

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
John G. Rangos Sr. School of Health Sciences

**Fieldwork Education &
Doctoral Capstone Experience
Policy Manual**



Please visit our website:

[Fieldwork & Doctoral Capstone \(duq.edu\)](https://duq.edu)

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Duquesne University Department of Occupational Therapy Fieldwork/OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience Policy Manual

Student Acknowledgement Page

All occupational therapy students entering the professional & advanced professional phase of the program are expected to READ and UNDERSTAND the information and policies contained in this manual and to ABIDE by the policies defined therein.

Students are expected to sign this *Acknowledgment Page* indicating their understanding and acceptance of these policies and post to their student profile in Exxat.

I, _____, have read and understand the Policies/Processes as outlined in this manual. I agree to follow and take responsibility for my actions as outlined in this manual. If I choose to take other courses of action than those outlined, I will accept full responsibility for any consequences as a result of those actions in accordance with Department, School, and University Policy. **I acknowledge that I have downloaded a copy of this manual for my reference throughout the curriculum.** This confirms that I have read and fully understand the Duquesne University Department of Occupational Therapy Fieldwork / OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience Policy Manual. I have been given the opportunity to discuss this document with the AFWC and/or faculty mentor in the Occupational Therapy Department.

Occupational Therapy Student Signature

Date

If you have any questions concerning the concepts of this manual please speak with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and/or your faculty mentor prior to signing this form.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The material contained herein is subject to change from time to time. The Department of Occupational Therapy reserves the right to alter or amend the terms, conditions, and requirements as necessary.

This manual can be found electronically on the DU OT Department Website at:

[OccupationalTherapyDepartment\(duq.edu\)](http://OccupationalTherapyDepartment.duq.edu)

Fieldwork & OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience Philosophy and Link to Curriculum

Fieldwork & experiential learning is a crucial aspect of occupational therapy education (C.1.0). The Occupational Therapy Department of Duquesne University is committed to the development of practice scholars and utilizes fieldwork & the doctoral capstone experience within the well-integrated curriculum philosophy to promote skill development in the core aspects of our mission through serving, leading, questioning and doing ([APPENDIX A](#)). Our faculty strongly embraces the concepts of engaged and transformative learning and recognizes their value in developing practitioners that can be the leaders within our profession. We have integrated the core concepts of these learning theories within many aspects of the professional and advanced professional phases of the curriculum (C.1.1).

Level I Fieldwork is integral to our program's curriculum design, as it is a key learning experience in OCCT 511 Clinical Reasoning I, OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function and OCCT 561 OT Administration and Leadership courses. **Level II Fieldwork** is a natural continuation of our curriculum and its primary purpose is to provide students with the opportunities to integrate the theory and skills learned in the classroom within diverse practice settings. Students receive site-specific assignments as well as multiple reflective online assignments to ensure congruence of their experiences with their academic preparation. The advanced professional phase of the curriculum includes a 14-week **Doctoral Capstone Experience (DCE)** where students are provided in-depth exposure to one or more focus areas, and is integral to acquiring deeper-practice scholar competencies as reflected in the program's curriculum design (D.1.3). The DCE directly connects occupational therapy practice with scholarship via the creation, implementation & evaluation of a doctoral capstone project. These continuous, sustained and in-depth learning experiences provide an avenue for display of professional values, clinical reasoning, professional performance skills and professional knowledge consistent with the curriculum framework of the DU OT Program.

Participants in Fieldwork Education

Fieldwork Coordinator

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) is a full-time faculty member who is responsible for the planning, coordination and implementation of integrated and sustained fieldwork experiences. The AFWC negotiates the logistics of recruiting, assigning, confirming, and monitoring Level I and Level II fieldwork placements. The AFWC serves as a resource for students, fieldwork sites and fieldwork educators, faculty & student success coaches, as needed, in regards to negotiating logistics and processing outcomes of fieldwork experiences. Additionally, the AFWC provides orientation to the fieldwork program and process, upon admission, and, throughout participation in the DU program. Fieldwork is a degree requirement and functions as the "bridge" between academic and professional roles for our students. As such, the AFWC is also responsible for assisting and supporting students' preparation for entry-level credentialing, licensure, and passing of the national certification exam. The AFWC responsibilities include:

1. Identify and develop appropriate FW sites that align with DU OT curriculum philosophy (C.1.1; C.1.2; C.1.4).
2. Maintain appropriate files/records of information on each FW site (C.1.2; C.1.3; C.1.5).
3. Maintain a collaborative relationship with fieldwork sites (C.1.3).
4. Develop and implement FW policies and procedures.
5. Orient students to the general purpose, process and expectations for all levels of FW.
6. Assign all eligible students to Level I Fieldwork experience and coordinate the assignment between student and facility (C.1.10, C.1.11).
7. Assign all eligible students to Level II Fieldwork experience and coordinate the assignment between student and facility (C.1.13, C.1.8, C.1.14).
8. Make regular and periodic contacts with fieldwork sites when students are at placement to monitor student progress. (C.1.9, C.1.14).
9. Provide necessary intervention to assist in problem solving regarding FW issues that are not satisfactorily resolved between student and site.
10. Provide faculty support and liaison to students on FW.
11. Provide faculty support to fieldwork educators.
12. Review FW evaluation forms and submit course grades to the Registrar's Office.
13. Record FW grades and maintain student records.
14. Develop FW objectives in collaboration with fieldwork educators (C.1.3).
15. Assist in development of FW site/student programs.
16. Communicate with other faculty regarding issues as they relate to curriculum and student advisement.
17. Collaborate with Capstone Coordinator to ensure no overlap between FW and DCE.

Capstone Coordinator

The Capstone Coordinator (**CC**) is a full-time faculty member who is responsible for the planning, coordination, and implementation of the doctoral capstone. The CC negotiates the logistics of recruiting, assigning, confirming, and monitoring the doctoral capstone experience. The CC serves as a resource for doctoral students, DCE sites and content experts, faculty & capstone chairs, as needed, in regards to negotiating logistics and processing outcomes of the doctoral capstone. Additionally, the CC provides orientation to the doctoral capstone process. The doctoral capstone (including the DCE and project) is a degree requirement for students enrolled in the OTD program. The capstone coordinator is expected to demonstrate ongoing collaboration with the course instructor of the capstone course sequence, which contains learning activities associated with the doctoral capstone project and the completion and dissemination of the student's capstone project (D.1.4; D.1.9). The CC responsibilities include:

1. Ensure that the Doctoral Capstone Experience & Project is consistent with the school's curriculum design (D.1.1; D.1.2).
2. Instruct students regarding the capstone processes and expectations (this may include orientation sessions, individualized counseling sessions, creation and use of a capstone manual, and course syllabi).
3. Collaborate with the capstone student and AFWC to identify student goals, interests, and to ensure there is no overlap with fieldwork education experiences.
4. Educate the capstone students and Content Expert on the ACOTE focus areas (D.1.1; D.1.4).
5. Advise capstone students in determining site preferences and project focus (D.1.2).
6. Identify and correspond with potential capstone sites, potential Content Expert, establish affiliation agreements, and confirm capstone experience placements (D.1.3; D.1.4; D.1.5).
7. Ensure all policies and procedures are followed, according to the academic institution and ACOTE standards.

8. Obtain and disseminate necessary capstone student and site information (including but not limited to: confirmation letters, student data form, student health/security clearances, etc.).
9. Maintain adequate records of capstone site information and allow student access.
10. Ensure that the student will be mentored by an individual with expertise consistent with the student's area of focus (D.1.2).
11. Educate faculty, capstone chairs, and Content Expert on roles and responsibilities, including the length of the experience a minimum of 14 weeks full-time and a minimum of 32 hours per week. (D.1.5 – 14 weeks (560 hours).
12. Ensure all capstone sites have signed Experiential Plan and Written Agreement, which must include individualized specific objectives, a plan for supervising/mentoring, responsibilities of all parties, and that the student obtains appropriate collaboration and signatures. The Experiential Plan and Written Agreement must be completed PRIOR TO the commencement of the capstone experience and according to the standards and regulations of all regulating bodies (D.1.4).
13. Correspond professionally with capstone student and Content Expert via electronic communication, phone-calls, and/or site visits, as appropriate.
14. Support capstone student progress and provide remediation as needed.
15. Ensure that an objective formal evaluation of the student's performance is completed during and at the completion of the capstone experience (D.1.7).
16. Be available as a resource and consultant to the capstone student, Content Expert, and faculty mentor during the Doctoral Capstone Experience.
17. Evaluate (including data collection and analysis) the capstone experience to ensure that the program is in compliance with ACOTE standards related to "D" standards, and meeting academic institution specific student outcomes and goals.
18. Record and assign grades for the DCE, according to timelines stated by the Registrar's office.
19. Ensure that formal letters or certificates are provided to Content Experts following completion of the DCE, acknowledging the mentorship provided.
20. In collaboration with the capstone project course instructor, ensure the completion and dissemination of student's individual capstone project that relates to the capstone experience and demonstrates synthesis of in-depth knowledge in the student's area of focus (D.1.6).

Fieldwork Educator

Each individual responsible for student training in Level I and II Fieldwork practice settings is considered a Fieldwork Educator (FWEd). The FWEd responsibilities include:

1. Coordinate appropriate orientation of the facility to the student.
2. Communicate expectations, objectives (C.1.3), and assignments required for successful completion of fieldwork prior to the onset of the fieldwork experience.
3. Supervise the provision of occupational therapy services, documentation and oral reporting of the student.
4. Provide protection of consumers and opportunities for appropriate role modeling of occupational therapy practice (C.1.7).
5. Provide frequent assessment of student progress in achieving stated fieldwork objectives (C.1.3).
6. Provide ongoing feedback to student regarding progress and performance (C.1.7)—including a formal written midterm (Level II FW only) and final student performance evaluation—yet also informally throughout the fieldwork experience.
7. Create an environment which encourages learning and allows for questions.
5. Act as a professional role model for students.

6. Inform AFWC regarding *any* problem situations in regards to student performance.
7. Provide verification of qualifications and preparedness to serve as a fieldwork educator when requested by AFWC - Level I FWEds (C.1.10) and Level II FWEds (C.1.13).

*The role of the OTD Content Expert (site mentor) is outlined within the OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience policies beginning on page 39.

Student

This is the Occupational Therapy Student participating in required fieldwork experience. The fieldwork student's responsibilities include:

1. Completing all required coursework up to date.
2. Providing documentation of all department and fieldwork site requirements by deadlines.
3. Indicating preferences with consideration for interests and experience in a variety of practice contexts, recognizing that the AFWC determines FW placements.
4. Researching potential and actual fieldwork sites.
5. Seeking information on sites, asking questions and using FW files in database.
6. Writing and sending a letter or email or making a phone-call confirming these fieldwork experience dates to the fieldwork educator. For Level II, this contact is at least 6 weeks in advance of the starting date.
7. Reading and knowing contents of FW Manual, bringing it to the fieldwork site and referring to it with questions about FW.
8. Collaborating with the FWEd and AFWC prior to the onset of the FW experience to ensure compliance with fieldwork requirements.
9. Making their own living arrangement. Check the Fieldwork Data Form/Exxat to see if housing reservations or arrangements may be available.
10. Providing transportation to/from their fieldwork site (see transportation section for specifics).
11. Complying with all policies and procedures of the fieldwork site, RSHS and the Department of OT.
12. Fulfilling all duties and assignments made by the fieldwork educator and AFWC, unless exempted, within the time limit specified.
13. Notifying the fieldwork placement and AFWC of address & phone numbers; and changes.
14. Use duq.edu email for all FW correspondence.
15. Being an active participant in the supervisory process. This process also includes effective communication, constructive response to feedback and reflection on performance and learning.
16. In the event of any problem related to fieldwork evaluation, student will follow chain of command at fieldwork placement, i.e., discuss problem with fieldwork educators and/or academic fieldwork coordinator and if not satisfied with a resolution, contact academic program director.
17. Fulfill all other duties and responsibilities identified by the clinical fieldwork educators and AFWC within the designated timelines.
18. Comply with the laws, regulations, and professional standards identified by the fieldwork educators, the University, state licensure boards and the American Occupational Therapy Association.

