

PD Newsletter

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education

Spring 2015

A few notes...

This edition of the PD Newsletter includes updates to the ACOTE policies, including changes to accreditation language. You will also find new resources available to you at acoteonline.org and education opportunities such as the Self-Study Workshop and the Education Summit, which will be held in Denver, Colorado in October.

On page 3 you will find an update on the ACOTE entry-level task group. This group is collecting and analyzing data and will submit an analysis of this data at the next ACOTE meeting in August 2015.

Thank you for all of your support and continued work on behalf of occupational therapy education.

Heather Stagliano, DHSc, OTR/L
Director of Accreditation

Recruiting New RAE Members!

We are actively recruiting OT and OTA practitioners to meet demands with the increased number of OT and OTA programs. The 2015 application deadline is June 20, 2015, and the application forms, as well as additional information, can be found at www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Accreditation/Announcements.aspx.

Please encourage OT and OTA practitioners who would be valuable additions to the RAE to apply!

Further questions may be directed to hstagliano@aota.org

The AOTA Self-Study Preparation 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

Attendance is limited to 30 participants.

Contact: vnjoroge@aota.org

Next Workshop:

The Summer 2015 workshop is full, but registration will open in July for the Fall 2015 workshop

When: October 14-15, 2015

Where: Grand Hyatt, Denver, Colorado

SAVE THE DATE!

Fall 2015 - Denver, Colorado

*Grand Hyatt
1750 Welton Street*

The 2015 AOTA/OTCAS Education Summit provides a venue for educators, scholars, post professional graduate students, and clinicians who share the common vision of enhanced understanding of teaching and learning in occupational therapy education. A total of 58 peer-reviewed papers and 73 peer-reviewed posters will be presented in the following three summit themes:

- Pedagogy and Instructional Design
- Foundations for OT/OTA Education and Practice
- Capacity Building Within the Profession and Academia

October 14-15 - Self-Study Preparation Workshop

October 16 - Academic Leadership Council Meeting

October 17-18 - Education Summit

See more at: [2015 AOTA/OTCAS Education Summit](#)

Rebuilding Together Update



Extensive revisions have been made to the Rebuilding Together resources on the AOTA website. These resources can be very helpful to faculty for service learning and other educational opportunities. A number of faculty members were interviewed for the project and they shared their success stories as well as specific tools that they use.

More information can be found at [Rebuilding Together](#)

Further questions may be directed to ksmith@aota.org

Guidance on publishing information for Standard A.4.2 on your Web page

Recently, an email was sent out to all program directors alerting them that many programs were incorrectly reporting information regarding Standard A.4.2 on their program Web page. If you missed this email, please check it out here: [Sample Program Web Page](#)

Update on ACOTE's Task Group on Entry-Level Degrees

Consistent with ACOTE®'s mission of establishing standards for the preparation of competent occupational therapy practitioners, the ACOTE® Entry-Level Degree Task Force is working to identify the optimal entry level(s) of education for ethical, accountable, and efficient practice to meet society's occupational needs.

The task force is continuing to gather data through various means and is currently analyzing the data from the entry-level surveys, which were distributed to program directors, clinicians, and employers across the country in March 2015. The survey closed on May 15, 2015.

During the 2015 AOTA Conference, Roundtable discussions were held with a cross-section of special interest group representatives. The task force is also soliciting additional input from the Representative Assembly, prospective students, and employers over the next several months.

The task force will submit an analysis of this data at the next ACOTE meeting in August 2015.

Further questions may be directed to hstagliano@aota.org

Reports Due Reminder



It is important to remember that Self-Study and Interim Reports take a lot of time to complete. Before you can submit your reports, your dean and CEO will have to sign off on your Self-Study Report and your dean will have to sign off on your Interim Report. They may suggest edits or require additional time to review these reports. **Please make sure that you budget enough time to allow for this process.**

Faculty Licenses



All faculty must be licensed once their new position commences.

