



**Midwestern University**  
**Occupational Therapy Program**

**Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)**  
**Fieldwork Manual**

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## **Table of Contents**

Introduction.....	4
Overview of Fieldwork Program.....	5
The Fieldwork Program and Purpose .....	5
Fieldwork Experiences – OTD Students.....	5
OT Fieldwork Practice Settings .....	6
Student Supervision.....	6
Advising.....	7
Costs.....	8
Guidelines for Assigning Fieldwork Placements.....	8
Level I Fieldwork - OTD Students.....	9
Course Objectives.....	9
Level I Fieldwork Evaluations .....	10
Level II Fieldwork – OTD Students.....	10
Level II Fieldwork Course Objectives .....	11
Level II Fieldwork Evaluations .....	15
Fieldwork Requirements and Policies .....	15
Student Requirements.....	15
Student Health Records .....	16
Criminal Background Check .....	16
Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers Certification .....	17
Additional Trainings.....	17
Liability Insurance.....	17
Attendance.....	17
Personal and Professional Responsibilities .....	18
Professional Attire .....	18
Financial Aid .....	18
Scholarships and Financial Assistance Programs.....	18
Pregnancy.....	19
Students with Disabilities.....	19
Time Limits for Completion of Coursework .....	19

Students' Frequently Asked Questions about the First Day of Fieldwork.....	19
Fieldwork Performance.....	19
Satisfactory Performance .....	20
Unsatisfactory Performance .....	20
Incomplete in Fieldwork .....	20
Leaves of Absence .....	20
Reference .....	21
Links to Online Resources.....	21
Articles for Fieldwork Educators/Supervisors: .....	22
Appendices.....	23

## **Introduction**

This manual was created by the Midwestern University (MWU) Occupational Therapy OT Program to support the students and fieldwork sites throughout the fieldwork experience. The faculty of MWU extends a thank you to all the practicing professionals who take the time and effort to complete this step in the process of preparing our students to become professional occupational therapists. Students use this manual throughout the Program as a guide and learning tool during their fieldwork experiences. We congratulate the students who have reached this point in their education and wish them continued success.

This manual is designed to provide basic information to both the fieldwork students and to those professionals who are giving of their time and talents to educate OT students. Included is general information about AOTA's fieldwork requirements, Midwestern University's Occupational Therapy Program, and specific information related to the fieldwork program. Additional information regarding the occupational therapy program philosophy and curriculum design may be found in the Program Manual. This manual serves as part of the syllabus for the students undertaking Fieldwork in conjunction with the Program Manual, and it also provides procedures, guidelines, and processes for both the Fieldwork sites and the students related to Fieldwork.

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## **Overview of Fieldwork Program**

### **The Fieldwork Program and Purpose**

Learning theories support the supposition that didactic material, supplemented with experiential opportunities, facilitates optimal learning. One approach occupational therapy programs use to provide experiential learning opportunities is through required fieldwork rotations. The goal of Midwestern University's Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) Program is to exceed the standards set by the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). It is the student's responsibility to fully engage in all fieldwork opportunities and to integrate the didactic component of the program into the fieldwork experience. This manual serves to provide information to enhance the fieldwork experience, as well as provide guidelines for post-fieldwork procedures. Please read this manual carefully and contact the Director of Clinical Education if you have any questions.

Supervised fieldwork experiences in occupational therapy are an integral part of both the educational process and professional preparation. It is intended to complement academic preparation by offering additional opportunities for growth, learning to apply knowledge, developing, and testing clinical skills, and for validating and consolidating those functions that comprise professional competence.

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Program at Midwestern University educates students as generalists with a broad exposure to the delivery models and systems used in settings where occupational therapy is currently practiced. Fieldwork education is to be provided in settings that are equipped to meet the curriculum goals and provide educational experiences applicable to the academic program. While recognizing the diversity of students and their career goals, the OT Program ensures that each student receives this broad exposure through placement in varied fieldwork settings and with clients across the lifespan.

The purpose of fieldwork experience is to provide occupational therapy students with the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with application skills at progressively higher levels of performance and responsibility. The unique contributions of fieldwork experience include the opportunity to test first-hand the theories and facts learned in academic study and to refine skills through client interaction under the supervision of qualified personnel. Fieldwork also provides the student with situations in which to practice interpersonal skills with patients/clients and staff and to develop characteristics essential to productive working relationships. Through fieldwork experience, future practitioners achieve competence in applying the occupational therapy process and using evidence-based interventions to meet the occupational needs of diverse client populations. Fieldwork assignments may occur in a variety of practice settings, including medical, educational, and community-based programs.

### **Fieldwork Experiences – OTD Students**

All OTD students are required to complete two Level I Fieldwork rotations (1.5 credits each) and two 12-week (12 credits each) Level II fieldwork rotations.