Level I Fieldwork

Level I Fieldwork is integral to our program's curriculum design, as it is a key learning experience in OCCT 511 Clinical Reasoning I (C.1.11), OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function(C.1.6; C1.11)and OCCT 561 OT Administration and Leadership (C.1.11).. All Level I FW experiences in the curriculum are roughly 40-hour experiences, and are labeled in our curriculum as follows:

- **FW I:** a 40-hour experience within OCCT 511W in a practice setting, or simulated environment that occurs at the end of the Fall semester in the 4th year (C.1.11).
- **FW II:** a 40-hour experience that takes place in a community-based practice setting that begins in the Fall semester of the 4th year within OCCT 511W, and is completed in the Spring of the 4th year in OCCT 525. FW II has a primary focus on the role of occupational therapy practitioners addressing mental health, behavioral health or psychological and social aspects of client performance to support their engagement in occupation (C.1.6).

Over the course of the Fall semester, in OCCT 511W, students are provided in-depth opportunities to evaluate needs, plan and implement programs, delivery of services, and exploration of management and administrative issues in the community-based practice settings. In the Spring semester, students are expected to integrate and synthesize information, enhance their clinical reasoning skills, and create & implement occupational therapy programming which directly focuses on the psychological and social factors that influence engagement in occupation of the population at the community agency. In OCCT 525, students have the opportunity to actively observe and participate in components of clinical evaluation and intervention in community-based settings for individuals with various psychosocial needs. During this four-credit course, students participate in didactic & in class lab activities two days a week, and engage in their community site on fieldwork approximately one day a week. Through structured assignments and projects, students apply knowledge of clinical reasoning, and psychosocial conceptual practice models to assess, plan, and implement evidenced-based interventions in a community setting. Throughout these two courses, FW II serves as a "text" for understanding the OT process in different contexts and applying various clinical reasoning theories to practice. Students develop basic clinical reasoning skills through observation, participation in practice and reflection on these experiences. Students complete written assignments that combine observation, practice and reflection on completing assessments, setting goals and treatment planning, documentation, re-assessment and discharge planning.

- **FW III:** a 40-hour experience within OCCT 512W in a practice setting, or simulated environment that occurs at the end of the Spring semester in OCCT 561 OT Administration and Leadership (C.1.11).

Successful completion of all Level I experiences is required prior to Level II fieldwork. No Level I FW can be substituted for any part of Level II FW (C.1.11). Please see section on [Failure of Fieldwork](#) for more details.

Level II Fieldwork

Level II Fieldwork experiences are an integral part of the curriculum design and include an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, organizations and/or populations. The goal of Level II Fieldwork is to “develop competent, entry-level”, practice scholars and designed to promote clinical reasoning and reflective practice, to transmit the values and beliefs that enable the application of ethics related to the profession, to communicate and model professionalism as a developmental process and a career responsibility, and to develop and expand a repertoire of occupational therapy assessments and treatment interventions related to human performance (C.1.1).

A minimum of **six months (24 weeks)** of Level II Fieldwork will be required. At least three months (12 weeks) of sustained fieldwork is desirable on a full-time basis (C.1.12). Flexibility is permitted through stipulation of the total number of hours. Time should be appropriate to the setting selected, student needs, and continuity of client services, e.g., consecutive half days. No prior Level I FW can be substituted for any part of Level II FW (C.1.11).

To ensure diversity of practice settings and exposure across the lifespan, it is recommended that Level II fieldwork take place in two separate full time; twelve-week placements arranged by the AFWC in collaboration with the student. Students may take the option of splitting one of their Level II experiences into two 6-week placements in two unique settings; at the discretion of the AFWC. If the student exercises this option, they must score a passing grade on the AOTA FW Performance Evaluation by the end of the six-week rotation. The student *can* complete Level II fieldwork in a minimum of one setting if it is reflective of more than one practice area, or in a maximum of four different settings. Discernment of the practice settings available must occur and be confirmed by the AFWC and the fieldwork site prior to the placement (C.1.12).

The first Level II experience (FW IV) will take place from approx. June-September and the second Level II experience (FW V) will take place from September to December. Students must have successfully completed all the academic classes and Level I Fieldwork with a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA before being allowed to participate in Level II experiences. Affiliated placement sites are located throughout the country and must meet ACOTE requirements (C.1.5) ([APPENDIX B](#)). Level II sites are assigned by the AFWC based on quality of clinical experience rather than geographical convenience. Students are encouraged to seek placements that broaden their view of occupational therapy, which may be found in other parts of the country. If it is felt that a student would not be successful at a site for certain reasons, that student will be placed at an alternative site. All students will be guided by the AFWC in their selection process in order to ensure successful learning opportunities and a ‘just-right-fit’.

During the Level II experience, the student will remain registered at Duquesne University and will be monitored and assisted by the AFWC and any other university faculty as needed, however, the experience is completed off campus and will be supervised by the onsite Occupational Therapist (Fieldwork Educator). *We expect students to be knowledgeable about the fieldwork process and adhere to all University, RSHS, Department and Fieldwork specific policies and procedures.*

All Level II fieldwork experiences/requirements must be completed within 24 months of the student’s last didactic class on campus.

** The OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience is explained fully beginning on page 39.*

Access to Site Files & Exxat Database

The Department maintains FW and DCE site files by using Exxat. Each student creates a profile which provides them access to the database of sites (C1.2). Students can use the “Explore Locations” tab in Exxat to search for and review sites based on the type of setting or geographic location. Through Exxat, students have access to site information and requirements, objectives and performance expectations prior to the start of the fieldwork experience. Students are also guided to contact the fieldwork site coordinator at least 8 weeks prior to the start of fieldwork to inquire about any changes to requirements, objectives or performance expectations. (C1.2)

Each site file on Exxat may include:

- An AOTA Fieldwork Data Form (provides information about the site, clients served, type of OT assessments/interventions used, student prerequisite requirements and additional site-specific details)
- Site specific information (fieldwork objectives, site specific requirements, staff profiles, mission and vision statements, etc.)
- Student Evaluations of the Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE) completed by students who have completed fieldwork at the facility in the past.

Students are encouraged to utilize this database as they collaborate with the AFWC (See [APPENDIX C](#) for instructions on how to access database) * *DU students access only.*

Students are not to contact any site without prior permission of the AFWC. Making unauthorized arrangements include, but are not limited to, the student or student’s family or friends contacting sites without permission from the AFWC regarding the ability of the site to take and/or start the student on a specified date, or negotiate/facilitate the letter of understanding between the facility and the college.

Fieldwork Site Placement Process & Assignment

Students are scheduled to rotate through various practice settings (C.1.4; C.1.5)) which have contracts with Duquesne University (C.1.5). These sites may include traditional settings (such as acute care hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and pediatric/geriatric practice sites) and non-traditional or role emerging settings such as community-based sites (C.1.4). Input into site selection will be sought, but the final decision rests with the AFWC. Students may be required to commute or temporarily-move to other communities for all or part of fieldwork education. Students are responsible for paying the transportation and living expenses incurred during FW education.

Duquesne University’s Rangos School of Health Sciences maintains a password protected electronic database of over 1,400 + clinical sites with active clinical contracts between the site and Duquesne University’s School of Health Sciences in Exxat (C.1.2;C.1.4). This database is a dynamic compilation of all sites for which contracts exist. Sites can be added to the database upon student request, alumni request and/or appropriateness and availability of the site to supervise students (C.1.4; C.1.5). Once a site is identified, a contract is generated from either the site or the Rangos School of Health Sciences Contract Manager in the Office of the Dean. Clinical contracts generated by Duquesne University are automatically renewed yearly unless either party requests a change or termination of the agreement as per the

contract. (See [APPENDIX D](#) for DU Standard Contract). Duquesne University's insurance provider does a yearly mailing for every site which has an active contract. This mailing includes the current certificate of liability. Amendments are made to contracts as needed by the School Contract Manager, who then updates the electronic database (Exxat) and notifies the AFWC via email (C.1.5).

The sites within our database represent both traditional and/or role emerging settings that meet the curriculum goals and design and strive to provide occupation-based and evidence-based OT services (C.1.1). Traditional settings are sites which occupational therapists have been previously practicing and emerging areas are new and upcoming areas of practice.

Traditional Settings:

Hospital
 Skilled Nursing/Long-Term Care
 Training Private Practice
 Consulting
 Residential Program
 School Setting
 Centers Outpatient
 Rehabilitation
 Community
 Agencies

Emerging Settings:

Ergonomics Consulting
 Drive Rehabilitation
 Design & Accessibility
 Low Vision Services
 Technology/Assistive Device
 Wellness

The sites within our database provide opportunities for fieldwork experiences in diverse practice settings and across the lifespan. Level I and II fieldwork sites are continually evaluated by students via the *Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience form (SEFWE)* and by AFWC via site visits and telephone/virtual and email contacts. Fieldwork sites remain on the active fieldwork database list if quality experiences are provided.

Frequently used affiliated sites are provided an annual slot request ([APPENDIX E](#)) via Exxat. A listing of available sites, per each fieldwork experience, is generated from these returned slot requests.

Fieldwork sites are considered to provide quality experiences based on the overall opportunities that a facility has to provide students professional clinical experiences under appropriate supervision. Facilities are sought out that provide professional role modeling within the occupational therapy arena. Fieldwork sites must be willing to accept students for a concentrated Level I experience or 12-week Level II experience. Qualified personnel must supervise all Level I students. These may include: currently licensed or credentialed occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, nurses, and physical therapists. Level I students must be supervised at all times (C.1.6; C.1.10; C.1.11).

Verification of a FWE's credentials occurs prior to the FW experience via the Fieldwork Contact Information Form on Exxat. Level II FWEs must be licensed occupational therapists who have a minimum of one-year experience in the field (C.1.13). Fieldwork educators who are adequately prepared to supervise include those who seek out professional resources and are able to meet the learning needs of the student. Level II FW Educators acknowledge they are adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator prior to the onset of the FW experience via an Exxat form (C.1.13)

Supervision should be initially direct and then may be decreased to less direct supervision as is appropriate for the setting, the client's needs, and the ability of the student during Level II FW to support

progression toward entry-level competency (C.1.14).

For a Level II FW experience in a role-emerging setting where occupational therapy services might not exist, a documented supervision plan will be created in advance of the placement (C.1.16). A FWEd must be available, via a variety of contact measures, to the student during all working hours. An on-site supervisor designee of another profession must be assigned while the occupational therapy supervisor is off site, with a documented plan for provision of services and supervision by an OT practitioner with at least 3 years of full-time or its equivalent of professional experience prior to the Level II FW experience. Duquesne University does not typically provide Level II experiences without an occupational therapist supervisor. In the rare case that this occurs, a faculty member from the occupational therapy department acts as the primary fieldwork educator and seeks out other occupational therapists working in the geographic region to provide additional supervision and consultation. The fieldwork educator must have at least 3 years full-time or its equivalent in professional experience and include a minimum of 8 hours of direct supervision each week of the fieldwork experience. *An occupational therapy supervisor* must be available, via a variety of contact measures, to the student during all working hours. An on-site supervisor designee of another profession must be assigned while the occupational therapy supervisor is off site (C.1.16). The FWEd must be willing to review student's assignments for validation and feedback as well as provide feedback on a periodic basis regarding student's performance.

Although there are no active OT international fieldwork sites in the database, for a Level II fieldwork, the AFWC will ensure that any student wishing to pursue a Level II Fieldwork experience outside the United States are supervised by an occupational therapist who graduated from a program approved by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) and has at least one year of experience in practice prior to the onset of the Level II FW. (C.1.13).

Consideration of assigning students to a particular site includes quality and diversity of educational experiences related to DU OT curriculum philosophy, input from faculty, match of student characteristics and student preferences. The AFWC collaborates with faculty to identify and select appropriate sites that serve as DU OT fieldwork sites. Sites are selected to optimize student learning consistent with the DU OT curriculum philosophy. Students complete a personal profile data form and learning style inventory to provide the AFWC and faculty with their preferences and unique characteristics. Our process of identifying sites is to explore the alignment of site philosophies and practices relative to DU OT curriculum themes, in consideration for the objectives of particular fieldwork experiences. Faculty phone-calls, virtual meetings, visits to sites, and connections to colleagues and alumni through projects or meetings, help us identify potential sites. Student feedback on fieldwork experiences is also valuable in planning and occurs formally using the FW evaluation forms and in discussion with faculty (C.1.1; C.1.5).

