

Belmont University

School of Occupational Therapy

MSOT Fieldwork Manual

Overview

Fieldwork education is designed to provide occupational therapy students with opportunities to integrate academically acquired education with practice. It is during the fieldwork experience that the student can learn, practice and refine skills of observation, evaluation, treatment planning, implementation and communication. In the fieldwork setting the student begins to define his or her future roles as a practicing occupational therapist and can develop the necessary self-confidence and affective characteristics essential to meeting the demands for this challenging field. Fieldwork provides many opportunities for feedback which promotes professional behaviors and attitudes and clinical expertise.

Fieldwork is an integral part of the education of an occupational therapist and must occur in an environment that provides those experiences which reinforce previous learning and which challenge and motivate the student to develop professionally and adapt to clinic situations. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator is responsible for the planning and implementation of integrated and sustained fieldwork experiences. The experiences occur under the supervision of and with the support of occupational therapist or other professionals. To ensure that the fieldwork activities support and enhance the goals of the program there is continual collaboration by clinical educators, academic faculty, and the Fieldwork Coordinator. In keeping with Belmont University's occupational therapy program's mission and curriculum design, fieldwork experiences are designed to encourage values and behaviors that exemplify professional leadership, integrity and social consciousness to support the program's goals to develop ethical practitioners to meet the immediate and future needs of the community.

The occupational therapy program requires both Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

Level I fieldwork is an integral part of the didactic portion of the educational program. Students are exposed to diverse settings to increase their understanding of occupational therapy and/or the health care arena. Level II fieldwork is the culminating educational experience for the Belmont University occupational therapy student.

Level I Fieldwork

Level I fieldwork has been designed to integrate with the intervention courses and assist the student in transitioning to their role as an occupational therapist. Students are exposed to a variety of cultures and service delivery systems in three broad areas of practice: , pediatrics, adult, and older adult. The integration of the fieldwork and the academic intervention courses is accomplished by utilizing focus groups or written, electronic or telephone communication. Input and feedback from the intervention course faculty, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and representatives from the clinical educators for each of the practice areas is used to develop objectives, clinical experiences and assignments. The experiences include an opportunity to observe and assist in practice with occupational therapists and other health care professionals. The sites include non-traditional settings, contemporary practice areas as well as traditional medical model environments to expose the student to existing and developing opportunities for occupational therapy. The faculty, fieldwork coordinator, fieldwork supervisors and students continually evaluate the experiences to ensure their effectiveness. Preparation of the student prior to each Level I clinical experience includes review of objectives and assignments for the individual fieldwork experiences.

Level I fieldwork is offered during three of your four academic semesters and corresponds to the related intervention course (peds, adult, and older adult). Students are permitted to use their place of employment to substitute for one of the Level I experiences if they so choose. Substituting their place of employment for one

of the Level I experiences is referred to as “substituting” a Level I. In order to use their place of employment, they must have the permission of their employer to devote 20 hours of their time (either during normal work hours, or after hours) to practicing the skills and professional behaviors identified for Level I fieldwork under the direct supervision of an occupational therapist at your facility. Your OTR supervisor at your job will then complete and submit a “Substitution” form to verify that you have successfully met the objectives for the experience. Belmont does not establish a fieldwork contract with the employer because the student is not technically doing fieldwork and therefore it is the student’s responsibility to make sure that their employer is willing to assume liability for them while they complete these requirements. If a student chooses to “Substitute” a Level I fieldwork they must complete the request form prior to the scheduled semester/term. The requirements must be completed during the semester when the corresponding intervention course work is being taught. Students who substitute a fieldwork site with their place of employment are expected to participate in on-line discussion postings, and have Fieldwork Evaluation form completed by the OTR before the end of the semester/term.

Level I Fieldwork Objectives

Level I fieldwork experiences are integrated so as to provide exposure to professional practice and/or professional growth experiences concurrently with didactic and laboratory material presented in the intervention courses. The following general Level I objectives coordinate with the co-requisite intervention course and laboratory objectives and serves as a guide for developing the specific objectives and learning experiences for each of the Level I fieldwork practicums. The emphasis is not on independent performance at this level, but rather on the incorporation of professional modes of behaving, communicating, thinking and problem solving through directed observation and participation.

