Greetings to all! I have just returned from a productive Academic Leadership Committee (ALC) meeting and edifying Education Summit in Louisville, Kentucky. Key highlights from the ALC included a 2018 Standards update highlighting Standards that appeared ambiguous, confusing and/or were cited often in the listserves. Topics for discussion included clarity regarding the glossary definition of core faulty, faculty composition and degrees, and the options now available for Level I Fieldwork. The audio transcript of the Standards update can be found on https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Educators/Academic-Leadership-Councils-Meeting-Presentations.aspx.

In order to support our programs, eight regional Standards workshops are scheduled for Spring and Fall of 2019 to provide an overview of the accreditation system and reporting requirements; all the changes in the new accreditation Standards; and examples on how to demonstrate compliance with the new Standards. The announcement can be found at http://www.aota.org/~/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/StandardsReview/WorkshopAnnouncement2018-2019.pdf

**Online registration is now available through the AOTA Store under New Products**

**Earn 7.5 Contact Hours (.75 AOTA CEUs/9.38 NBCOT PDUs)**

The direct link is: http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?TYPE=osg&osgid=fw

Workshops are scheduled for the following dates and locations:
- Boston, MA, MGH Institute of Health Professions, February 8, 2019 ($55)
- New York, NY, Columbia University, April 29, 2019 ($35)
- Nashville, TN, Belmont University, February 11, 2019 ($35)
- Chicago, IL, Midwestern University, June 7, 2019 ($35)
- Los Angeles, CA, University of Southern California, September 27, 2019 ($35)
- Dallas, TX, Texas Woman’s University, October 21, 2019 ($35)
- Seattle, WA, University of Washington, September 25, 2019 ($35)
- Kansas City, KS, Cleveland University, November 18, 2019 ($35)

Seating is limited, so early registration is recommended.

**Instructors:** Sabrina Salvant, EdD, OTR/L, Director of Accreditation, Barbara Ostrove, MA, OTR/L, FAOTA, Assistant Director of Accreditation, and a regional member of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) or the Educational Standards Review Committee (ESRC).
The following topics will be presented by webinar:

- Moving from a Master’s to a Doctoral Level  
  **October 2018, Presenter—Paula Kramer PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA**  
  [https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/?utm_source=transcriptReadyNotification&utm_medium=email#/s/dd90d43ceff4fb2aa1814312ab238eb2c4e365cacc235966f4e8205249284a47](https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/?utm_source=transcriptReadyNotification&utm_medium=email#/s/dd90d43ceff4fb2aa1814312ab238eb2c4e365cacc235966f4e8205249284a47)

- Curriculum Design  
  **December 2018, Presenter—Paula Kramer, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA**

- Strategic Planning and Program Assessment  
  **February 2019, Presenter—Paula Kramer, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA**

- Doctoral Capstone Project and Development  
  **January 2019, Presenter—Beth Ann Hatkevich, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA**

### Clarification of Documentation of Release Time

ACOTE discussed and agreed that due to the ongoing change of work loads, load reports for a given semester/year are not acceptable as documentation to demonstrate sufficient release time for the program director and/or academic fieldwork coordinator. In lieu of this, the Council requests that you submit formal documentation (e.g., signed letter or annual contract) from senior administrator(s) (e.g., department chair, dean, etc.) that highlight program director and academic fieldwork coordinator release time that ensures that the needs of the program are being met.

### 2018 ACOTE Standards

The 2018 ACOTE Standards were approved at the August 2018 meeting and are available on the [Current ACOTE Accreditation Standards](#) webpage.

In addition, ACOTE voted to allow early implementation of two doctoral-level Standards, as programs would like to develop their curricula to reflect the new Standards to better address the needs of their faculty and students and for strategic planning purposes. Specifically, 1) Allow programs to waive the requirement in 2011 Standard A.3.2 for program applicants to hold a baccalaureate degree or higher prior to admission to the program. 2) Allow OTD programs to have a 14-week Capstone Experience (2018 Standard D.1.5) versus a 16-week Capstone Experience (2011 Standard C.2.3).
New ACOTE Members

This August, ACOTE accepted 4 new members to the Council:

- Elizabeth Cada, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA (Higher Education Administrator)
- Patricia Coker-Bolt, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
- Renee Ortega, MS, COTA/L, BC-DMT
- C. Douglas Simmons, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

ACOTE and Accreditation staff would like to take this opportunity to thank Patricia Chute, EdD (Higher Education Administrator), Tia Hughes, DrOT, MBA, OTR/L, and Donald Walkovich, DHSc, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA and for their service on Council and for their commitment to ensuring that students receive a quality occupational therapy education.