Level I Fieldwork Site Placement Process & Assignment

Fieldwork I & III

1. AFWC introduces 3rd year students to the overall fieldwork process during the Fall Semester in a meeting with all students, including a Q&A session
2. After this Q&A, students complete and submit the Fieldwork Planning Survey ([APPENDIX G](#)) to the AFWC to measure any special needs or considerations for Fieldwork (i.e. clinical interests, accessibility, transportation, geographical preferences, etc.). Every attempt will be made to place the student in sites based on their areas of interest; **however IDENTIFICATION OF INTERESTS DOES NOT GUARANTEE PLACEMENT.**

Securing Level I Sites

3. Mid-March through August, the AFWC contacts affiliated sites from the FW database using Exxat slot request to secure quality fieldwork placements.
Completing Level I Reservations
4. AFWC confirms each site placement by sending a placement notification through Exxat which includes the Student Profile (Students are required to complete on Exxat by established deadline)
^ Level I fieldwork assignments, curriculum philosophy and behavioral objectives, and evaluations are sent at a later date to the student's assigned Fieldwork Educator.
5. During the first few weeks of classes in the context of Clinical Reasoning I (Fall semester), AFWC announces Fieldwork I & III placements to students via their Exxat profile (C.1.5)
 - Students are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the AFWC to discuss types of sites available (if necessary).
 - Students are invited to meet with the AFWC (if necessary) to reflect on personal goals ([APPENDIX E](#)) and objectives, and identify clinical training opportunities available to meet the established fieldwork learning criteria.
 - Once a student is placed, the AFWC notifies fieldwork sites via Exxat. Students receive notification of their site name and contact information once confirmed by fieldwork site in their Exxt profile
 - **Students are only placed at sites where clinical affiliations agreements exist.**
 - While taking into consideration individual preferences, the following criteria will also be used in fieldwork assignments (in weighted order):
 1. Widest possible variety of educational experiences, in order to allow for compliance with fieldwork standards. (i.e.: settings, clients, ages, diagnoses)
 - a. ONLY in very unusual circumstances will a student be assigned to the same site or type of site more than once.
 - b. Students will be assigned to the site offering the wider experience over experiences which repeat those already completed.
 2. Student learning style & needs
 3. Match between FWEd & student
 4. Faculty recommendations & feedback
 5. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest (see page 28)

Fieldwork II

Duquesne University has a long history of community-university partnerships. A consistent aspect of our curriculum includes community engaged learning, experiential learning, and using the community as the classroom. Within small groups, students will be placed by the Community Engaged Learning Coordinator and lab instructor(s) of the OCCT 511W Clinical Reasoning and OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function courses at affiliated-community agencies across the Greater Pittsburgh area, which provides services for individuals experiencing various behavioral health, psychological, and/or social challenges. Over the course of the Fall and Spring semesters in the 4th year of the program students will integrate and synthesize information across the curriculum, enhance clinical reasoning skills, and create & implement occupational therapy programming which directly focuses on the mental health, behavioral health, or psychological and social factors of client performance to support their engagement in occupations of the population at the community agency (C.1.6). Opportunities to apply psychosocial models of practice & theories, evaluate

client/site needs, plan and implement programs, delivery of services, and exploration of management and administrative issues are provided in the context of this experience. The Community Engaged Learning Coordinator performs bi-semester site visits evaluating the students' performance within the community sites and demonstrating congruence with curricular threads. See [APPENDIX E](#) for OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function Course Syllabus.

Level II Fieldwork Site Placement Process & Assignment

Level II FW Site assignment is carried out by a lottery-like system during the Fall Semester of the 4th year of the OT program. Students may choose from sites located throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area that have identified available slots from the Exxat slot request process.

Students wishing to complete Level II FW outside of the Greater Pittsburgh area OR desiring to complete a FW at a non-contracted site need to request to be removed from the Wish List process and meet with AFWC during their third year in the program. See process for requesting a new fieldwork site and out-of-state/Pittsburgh area. Sites that are eligible to take students must ensure that therapy is supervised by a certified and licensed occupational therapist and that education of students is pragmatically or philosophically supported by the administration of the facility. Students are reminded that the fieldwork policies regarding student contact with fieldwork sites are in effect. Therefore, students are not permitted to contact ANY fieldwork site, without approval from AFWC. Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation, housing, and financing for their fieldwork experiences.

Exxat Wish List Process

During the 4th year Fall semester, each student will fill out their Wish List in Exxat based on the slots that are available for each fieldwork placement (which were obtained by the annual reservation request form performed earlier in the year by the AFWC). It is expected that once they receive this list, students independently seek out information regarding sites, including but not limited to: Exxat database, internet resources, and conversing with OT upperclassmen. Students will be given a 2-3 week span, to research the sites on the list, and rank their top 10 selections, for each Level II experience, and submit their Wish List by the deadline established by the AFWC. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to meet with the AFWC and/or their faculty mentor to discuss choices. The AFWC will establish a deadline of when the Wish List is to be submitted. Any forms submitted AFTER the deadline, will be moved to the bottom of the list.

The AFWC will then begin the placement process. Level II FW placements will not be revealed to students until all students are successfully placed, and all grades from the 4th year Fall semester are turned in.

While students' fieldwork preferences and selections are taken into consideration**, they must be balanced by the availability and variety of placements that are needed to develop well rounded, competent entry level occupational therapists. Any fieldwork site that the student lists on their Wish List may be a potential placement for the student. The following criteria will be used in fieldwork assignments (in weighted order):

1. Widest possible variety of educational experiences, in order to allow for compliance with fieldwork standards. (i.e.: settings, clients, ages, diagnoses)
 - a. ONLY in very unusual circumstances will a student be assigned to the same site or

type of site more than once.

- b. Students will be assigned to the site offering the wider experience over experiences which repeat those already completed.
2. Student learning style & needs
3. Match between FWEd & student
4. Faculty recommendations & feedback
5. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest (see page 28)

**The AFWC works diligently to create a positive match between a student's interests and learning needs and the attributes of each fieldwork site. Specific requests for fieldwork placements are considered, but cannot be guaranteed.

Once Level II FW placements are confirmed and revealed to students, students may exchange fieldwork assignments with each other, if both students can give reasonable explanations as to why the switch would be beneficial. The AFWC must approve ALL changes. If the change is deemed educationally inappropriate for a student, the AFWC may refuse the change. *The AFWC reserves the right to refuse requests for fieldwork placement changes after a given date prior to commencement of the fieldwork experience.*

Level II Fieldwork Lottery Appeals Process

The appeal process is designed to meet the occasional need of students for whom the Wish List process would prove disruptive to their family responsibilities and would result in the student's probable discontinuation of their schooling. Petitions for appeals are not to be made lightly. Students should consider the gravity of their appeal and submit an appeal only if they feel they could not continue in the program and complete their training if the appeal were denied. Appeals for special consideration in placement are based on demonstrated need for one of the following reasons: dependent care, extreme personal issues, and students with disabilities who have identified themselves to the Office of Disability Services. Appeals cannot be made for financial or marital status reasons. Appeals found to be made on false claims will be overturned and denied, and students may be removed from the program for this highly unethical behavior. Students who falsify appeal claims will be placed in any remaining site at the conclusion of the lottery process. Students will be informed of the dates of the Appeal process. Appeal decisions are made subject to the availability of fieldwork sites. All decisions of the faculty will be final.

Out-of-Area Fieldwork Assignment Process

Students who wish to potentially complete Level I or Level II FW outside of the Pittsburgh area must indicate their intention and rationale for doing so on the Fieldwork Planning Survey ([APPENDIX G](#)) which is completed via Exxat during the Fall of the 3rd year in the program. After indicating this preference on the Fieldwork Planning Survey, students MUST complete the Out of State/Pittsburgh Area Request form ([APPENDIX GG](#)) for each of the fieldworks they wish to be placed out of the area. Students are encouraged to meet with the AFWC to discuss the process and site options. Once the forms are completed by the deadline established by the AFWC, students MUST meet with the AFWC to discuss site options in their preferred geographic area. If students are interested in completing fieldwork at a site that is not within the Fieldwork Database, students must follow the process of initiating a new contract. Based upon the student's rationale listed on the Out of State/Pittsburgh Area Request form, and the outcome of the meeting with the AFWC, the AFWC will determine the next course of action. Students are not permitted to contact ANY fieldwork site, without approval from AFWC.

Process to Request a New Fieldwork Site Contract

The Department of Occupational Therapy at Duquesne University and the AFWC work very hard with our existing fieldwork sites and fieldwork educators to ensure that you have a quality fieldwork experience and adequate clinical preparation for the NBCOT exam. There is a risk you take when you look for a placement outside of these existing settings – each site has a different philosophy and expectations of fieldwork students – with the changing healthcare environment some sites are able to devote more resources to students than others and we strive to place you in situations that can maximize your fieldwork experience and prepare you to successfully pass your NBCOT exam.

The Department of Occupational Therapy at Duquesne University has used some sites for over 30 years to place students, so we know many of our existing sites and fieldwork educators very well. With that being said, some of you may choose to find new fieldwork sites for Level II placement. There are a number of great facilities and clinics that we do not have contracts with currently, so this is a primer for you to help locate these settings. We are interested in sites that want to have an ongoing relationship with the Department of Occupational Therapy and have an interest for students in subsequent classes. Setting up a new contract can be a lengthy and complex process – so don't count on these new contracts and know that sometimes there are issues at sites at the last minute that require student reservations to be canceled. Due to the extensive time and paperwork of investigating a new site and setting up a contract, the AFWC will consider a maximum of 3 potential new contracts to be initiated annually.

Efforts to develop a contract at a new fieldwork site will be done only when a student has made a firm commitment to carry out their fieldwork at that specific site.

If you are interested in setting up a new contract:

- **You must have permission from the AFWC before you contact a site.**
- **We will NOT use a site if you contact them without the permission of the AFWC.**
- **You may not call a site that we have an existing contract with.**
- **Sites must be compatible with DU OT curriculum philosophy and objectives.**

Some sites do not like to hear from students regarding fieldwork placements, while others don't seem to mind. Not all sites are available at all time frames and facilities often contract with numerous academic programs and have limited numbers of students they can accept per year.

In order to request a new contract, you might be instructed by the AFWC to initiate contact with the fieldwork site. Make a good first impression. Do not ask about housing/stipends or any benefits you would receive from the fieldwork site. Do your research beforehand (most sites have websites) and be professional when you call.

Ask to speak with whoever is in charge of placing occupational therapy fieldwork students. Explain that you are an occupational therapy student from Duquesne University, interested in learning more about the facility as a potential fieldwork placement.

Students must complete the New Fieldwork Site Contract Request ([APPENDIX H](#)) for a site to be considered by the AFWC.

Fieldwork Student Placement Interview

Some Level II Fieldwork sites require/prefer an interview (face-to-face or phone) as part of their decision-making process in selecting a Level II student. The interview serves as a tool to better understand the student's interests, as well as determine if the student is a good fit for the facility. If a site requires an interview, the student must meet with the AFWC beforehand to discuss strategies and the interview process. Upon completion of the interview, it is strongly encouraged for the student to send a follow up thank you note/email to the interviewer(s).

Students should present themselves appropriately and be prepared for the interview. Students who do not complete the required interview will not be considered for placement at that site.

Frequently asked Level II Fieldwork interview questions to the student:

- What are your expectations of this fieldwork?
- What do you hope to learn in this placement?
- How do you learn best?
- Why did you choose occupational therapy as a profession?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- Identify your professional interests.
- What has been your academic and/or fieldwork experience?
- Identify some theories or frames of reference that you are studying that might be relevant to occupational therapy practice in this setting.
- Identify your strengths and areas for growth.
- What are you looking for in regard to supervision?
- Identify past experiences that may be relevant to the fieldwork experience.
- How do you spend your leisure time?
- How do you handle stress?
- What motivates you?
- How do you best orient and familiarize yourself when entering a new system?
- Is there anything that might interfere with your ability to perform the tasks required on this fieldwork?

Students should also be prepared to ask questions of their prospective site/FWEd. Do your research beforehand and come prepared. (check out, Exxat, the website, prior students' experiences, etc.).

Sample Questions for the student to ask the site:

- What are agency/site/patient/client needs in this setting?
- Describe a "typical day" on the job.
- How can students best prepare for this experience? (readings, theories/models, most common diagnostic conditions, etc.)
- What are the characteristics of successful students in this setting?
- What are the greatest rewards and challenges of being an occupational therapist/health care provider in this setting?
- Are there any medical clearances/requirements that need to be completed prior to starting my placement?

Fieldwork Cancellation

Student Initiated Cancellation

Once a fieldwork placement has been confirmed, student requests for a change of affiliation WILL NOT be honored unless there is an *extreme emergency situation* or an *ethical, legal or professional* issue within the site. An extreme situation is identified as death of an immediate family member, childcare/parenting issue or serious illness of self. It does NOT include financial reasons, housing changes, or wedding plans, etc. Documentation of the situation will be required explaining rationale for requesting a change. (i.e. obituary or confirmation of medical scenario from physician). If after a review of documentation it is determined that a change should be made, the following procedure will be implemented:

1. Meeting of AFWC and Student to discuss preference indicators regarding fieldwork.
2. AFWC assigns the student to a new site.
3. All involved persons are notified of change by AFWC.