Level I Fieldwork is offered in the summer and fall quarters of the second academic year. The two Fieldwork I experiences are aligned with the OT Practice courses and Group

Process. The focus of Level I Fieldwork is integration of psychosocial practice with a variety of populations while incorporating knowledge and skills from Pediatric and Adult Practice courses, Psychosocial Process & Practice, Group Process, and Therapeutic Communication courses. Professional skills are expected and reinforced.

Level II courses are offered in the second and third years of the OTD curriculum.

Fieldwork IIA is offered March through May of the second academic year. Fieldwork IIB is offered September through November of the third academic year.

### **OT Fieldwork Practice Settings**

Practice settings set forth by ACOTE are also used in the Fieldwork Data Forms. Fieldwork data Forms are available for students to view in the OT Program. Students may be placed in any of the following settings or other emerging areas of practice that are available at the time of the fieldwork match:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Hospital based settings<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-Patient Acute, adults/pediatrics</li><li>• In-Patient Rehab</li><li>• SNF/Sub-acute/Acute Long-Term Care</li><li>• Outpatient Hands</li><li>• Pediatric Hospital Outpatient</li><li>• In-Patient Psych/ Outpatient</li></ul></li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Community based settings<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pediatric community</li><li>• Behavioral Health</li><li>• Older Adult Community Setting</li><li>• Older Adult Day Program</li><li>• Outpatient/ hand private practice</li><li>• Adult Day Program for DD</li><li>• Home Health</li><li>• Pediatric Outpatient Clinic</li></ul></li></ol> |
|---|---|

The Occupational Therapy Program at Midwestern University adheres to the ACOTE guidelines which state that a graduate from an ACOTE accredited occupational therapy program must be educated as a generalist with a broad exposure to the delivery models and systems used in settings where occupational therapy is currently practiced and where it is emerging as a service. Fieldwork education is to be provided in settings that are equipped to meet the curriculum goals and provide educational experiences applicable to the academic program. While recognizing the diversity of students and their career goals, the OT Program ensures that each student receives this broad exposure through placement in varied fieldwork settings and with clients with varying levels of performance across the lifespan. Beginning in the application interview process and throughout the curriculum, the student is counseled as to the importance of fieldwork in diverse settings. The student fieldwork placement process is monitored by the Director of Clinical Education to ensure that students' fieldwork placements are varied. The OT Program also evaluates compliance with this standard through retrospective review of its placement history.

### **Student Supervision**

Fieldwork educators who supervise students must remain sensitive to the changing needs of each student while, at the same time, promoting the student's development of effective therapeutic relationships, evaluation and treatment techniques, and clinical problem-solving

skills. In addition, the fieldwork educator must facilitate the assumption of professional responsibility, behavior and attitudes, self-confidence, and personal growth. The Director of Clinical Education is available to collaborate with Fieldwork Educators throughout the fieldwork process.

In addition to regularly scheduled meeting times, supervision includes spontaneous discussions, instruction, and guidance. The student/supervisor relationship should be a shared growth experience built on mutually determined needs and objectives. Fieldwork educators give students the feedback essential to their development as therapists and receive students' feedback, which is important to continuing development as fieldwork educators. The need for open, direct, and timely communication cannot be over emphasized.

Fieldwork educators provide a solid foundation and framework of knowledge and experience from which the student can develop a professional identity and philosophy. Independent functioning, thought, and experimentation are encouraged. Different approaches to student supervision may be indicated for different students. There is no single "right" way for the student supervisor to approach every problem or situation. Student supervision is essentially a relationship, and each student offers a new and different experience to the fieldwork educators. Through experience, each fieldwork educator will develop their personal abilities and philosophy concerning the "techniques" and "approaches" useful for supervising students.

Fieldwork requirements are guidelines that represent minimal expectations of performance. The amount and depth of knowledge and experience the student gains depends on the degree to which the student shares the responsibility for learning. The result of the fieldwork experience is to prepare the student to assume the responsibilities of an entry-level occupational therapist in a given area of practice.

Ongoing communication will occur through web discussions, emails, telephone calls, text messages, and fieldwork site visits during the time students are on their fieldwork rotations. The Director of Clinical Education makes every effort to stay in communication with students and fieldwork educators throughout the process. Fieldwork educators and students are encouraged to contact the Director of Clinical Education with any questions or concerns.

It is the students' responsibility to communicate with the Director of Clinical Education when there are issues, health concerns, including pregnancy, absenteeism, anxieties, or other matters that may impact their performance and successful completion of these courses.

## **Advising**

All fieldwork advising is handled by the Director of Clinical Education. The Program Director is immediately informed and continually updated on the progress of any student experiencing difficulties during a clinical experience. Other faculty mentors, when necessary, may be involved in the process. Students who have concerns about their fieldwork progress, or Fieldwork Educators who have concerns, should contact the Director of Clinical Education immediately.

## **Costs**

All students must be prepared financially to assume the costs that will accompany any fieldwork assignment. In addition to full tuition and fees, expenses may include additional immunizations, drug testing, physical examinations, fingerprinting, transportation, travel, parking, housing, and meals, as well as incidental costs such as materials for a special project. It is advisable for the student to have access to a car during fieldwork if public transportation is inadequate, or they must travel some distance to their location.