Standard A.2.8 states, "Core faculty who are occupational therapists or occupational therapy assistants must be currently licensed or otherwise regulated according to regulations in the state or jurisdiction in which the program is located."

"Faculty in residence and teaching at additional locations must be currently licensed or otherwise regulated according to the regulations in the state or jurisdiction in which the additional location is located."

New Accreditation Language

Step 2 of the accreditation process is no longer called the “Initial Review.” This step is now known as the Preaccreditation Review and programs will be granted Preaccreditation Status if approved.

STEP 2: PREACCREDITATION REVIEW

If Candidacy Status is granted, the program may admit its first class of students and proceed to the second step of the process, the preaccreditation review. In this step, the program assesses its compliance with the ACOTE Standards and submits an initial Report of Self-Study. Upon review of this report, ACOTE grants, defers action on, or denies Preaccreditation Status. The granting of Preaccreditation Status indicates that on the basis of the paper review of the submitted materials, ACOTE has determined that the program is likely to meet the applicable ACOTE Standards if fully implemented in accordance with its plans. The granting of Preaccreditation Status is not a guarantee of accreditation status.

(See [III.A.2. Step Two: Preaccreditation Review](#))

ACOTE Policy IV.B.1. Additions or Changes Reminder

When submitting a minor or significant program change, it is important to understand that minor program changes can occur without ACOTE approval. You must notify ACOTE and that information will be forwarded to the reviewers assigned to your program. You will only receive additional correspondence if additional information is needed. For significant program changes, you must have ACOTE approval before making the change.

- Minor Program Changes or Additions

Minor program changes or additions must be submitted through ACOTE Online (<https://acote.aota.org>) using the “Substantive Change” tab. 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.**

- Significant Program Changes or Additions

Significant program changes or additions **require ACOTE review and approval prior to** the admission of students into the new/changed program.

(See [IV.B.1. Additions or Changes](#))

Policy III.A. Update

Accreditation Process for New Programs: Overview of the Process

At the April 2015 ACOTE meeting, the Council voted to limit the number of new program submissions to 6 per cycle.

“ACOTE will accept and review a maximum of 6 Candidacy Applications during a given cycle. Only institutions with occupational therapy/occupational therapy assistant program directors hired will be assigned to a Candidacy Application submission slot. The acceptance of Candidacy Applications will be based on the receipt date of the Letter of Intent (if signed by the program director) or date of notification that a program director has been hired. After the 6-program cap is reached, programs will be placed on a waiting list and may be subject to the next available review cycle. The planned student admission must be delayed accordingly.”

Additionally, the 6-program cap on submission of Candidacy Applications for currently accredited master’s-degree-level programs transitioning to the doctoral-degree-level may be waived. Programs adding a doctorate program will be subject to the 6-program cap.

A link to this policy can be found here: [III.A. Overview of the Process](#)

New Program Self-Study Tips

For new programs, when writing the “Overview” section in the self-study, the reviewers will want to see a **brief** history of the program including a clear picture of the college or university, the program faculty, the organization of the program and degree offered (e.g., entry-level MS,

2+3, junior entry) and any significant factors that make the college or university unique. Such factors could include the size of the school, location (rural or urban), sponsorship (public or private and by whom), mission (research, public service, adult learner), and if the program will meet a specific need in that area of the state or country. Please also include the following information in this section:

- Mission and Philosophy of the Program
- Curriculum Design and Threads
- Number of Student Cohorts, Students in each Cohort, and Start Dates
- Length of the Program
- Current Staffing Pattern
- Institutional Support and Approval

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ACOTE Online Changes

You may have noticed recently that some changes have been made to ACOTE Online. The tab formerly listed as "Staff" is now labeled "Users." You should continue to use the "Users" tab to add any individuals to the system. You will also see a new tab labeled "Officials." This tab will allow you to assign an official role to anyone listed in the "Users" tab, including dual roles. For example, you may assign the same individual as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Student Occupational Therapy Association Advisor without creating a system conflict.

