the Standards becomes the responsibility of the ACOTE Standards and Ethics Committee, a standing committee of ACOTE. This Committee is responsible for review of the feedback obtained through the Standards Evaluation Forms and other evaluation instruments to determine:

1. The need for an immediate change to the Standards. If ACOTE determines, at any point during its systematic program of review, that it needs to make changes to the Standards, ACOTE will initiate action within 12 months to make the changes and will complete that action within a reasonable period of time. Before finalizing any changes to the Standards, ACOTE will provide advance public notice of proposed new or revised Standards. ACOTE will provide adequate opportunity for broad comment from the academic community and the public prior to adoption of proposed changes to ACOTE Standards.

2. Continued compliance with USDE and CHEA recognition criteria. ACOTE will notify the Secretary of USDE in writing of any changes in its policies, procedures, or accreditation standards which might alter ACOTE's scope of recognition or its compliance with the USDE requirements for notification to the Secretary.

3. The need for an ACOTE interpretation of a Standard or Standards. Such interpretations will be included in ACOTE's Standards Interpretive Guide to be maintained on the AOTA Web site. Any changes to the Standards Interpretive Guide will be immediate unless otherwise indicated by an implementation date. In determining the implementation date, ACOTE will take the following guidelines into consideration:
   (a) If the interpretation is to the benefit of the programs, it will be implemented immediately.
   (b) If the interpretation potentially requires changes by the program in order to be in compliance, then an implementation date will be determined by ACOTE that provides all programs a reasonable time period with which to come into compliance.

4. The need for a change to any of ACOTE's policies, procedures, or forms.