Due to the limited availability of fieldwork sites throughout the Chicagoland and suburban areas, students should be prepared to affiliate at sites away from their permanent address for one 12-week placement, which may require relocation. Students should be prepared financially to assume the costs associated with this temporary relocation. When it is possible, consideration will be given to those students who have special needs or circumstances.

## **Guidelines for Assigning Fieldwork Placements**

The Director of Clinical Education is committed to providing a carefully orchestrated effort to ensure optimal fieldwork experiences. The process involves the Director of Clinical Education collaborating with fieldwork sites and students, when possible, to maximize student learning experiences. Students will be assigned fieldwork placements based on available reservations from fieldwork sites for each rotation. The Director of Clinical Education may utilize various factors when assigning fieldwork placements, including, but not limited to, cumulative GPA scores, student interests, geographic residence, preferred learning styles, and previous exposure/experiences. Students are assigned through a lottery process in the Exxat Rotation Management platform to allow student preferences and equity with choice of rotation sites. Students will be placed in two different practice areas. Ultimately, the final decision regarding all fieldwork placements is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education. Placement conflicts will be handled between the Director of Clinical Education and the student.

Students will be notified of their final reservation at a site no later than two weeks prior to the initial starting date of Level I fieldwork rotations and no later than eight weeks prior to the initial starting date of Level II fieldworks. Student requests to change their fieldwork placement after fieldwork reservations have been confirmed will not be honored. Conflicts, cancellations, and special circumstances do not apply to the above-noted timeline and will be handled on a case-by-case basis as deemed appropriate by the Director of Clinical Education. Fieldwork reservations are subject to change due to cancellations and unforeseen circumstances. In these circumstances, every attempt will be made to make changes that reflect the most positive learning experiences for all students.

If extraordinary circumstances occur that have the potential to affect fieldwork placement, the student is responsible for notifying the Director of Clinical Education immediately. They must submit a Request to Change a Fieldwork Rotation Form. The Director of Clinical Education and Program Director will then determine if the circumstances warrant special consideration.



### Level I Fieldwork

The purpose of Level I fieldwork is to introduce students to occupational therapy practice while concurrently engaging in academic coursework related to practice with children/youth, adults, and in settings focused on the psychosocial needs of individuals. Level I Fieldwork will “ensure that the fieldwork experience reflects the sequence and scope of content in the curriculum design, in collaboration with faculty, so that fieldwork strengthens the ties between didactic and fieldwork education.” (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education [ACOTE], 2023, p.36). Qualified personnel for supervised Level I fieldwork include, but are not limited to, currently licensed or otherwise regulated occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, physicians, speech-language pathologists, nurses, and physical therapists. (ACOTE, 2023).

### **Level I Fieldwork - OTD Students**

The Level I fieldwork experiences are each worth 1.5 credits and are situated in the summer and fall quarters of the second didactic year to be held concurrent to each of three OT Practice courses: OT Practice: Children, OT Practice: Adults, OT Practice: Psychosocial, and Group Process courses. These experiences focus on individuals with psychosocial concerns with application of motor and process skills where applicable. The student will receive a grade of pass or fail for each Level I rotation.

**Course Objectives.** At the completion of this FW course, the student will be able to:

ACOTE Standards 2023	Description
B.2.3	Apply, analyze, and evaluate the interaction of occupation and activity, including areas of occupation, performance skills, performance patterns, context, and client factors.
B.2.4	Explain to the community of interest (e.g., consumers, potential employers, colleagues, third-party payers, regulatory boards, policymakers, and the public) the distinct nature of occupation and the evidence that occupation supports performance, participation, health, wellness, and well-being.
B.3.1	Demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one’s personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments, as part of the therapeutic process in both individual and group interaction.
B.3.21	Demonstrate effective communication with clients, care partners, communities, and members of the intraprofessional and interprofessional teams in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team approach to promote client outcomes.

## **Level I Fieldwork Evaluations**

1. The Level I Fieldwork Student Evaluation by the supervisors is completed electronically in the Exxat Rotational Management platform. A copy is also located in the Appendix section of the Fieldwork Manual.
2. The Student Evaluation of Level I Fieldwork Experience is completed in the Exxat Rotation Management platform by each student. A copy is also located in the Appendix section of the Fieldwork Manual.

Both evaluations need to be completed and signed by both the fieldwork educator and the fieldwork student. The student and fieldwork supervisor are required to submit the evaluations through the online platform Exxat.