A current list of ACOTE members is available here: ACOTE Members

Notes for Program Directors

Looking for an ACOTE announcement, form, policy, procedure, or other accreditation information online? The following webpages are available to you:

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

August 2018 ACOTE Meeting Actions

A full report on ACOTE actions is available online at August 2018 ACOTE Accreditation Actions.

AOTA's NBCOT Exam Prep

AOTA’s online NBCOT® Exam Prep program is the most comprehensive and effective way for new occupational therapy practitioners to get ready for the biggest test of their career—at their own pace, any time and any place. Developed and reviewed by top occupational therapy leaders and educators across all practice areas, Exam Prep includes hundreds of self-assessment questions and vital tools to help students and new graduates focus on the topics they’ll need to master. Subscriptions include access for 1 year from the date of purchase. For more information and to order, visit: AOTA’s NBCOT Exam Prep.
Program Personnel Changes in ACOTE Online

It is very important that you keep program personnel current in ACOTE Online (https://acote.aota.org) so that communications are sent to the correct person. New personnel may be added by clicking on the “USERS” tab and adding the requested information (including a new password) under “Add User”. The individual should be given a role of “Program Official” if they will be assigned one of the following roles. Otherwise, they should be designated as an “Application User”. Program Officials include the following:

- CEO
- Dean or Administrator (to whom the program director reports)
- Program Director
- OTD Capstone Coordinator
- Academic Fieldwork Coordinator
- Student Occupational Therapy Association Advisor

To remove an official, click on the “Edit” button to the right of their name in the “OFFICIALS” tab, then click “Replace Official”. Once accreditation staff approve that change, you may designate another program official in that role. Once the new Official is added, click on the “Edit” button to add their credentials, official title, and mailing address.

Changes to program officials should also be reported by using the designated Program Data Forms available in the Accreditation Surveys, Forms, and Templates section of the ACOTE webpage.

Join Us for the Next Self-Study Workshop

The AOTA Self-Study Preparation Workshop is designed to meet the needs of program directors and faculty preparing for an upcoming self-study review and new program directors wanting to understand more about the accreditation process. The workshop includes didactic instruction and interactive sessions with a mock review of sample materials and interviews.

Topics covered include:
(1) How to get started on a report of self-study;
(2) What to consider when writing the report;
(3) What are the key elements in the self-study;
(4) How much detail is needed;
(5) What the reviewers are looking for in the self-study;
(6) How to prepare for the on-site visit;
(7) What I need to show the on-site reviewers; and
(8) Review of the e-Accreditation System.

Next Workshop: the next scheduled workshop will be held in the Washington, D.C. area in January 2019. Please contact Valeta Njoroge at vnjoroge@aota.org for more information.
As of October 25, 2018, the number of program locations in the accreditation process totaled 517.

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2019 Annual Reports

As stated in ACOTE Policy IV.E.5. Annual Reports to ACOTE, each program that is accredited by ACOTE is required to submit an Annual Report every year to provide data on key indicators and quality outcomes of the program. Collected data allows us to aggregate national trend data such as enrollment numbers, student population (including ethnicity, race, and gender), faculty numbers and degree level, graduates’ job placement, work settings, debt load, and average starting salary. Accrediting bodies are expected to be able to provide this information when applying for recognition or re-recognition by the US Department of Education.

The 2019 Annual Report module is in the process of being built in the ACOTE Online system and is scheduled to be launched in early January 2019. All programs that are accredited at that time will be required to complete the report. Annual Reports will be due by February 5, 2019.

In response to feedback from program directors and to collect more accurate data, the Annual Report questions in Section V related to job placement rates will be revised to read as follows:

V.2. Counting all students who graduated from the program in calendar year 2017, what percentage responded that they were employed in an OT/OTA or OT/OTA-related position within 1 year of graduating?
   0%
   1-24%
   25-49%
   50-74%
   75-100%

V.2.a. What is the total number of students who graduated from the program in calendar year 2017? __