Level I Fieldwork Objectives for Traditional Settings

Upon successful completion of the Level I experience the student will:

1. Conduct self in a professional manner as demonstrated by:
 - a. Being dependable
 - b. Showing respect for patient/client confidentiality
 - c. Making appropriate use of time management skills
 - d. Taking appropriate initiative and responsibility for own learning
 - e. Accurately assessing own strengths and limitations
 - f. Exhibiting an enthusiasm for inquiry and discovery
 - g. Being content prepared
2. Exhibit good interpersonal skills as demonstrated by:
 - a. Demonstrating professional verbal and non-verbal communication skills
 - b. Interacting with persons of varying age, race, social-economic and cultural backgrounds in a therapeutic manner
 - c. Accurately recognizing and discussing his/her own feelings and attitudes
 - d. Seeking and obtaining feedback
 - e. Modifying own behavior in response to feedback
3. *With supervision, demonstrate ability to begin transition to role of occupational therapist by:
 - a. Being able to obtain pertinent client information from a variety of sources (client record/chart, interview, formal assessment, etc)
 - b. Providing a rationale for selection of assessment tool(s) for specific clients and if possible, assist in administration and interpretation of same
 - c. Identifying and discussing appropriate goals and treatment activities for clients based on results of evaluation process
 - d. Selecting and implementing a variety of treatment activities based on the client’s goals
 - e. Documenting and/or reporting client performance accurately, concisely, objectively and in appropriate detail

- f. Suggesting appropriate adaptations in environment and activities to accommodate to client's functional level
- g. Identifying and reporting the need for program modifications in response to client functional performance

*Note: This objective pertains to Level 1 fieldwork completed under the supervision of an occupational therapy supervisor. However, due to the limited number of hours associated with the Level I experience, we recognize that not all students may have the opportunity to actively participate in all of these objectives with actual patients/clients. If client contact is not feasible for all of these objectives, it is expected that the student will meet the objectives through discussions with the fieldwork clinical supervisor.

Level I Fieldwork Objectives for Non-Traditional Settings

Upon successful completion of the Non-traditional Level I experience the student will:

1. Conduct self in a professional manner as demonstrated by:
 - a. Being dependable
 - b. Showing respect for patient/client confidentiality
 - c. Making appropriate use of time management skills
 - d. Taking appropriate initiative and responsibility for own learning
 - e. Accurately assessing own strengths and limitations
 - f. Exhibiting an enthusiasm for inquiry and discovery
 - g. Being content prepared
2. Exhibit good interpersonal skills as demonstrated by:
 - a. Demonstrating professional verbal and non-verbal communication skills
 - b. Interacting with persons of varying age, race, social-economic and cultural backgrounds in a therapeutic manner
 - c. Accurately recognizing and discussing his/her own feelings and attitudes
 - d. Seeking and obtaining feedback
 - e. Modifying own behavior in response to feedback
3. *Identify the potential occupational therapy role within the agency/program:
 - a. Identify the sociocultural environment of the clients, population, and/or agency
 - b. Describe the mission, vision, or goals of the agency
 - c. Describe how the goals of the agency are consistent with the occupational therapy scope of practice.
 - d. Identify client, population, and/or agency concerns or needs, as they relate to occupational therapy
 - e. Propose how the client, population, and/or agency needs could be met through occupational therapy service provision or the contribution of an occupational therapist.

*These are recommended objectives for the Non-traditional Fieldwork Experience. In certain circumstances, these objectives can be modified if agreed upon by the student, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and Fieldwork Supervisor.

Level II Fieldwork

The goal of Level II fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapists. Level II fieldwork serves to promote clinical reasoning and reflective practice; to incorporate and demonstrate the values, beliefs, and ethical commitments of the field of occupational therapy; to communicate and model professional behaviors attending to the developmental nature of career growth and responsibility; and to develop and expand a repertoire of occupational therapy assessments and treatment interventions related to human performance. Level II fieldwork includes an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy

services to clients, focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupation and/or research, administration and management of occupational therapy services.

Level II fieldwork is designed to provide students with extended practical opportunities for skill development and technique refinement pertinent to direct patient/client care. During this experience each student has the opportunity of learning to apply academically acquired knowledge to evaluating, planning, implementing and terminating occupational therapy intervention programs for clients in a wide variety of traditional and emerging service settings.

Students are required to complete a minimum of the equivalent of 24 weeks of full-time Level II fieldwork. This may be completed on a full-time or part-time basis, but may not be less than half-time as defined by the specific fieldwork site. Belmont University's ability to establish fieldwork placements is dependent on our ability to negotiate schedules that meet the needs of the MSOT Program, the student, and the specific fieldwork site. As stated in the ACOTE Standards, students can "complete Level II fieldwork in a minimum of one setting and maximum of four different settings." Students need to be aware, however, that it is the individual sites that determine the length of the rotation and students who choose to accept placements of less than 12 weeks are held to the same criteria as students who have the full 12 weeks to meet all of the expectations scored on the FWPE.