Site Initiated Cancellation

A fieldwork site may need to cancel a confirmed placement. This happens for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to staffing issues, inadequate supervision, etc. Also, occasionally a facility closes or merges with another organization and the confirmation of placement cannot be honored. If a cancellation should occur, the procedure is as follows:

1. Student and/or AFWC is notified the fieldwork placement has been canceled by the site.
2. Meeting of student and AFWC to discuss replacement options.
3. AFWC will work closely with student to reschedule the experience.

Refusal or Student Initiated Leave of a Fieldwork Placement

Once a student has been assigned to a fieldwork site, the student is expected to carry out the fieldwork placement. A student who refuses their assigned Level I or Level II Fieldwork placement forfeits the ability to complete the designated fieldwork course and will follow the policy and procedures as failing the course.

If the student decides to leave a fieldwork placement before completion due to a concern or problem, the student must submit reasons, in writing, to the AFWC. The student must meet with the AFWC prior to taking action. The AFWC will collaborate with the student and the FWEd to resolve the situation and identify a plan to address any issues/concerns. If a student leaves the FW placement or refuses to return to an assigned fieldwork experience without first discussing it with the AFWC, it will be considered a voluntary withdrawal from the course, failing the course. If a student decides to not continue with the fieldwork placement after meeting with the AFWC and a plan to address issues has been created, it will be considered a voluntary withdrawal from the course, failing the course. The AFWC will then follow the policy and procedures for students who fail a fieldwork course.

Cost of Fieldwork

Students must be prepared financially to assume ALL costs that will accompany any fieldwork & DCE experience. In addition to full university tuition and fees, other expenses may include: transportation, travel, parking, housing, and meals, as well as incidental costs such as materials for a special project,

uniforms, personal protective equipment, or costs related to clearances/medical requirements. The estimated cost of one level II fieldwork placement can amount to approximately \$3500. Plan your budget carefully. Given the competition for available sites in the Pittsburgh area for Fieldwork Level II & DCE, all students must be prepared to relocate for a minimum of one of their two 12-week fieldwork rotations. When it is possible, consideration will be made for those students who have special needs.

Housing, Transportation & Food

Students are responsible for ALL housing needs relating to their fieldwork/DCE placements. Therefore, it is important to plan ahead to meet all financial obligations during fieldwork. Tuition as well as travel, living arrangements, commuting/parking costs, and day-to-day personal expenses may be greater than the expenses incurred during an academic semester. On site housing and food stipends are rarely available. **Transportation is the sole responsibility of the student.** This includes transportation expenses to and from the sites as well as between sites. Some fieldwork sites require students to commute between multiple locations during the fieldwork; **therefore, a personal car is required in the professional and advanced professional phases of the program.** Public transportation is an option for some of our affiliated sites, yet not all. Whenever possible, commutes to fieldwork/DCE are limited to approximately 90 minutes each way. The AFWC works closely with all students to minimize transportation costs & hardships whenever possible. Concerns about transportation and housing are not acceptable reasons for requesting a change in fieldwork assignment as students are given placement information in advance, allowing time for appropriate arrangements to be made. Students are able to indicate their fieldwork site preferences prior to the fieldwork selection process. However, no fieldwork request can be guaranteed.

Employment during Fieldwork

With the expense of a graduate education, many students feel the need to work during the school year. Duquesne University Occupational Therapy students are expected to prioritize their responsibilities: **class attendance and fieldwork appointments are top priorities. Fieldwork & DCE is an extension of the classroom, and is a full-time clinical commitment,** not unlike having a full-time job. With this understanding, full-time work is not realistic and can lead to decreased performance in the classroom/clinic, and/or health problems. Reasonable work hours can be incorporated into your schedule; however, you are expected to rearrange your work schedule to accommodate class and fieldwork requirements, including allowing adequate time for study.

Students are STRONGLY DISCOURAGED from pursuing employment while they are completing full-time fieldwork experiences. It is very common for fieldwork & DCE placements to require additional time beyond the regular 40-hour work week, including evening hours and weekend shifts. The focus of fieldwork is on the integration of professional knowledge and behaviors and general clinical skills. In addition, outside readings, reports, studying, and/or special projects are often required. Site hours for fieldwork education are **not negotiable.** The hours of the affiliation are set by the facility. The weekly schedule will be determined by each fieldwork educator and/or site. Some sites require evening or weekend hours. Or you may be expected to work 4 (10 hour) days as required by your fieldwork educator. Some fieldwork educators work different schedules such as Tuesday-Saturday. You are expected to maintain the same work schedule as your fieldwork educator. Any changes to the dates for the fieldwork experience **must be** approved and documented in writing by the AFWC **AND** the Fieldwork Educator/Site Mentor before the start of the fieldwork experience.

Fieldwork Performance Evaluation

Level I Fieldwork

Fieldwork I and III are part of the OCCT 511 Clinical Reasoning I and OCCT 561 OT Administration and Leadership courses. Fieldwork II is part of the OCCT 511 Clinical Reasoning I and OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function. The student's performance on Level I FW is evaluated several ways. Firstly, the Level I FW student's performance is evaluated through multiple class assignments that are tied to the clinical reasoning process. Secondly, the FWEd formally evaluates the student using DU's Level I Fieldwork Evaluation of the OT Student. Lastly, during FW II the course instructors provide site visits during the context of their community placement to observe student performance and provide feedback. A student must complete all coursework at a passing level, have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B), and receive minimum competency on the Level I Fieldwork Evaluation of the OT Student in OCCT 511 Clinical Reasoning I, OCCT 525 Psychosocial Function and OCCT 561 OT Administration and Leadership courses in order to proceed to Level II Fieldwork. Level I FW evaluations occur through Exxat.

Level I FW Evaluation Forms (C.1.11)

- FW I & III Evaluation of Level I Student Performance ([APPENDIX I](#))
- FW I & III Student Evaluation of Level I Fieldwork Experience ([APPENDIX J](#))
- FW II Evaluation of Level I Student Performance ([APPENDIX K](#))
- FW II Student Evaluation of Level I Fieldwork Experience ([APPENDIX L](#))

Level II Fieldwork

Each Level II Fieldwork experience is designated as a course in the academic program for a combined total of 12 credits (OCCT 555-556) ([APPENDIX M](#)). Students will receive a "PASS" or "FAIL" grade for each experience based on input/feedback of the Fieldwork Educator, the evaluation received on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE), completion of required assignments/projects, and the discretion of the AFWC. Therefore, students are *evaluated* by the fieldwork educator, using the AOTA FWPE (C.1.15). However, the final grades for the Level II FW courses are issued and assigned by the AFWC.

The AFWC reserves the right, on behalf of the Department of Occupational Therapy, to assign a grade other than that which is reflected by earned points on AOTA FWPE alone. Justification for doing so could include such things as the failure of the student to maintain and/or provide in a timely fashion proof of health requirements/clearances/evaluation forms, evidence of academic misconduct, failure to maintain required correspondence with AFWC and/or Faculty, unethical behavior or violation of the Department of Occupational Therapy Professional Behavior Policy ([APPENDIX N](#)). Students must earn a minimum of passing scores on the AOTA FWPE and all required assignments to receive a passing grade for the fieldwork education course. Grading criteria include the AOTA FWPE and other specified fieldwork education assignments. Students must earn a minimum of passing scores in the AOTA FWPE AND at least 70% on all assignments to receive an overall final passing grade for the fieldwork education courses.

See course syllabus for description of required assignments on Level II Fieldwork. **The decision regarding the student's final grade for the fieldwork placement rests solely with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at Duquesne University and NOT the fieldwork site.**

The AOTA FWPE is provided to the Level II Fieldwork Educator through Exxat. The Department of Occupational Therapy will enter the email address of the primary fieldwork educator and deploy a

midterm evaluation at week 6, and a final evaluation at week 12 (C.1.9; C.1.15).

The AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation is intended to provide the student with an accurate assessment of their competence for entry-level practice. Both the student and fieldwork educator should recognize that growth occurs over time. The midterm and final evaluation ratings will reflect development of student competency and growth. In order to effectively use this evaluation to assess student competence, site-specific objectives need to be developed. Utilize this evaluation as a framework to assist in ensuring that all key performance areas are reflected in the site-specific objectives.

Using this evaluation at midterm and final, it is suggested that the student complete a self-evaluation of their own performance. During the midterm review process, the student and Fieldwork Educator should collaboratively develop a plan, which would enable the student to achieve entry-level competency at the end of the fieldwork experience. This plan should include specific objectives and enabling activities to be used by the student and fieldwork educator in order to achieve the desired competence.

The Fieldwork Educator must contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator when: (1) a student exhibits unsatisfactory behavior in a substantial number of tasks or (2) a student's potential for achieving entry-level competence by the end of the affiliation is in question.

Performance items on the AOTA FWPE include: Fundamentals of Practice, Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy, Screening and Evaluation, Intervention, Management of OT Services, Communication, and Professional Behaviors. The student must achieve an overall score of 111 points at final AND the student must receive a 9 or above in Section 1 of the AOTA FWPE. A score of 1 on any item is not allowed to receive a Pass on the FWPE tool.

Students must complete all Level II Fieldwork experiences at a satisfactory level in order to graduate (or proceed to advanced professional phase) and be eligible to sit for the occupational therapy certification exam.

Students provide feedback on their fieldwork sites as part of our ongoing process to improve learning experiences. Upon completing a fieldwork experience, the student will be required to critique the experience, including the effectiveness of the Level II FW supervision (C.1.8). An adapted version of the Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE) form, initially developed by the AOTA Commission on Education, is used by students to critique Level II Fieldwork to ensure that the experiences and supervision offered to students are consistent with DU OT's curriculum philosophy and objectives. This form must be completed by the student and acknowledged by their supervising Fieldwork Educator in Exxat in order to receive a grade. Evaluative information is used by the fieldwork site and Duquesne University to improve its fieldwork experience and academic program. Student responses on the tools are routinely collated, reviewed, and analyzed by the AFWC and shared with DU OT Faculty. This process also provides the student an opportunity to practice their ability to objectively assess an experience in a professionally acceptable manner.

Students are encouraged to download copies of their fieldwork evaluations form Exxat and maintain them in their personal files or professional development portfolio.

It is necessary that both evaluations are completed within a timely fashion. Final grades for the fieldwork courses (OCCT 555-556) will not be issued until all required paperwork is received.

Level II FW Evaluation Forms

- AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation of the Occupational Therapy Student ([APPENDIX O](#))
- Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Experience ([APPENDIX P](#))

Grading Process for Level II FW

Due to deadlines established by the Office of the Registrar for submission of final grades, it may be necessary to enter final grades for Level II FW, prior to receipt of evaluation forms. Therefore, per University policy, an “In Progress” (IP) may be processed as the initial grade for Level II FW. Passing grades will only be given when the completed AOTA FWPE and SEFWE forms have been received by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Final fieldwork evaluations are kept in the individual student’s record (Exxat) in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Duquesne University.

In addition, the Department of Occupational Therapy adheres to the “I” (Incomplete Grade) policy noted in the RSHS Handbook, which states that all course materials need to be submitted no more than three weeks after the end of the course. Any “I” not removed by the date specified above, becomes a permanent “F”. Professional students must remove all “I” grades in order to graduate. Students are responsible for following the dates in the academic calendar for each semester.

- * Grading for the OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience is outlined on page 43.

Failure of Fieldwork

A failed fieldwork experience is a serious concern. Fieldwork education is the opportunity to put academic learning into practice. This applied knowledge and critical thinking are paramount to being a successful occupational therapy practitioner. It is necessary to demonstrate proficiency in both the clinical and academic components of both entry level occupational therapy practice and the professional world of healthcare.

The AFWC reserves the right, on behalf of the Department of Occupational Therapy, to assign a grade other than that which is reflected by earned points alone on the AOTA FWPE. Justification for doing so could include such things as the failure of the student to maintain and/or provide in a timely fashion proof of health requirements/clearances, evidence of academic misconduct, unethical behavior or violation of the Department of Occupational Therapy Professional Behavior Policy ([APPENDIX N](#)). Prior to adjusting the grade, the AFWC will consult with the student, the FWEd, Student Success Coach, Faculty Mentor and/or Department Chair as deemed appropriate.