## **Level II Fieldwork**

Level II fieldwork follows Level I fieldwork in the curriculum. Further, Level I experiences cannot be substituted for any part of a Level II experience. The goal of Level II fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapists (ACOTE, 2017, p. 35). Level II fieldwork is an in-depth experience, “focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupations” (ACOTE, 2017, p. 35). It is required that the student be exposed to a variety of clients across the life span and to a variety of settings. Each 12-week rotation emphasizes the development of disciplined, higher-level critical thinking skills necessary to plan and provide high-quality client care. Students are supervised by registered occupational therapists who have a minimum of one year of practice experience.

A student must complete all coursework at a passing level and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for Level II fieldwork placement. A student must complete all Level II fieldwork at a satisfactory level to graduate and be eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Examination. ACOTE Standards require that students complete a minimum of 24 weeks of full-time Level II fieldwork. This may be completed on a full-time or part-time basis but may not be less than half time as defined by the fieldwork site.

## **Level II Fieldwork – OTD Students**

The OTD students complete their Level II-A fieldwork rotations in the Spring of the second year of the OTD curriculum as a 12-credit course (OTHED 1638). Students complete their Level II-B fieldwork rotations in the fall of the third year of the OTD curriculum as a 12-credit course (OTHED 1738).

## Level II Fieldwork Course Objectives

ACOTE Standards 2023	Description
C.1.3	Document that academic and fieldwork educators agree on fieldwork objectives prior to the start of the fieldwork experience.
C.1.7	Ensure that the ratio of fieldwork educators to students enables proper supervision and provides protection of consumers, opportunities for appropriate role modeling of occupational therapy practice, and the ability to conduct frequent assessment of student progress in achieving stated fieldwork objectives.
C.1.13	<p>Document and verify prior to the start of the Level II fieldwork that the student is supervised by an occupational therapy practitioner who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator.</li> <li>• Currently a licensed or otherwise regulated occupational therapist.</li> <li>• Has a minimum of 1 year full-time (or its equivalent) of practice experience as a licensed or otherwise regulated occupational therapist prior to the onset of the Level II fieldwork.</li> </ul> <p>The fieldwork educator may be engaged by the fieldwork site or by the educational program.</p>
C.1.14	Ensure that Level II fieldwork supervision is direct and then decreases to less <a href="#">direct supervision</a> as appropriate for the setting, the severity of the client's condition, and the ability of the student to support progression toward entry-level competence.

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

ACOTE Standards 2023	Descriptions
B.2.1	Apply, analyze, and evaluate scientific evidence, theories, models of practice, and frames of reference that underlie the practice of occupational therapy to guide and inform interventions for persons, groups, and populations in a variety of practice contexts and environments.
B.2.4	Explain to the community of interest (e.g., consumers, potential employers, colleagues, third-party payers, regulatory boards, policymakers, and the public) the distinct nature of occupation and the evidence that occupation supports performance, participation, health, wellness, and well-being.
B.2.6	Analyze occupational performance aspects that are affected by diagnoses including heritable diseases, genetic conditions, mental illness, disability, trauma, and injury

ACOTE Standards 2023	Descriptions
B.2.7	Demonstrate activity analysis in areas of occupation, performance skills, performance patterns, context(s), and client factors to formulate the intervention plan.
B.2.8	Demonstrate sound judgment regarding safety of self and others and adhere to safety regulations throughout the occupational therapy process as appropriate to the setting and scope of practice. This must include the ability to assess and monitor vital signs (e.g., blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory status, and temperature) to ensure that the client is stable for intervention.
B.2.10	Demonstrate knowledge of the current published American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and AOTA Standards of Practice and use them as a guide for ethical decision making in professional interactions, client interventions, employment settings, and when confronted with personal and organizational ethical conflicts.
B.3.1	Demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments, as part of the therapeutic process in both individual and group interaction.
B.3.2	<p>Demonstrate professional reasoning to evaluate, analyze, diagnose, and provide occupation-based interventions that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address client factors, performance patterns, and performance skills.</li> <li>• Focus on creation, promotion, establishment, restoration, maintenance, modification, and prevention.</li> </ul>
B.3.3	Evaluate client(s)' occupational performance, including occupational profile, by analyzing and selecting standardized and non-standardized screenings and assessment tools to determine the need for occupational therapy intervention(s). Assessment methods must take into consideration cultural and contextual factors of the client. Identify and appropriately delegate components of the evaluation to an occupational therapy assistant. Demonstrate intraprofessional collaboration to establish and document an occupational therapy assistant's competence regarding screening and assessment tools.
B.3.4	<p>Interpret evaluation findings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational performance and participation deficits.</li> <li>• Results based on psychometric properties of tests considering factors that might bias assessment results (e.g., culture and disability status related to the person and context).</li> <li>• Criterion-referenced and norm referenced standardized test scores on an understanding of sampling, normative data, standard and criterion scores, reliability, and validity.</li> </ul>