Students are not permitted to complete Level II fieldwork where they are employed. To identify whether or not a student is considered an employee at the site they are considering, the student should determine whether as an employee in their current position, would it be possible for them to rotate/transfer to that site/setting/department without having to quit their current position. If the student could do so without having to quit one job and be rehired in the other area, then for purposes of Fieldwork the site would be considered the student's "employer". If however, if the other site functions autonomously from their current place of employment, the student may be eligible to complete their fieldwork at the other site. Determination will be made on a case-by-case analysis. The rationale for not permitting students to complete their Level II fieldwork where they are employed is based, in part, on:

- A desire to avoid the appearance of a "conflict of interest"
- To assure that the student is utilized as a student during their fieldwork, and not as an employee
- To assure that the student is able to practice their "professional level" skills
- To assure that the student is held to the same "entry-level" expectations as any other Level II student

Students are eligible to begin their Level II fieldwork placements upon successful completion of all their Academic and Level I fieldwork requirements (generally starting in the spring semester of their second academic year). Students must complete all fieldwork requirements within 24 months following completion of the academic work.

Level II Fieldwork Objectives

Introduction

Level II fieldwork as established at Belmont University consists of a minimum of the equivalent of 24 weeks of full-time Level II training under the supervision of a qualified, registered occupational therapist. The purpose is to provide in-depth experience and gradual assumption of entry-level responsibility for the delivery of occupational therapy services to clients, whether they be individuals, groups, programs, or organizations.

Upon completion of the Level II fieldwork experience(s) the student will be able to integrate and apply theoretical concepts and didactic learning to the practice of occupational therapy. The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student (FWPE) is used to assess the student's performance on each Level II fieldwork experience.

Learning objectives and experiences are developed in collaboration with the student, individual sites and the academic Fieldwork Coordinator. As indicated on the FWPE the 3 items under “Fundamentals of Practice” must all be scored at a “3” (Meets Standards) or above on the final evaluation in order for the student to pass the fieldwork experience.

Upon completion of the Level II fieldwork, students are required to complete the Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience and review this with the fieldwork supervisor. The SEFWE form is found on-line in the corresponding web ct course for fieldwork and should be downloaded and given to the fieldwork supervisor. The SEFWE must be signed by the fieldwork supervisor and submitted with the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student.

Fieldwork Sites and Supervisors

Fieldwork at Belmont University is an integral part of the occupational therapy curriculum. The faculty, clinicians, and students are mutually involved in the process.

The School of Occupational Therapy evaluates and selects fieldwork sites according to specific criteria that meet the needs of the curriculum and to assure that the facility is able to provide adequate supervision and experiences to enable the student to successfully meet the requirements of the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student. All sites utilized for student fieldwork placement meet the requirements and learning objectives of the curriculum. A contractual agreement is completed with all facilities. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and fieldwork supervisors collaborate on objectives, practice activities and the advising of students. In order for a fieldwork site to be established and retained, it must provide a quality educational experience for the students. In addition, the School of Occupational Therapy and students must conscientiously cooperate and fulfill the duties/requirements of the contract.

Fieldwork Education Information

General fieldwork information will be updated periodically. All changes will be distributed to students as they are made. Students are responsible for reading, understanding and following all current fieldwork policies. Level I fieldwork information will be posted each semester on the fieldwork web ct course. Students are expected to download any relevant document and complete as outlined in the web ct instructions. Students are required to provide the fieldwork supervisor with the corresponding syllabus, the evaluation form and the fieldwork objectives during the orientation to the fieldwork experience. A Level II fieldwork packet with appropriate information will be sent to the fieldwork site by the Fieldwork Coordinator. Information regarding specific Level II fieldwork sites is in the files, which can be accessed through the School Secretary and/or the Fieldwork Coordinator. These files provide a description of the facility, specific requirements of the placement, a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding for that institution, and any specific learning objectives set by the Level II fieldwork site. Questions concerning Level II fieldwork should be directed to Belmont University’s Academic Coordinator of Fieldwork Education.

Advising

Level I fieldwork advising is done throughout clinical assignments by the clinical fieldwork supervisor, Belmont University occupational therapy faculty, and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. The academic fieldwork coordinator and/or faculty may visit Level II sites when necessary and are available for student advising or fieldwork concerns by phone and email.