In addition, the fieldwork site may terminate a student at any time, whose performance is not competent and threatens the clients’ treatment/safety. Terminated failing could also occur if the student violates a facility policy or procedure, the violation of which, if done by an employee of the facility, would cause immediate termination of the employee. Examples include inappropriate use of phone or technology, drug use, theft of property, unsafe practice, unprofessional behavior, violation of patients’ rights, violation of AOTA Code of Ethics, excessive tardiness/absenteeism, or HIPPA violation (such as discussion of a patient in an inappropriate situation) etc. It is important for students to be familiar with facility policies and procedures, particularly policies related to patient confidentiality.

Lastly, depending on the nature of the problem, a student may be withdrawn immediately from the fieldwork site and the occupational therapy program and not provided an additional fieldwork experience. Students have a right to complete a written appeal via processes outlined in the [student handbook](#).

Level I Fieldwork Failure

A student who fails a Level I Fieldwork experience may be allowed one additional opportunity to complete the experience successfully at the discretion of the Clinical Reasoning/Psychosocial/OT Admin & Leadership Course Instructors, Department Chair, and AFWC. If deemed eligible to proceed, a remediation plan and learning contract will be developed and attested to. Then, the student will need to re-register for the course in which Level I Fieldwork appears during the semester it is offered. If the student fails a second time, the process for dismissal from the Occupational Therapy program will be initiated.

Level II Fieldwork Failure

When a student fails a Level II Fieldwork, a second opportunity *may* be given after a plan of remediation has been successfully completed and/or at the discretion of the AFWC and Department Chair. If deemed eligible to continue, the student must repeat the failed experience before beginning the next fieldwork. In order to repeat the fieldwork experience, the student must re-register for the same course the following semester, or when a placement is available. The dates and location of the new assignment are dependent on the availability of a placement, but in most cases this will mean that a student may not be rescheduled for their last rotation until the next academic year. A student cannot proceed with additional coursework until the failed course is passed. If failure occurs a second time, dismissal from the Occupational Therapy program will be initiated.

A student who is failing fieldwork may be asked to leave the fieldwork site before the date on which the assignment ends and still receive a failing grade. Other students may finish the full assignment and still fail. In either case, the decision to be asked to leave or continue in the affiliation is based on an assessment of: 1) the student's difficulties and the student's potential to remain in the clinical setting without being disruptive to patient/client care; 2) the student's response to supervisory feedback; and 3) the student's potential to change skills, judgments, and professional behaviors in a reasonable amount of time with normal supervision.

Fieldwork Site Policies & Procedures

While on fieldwork, students remain registered at Duquesne University and you must adhere to ALL University, RSHS, and Department of OT policies, in addition to any policies/expectations of your fieldwork site. Each facility and department has its own policy and procedure manual. It is the student's responsibility to review the manual and follow all the policies related to their assigned placement. Termination/failing could also occur if the student violates a facility policy or procedure, the violation of which, if done by an employee of the facility, would cause immediate termination of the employee. Examples include inappropriate use of phone or technology, drug use, theft of property, unsafe practice, unprofessional behavior, violation of patients' rights, violation of AOTA Code of Ethics, excessive tardiness/absenteeism, or HIPPA violation (such as discussion of a patient in an inappropriate situation) etc. If the clinical site does not have a particular policy or manual, the student shall refer to the University, RSHS, Department of OT and/or OT FW Manual regarding expectations.

FW Site Student Manuals

Student FW manuals that contain specific assignments, personalized FW experiences, site-specific objectives, weekly expectations, etc. may also be provided by sites. Check with your Fieldwork

Educator/site upon arrival. Weekly expectations tend to keep students as well as supervisors on track during the twelve-week placement. In addition, students should bring this DU OT FW/DCE Manual to fieldwork, share with your Fieldwork Educator/Site Mentor, and refer to it often. Any sites interested in revising or updating their site manual should contact the AFWC for resources and guidance.

Special Needs/Medical Conditions Disclosure

The Department of Occupational Therapy prepares occupational therapists to serve as primary providers of occupational therapy services. In order to function as an occupational therapy practitioner, an individual must be able to meet certain motor, sensory, intellectual and social expectations for performance. The performance indicators outlined for all RSHS students can be found here: [RSHS Technical Standards Performance Indicators](#).

Any student who thinks they do not possess one or more of the enumerated skills should seek assistance from their student success coach or faculty mentor, and must notify and work with the AFWC and the Office of Disability Services. It is the student's responsibility to notify both the RSHS and their respective department of any accommodations which may be necessary. During the pre-professional and professional phases of curriculum, OT students will review and sign-off on a document serving as a testimony that they are in compliance with these standards and understand the responsibilities outlined. This document will be securely stored in the student profile in Exxat.

The faculty of the Department of Occupational Therapy wishes to affirm the intent of the American with Disabilities Act. Any student enrolled in these fieldwork experiences, who may require adjustments in terms of format, procedures, and/or experiences due to a documented disabling condition, should feel free to discuss these needs with the Office of Disability Services, their student success coach, faculty mentor, and/or AFWC in confidence so that reasonable accommodations can be made. Accommodations provided at the University do not carry over into the fieldwork site. The faculty strongly urges those students with special needs to make these needs known to the FWEd or fieldwork site coordinator, especially if there is a potential risk to evoke harm to the student, future patients, Fieldwork Educator, or others at the clinic/community. Students may not ask for accommodations once the fieldwork placement has begun. We are not required to provide accommodations without prior knowledge or after the placement has begun. Students who choose not to disclose such information may be in jeopardy of failing.

Pregnancy

If a student is or becomes pregnant while enrolled in OT academic courses, she must notify her student success coach and faculty mentor immediately. This is necessary so the student can plan for the anticipated absence from classes and make decisions related to registration, enrollment, and course completion. If a student is or becomes pregnant prior to beginning fieldwork or while on fieldwork, she must notify the AFWC immediately and inform the FWEd and/or site coordinator at her site. This is necessary to appropriately plan for fieldwork. Any student who is pregnant will be required to have a letter from her physician stating she is capable of assuming the normal clinical duties of an OT student. The physician must confirm that they do not have any objection to the student's specific assignment for fieldwork.

Professional Liability Insurance

Professional liability insurance will be provided by Duquesne University at no additional cost and will be mailed to fieldwork sites by the university's insurance provider annually. Individual students do not need to seek liability insurance on their own. This insurance covers students on University education related activities (e.g. fieldwork education rotations). Coverage runs annually from July 1 – June 30. Any student who is employed or is working external to the clinical placement is not covered under the university's Professional Liability Insurance. Students should be aware that when they become professional practitioners, they may need their own insurance. (*MALPRACTICE OR LIABILITY INSURANCE IS REQUIRED IF GOING TO PRACTICE & CREDENTIALS IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA*). Professional General Liability limits are: General Aggregate \$3,000,000; Each Occurrence \$1,000,000.

Safety & Infection Control on Fieldwork

All DU OT students complete OSHA, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Universal Precautions Training prior to fieldwork and upload in their Exxat student profile. Students are expected to maintain verification of this training and produce to fieldwork sites, upon request. Students are required to follow the safety, infection control, and emergency procedures at their assigned fieldwork site. Students are advised to follow Universal Precautions at all times to protect themselves and patients during their fieldwork rotations. Students who demonstrate any signs of illness or infection should immediately advise their Fieldwork Educator and call the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to report their missed days. Students need to use their best judgment as to whether they are well enough to perform their assigned duties. Students should always consider their own health and the health of patients at risk of exposure to illness when making the decision as to whether to miss a day of fieldwork due to illness.

Critical Incidents/Incident Form

Students are required to report all critical incidents that occur on fieldwork to the AFWC. When the incident occurs, the student should notify the fieldwork educator **AND** AFWC. The student should complete an incident report as directed by the FWEd/clinical coordinator, and then the student is to contact the AFWC. An incident report is a form that is filled out in order to record details of an unusual event that occurs. Critical incidents include: patient falls, patient injury, patient upset/complaint with student, student fall/syncopal episode, seizure event, and any other incidents considered critical. If a student is unsure if an incident is considered critical, they are to contact the AFWC.

Should the student, in the course of their fieldwork experience have a health related incident or accident, the AFWC will instruct the student to complete a Student Health Incident/Accident Report within 24 hours of the occurrence. This incident report is available through:

<http://www.duq.edu/about/departments-and-offices/risk-management/forms>

University Emergency Response Protocol for Community Engagement Sites

1. Introduction

This protocol provides a structured response plan for emergencies involving students, faculty, and staff at community-engaged teaching, learning, research, and service sites. It strives to ensure the safety and well-being of campus community members, coordinate communication, and provide guidance on actions to take in various emergency situations. This protocol is intended to be a guide only. Every emergency is different and may require additional or different responses.

2. Definitions

- **Emergency:** Any situation that poses an immediate risk to health, safety, or property, including but not limited to medical emergencies, natural disasters, criminal activities, and accidents.
- **Community Engagement Site:** The organization or location where the campus community members complete their engagement for a University-sponsored community engaged course, co-curricular program, or service event.
- **Project/Program Lead:** The faculty, staff, or university employee in charge of the community-engaged learning or service experience.
- **Departmental Point Person:** The project/program lead's immediate supervisor

3. Immediate Response Actions

Student Actions

- **Seek a Safe Location:** If possible, the student should move to a safe location away from immediate danger.
- **Contact Emergency Services:** Dial local emergency services (e.g., 911 in the US) if immediate intervention is warranted.
- **Notify Project/Program Lead:** Inform the site supervisor of the emergency as soon as it is safe to do so.

[Click to view the complete plan.](#)

[Click for Tips for Effectively Responding to the Unexpected during Community Engaged Teaching](#)

Scholarships/Aid from Fieldwork Sites

Any student who is receiving financial assistance from a future employer in the form of scholarships, signed work agreements, or other resources must INFORM THE AFWC immediately upon signing a contract. Because of the conflict of interest which could arise in situations like these, students will not be allowed to do fieldwork in a center where they have made a commitment to work upon graduation in exchange for financial assistance.

Conflict of Interest

Students will NOT be placed at a site where a family member may be in a supervisory capacity of the student or student's Fieldwork Educator. A student will not be assigned to a site where they have already accepted a job or are negotiating employment. In addition, students are not permitted to do FW/DCE placements at sites where they have been previously employed by the Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation, or related department, or have been a patient. Lastly, students will not be placed at sites where they have volunteered/shadowed extensively. Requests for exceptions to this policy may be submitted, in writing, by the student requesting a particular site. The student should provide the AFWC with a rationale in writing that would justify setting aside this policy.

Student Health Reports/Clearances

Prior to enrolling in the Professional phase of the OT program, all students are to demonstrate

compliance with the student health and security requirements within Exxat Approve. **Students are responsible for not only meeting the standard requirements, yet continue to maintain compliance throughout the duration of their studies.** When assigned to a fieldwork site, students are responsible for determining the site's health/security requirements (often found in Exxat) and ensuring that they are compliant. Students are required to submit their requirements to the fieldwork site on the first day, unless the site requests differently. Once the student receives notification of placement of a specific fieldwork site, **it is the student's responsibility** to review the facility's AOTA Fieldwork Data Form and review the clinical site file in Exxat.

Each student is **required** to carry health insurance, as many FW facilities do not carry coverage or offer services free to student interns. Facilities will not allow you to engage in fieldwork without evidence of coverage, and may at any time require that you produce proof of coverage. Lack of coverage may result in rejection from the site or immediate termination of the fieldwork. In addition, you will be required to provide verification of your current health status, proof of health insurance, and current CPR certification prior to beginning your fieldwork. Be certain to keep excellent records of any medical history and carry copies of current immunizations report, current 2 step TB results, CPR/First Aid certification, and other necessary medical information.

Occupational Therapy students must show completion of a physical examination and other health requirements ([APPENDIX Q](#)) prior to entry in the professional phase of the program. In addition to meeting the University's health and immunization requirements upon matriculation, all students must subsequently meet the RSHS pre-clinical health requirements prior to entry into the professional phase. Duquesne University's Health Service can provide the physical examination and laboratory tests to students for a reasonable fee, or students may opt to use a private primary care provider. All physical examination and test results will be collected and maintained in the Health Service Office. No student records are kept in the Occupational Therapy Department. **RSHS students may be asked to provide additional documentation indicating ongoing health status** (e.g current PPD) AND complete additional health requirements, including the ability to meet performance indicators/technical standards. The RSHS will be notified of any student who is deemed unable to meet the RSHS performance skills required for completion of didactic or clinical education. In cases where immunity does not exist or test results are positive, students may either be expected to engage in additional testing or immunizations, or be removed from the clinical experience due to the health risks presented to themselves, their classmates, faculty, and their patients (C.1.2).