ACOTE Standards 2023	Descriptions
B.3.5	Based on interpretation of evaluation findings, develop occupation-based intervention plans and strategies that must be client centered, culturally relevant, reflective of current occupational therapy practice, and based on available evidence. Report all evaluation findings and intervention plan to the client, interprofessional team, and payors.
B.3.6	Based on interpretation of evaluation findings, develop occupation-based intervention plans and strategies that must be client centered, culturally relevant, reflective of current occupational therapy practice, and based on available evidence. Report all evaluation findings and intervention plan to the client, interprofessional team, and payors.
B.3.7	Monitor and reevaluate, in collaboration with the client, care partner and occupational therapy assistant, the effect of occupational therapy intervention and the need for continued or modified intervention.
B.3.8	Assess, grade, and modify the way persons, groups, and populations perform occupations and activities by adapting processes, modifying environments, implementing assistive technology or adaptive equipment, and applying ergonomic principles to reflect the changing needs of the client, sociocultural context, and technological advances.
B.3.9	Select, design, and implement occupation-based interventions using the strategies of establish, restore, and modify approaches to address deficits in performance skills.
B.3.10	Develop a plan for discharge from occupational therapy services in collaboration with the client and members of the intraprofessional and interprofessional teams by reviewing the needs of the client, caregiver, family, and significant others; available resources; and discharge environment.
B.3.12	Provide recommendations and training in techniques to enhance functional mobility, including physical transfers, wheelchair management, and mobility devices.
B.3.14	Demonstrate use and knowledge of the safe and effective application of superficial thermal agents, deep thermal agents, electrotherapeutic agents, and mechanical devices as a preparatory measure to improve occupational performance. This must include indications, contraindications, and precautions.
B.3.16	Assess the need for orthotics, and design, fabricate, apply, fit, and train in orthoses and devices used to enhance occupational performance and participation. Train in the safe and effective use of prosthetic devices used to enhance occupational performance.

ACOTE Standards 2023	Descriptions
B.3.18	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of the use of technology in practice, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic documentation systems</li> <li>• Virtual environments</li> <li>• Telehealth technology</li> </ul>
B.3.19	<p>Demonstrate and evaluate the principles of the teaching–learning process using educational methods and health literacy education approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To design activities and clinical training for persons, groups, and populations.</li> <li>• To instruct and train the client, caregiver, family, significant others, and communities at the level of the audience.</li> </ul>
B.3.21	<p>Demonstrate effective communication with clients, care partners, communities, and members of the intraprofessional and interprofessional teams in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team approach to promote client outcomes.</p>
B.3.22	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of intraprofessional and interprofessional team dynamics to perform effectively in different team roles to plan, deliver, and evaluate patient- and population-centered care as well as population health programs and policies that are safe, timely, efficient, effective, and equitable.</p>
B.4.28	<p>Demonstrate effective intra-professional OT/OTA collaboration to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the role of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant in the screening and evaluation process.</li> <li>• Demonstrate and identify techniques in skills of supervision and collaboration with occupational therapy assistants.</li> </ul>
B.4.3	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of various reimbursement systems and funding mechanisms (e.g., federal, state, local, third party, private payer), appeals mechanisms, treatment/diagnosis codes (e.g., CPT®, ICD, DSM® codes), and durable medical equipment coding (e.g., HCPCS) and documentation requirements (e.g., equipment justifications) that affect consumers and the practice of occupational therapy. Documentation must effectively communicate the need and rationale for occupational therapy services.</p>
B.4.6	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care coordination, case management, and transition services in traditional and emerging practice environments.</li> <li>• The consultative process with persons, groups, programs, organizations, or communities in collaboration with inter- and intraprofessional colleagues</li> </ul>

ACOTE Standards 2023	Descriptions
B.4.9	Develop strategies for effective, competency-based legal and ethical supervision of occupational therapy practitioners and non-occupational therapy personnel. Analyze staff development and professional abilities and competencies of supervised staff as they relate to job responsibilities.

## Level II Fieldwork Evaluations

1. The AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) for the Occupational Therapist is available for completion online through the Formstack platform (changing to Exxat in August, 2025). A sample copy is in the Appendix section of the Fieldwork Manual. The FWPE should be completed at midterm and at completion of fieldwork. To be considered passing, students must obtain the following scores:
  - 6-week midterm evaluation: Satisfactory – no minimum score is currently set, but students who receive a score of 80 or less should contact the Midwestern clinical education faculty regarding creating an improvement plan.
  - 12-week final evaluation: Satisfactory – a minimum score of 111.
2. The **Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE)** is provided to each student and must be submitted online in the Exxat platform. A copy is also located in the Appendix section of the Fieldwork Manual. This Evaluation contains two parts: Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Site and the Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Educator.

Both evaluations need to be completed and signed by both the fieldwork educator and the fieldwork student. The student is required to ensure that both evaluations are submitted online through the Formstack and/or Exxat platforms. The final course grade is determined by the Director of Clinical Education and is based on FWPE scores, feedback from the Fieldwork Educator, and successful completion of course assignments.