Advising on Level II fieldwork is done collaboratively by the fieldwork supervisor and the Belmont University Fieldwork Coordinator. Students should send a personal data sheet and letter of introduction to

both Level I and Level II fieldwork sites. Instructions and forms for each level of fieldwork are included in the corresponding web ct course and should be downloaded as needed. Review of the forms and discussion of experiences will be covered in the orientation session. It is important for students to be forthright about health problems or special needs learning styles so that necessary accommodations may be made.

An orientation session will be provided for students before Level II fieldwork experiences. The Fieldwork Coordinator will be available to the students for advising on Level II assignments. Site visits will be made upon request of the facility or student.

Attendance

Attendance on all clinical days is required unless the student is ill or excused by the Fieldwork Coordinator. Telephone numbers will be provided for the Level I and Level II fieldwork sites. The student must follow the procedures of the facility and notify the facility immediately. If more than 2 consecutive days are missed, or if the student misses more than 4 days of the level II fieldwork, the student must notify the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. A schedule for making up the time missed due to absence must be acceptable to the facility and approved by the academic coordinator and/or assigned faculty.

Tardiness is not acceptable. If there is an emergency a call must be made to the facility. Absenteeism and tardiness may affect the grade.

Background Checks

Depending on where a student is placed for fieldwork, federal and state laws may require that the student submit to the following, prior to being accepted for fieldwork.

The federal legislation that made national criminal history background checks on employees and/or volunteers available to public schools was the National Child Protection Act of 1993, and the most relevant section is codified as 42 U.S.C. 5119a. By the definition in 42 U.S.C. 5119c (9)(A)(I), a child care provider means “a person who is employed or volunteers with a qualified entity.”

Section 5119a (a)(1) of the above Act specifies that: “A state may have in effect procedures (established by state statute or regulation) that require qualified entities designated by the state to contact an authorized agency of the state to request a nationwide background check for the purpose of determining whether a provider has been convicted of a crime that bears upon the provider’s fitness to have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities.” Thus, the federal law alone does not require fingerprinting; the significant authority rests with each state. The unique state legislation will specify whether state and/or national criminal history background checks on employees and/or volunteers are required or not required. Many public school districts started performing both state and national criminal background checks based on fingerprinting of employees and/or volunteers as a result of new state legislation in response to this Act.

Clinical Performance Intervention Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline a sequential procedure for instructional and/or disciplinary interventions in the event of unsatisfactory student performance during fieldwork placements. The intent is to encourage early intervention with an emphasis on collaborative problem solving in order to assure successful student clinical performance. This procedure outlines the instructional or disciplinary intervention. The procedure usually begins in sequence, but may vary depending upon the nature of the unsatisfactory performance. This sequence may be ended at any time by the student’s successful completion of a remedial action plan. Certain behaviors (e.g., illegal or unethical activities) may be cause for immediate withdrawal from the placement and from the program.

1. The fieldwork supervisor reports unsatisfactory performance to the student upon identification. The fieldwork supervisor counsels the student on corrective actions. The fieldwork supervisor and the student may consult with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for guidance if necessary.
2. The fieldwork supervisor notifies the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator of a non-resolving problem. The fieldwork supervisor and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will work with the student on corrective actions. At this time, a supervisory site visit (or telephone visit) may be made by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. On the visit, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will gather information from all parties involved. If the student performance appears satisfactory the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will suggest strategies for resolution of the conflict. This may include, but is not limited to, possible removal of the student from the site and reassignment to another site. If the student's performance is found to be unsatisfactory step 3 will be followed.
3. A written development plan will be developed jointly by the student, the fieldwork supervisor and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. The development plan will include, but is not limited to: a description of the problem; suggested learning strategies; outcome measures; time lines; and consequences of success or failure to meet requirements set forth in the plan. The fieldwork supervisor monitors student progress and provides formal (written) and informal feedback to the student and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for the duration of the placement.
4. Continued unsatisfactory performance will result in assignment of a grade of either "incomplete" or "failure" for that specific clinical placement. If the student is assigned a failing grade, the student must meet with faculty committee to determine further course of action. Immediate removal (prior to the scheduled ending date) from the site and/or a failing grade may be given for any fieldwork placement for the following:
 - a. Violation of patients' rights
 - b. Violation of the rights of others
 - c. Violation of the AOTA Code of Ethics
 - d. Unprofessional behavior
 - e. Unsafe practice
 - f. Substance abuse
 - g. Failure to complete any of the specified requirements
 - h. Continued unsatisfactory performance
 - i. A score below a "3" on items 1 – 3 of Section 1 of the FWPE (Fundamentals of Practice)

As described in the online Graduate Catalog under Progression Towards Graduation (a grade of WF (withdrawal failing) or F (failure) will result in immediate dismissal from the Weekend MSOT Program.