Criminal Background Checks & Fingerprinting

Most, if not all, sites are now requiring criminal background checks and/or fingerprinting. Students are responsible for meeting these requirements on their own and in most cases, at their expense. The Department of Occupational Therapy has an affiliation with Exxat, to ensure completion and management of all educational, professional, and personal information for students. Occupational therapy students will be required to purchase an account the Spring of their second year, and renew annually up until their 5th or 6th year. Students are responsible for renewing security clearances as necessary to meet the timeline requirements of their assigned fieldwork placements.

If doing fieldwork out-of-state, please double check what type of background checks are required by the site.

Drug Testing

Many sites are now requiring drug testing. Students are responsible for meeting this requirement on their own, and in most cases, at their expense. Students must be cleared prior to starting the placement. Keep in mind that some results may take several weeks to receive. If your site requires drug testing, please meet with AFWC to obtain information on how to fulfill this requirement. You can fulfill a 10-panel drug screen via Exxat. Please double check what TYPE of drug panel your site requires (5 panel, 10 panel, 11 panel screenings etc.). The Department of Occupational Therapy complies with the RSHS Drug Testing Policy.

Professionalism

Fieldwork education is a crucial part of professional preparation. The term professionalism means *conforming to the standards of a profession*. Positive professional behaviors are critical to effective occupational therapy practice. A therapist must adhere to ethical standards, reflect cultural sensitivity, work collaboratively with others, show self-initiative and motivation, and demonstrate therapeutic use of self and competent leadership skills. This thread is addressed throughout the curriculum of Duquesne University's Occupational Therapy Program. Becoming an occupational therapist encompasses development of clinical as well as professional skills. Communication, receptiveness to feedback, taking initiative, dependability, and other interpersonal behaviors are essential learning outcomes of fieldwork and coursework. The Occupational Therapy Program at Duquesne University is a professional program and as occupational therapy students, you are expected to dress and present yourselves in a professional manner at all times. The Duquesne University Student Professional Behavior Policy ([APPENDIX N](#)) and the AOTA Code of Ethics ([APPENDIX R](#)) apply to all Level I and Level II Fieldwork experiences in addition to the specified behaviors required by the specific clinical sites.

As a health professional in training, students should demonstrate appropriate professional behavior during all fieldwork activities. Remember that on fieldwork, students are representing Duquesne University, the Department of Occupational Therapy, and the profession of occupational therapy. Professional behavior criteria along with OT values and attitudes are outlined in the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards (2020) ([APPENDIX R](#)).

These include but are not limited to:

- being punctual for & attending all clinical activities
- arriving before scheduled time to begin and not asking to leave early
- notifying Fieldwork Educator & AFWC of emergencies and/or illnesses
- being respectful of others
- demonstrating appropriate interpersonal communication skills
- being organized
- completing assignments (from University and FW site) in a timely manner
- ask questions but not challenge the supervisor's authority or competence

A more thorough description of professional behaviors is clearly outlined in [Duquesne University OT Student Handbook](#).

****Students can be dismissed from Level I/II Fieldwork experiences for inappropriate/unprofessional behavior, as determined by the FWEd in collaboration with the AFWC.**

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Use

Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices are considered distractions to the learning environment and potential threats to patient privacy. As per the John G. Rangos Sr. School of Health Sciences Academic Student Handbook electronic devices such as cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices are to be turned **OFF** (no sound, vibrating, or text messaging) **during class and clinical experiences**. Therefore, they are to be turned off and out of site during all learning experiences including classroom, laboratory, and clinical activities. In many clinical sites, electronic devices are prohibited from use and may cause technical difficulties with medical equipment. If a student has extenuating circumstances (emergency only) that require accessibility by phone, the student should let the course instructor/Fieldwork Educator know and appropriate accommodations will be considered.

Instant messaging and texting are also not permitted during these times. If absolutely necessary (emergency only), you may check for messages during lunch hours only and only out of view of clients/staff members. Emergency calls are strictly for emergencies only.

Computer Use

Use of fieldwork site computers is restricted to activities associated with client-care unless otherwise instructed by the Fieldwork Educator, such as performing evidenced-based literature research. Under no circumstance should the fieldwork student use the facility-based computer to check their personal email, participate in social networking, gaming, or accessing the Internet for personal use. Computers are to be used for fieldwork-related use only.

Social Media & Networking

Since online social media and social networking have become one of the options for daily communication with others, it is necessary to clarify professional behavior expectations with its use, especially pertaining to fieldwork education. Social media often crosses traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Therefore, it takes extra vigilance to assure that personal, professional, and university reputations are protected. It is important to consider what is posted on the Internet, in addition to adhering to the *OT Code of Ethics* (AOTA, 2020) ([APPENDIX R](#)). The ethical concepts include: Beneficence, Nonmaleficence, Confidentiality, Procedural Justice, Veracity, and Fidelity. Adherence of this policy is expected of students in the DU OT Program.

These guidelines are intended to protect the privacy and confidentiality of fellow students, faculty and staff, clinical educators and facility staff, and any clients of a facility. These guidelines may continually change as new social networking tools emerge. Compliance with this policy is expected at all times. Violation of these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the DU OT Program.

You are responsible for what you post. A posting should never reference (or allude to) a client's name, fieldwork site name, clinical instructor name, criticism about site or information about what is happening, or any other disclosure of confidential material to unauthorized parties in a posting or reference Duquesne University. A posting should never disclose confidential or HIPAA-related information. Sharing this type of information, even unintentionally, can result in legal action against you, DU, the fieldwork site, and/or the client. It is important to adhere to copyright laws and reference or cite sources

appropriately. Plagiarism applies online as well. The content of the posting should be respectful.

Consider what you post on ANY social networking site. Many potential employers go to these sites to see what you have posted and often determine if they are interested in having you as an employee.

Do not ask your supervisor to “friend” you while on Fieldwork. This puts your supervisor and yourself in an awkward situation with personal information about each other. If you mutually decide to do this after the Fieldwork experience, this is your personal choice.

Social Networking Examples:

- o Social networking sites: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, etc.
- o Video and photo sharing websites: TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, Snapfish
- o Micro-blogging sites: Twitter, FriendFeed, Tumblr
- o Weblogs, blogs, forums (“online journals”)
- o Online forums and discussion boards
- o Any other Websites or software applications that allow individual users or entities to publish content on the Internet

Dress Code

As a healthcare professional in training, all students should demonstrate professional appearance during all clinical activities including observational opportunities specifically in Fieldwork Level I and Level II & OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience. Adherence to dress code criteria is necessary to maintain safety, health, professionalism, and a shared supportive learning environment. Duquesne University will expect the students to present themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

These include but are not limited to:

- Overall neat & clean grooming
- Hair is combed & pulled away from face
- Hair color of unnatural tone is not appropriate
- No strong perfume, cologne, body spray, or scented lotion.
- Facial piercings are removed
- Conservative use of jewelry/accessories (please limit earrings to one or two pairs, no large hoop or dangling earrings for safety reasons)
- Tattoos are covered
- Nails are neat & trimmed (no artificial nails - this is unhygienic and prohibited in healthcare settings; natural nail tips should be less than one quarter (1/4) inch long)
- Overall neat & clean appearance of clothing
- Appropriate fit to clothing
- Appropriate shirt choice (no tank-tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, muscle shirts or sleeveless shirts; no t-shirts with logos/slogans)
- Conservative neckline
- Chest/cleavage remains concealed when bending forward
- Abdomen/low back remains concealed when reaching overhead
- Appropriate choice of pants/skirts (no jeans, sweatpants, yoga pants, leggings, shorts, low riding

pants)

- Low back remains concealed while sitting
- Low back remains concealed when performing a patient transfer
- Low back remains concealed when kneeling on floor and reaching forward
- Undergarments remains concealed during all movements
- Appropriate footwear (no sandals, high heels, or open toed shoes)
- Wearing socks/stockings
- Smoking, use of chewing tobacco, or gum is strictly prohibited
- Watches: Students are recommended to wear watches at all times in order to keep patient/client appointments and keep themselves organized. The use of cell phones to tell time is prohibited.

Students may be asked to wear name tags and/or facility identification. These are to be worn throughout the placement. Students will purchase name tags with Duquesne University identification on them from the Occupational Therapy Office prior to Level I experiences. In some cases, lab coats or hospital scrubs are required and are the responsibility of the student both in purchasing and maintaining.

Please be aware that some facilities may have dress codes and policies which are more stringent than what is listed here. In that case, you should follow the dress code policies of your facility.

Attendance

Regular attendance and promptness are professional behaviors that facilitate learning and teaching and show respect for one's fieldwork educators, colleagues, and peers. Attendance is mandatory for all fieldwork education experiences. Students are expected to arrive to fieldwork prior to the scheduled start time, and to be prepared to begin fieldwork ON-TIME. There are NO designated holidays, vacation days, personal days, or sick days/leave during Level II Fieldwork. Therefore, **you are NOT entitled to any days off during fieldwork.** While the possibility of extraordinary life and/or crisis circumstances is acknowledged, absences from the experiential learning environment causes significant concern regarding clinical and professional skill development and knowledge acquisition as it relates to the integration and utilization of occupational therapy theory and best practice. Acceptance of these extreme circumstances will be determined on a case-by-basis by the AFWC.

The student is expected to follow the Fieldwork Educators regular hours, which may follow a non-traditional work schedule and may include evenings/weekends. Once a clinical schedule is established between the student and the Fieldwork Educator, the information must be shared with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Any variations to the established schedule must be communicated to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Should an unexpected absence occur, the student is responsible for communicating with the Fieldwork Educator and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator; prior to the beginning of their start time. Failure to attend a clinical placement or to provide notice of an absence with appropriate approval will result in a warning and may result in a **"not pass"** grade for the fieldwork course.

Absence from Fieldwork

Personal illness and personal or family (parents, spouse, siblings, and children) emergencies, and death of a family member (including extended family) are the only excused unplanned absences. The AFWC must be notified of all unplanned absences. In the event of an illness or emergency, students must notify the fieldwork educator **prior** to the start of the work day. It is recommended that the student and FWE exchange phone numbers and for the student to be aware of the attendance policy/call-off procedure of

the site. The student must speak with both the FWEd and AFWC. Voicemails and messages are not acceptable forms of communication. **Any absences must be reported to the AFWC. This is important due to School/University liability issues.**

Students must request time off for religious observances from the fieldwork educator in advance and must make up the time. **Any requests for time off/variances in schedule to attend conferences, interviews, study for exams, personal appointments, outside employment, weddings/honeymoons, family vacations/reunions, or other personal purposes are NOT considered valid excuses for missing fieldwork and/or alternating start/end dates of experiences.**

Students experiencing extenuating circumstances that would make them unable to start/end a fieldwork placement on the specified start/end dates may request a different start/end. **This request must be made in writing to the AFWC as soon as the student is aware.** The student must first discuss this option with the AFWC before discussing the option with their Fieldwork Educator. It is up to the discretion of the AFWC and the availability of the student's Fieldwork Educator whether a student's request to start/end fieldwork on a different date will be approved.

Students are to follow the work schedule established by the clinical facility, not the academic calendar of Duquesne University. Students need to be aware that the hours/schedule may include evenings, weekends, and Holidays. Make-up days for absences on fieldwork are only an option when the missed days are determined excusable (i.e unplanned emergencies/circumstances), according to the reasons listed above, and at discretion of the AFWC. The plan for make-up days must be created with permission of, and at the convenience of, the Fieldwork Educator, and agreed upon by the AFWC. Therefore, any changes to the fieldwork schedule (including but not limited to start/end date), need approval from the AFWC. It is not permitted that the student/FWEd change the end date if no days are missed, or based upon good performance.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 120 hours between FW I, II, and III (approximately 40 hours per fieldwork experience), regardless of scheduled holidays, snow days, or shortened work days such as school systems.

Please be aware that time missed in the first Level II FW placement may affect the student's ability to begin their second Level II FW placement. If the completion date of the first fieldwork is affected, the student must notify the AFWC to discuss arrangements for the change of the fieldwork start date.

Tardiness and absenteeism which is excessive and patterned is not acceptable. Proper documentation may be requested by the University as well as the fieldwork site. **Repeated and/or excessive lateness, absence, or failure to comply with this stated attendance policy may require repeating or failure of the experience.**

Holidays

During the FW & DCE, the student will follow the holiday schedule established by the placement facility, NOT the academic schedule of the University. Therefore, whatever schedules your fieldwork educator/site requests of you during the holidays, you are expected to be present and committed to your clinical duties – without exception. Schools systems and clinics that normally schedule days-off around the holidays during Level II placements may extend the fieldwork experience and require make-up days, at discretion of the FWEd and AFWC.