Ongoing communication between the students, the Director of Clinical Education, and the Fieldwork Educator occurs through email, web-based course assignments, phone/virtual calls and text messages, and site visits. The Fieldwork Educator and/or the student should contact the Director of Clinical Education or Assistant Fieldwork Coordinator if there are any concerns at any time.

### **Fieldwork Requirements and Policies**

#### **Student Requirements**

Students must meet the following requirements throughout their enrollment in the program. Students are required to maintain copies of documents that demonstrate compliance with

these requirements in their personal portfolios and should be prepared to share copies with the University or with fieldwork sites upon request.

All requirements must be updated or completed, and documentation submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to expiration to prevent issues with compliance. Failure to do so may result in a delay in entering fieldwork when scheduled and may subsequently delay the student's progression through the program and graduation.

- Immunizations:
  - Series of three Hepatitis B vaccinations **and titers**
  - Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Rubeola (Measles) **and titers**
  - Varicella **and titers**
  - Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis
  - Two-step Tuberculosis skin test or QuantiFERON test (One-step may be used to update annually if it is completed prior to the expiration date of the previous test)
  - Seasonal Influenza **(updated annually)**
- Physical examination upon admission to the program
- Healthcare Insurance
- Background check (standard check completed by the University)
- American Heart Association Certification in Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (adult/child)
- HIPAA (training annually)
- OSHA (training annually)
- Bloodborne Pathogens / Universal Precautions (training annually)
- Successfully passing required classes with 3.00 GPA

**Fieldwork sites may have additional requirements (e.g., drug test, fingerprinting, background checks, interview, COVID vaccine, etc.) that a student must meet to participate in their rotation.** The Essential Skills and Abilities noted in the Occupational Therapy Program Manual as requirements for participation in courses and lab experiences are also required for fieldwork rotations.

### **Student Health Records**

All students are required to submit a current copy of their immunization and vaccination history as a part of the matriculation agreement. Each student is responsible for the appropriate maintenance of their health requirements and submission of immunization documents to the Wellness Center via their RMS portal. Each student should keep current copies of a "Health and Immunization Report" form in their personal portfolio or fieldwork file.

### **Criminal Background Check**

The Joint Commission now requires that all healthcare workers have a criminal background check prior to working within the organization whether they are paid employees or not. Standard background checks are completed by the University on all students upon



matriculation. Additional specialized background checks for some fieldwork sites may or may not be provided by the University and included in their program fees. Students will be required to comply with additional facility requirements and may be asked to pay for a background check and/or fingerprinting and provide the necessary information to do so through the fieldwork site. A prior misdemeanor or felony conviction may affect completion of fieldwork requirements for graduation.

### **Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers Certification**

All students are required to attain/maintain currency in American Heart Association Basic Life Support Certification (BLS adult/child) for Healthcare Providers (cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification) and to present evidence of current certification throughout the program. Each student is responsible for uploading their BLS certification to the student portal and EXXAT and should keep a copy for their own records.

### **Additional Trainings**

All students receive training annually on Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and Bloodborne Pathogens / Universal Precautions. Students receive a certificate of successful completion which can be shared with sites. The certificates are also maintained electronically by the University.

### **Liability Insurance**

The university provides evidence of liability coverage for each student assigned to a fieldwork rotation. This is submitted annually to the fieldwork sites as directed by the Occupational Therapy Program.

### **Attendance**

Students are required to attend all scheduled days, meetings, trainings, and/or rounds associated with the fieldwork rotation. This schedule may include evenings, weekends, or holidays. If the rotation requires or recommends students to participate in additional activities, the student is expected to do so. Part-time jobs or extracurricular activities are not acceptable excuses for absences. All students MUST notify the Director of Clinical Education AND the Fieldwork Educators if they are going to be absent at any time from a rotation. All students are expected to be in daily attendance throughout each rotation unless prior arrangements have been made with their Fieldwork Educator AND the Director of Clinical Education. Personal illness and emergencies are valid reasons for excused absences from fieldwork. Unexcused tardiness and absences from a rotation may jeopardize a student's success in completing fieldwork.

Due to the minimum number of weeks required for fieldwork, students will be required to make up all time missed due to illness or emergencies (excused absences). Students must fill out the Missed Day(s) Form indicating how they will make up the absence(s). This form is signed by their Fieldwork Supervisor and uploaded in EXXAT. If there are any questions

regarding making up time, please contact the Director of Clinical Education. Students who do not complete experiential time requirements for Fieldwork I or II are at risk of failing those courses.

### **Personal and Professional Responsibilities**

Students must know and adhere to regulations of the University and "The Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics" (see Resource section). Students must also comply with regulations of the College, the Program, and fieldwork facilities.

### **Professional Attire**

The therapist's appearance influences patient, client, family, and staff reactions to the therapist. Fieldwork students are expected to maintain professional standards of dress and grooming. Identification (ID) badges are required for entrance to all fieldwork settings. Students are required to wear either their MWU ID badge or an ID badge provided by the fieldwork site during the time they are on a fieldwork assignment.