Questions? Please contact sgraves@aota.org

Find a School Page

As you may be aware, the Accreditation Department is responsible for maintaining all lists included on AOTA's [Find a School](#) Web page. In addition to the lists of accredited, developing, and applicant programs, we also maintain the lists of Bridge-Weekend programs and [Postprofessional OT Doctoral Programs](#) and [Postprofessional OT Masters programs](#). Please inform us by e-mail to accred@aota.org if you have any changes to the listed information or would like your program to be added to a list. Thanks for your assistance.

Questions? Please contact accred@aota.org

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E-Mail: accred@aota.org We're on the Web! See us at: www.acoteonline.org

Participation and support continues to grow for the Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS).

OT program participation in OTCAS has significantly grown over the past two years, with 66% of all eligible graduate programs choosing to utilize the service.

By joining OTCAS, your occupational therapy program will become part of a national platform for promotion and visibility, data collection and management, and the sharing of best practices. OTCAS is administered through a partnership between the AOTA and Liaison International, the leader in centralized application services (CAS) for the health professions.

Is your office understaffed?

Are you overwhelmed with the amount of paper documents you receive during the application cycle?

Do you have limited resources to manage your growing applicant pool?

Are you having difficulty filling seats reserved for out-of-state applicants?

OTCAS can help! The service offers:

- Attractive, modern, online applications for prospective students
- Exposure to a broader national spectrum of applicants
- A platform to cultivate and recruit applicants as soon as an OTCAS account is created
- CRM tools that enable targeted communications and messaging to in-progress applicants
- Access to secure, Web-based admissions software to make admissions decisions
- Rich database allows for comparative data on GPAs, test scores, demographic information, and other academic criteria
- Analytic platform supports automatic ranking and scoring of applicants based on customizable criteria
- Ideal platform for sharing best practices
- Decrease in administrative burdens enabled by integrated service model, in which transcripts are received, individual and aggregate GPAs are calculated, application documents are scanned, and support is provided to applicants via telephone, email, and social media

OTCAS is a service of AOTA and available free of charge to admissions teams managing Master's and Doctoral degree programs. Complimentary trainings can be scheduled at your convenience, as the OTCAS staff carefully tailors an onboarding experience to your meet the needs of your unique program.

Eligible programs can sign on to participate in OTCAS at any time.

For more information please contact Jessica Scott at jscott@liaison-intl.com.

Number of Programs

As of May 28, 2015, the number of program locations in the accreditation process totaled 482.

Program Status	OT Doctoral	OT Master's	OTA	TOTAL
Accredited Programs	7	152	188	347
Accredited Additional Locations	0	9	25	34
Candidate Programs	13	15	28	56
Developing Additional Locations	0	2	0	2
Applicant Programs	10	9	23	42
Applicant Additional Locations	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	30	187	265	482

In September 2007, there were 147 accredited programs for occupational therapy and 128 accredited programs for occupational therapy assistants. At that time there were NO applicant or candidate programs.

¹ Candidate 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.

April ACOTE Meeting

At the April 2015 ACOTE meeting, ACOTE took action on 488 program reports, including the following:

Initial Accreditation: 1 program was granted initial accreditation for 1 year; 1 program was granted initial accreditation for 5 years; and 1 program was granted initial accreditation for 7 years.

Reaccreditation: 5 programs were reaccredited for 10 years; 5 programs were reaccredited for 7 years; and 1 program was reaccredited for 5 years.

Candidacy Applications: 15 programs were granted Candidacy Status and 1 program application for Candidacy Status was deferred.

Preaccreditation Status: 7 programs were granted Preaccreditation Status and 1 program was denied Preaccreditation Status.

Probationary Accreditation: 1 program was placed on Probationary Accreditation subsequent to a review of a Plan of Correction.

A full report on ACOTE actions is available online at [ACOTE April 2015 Accreditation Actions](#)