Inclement Weather

FW & DCF sites expect the same attendance from students as they do from their employees. Students should plan appropriately for potential commute delays during inclement weather. Make sure to address bad weather and emergency policies (as they affect attendance) with the fieldwork educator on the first visit/orientation period. Some fieldwork educators may wish to exchange personal telephone numbers in case of emergency. Please note that students follow the schedule of the fieldwork site, and NOT University while on fieldwork. Any missed days due to inclement weather MUST be made up.

Confidentiality, Privacy & HIPAA

On April 14, 2003, a law, entitled the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) came into effect. This law pertains to protection of health information relating to the health of an individual, the care provided, or payment for care. HIPAA includes classroom case-related activities and clinical experiences (including observations, research, fieldwork, etc.) where you would have access to an individual's health information.

On fieldwork, you will have opportunities to see many situations that are new to you and possibly encounter clinical situations that involve a person(s) you know. Although it is understandable that you may wish to discuss these events with others, **the sharing of confidential information must be avoided – without exception.** It is also essential that confidentiality within your setting be maintained; information pertaining to one client/patient may never be shared with another client. Keeping patients' health information confidential is part of a clinician's job responsibilities and professional behaviors.

Students are expected to respect and comply with confidentiality and other ethical and legal standards of care. Students should be familiar with the AOTA Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics. Please refer to [APPENDIX R](#) for the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics. Students are expected to maintain the guidelines of confidentiality and privacy in all clinical settings. Students receive documented training regarding the HIPAA regulations prior to FW experiences and are expected to bring evidence of this completed training on FIRST DAY of fieldwork. However, students may also have to take additional training per site guidelines or sign a confidentiality statement.

Examples of general HIPAA/Privacy guidelines can include, but are not limited to:

1. No papers, forms, medical chart information, or documents of any kind should be taken out of the facility without permission from the supervisor.
2. Any assignments relating to chart reviews, patient care, or treatment must have all patient/client identification information removed.
3. No discussion relating to specific consumers should take place in public areas WITHOUT EXCEPTION.
4. Any discussion in class or in treatment areas should NOT reveal the consumer's identification in any way.
5. **Do not discuss consumers' medical or personal information with other consumers, friends, relatives, or professionals that are not involved with the consumers' direct care.**
6. **If you are not the treating student-therapist, then you are not on a "need-to-know basis".**

Need-to-know basis: The principles that patient information should be accessed or disclosed only as necessary in order to provide services to the patient or as authorized by the patient or the law. You are only permitted to access and use patient information as it relates to your role, as a student practitioner. If

you see or hear patient information in the course of doing your job that you do not need to know, remember that this information is confidential. You are not permitted to repeat it or share it with others - even friends, family, or other employees who do not have a need to know it.

****Always consult the fieldwork sites' facility policies for further clarification.**

The welfare of clients shall be the primary concern of the student. Students must assure the integrity of the client and respect the confidentiality of client/patient information regardless of the source (patient, therapist, records, and charts). This trust cannot be breached either verbally or in writing. When in doubt as to the amount of information that can be disclosed, the AFWC/FWEd should be consulted.

A breach of *confidentiality, privacy, and/or security (whether intentional or unintentional)* could have a negative impact on the care of a client and may be viewed as serious misconduct on the part of the student. The level of violation of HIPAA will be determined by the fieldwork site and the AFWC. Inability to follow Duquesne's HIPAA policy or the policies/expectations of the FW site may result in immediate dismissal from fieldwork, the OT program, and potential civil and criminal penalties.

Part-Time Fieldwork

If a student absolutely needs to perform fieldwork on a part time basis, the student must consult with the AFWC immediately and must explain their reasons for requesting this option. The AFWC in consultation with the OT faculty will decide if the reasons justify consideration of a part time fieldwork experience. Students will be offered part-time fieldwork experiences upon request and availability of the site to accommodate the request. Students who are granted permission to complete fieldwork part-time must be in accordance with at least 50% FTE of the site personnel expectations (C.1.12). Students should be aware that a part-time fieldwork model might delay future courses and graduation dates.

AFWC Monitoring & Site Visits

Close communication with the fieldwork sites is vital to the process of fieldwork education (C.1.3, C1.8, C1.9). Email is used extensively, along with other methods such as phone, virtual platforms such as Te.ams/Zoom, fax, and U.S. mail. The AFWC will communicate with students via DUQ email and students should check their email frequently (at least three times a week) throughout fieldwork experiences. In addition, the AFWC will provide all students with phone numbers to use for phone contacts. The AFWC will be available on evenings and weekends for phone contacts as well.

The AFWC of Duquesne University works hard to maintain a positive relationship between the University and all affiliated sites. The purpose of site visits and monitoring is multidimensional and may include, but is not limited to:

- Student performance evaluation
- Fieldwork site evaluation
- Fieldwork educator evaluation
- Assistance with implementation of fieldwork education program
- Assistance with managing student performance problems
- Fieldwork educator and staff education and development

Site visits can be announced or unannounced. On site visits are scheduled whenever possible to assist in this relationship and to ensure that sites are providing students with opportunities that relate to our curriculum. On site visits do not mean that the student is in jeopardy of failing. The AFWC remains in contact with the FWEd regarding student's progress and performance during fieldwork at all times. Problem areas may be identified by the AFWC, FWEd, student, or department faculty. The AFWC shall assist in the problem solving process of resolving performance issues related to the student, facility, or educational program only after the student and facility have used their appropriate resources.

If a site visit is needed, the visit will entail meeting with the student and the Fieldwork Educator both individually and together to discuss the types of learning experiences, strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance, and strengths and weaknesses of the student's academic preparation. The discussion will be documented and appropriate information will be shared with the academic faculty as needed (C1.9). In many cases, a formal learning contract will be used. (See [APPENDIX T.](#))

Access to Email/Internet on Fieldwork & DCE

Students will need to have regular access to a computer with internet connection & email outside of fieldwork & DCE hours. A Level II FW & DCE Canvas site has been created. It is the student's responsibility to check site/email on a regular basis to maintain correspondence with AFWC or Capstone Coordinator. Your Duquesne University personal email account is the official method of communication for all Duquesne administrative matters. You are required to periodically check your account for time critical notices such as billing notifications, insurance requirements, or other important alerts or administrative notices requiring a timely response. Notice will be considered received one day following the date the notice is posted to your email account. Failure to check your email account does not excuse or exempt you from any actions required of you by the University. **It is expected that students respond to phone-call or email from AFWC or DU faculty within 48 hours.**

Communication/Canvas Online Fieldwork Course Website

Level I and II Fieldwork courses are maintained electronically via Canvas, DU's online teaching system. Through this means, students are able to access the Fieldwork Manual, syllabi, and evaluation forms as needed, along with any other relevant information or forms. All students are encouraged to use Canvas to communicate and share individual experiences or to ask group questions via the discussion board forums. At several points in each of the two Level II fieldwork placements students are sent instructor generated reflection questions to ascertain how the student is doing on their placement. Questions are posted in discussion board format and focused around curricular themes and professional development. Students are required to post several times on each fieldwork rotation. Discussions and postings are monitored by the AFWC and responded to as needed. The student is highly encouraged to contact the AFWC at the first sign of any concern with the fieldwork placement and/or supervision. Routine communication is encouraged throughout the fieldwork experience (C1.9). **See course syllabi for specifics on Canvas postings requirements.**

DU Level II Fieldwork Assignments

See course syllabi for all DU OT required assignments/projects on Level II Fieldwork ([APPENDIX M.](#))

Collaboration of Fieldwork Objectives

Duquesne University has established Level II Fieldwork behavioral objectives that are aligned with the competencies within the 37 performance items listed on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation ([APPENDIX Q](#)). These objectives are communicated to clinical sites in advance of the placement through Exxat along with the DU OT Curriculum Philosophy ([APPENDIX A](#)). Prior to the fieldwork experience, sites are encouraged to work collaboratively with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to supplement these objectives with site specific objectives, site requirements, and assignments as needed. Available site specific objectives are filed in Exxat for students' perusal (C.1.2; C.1.3).

If the site has site-specific fieldwork objectives, the student is responsible for acknowledging these and turning in a copy of the signed objective sheet to the AFWC. If the site does not have site-specific student objectives, the site must adopt Duquesne University's Level II FW behavioral objectives and acknowledge their ability to adopt them in Exxat. It is the student's responsibility to also be aware of their behavioral objectives. It is encouraged for the student to assist in developing site-specific objectives as a student project if the site does not have any.

AOTA Fieldwork Data Form

The AOTA Fieldwork Data Form ([APPENDIX U](#)) can be accessed online either on Exxat (under Student Packer) or on Canvas fieldwork course pages.

To assist us in maintaining current site data (C.1.2), the University requires an annual updated copy of the AOTA Fieldwork Data Form (FDF) for each facility where students are placed. It is preferred that the AOTA FDF is provided using Exxat, but an electronic or paper copy can also be provided which will be uploaded into the Exxat account for the site. The student is encouraged to assist in completing this form as requested by the site.

Duquesne University maintains all fieldwork data forms from providing facilities to ensure that they are accurate and up to date to the best of their ability. Fieldwork data forms are provided as informational tools for interested students and can be located in the fieldwork files in Rangos 234 and on Exxat. Updated fieldwork data forms are requested from all sites being used annually through Exxat. Site coordinators are encouraged to complete and return the form prior to the start of the fieldwork placement.

Exxat Student Profile

The Student Profile in Exxat serves as an introduction of the student to the Fieldwork Educator(s) who will be supervising the student. The Student Profile is completed and updated by the student approximately two months before each assigned fieldwork experience. It is emailed to the assigned Fieldwork Educator along with the fieldwork assignments (Level I only) and curriculum philosophy and objectives ([APPENDIX V](#).)

Resources for Fieldwork Students

In addition to what is posted on their course Canvas site, students can refer to [APPENDIX W](#) for a list of

other useful resources for fieldwork education. Students can also use the School Resource tab on their EXXAT dashboard to access resources related to fieldwork and use of the EXXAT system. Also, on the Duquesne University Department of Occupational Therapy website, there is a [fieldwork education menu tab](#). This site offers resources and tools available to all fieldwork students and educators. In addition, AOTA also offers information for fieldwork students through their website. Students are able to locate information regarding Certification Dates, Fieldwork Opportunities at AOTA's National Office, Frequently Asked Questions, Student Resources, and AOTA's Fieldwork Survival Guide. Students may access this through www.aota.org and then click on Education.

Resources for Fieldwork Educators

Fieldwork Educators can refer to the site resource page on Duquesne University's EXXAT public website [Fieldwork Educator Resources](#). The public page provides resources for enhancing supervision such as materials on supervisory skills, student well-being, cultural humility, theory, and practice. Continuing education opportunities are also posted on the EXXAT public page. The Duquesne University Department of Occupational Therapy website, also has a [fieldwork education menu tab](#). *This public website* offers resources and tools available to all fieldwork students and educators. Fieldwork Educators may also use the AOTA website to obtain information regarding students and fieldwork. FWEs are also able to access certain forms and download them onto your computer. All fieldwork educators attest to being qualified and prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator prior to the onset of the fieldwork experience, via an EXXAT sign-off.

Educators may access this through www.aota.org ^ Education ^ Fieldwork Management

Duquesne University Department of Occupational Therapy

OTD Student

DOCTORAL CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Policies & Procedures



OCCT-640, 642, 644: OTD DOCTORAL CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE (DCE)

Students pursuing a doctoral degree (OTD) are required to complete one fourteen-week Doctoral Capstone Experience (DCE) following successful completion of their Level II FW. The goal of this DCE is to develop occupational therapists with in-depth knowledge and skills in a focused area of study which is integral to acquiring deeper practice-scholar competencies as reflected in the program's curriculum design (D.1.0-[APPENDIX Y](#)). The DCE directly connects clinical practice with scholarship via the implementation of a doctoral capstone project during the DCE (D.1.0; D.1.6).

This course sequence totals 10 credits (Spring – 2 cr., Summer – 6 cr., Fall – 2 cr.) ([APPENDIX Y](#)) and provides an in-depth, customized experience specific to the doctoral pursuit of the occupational therapy student and the opportunity to extend and refine knowledge and skills acquired in the curriculum. Students may participate in learning experiences that include a focus on clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, or education.