V.2.b. Please indicate the employment status of each of the 2017 graduates using the following categories. If your program did not have graduates in 2017, please enter "0" in each response box and explain in the comment box.
   Number of graduates employed in an OT/OTA or OT/OTA-related position FULL-TIME: __
   Number of graduates employed in an OT/OTA or OT/OTA-related position PART-TIME: __
   Number of graduates EMPLOYED IN HEALTHCARE in a non-OT/OTA or OT/OTA-related position (e.g., PRN): __
   Number of graduates STILL SEEKING EMPLOYMENT in an OT/OTA or OT/OTA-related position: __
   Number of graduates who will be CONTINUING THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION: __
   Number of graduates whose employment status is UNKNOWN: __
   Comment:

Other Annual Report questions will be basically unchanged from last year, except that questions related to student loan debt, full-time starting salary of graduates, and graduates’ initial areas of practice will ask for data on 2017 graduates rather than “the most recent class of graduates for which you have data”. This should allow for a consistent data point and sufficient time for data gathering.

Questions/comments may be directed to accred@aota.org.
Tech Tips by Sue Graves

Please Keep Us Informed of Changes

It is much easier for Accreditation staff if we receive notification of changes as they occur. This summer, we received over 200 changes to program personnel. Although we appreciated the response to our request for updates, it is more manageable if we receive change notifications at a more even pace throughout the year.

You can use ACOTE Online (https://acote.aota.org) to make the following changes:

- **Changes to Program Web Address or Phone Number**: Update the program’s web address or phone number in your program’s PROFILE TAB. That will automatically generate notification of the change to Accreditation staff so that we can update our records. Both of those fields are used to update your program listing on the **Find A School** page. Please check these listings to make sure they are current.

- **Changes of Program Personnel**: See instructions on page 7 for changes to program personnel. Note that we only need notification of changes to those positions listed in the OFFICIALS tab.

Keeping us informed will help ensure that:

- Important notifications, including ACOTE accreditation actions and listserv messages, are sent to the correct individual. Check the OFFICIALS tab to ensure the correct individuals are listed.
- Prospective students see the correct contact information for your program on **Find A School** page. They may not reach you if the web link or contact information is not correct. Please take a moment to make sure all information is current.

Who Needs to Sign off on Reports?

We often receive questions about who is required to sign off on accreditation reports. The following is a summary of the approvals required by the ACOTE Online system:

- **Program Director Only**: Annual Reports, Substantive Change submissions, responses to reopened Standards, and factual corrections subsequent to an on-site visit.
- **Program Director and Dean/Administrator**: Interim Reports and Plans of Correction/Progress Reports prepared in the REPORT tab.
- **Program Director, Dean/Administrator, and CEO**: Letters of Intent, Candidacy Applications, and Reports of Self-Study.

Note that although you may have completed and signed off on a report, it is not submitted through the ACOTE Online system until the last person has signed off and submitted the report to ACOTE.

Have tech questions? Contact Sue Graves at **sg Graves@aota.org**.
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Are you facing an application document deluge?
Are you overwhelmed by your growing applicant pool?
Are you having difficulty filling seats reserved for out-of-state applicants?

OTCAS is here to help! Now in its seventh application cycle, OTCAS is the AOTA-endorsed occupational therapy centralized application service that 83% of graduate occupational therapy programs already use to:

- **Wow prospective students.** OTCAS enables targeted communications and messaging that funnels directly into a user-friendly, modern online application experience.

- **Make data-based admissions decisions.** OTCAS provides access to secure, web-based admissions software and a rich database that allows for comparative data on GPAs, test scores, demographic information and other academic criteria.

- **Increase program exposure.** OTCAS is a national platform for promotion and visibility of your occupational therapy programs.

- **Decrease administrative burdens.** Powered by Liaison, the leader in centralized application services for the health professions, OTCAS gives you access to processing services that calculate GPAs, scan application documents and offer support to applicants via telephone, email and social media.

Graduate occupational therapy programs can sign on to use OTCAS at any time, free of charge!

We’re pleased to announce the recent launch of a new centralized application service for OTA programs. OTACAS offers the same benefits listed above but was developed specifically for occupational therapy assistant programs and applicants. Like OTCAS, program participation is free.

OTACAS is a win-win for students and programs alike. Occupational therapy assistant students want ease of access and programs want an effective way to recruit the top healthcare applicants. OTACAS’s single online application provides a streamlined application process for top occupational therapy assistant programs nationwide.

—— Net Harvison, Chief Academic and Scientific Affairs Officer at AOTA

For more information about OTCAS or OTACAS, contact Melissa Keaveney at mkeaveney@liaisonedu.com or (617) 612-2008.