Conduct

The AOTA Code of Ethics applies to all Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences in addition to any specific behaviors required by the specific clinical sites.

Confidentiality - HIPAA

Students are responsible for complying with all relevant state and federal confidentiality laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), to the extent applicable. Students are provided with training in the requirements of the privacy and security provisions of HIPAA. This information will be disseminated prior to the students beginning any of their required fieldwork (Level I and Level II). Students will be required to document in writing that they have received training in and have understood the significance and meaning of Protected Health Information (PHI), the appropriate use of PHI for educational needs, the significance and need for confidentiality of PHI, and the consequences of inappropriate use of PHI.

Financial Responsibilities

The student will be responsible for all expenses associated with the fieldwork experience except for the liability insurance. Each student should anticipate additional cost for housing, meals and transportation if relocation for Level II fieldwork is necessary.

Grading and Evaluation of Student Performance

Evaluation of student performance during the Level I and Level II fieldwork experience is an ongoing process which occurs during the formal and informal supervisory sessions by the fieldwork supervisor, fieldwork coordinator and/or faculty. The specific grading system will be contained in the relevant course syllabi. The FWPE form will be included in the assignment packet. It is the student's responsibility to review these evaluation forms and raise any questions regarding the expectations with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator prior to beginning the fieldwork placement.

Health Issues

In addition to the Belmont University health form, the fieldwork student may need to comply with specific health requirements for individual fieldwork sites, such as specific immunizations or physical exams. These will usually be at the student's expense. It is the student's responsibility to read the contract, the fieldwork data form and other information in the file of the facilities to which they are assigned for Level I and Level II placements. The student must communicate with the fieldwork clinical coordinator prior to the starting date of the affiliation. This is to insure that students know when and where to meet the fieldwork supervisor, appropriate dress, and health requirements.

During Level I and Level II fieldwork the occupational therapy student will continue to have access to Belmont University's Health Services clinic. The student will be expected to show proof of personal health insurance coverage before being accepted for Level I and Level II fieldwork placement. Students may contact Belmont Central for information on low cost student health insurance if they have no other health insurance coverage.

Each student is required to have a physical examination and specified immunizations at the student's own expense each year. The necessary forms are provided to the students the summer prior to initial enrollment. These forms need to be signed by the examining physician prior to matriculation in the program, and need to be updated yearly. If the student fails to provide the necessary information by their yearly deadline, they will be suspended from all classes until the necessary information is provided.

Students are required to send proof that health requirements are met to the fieldwork sites along with the Personal Data Form.

Liability Insurance

The occupational therapy students are covered for professional liability insurance with a single limit of not less than \$2 million per occurrence and \$5 million in the aggregate.

Monitoring and Site Visits

Site visits and telephone monitoring are primarily made by the Fieldwork Coordinator, but may be made by any member of the School of Occupational Therapy. The purpose of the monitoring is multidimensional and may include, but is not limited to:

- Student performance evaluation
- Clinical site evaluation

- Clinical instructor evaluation
- Assistance with implementation of clinical education program
- Assistance with managing student performance problems
- Clinical staff education and development

If a site visit is needed, the visit will entail meeting with the student and the fieldwork supervisor both individually and together to discuss the types of learning experiences, strengths and weaknesses of the student 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.

Placements

Assignments for Level I and Level II fieldwork are made by the faculty and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator based upon availability of sites, course requirements and student needs. Students provide the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator with a list of their top three choices for placements for each of the required fieldwork experiences. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will attempt to place students at one of the three facilities. If Belmont University has current and active fieldwork sites within a 60 mile radius of the students address, it is strongly advised that the student complete their Level I fieldwork at one of these sites. If none of the originally requested placements are available, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will provide the student with a list of available sites from which to choose. Students are not to request placement with any facilities but are expected to provide accurate contact information including the name of the fieldwork supervisor. Only the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator is to have discussions with the site regarding establishment of a fieldwork contract and potential placement of a student. If a placement is canceled the Fieldwork Coordinator will discuss with the student to determine an alternate plan. If this occurs, the placement may be delayed which may result in postponement of graduation. The University does not make housing arrangements for students. The site supervisor determines the training schedule and this may involve evenings and weekends. The School of Occupational Therapy suggests that the student not work while completing Level II fieldwork placements because there are usually assignments that need to be completed in the evening and on weekends. Should students find it absolutely necessary to maintain employment during the Level II placement, the student must advise the fieldwork supervisor in writing prior to scheduling the fieldwork placement.