In collaboration with the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (CC) and the student's Faculty Mentor (D.1.1) (See [APPENDIX Z](#)), OTD students will identify their desire to be located in the Greater Pittsburgh Area or outside of Pittsburgh for their DCE. All students will coordinate one-to-one meeting time with the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (CC) to complete an interview and survey of their preferences in site location, population of interest, and/or focused topic area for their DCE. Students will be encouraged to start this process in the Spring Semester of the year preceding entry into the OTD Program. Students will include their rationale for their interest in each of their preferences. In collaboration with the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator (CC) and confirmation of a community site interest, students will then be assigned a site and project based on interests and availability of the content expert who will provide supervision/mentorship for the student at that site. Assignment of all DCE sites is competitive and subject to availability and in many cases may require the student to commute a distance or relocate. Site and content expert selection completion is encouraged no later than the end of the Summer Semester prior to the start of the OTD Program (by the end of OCCT 602 Doctoral Capstone Seminar in the Summer Semester preceding to initiation of Level II FW).

For all didactic, clinical, and legal purposes, OTD DCE affiliation sites meet the same criteria and follow the same policies and procedures as fieldwork sites, except that in the selection both as capstone site for the database and the doctoral student, they need to offer in-depth experience in one or more of the focus areas listed above. Similar to fieldwork sites, DCE sites will receive the orientation to the curriculum, philosophical, mission and core beliefs of the DU OTD Program (D.1.3).

The DCE will support the development of in-depth knowledge and skill in collaboration with the sponsoring site for clinical, educational, and/or research-based projects. Examples of such projects are the development of resource materials, creation of quality assurance or outcome measurement programs, integration of evidence-based practice research activities, leadership or advocacy projects, and program development within community-engaged collaborative.

Prerequisites for OTD Doctoral Capstone Experience

As stated in ACOTE (2023) Standard, (D.1.3), the student must successfully complete all coursework

(including Level II FW and the practice scholar capstone project requirements listed in D.1.4) prior to the commencement of the DCE. Prior fieldwork or work experience may NOT be substituted for any part of the DCE (D.1.5). Exceptions must be formally requested by the student to the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator and/or Department Chair for approval. Students wishing to utilize their current work setting to satisfy the 14-week requirement must seek approval from the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator and/or Department Chair, and additional experiential activities and learning objectives must be established.

Timeline Requirements

The duration of the Doctoral Capstone Experience is a minimum of 14 weeks (560 hours). OTD students may complete this requirement on a part-time or full-time basis. Students will be offered the part-time option upon request, availability of the site to accommodate the request, and approval from the OTD Capstone Coordinator and/or Department Chair to ensure equivalency of time per D.1.5. Students must complete a minimum of 14 weeks full-time, and a minimum of 32 hours per week. All DCE students are required to maintain a timelog that is reviewed periodically by the capstone coordinator to ensure students meet the requirements of the capstone length; see [Appendix FF](#) (D.1.5) All students must successfully complete the doctoral capstone within 12 months of completion of didactic OTD coursework (A.3.3). Failure to successfully complete the DCE within the 12-month period may result in dismissal from the Program. Unforeseen circumstances may require a leave of absence or an extension to the Doctoral Capstone Experience that may allow the 12-month time frame to be extended. The OTD Capstone Coordinator, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and/or the Department Chair will determine the impact of a Leave of Absence or extension on the 12-month time frame for completion of the DCE experience. Any absence, illness, or departure from the doctoral experience expectations must be directly communicated to the Doctoral Capstone Coordinator at the time of the occurrence.

Supervision Requirements

As stated in the 2023 ACOTE Standards (D.1.2), the OTD student should be mentored by an individual with expertise consistent with the OTD student's area of focus. Mentoring is defined as a relationship between two people in which one person (the mentor) is dedicated to the personal and professional growth of the other (the mentee). While mentorship is multi-faceted, the mentor has more experience and knowledge than the mentee in the focus area and or population of interest. The advanced placement site will provide mentorship to OTD students on site by a qualified and competent (but not necessarily an occupational therapy practitioner) personnel. This individual assists the OTD student in applying knowledge to practical situations; developing problem solving skills and learning practical competencies. This individual will be called the **Content Expert**. The Content Expert will instruct and orient the OTD student as needed to perform specific negotiated learning activities consistent with the student's learning objectives. The Content Expert is to sign an Experiential Plan and Written Agreement (EP), which includes individualized specific objectives, behavioral expectations, a plan for mentoring and supervising, and responsibilities of all parties ([APPENDIX X](#)). The EP is a collaborative effort by the OTD Student, the Content Expert, Faculty Chair, and DCC. It is completed and signed via Exxat by both parties prior to the onset of the DCE (D.1.4).

Many professionals are qualified to supervise OTD students as they carry out advanced clinical skills,

research, program development, advocacy, teaching, or policy work specific to their doctoral pursuits. The individual, on behalf of the DCE site, is responsible for the direct instruction and supervision of the OTD student in the professional rotation setting. This individual supervises, directs, and facilitates the DCE. They may be the clinical supervisor, therapist, faculty member, or political or agency representative who acts on behalf of the site where the student is assigned for the rotation. The level and type of supervision will be customized to the type of setting, the student's learning objectives and focus of their doctoral capstone project and stipulated in the EP (D.1.4).

Direct clinical practice activities performed by the OTD student should be supervised by a professional who meets the state and national requirements to perform the area of practice. When the most appropriate professional to supervise students performing direct clinical practice activities is an occupational therapist, then the supervising occupational therapist must meet the state regulations and have a minimum of one-year practice experience post initial NBCOT certification.

The student must be mentored by an individual with expertise consistent with the student's area of focus (e.g., if the student's focus is occupational therapy treatment for neonates – they must be mentored by a professional in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). The Content Expert does not have to be an occupational therapist, thereby allowing for an inter-professional mentorship model. Depending on the DCE focus and/or setting, OTD students may have more than one Content Expert.

During the DCE placement process, the DU OT Faculty Chair, along with the OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator, will advise the OTD student as they seek out potential Content Expert(s) among their educational, professional, or community networks. Formal approval of the Content Expert will be provided by the OTD Capstone Coordinator using the EP. *OTD Student and Faculty Capstone Mentor Compact* and the *Experiential Plan and Written Agreement For the OTD Capstone* will also be completed (See [APPENDIX Z](#) & [APPENDIX X](#)).

OTD students are expected to achieve specific goals established by these parties. Duquesne University has established behavioral objectives for the OTD DCE, in agreement with the curriculum philosophy and program outcomes contained within the Experiential Agreement and Written Plan (D.1.2; D.1.4) (refer to [APPENDIX X](#)). DCE Content Expert Attestation ([refer Appendix AA](#)) and Site Data Form (See [APPENDIX BB](#)), credentials and professional resume/CV will be obtained to verify and document the expertise and experience of the mentor (D.1.6). In addition, in collaboration with their faculty and Content Expert, OTD students will set at least three individualized learning objectives to customize the concentration of the experience to the learning needs of the OTD student. The student-specific objectives should be agreed upon by the OTD student and DU Faculty Chair. Objectives will be reviewed and finalized with the Content Expert within the first week of the experience. A DCE Action Plan will be created by the OTD student in collaboration with the Content Expert, DU Faculty Chair, and OTD Capstone Coordinator and will be utilized to meet the individualized learning objectives (see [APPENDIX BB](#)). All DCE program goals, objectives, and outcome measures, during and at the end of the DCE, using DU OTD DCE forms, are collaborative between the OTD Capstone Coordinator, the OTD student, the Faculty Capstone Chair, and the Content Expert.

Capstone Project

Doctoral students are required to complete a culminating capstone project to demonstrate synthesis and application of knowledge gained (D.1.6). The capstone project course sequence (OCCT 635, 645 and 655) is intended to facilitate the process of completion of the capstone as well as dissemination of the outcomes of the project. Students are required to collaborate with their Faculty Capstone Chair regarding the most appropriate method of dissemination based on their focus area, project, and outcomes. Dissemination methods could include best practice guidelines, a webinar, a professional poster presentation or session, a popular press article, a manuscript, or other form of dissemination. This is further described in the Practice Scholar Capstone Course Sequence syllabi and related assignments.

Evaluation Methods & Grading of the DCE

Students are expected to achieve specific goals established by the OTD student, the Content Expert, and potentially the Faculty Chair. Duquesne University has established behavioral objectives for the DCE, in agreement with the curriculum philosophy and program outcomes which are contained in the EP ([APPENDIX Y](#)). In addition, in collaboration with their Content Expert and in agreement with their Faculty Chair, OTD students will set at least three individualized learning objectives to customize the concentration of the experience to the learning needs of the OTD student ([APPENDIX Y](#)). The student-specific objectives should be agreed upon by the OTD student, Content Expert, and Faculty Chair. Objectives will be reviewed and finalized with the Content Expert within the first week of the experience. Exactly how those objectives are met has been left to the site and Content Expert with input with guidance from the Department of Occupational Therapy at Duquesne University as needed.

Evaluation of the individualized objectives occurs under the supervision of a Content Expert with expertise in the student's chosen area of focus. Evaluation of performance is completed via the Doctoral Capstone Experience Evaluation of the OTD Student Form ([APPENDIX CC](#)), which is sent to the Content Expert via Exxat at midterm (~7 weeks) and at completion of the 14 weeks (D.1.7). Note that there is space provided for both the OTD student and the Content Expert to add their own objectives. All objectives must be:

1. Relevant to the field experience setting and experience
2. Understandable to the student, site contact/preceptor, and faculty advisor
3. Measurable and objective (i.e. SMART goals or other applicable format)
4. Behavioral/observable
5. Achievable within the specified time frame

The OTD student and Content Expert will revisit the established learning goals at midterm and at

final, and re-sign as evidence of accomplishment. The student must successfully meet or exceed these objectives and assessment criteria.

The OTD student is required to complete the Student Evaluation of Doctoral Capstone Experience ([APPENDIX DD](#)) on Exxat at completion of the 14-week experience. At the end of the DCE, the OTD student and the Content Expert should then meet to discuss both evaluations. Signature of both the Content Expert and OTD student is required on both evaluation forms. Evaluations without signatures of both parties will not be accepted.

Requirements for successful completion of the DCE include the following:

1. Satisfactory completion of the 14 week (560 hours) full-time experience (See [APPENDIX EE](#))
2. Satisfactory completion and submission of all learning objectives, learning activities, and evidence via completion of the DCE Evaluation of the OTD Student Form
3. Satisfactory completion of all required assignments throughout the curriculum
4. Completion of the Student Evaluation of DCE Form ([APPENDIX EE](#))

The OTD Capstone Coordinator will be responsible for assigning the final grade for the DCE courses. This course will be graded by the following distinctions: **Pass or Fail.**

Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond Exceeded and met for 70% of DCE Evaluation of the OTD Student • Above average comments on DCE Evaluation of the OTD Student 	83- 94% on Assignments
Fail / Not Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not receive a passing score on DCE Evaluation of the OTD Student 	Did not turn in <u>all</u> assignments, or missed the assignment deadlines

Withdrawal from the Doctoral Capstone Experience

Withdrawals (either by the OTD student or by the OTD Capstone Coordinator) from the DCE will result in the OTD student and the OTD Capstone Coordinator and/or Department Chair developing an individualized plan to complete the doctoral capstone component. This plan, and all steps of the plan, must be completed prior to completion of the program. Withdrawals from an OTD DCE will be considered a “Fail” or “Not Pass”, except by decision of the OTD Capstone Coordinator/Department Chair. The OTD Capstone Coordinator/Department Chair will consider the circumstances for withdrawal prior to deciding on the grade or plan to complete the 14-week requirement.

Failure of the Doctoral Capstone Experience

Students who fail a DCE requirement (a failing/not passing grade at the final or termination by the site due to failing performance) may be offered a second opportunity after a plan of remediation has been successfully completed and/or at the discretion of the OTD Capstone Coordinator and Department Chair. If deemed eligible to continue, the OTD student must repeat the failed Doctoral Capstone Experience before continuation in the OTD program. In order to repeat the DCE, the OTD Student must re-register for the same course. The dates and location of the new DCE Placement are dependent on the availability of placement sites, potential Content Expert, and match of student's needs.

Students are allowed to repeat only one failed DCE Placement. A "Fail" or "Not Pass" will be entered in the student's transcript, except by decision of the OTD Capstone Coordinator/Department Chair. Refer to the RSHS student handbook for specifics about grading policies. After the course has been retaken & passed, a passing grade will be assigned and will be reflected on the final transcript. Students who fail two DCE experiences will face dismissal from the program.