Students are expected to conform to the dress code requirements established by the setting to which they are assigned. Clothing and footwear should be clean, functional, and modest at all times: uniforms, lab coats, or scrubs may be required. Students are expected to wear a Midwestern University identification badge. For health and safety reasons, only a minimal amount of simple jewelry is recommended. Hair, if longer than shoulder length, should be held away from the face in some manner. This is necessary for the protection of the student when working with equipment and as a courtesy to the client. Students are expected to present themselves in a manner that reflects the practice of good hygiene. Students are expected to avoid the use of perfumes and colognes.

### **Financial Aid**

Students completing Level II Fieldwork are still enrolled as full-time students and are required to follow University policy. Therefore, if Fieldwork II rotations should fall outside of University and OT Program timeframes, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the Registrar's Office and the Financial Aid Department, as there may be financial ramifications.

### **Scholarships and Financial Assistance Programs**

Any student who is receiving financial assistance in the form of scholarships or other resources from a hospital or clinic must inform the Director of Clinical Education immediately upon signing a contract. A copy of the contract a student signs with the facility should be given to the Director of Clinical Education. Due to the conflict of interest which may arise in this situation, students may not be allowed to do Fieldwork in a center where they have made a commitment to work upon graduation in exchange for financial assistance.

## **Pregnancy**

Please refer to the University Student Handbook for its policy on student pregnancy. If a student is or becomes pregnant prior to beginning fieldwork or while on fieldwork, the student must notify the Director of Clinical Education immediately, as well as inform the Fieldwork Educator. This is extremely important so appropriate plans can be made for fieldwork. Any student who is pregnant will be required to have a letter from a physician stating that the student can assume the normal clinical responsibilities of an OT student, and that the physician does not have any objection to the student's specific assignment for fieldwork. Communication and careful planning during fieldwork experiences will contribute to the health and safety of the student and fetus.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Midwestern University is committed to providing equal access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities. If you believe you need accommodation(s) in this course for a documented disability, please contact Student Services to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting accommodations in the classroom and clinical settings. Accommodations are not provided retroactively. If Student Services has already approved your accommodation(s), please be sure to work with the course instructor to implement them. More information can be found online in the Disability Policy section of the MWU Student Handbook or by contacting Student Services at [disability\\_accommodations@midwestern.edu](mailto:disability_accommodations@midwestern.edu). Midwestern University encourages every student to access all available resources for support in their programs.

## **Time Limits for Completion of Coursework**

The curriculum for the Occupational Therapy Doctorate degree is a continuous, full-time program, extending 33 months from matriculation to graduation. The maximum allotted time for completion of this program is 49.5 months. It is also required that all Level II fieldwork requirements must be fulfilled within 16.5 months of completion of the didactic portion of the program.

## **Students' Frequently Asked Questions about the First Day of Fieldwork**

To see answers to students' frequently asked questions about preparation for the first day of fieldwork, please visit <https://www.aota.org/publications/student-articles/fieldwork/questions-for-fieldwork>

## **Fieldwork Performance**

Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences are designated as courses in the academic program. Students will receive a grade of pass (P), fail (F) or incomplete (I) for each Level I and Level II fieldwork experience. Grades are based on the criteria in the course syllabi that include completion and submission of all evaluations, completion of all course requirements, and approval of the Director of Clinical Education and the Program Director. A student must achieve at least minimal competence as determined by the FWPE to pass a Level II fieldwork course.

## **Satisfactory Performance**

Students are required to conduct themselves professionally and obtain a passing score on their performance evaluations. Each assignment in a fieldwork experience is an important measure of competency in the practice of occupational therapy. Therefore, it is important that students complete all assignments and requirements of the site. It is expected that students may spend several hours daily outside of fieldwork to complete assignments or other site requirements.

## **Unsatisfactory Performance**

If a student has concerns about their performance, it is their responsibility to contact the Director of Clinical Education. If a student is at risk of failing a fieldwork experience, the Fieldwork Educator/Supervisor should call the Director of Clinical Education immediately to inform the program of the student's status. The Fieldwork Educator should document the behavior, a plan of remediation, and the result. A Learning Contract may be utilized for this purpose.

The decision to terminate an affiliation is based on the assessment of: 1) the student's difficulties and the potential to remain in the fieldwork setting without being disruptive to patient care; 2) the student's response to supervisory feedback; and 3) the student's potential to change skills, judgments, and/or professional behaviors to successfully complete the fieldwork rotation in a reasonable amount of time, and 4) Willingness of the site to allow the student to return if the student takes a leave of absence (LOA). If a fieldwork is terminated for any of the above reasons, An Academic Review Committee (ARC) meeting may be required.

If a student fails a fieldwork course, the process of Academic Review as documented in the University Catalog will be implemented. If the student repeats a fieldwork course, the student will re-register for the same course during the next quarter the course is offered. Due to the timing of individual courses, this may entail students taking up to a year off to continue in the program.

## **Incomplete in Fieldwork**

Students receiving an INCOMPLETE as a grade for fieldwork are not required to pay tuition during the quarter when the INCOMPLETE is removed. However, the student must pay fees, notify the MWU Registrar and financial aid departments, and assume responsibility for any additional expenses incurred due to the extended time frame.

## **Leaves of Absence**

Any discontinuation of Level II fieldwork because of withdrawal, failure, or any other reason, must be requested formally as a leave of absence (see MWU Student Handbook). A leave of absence is not "automatically granted".

## **Reference**

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. (2023). *2023 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Standards and Interpretive Guide*. <https://acoteonline.org/accreditation-explained/standards/>

## **Resources**

### **Links to Online Resources**

American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics (2020):

[https://research.aota.org/ajot/article/74/Supplement\\_3/7413410005p1/6691/AOTA-2020-Occupational-Therapy-Code-of-Ethics?\\_ga=2.231728095.1528241942.1661890883-1567993379.1642093285](https://research.aota.org/ajot/article/74/Supplement_3/7413410005p1/6691/AOTA-2020-Occupational-Therapy-Code-of-Ethics?_ga=2.231728095.1528241942.1661890883-1567993379.1642093285)

American Occupational Therapy Association Ethics documents:

<https://www.aota.org/practice/practice-essentials/ethics/faqs-about-ethics>

The American Occupational Therapy Association Self-Assessment Tool for Fieldwork Educator Competency: <https://www.aota.org/-/media/corporate/files/educationcareers/fieldwork/certificate/safecom.pdf>

AOTA OT/OTA student supervision & Medicare requirements:

<https://www.aota.org/education/fieldwork/medicare-requirements-for-student-supervision>

AOTA Self-Assessment Tool for Fieldwork Educator Competency(SAFECOM)revised 2023:

<https://www.aota.org/-/media/corporate/files/educationcareers/fieldwork/certificate/safecom.pdf>

AOTA Steps to Starting a Fieldwork

Program: <https://www.aota.org/education/fieldwork/starting-a-fieldwork-program>

Fieldwork Education Resources link to American Occupational Therapy Association:

<https://www.aota.org/education/fieldwork/fieldwork-resources>  
<https://www.aota.org/education/fieldwork/fieldwork-educators>

Formstack Student instructions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQDdXLNXIJ8>

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation:

<https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/occtherapy.html>

- a. Illinois Occupational Therapy Licensure Application
- b. Illinois Occupational Therapy Practice Act
- c. Illinois Occupational Therapy Rules

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy Candidate Information:

<https://www.nbcot.org/exam>

OT Fieldwork Performance Evaluations:

<https://www.aota.org/education/fieldwork/fieldwork-performance-evaluation>

### **Articles for Fieldwork Educators/Supervisors:**

del Pozo, E., Herman, A., Strategies for Managing Fieldwork Burnout: Fostering More Self-Awareness, Setting Clearer Objectives, and More *OT Practice Magazine*, 11/24/2020

<https://www.aota.org/publications/ot-practice/ot-practice-issues/2020/managing-fieldwork-burnout>

Hughes, M.J., Mason, J., Howland, K.M., Horton, A. Supporting Occupational Therapy Students With Disabilities During Fieldwork, *OT Practice Magazine*, 12/23/2020

<https://www.aota.org/publications/ot-practice/ot-practice-issues/2020/fieldwork-students-disabilities>

Janes, W. E., Cohill, B., Cook, A., Escher, A., Galey, S., Hanson, D. J., LeQuieu, E. D., Olson, D., Williams, K., & Zeigler, J. (2024). Mapping Review of Fieldwork Education Literature. *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education*, 8(1).

<https://doi.org/10.26681/jote.2024.080111>

Marie-Lyne Grenier; Facilitators and Barriers to Learning in Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Education: Student Perspectives. *Am J Occup Ther* September/October 2015, Vol. 69(Supplement\_2), 6912185070p1–6912185070p9.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2015.015180>

Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Education: Value and Purpose. *Am J Occup Ther* November/December 2022, Vol. 76(Supplement\_3), 7613410240.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2022.76S3006>

Trivinia, B., Johnson, C.R., Blueprint for Success: Measurable Learning Contracts for Level II Fieldwork Students at Risk for Failing. *OT Practice Magazine*, 6/14/19

<https://www.aota.org/publications/ot-practice/ot-practice-issues/2019/fieldwork-learning-contracts>

## **Appendices**

Fieldwork educators can request access to these forms by emailing the MWU OT Program. Students also have access to these forms through their fieldwork Canvas courses.

- Appendix A: Occurrence Report Form
- Appendix B: Missed Time Form
- Appendix C: Learning Contract
- Appendix D: Weekly Check-In Form
- Appendix F: Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) (Sample)
- Appendix G: Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE)
- Appendix H: Student Evaluation of Level I Fieldwork & Supervisor Evaluation of Level I Experience
- Appendix I: Objectives Verification Forms