

2026-2027

Fieldwork Manual

Colorado Mesa University
Occupational Therapy Program



Purpose of the Fieldwork Manual

This fieldwork manual was developed for students enrolled in the Occupational Therapy Program at Colorado Mesa University. This manual serves as a comprehensive, structured guide that bridges academic knowledge with clinical practice by outlining the requirements, learning objectives, and policies required for Level I and II fieldwork. It is designed to ensure students develop the competencies necessary to become occupational therapy practitioners while also providing clear guidelines for educators. The policies and procedures established within this manual are intended to guide each student in attaining entry-level competence. All students in the program are required to adhere to them.

Colorado Mesa University

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A copy of this manual is available on the Occupational Therapy Program website:

<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/occupational-therapy/index.html>
<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/occupational-therapy/cmu-ot-program-fw-manual.pdf>

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Accreditation

In August of 2023, Colorado Mesa University's Occupational Therapy program was granted a seven-year accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Their offices are located at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is: (301) 652-AOTA, and its web address is: www.acoteonline.org.

The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) is the credentialing agency responsible for certifying occupational therapy practitioners in the United States. The NBCOT's certification process ensures that occupational therapists have the knowledge and skills necessary to practice safely and effectively. Graduates of the MSOT program will be eligible to take the NBCOT exam. Successful completion of the NBCOT exam and obtaining state licensure are required to become an occupational therapist. The OTR/L credential indicates that an occupational therapist is registered with NBCOT and licensed to practice in their state.

ACOTE standards can be found at the following link:

<https://acoteonline.org/accreditation-explained/standards/>

CMU Occupational Therapy Program

Mission

The mission of the Colorado Mesa University's Occupational Therapy Program is to prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors necessary to become competent and ethical occupational therapy practitioners who are equipped to meet the needs of diverse populations (e.g., individuals, groups, and communities) in a variety of practice settings.

Vision

Colorado Mesa University's Occupational Therapy program strives to help students learn how to think (not what to think) by building skills in critical thinking, professional reasoning, and evidence-based practice; develop professional identities through participation in leadership, advocacy, and research; solve big problems through collaboration, innovation, and mutually enriching community partnerships; and foster a sense of belonging in a supportive classroom environment that emphasizes student-centered learning.

Philosophy

In alignment with the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA) Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy (2017), Colorado Mesa University's Occupational Therapy Program believes engagement in occupations is fundamental to health. All persons, groups, and populations (i.e., clients) have an innate need to engage in meaningful occupations across the lifespan (AOTA, 2020). A core philosophical assumption of the profession is that people of all ages and abilities require occupation to grow and thrive; in pursuing occupation, humans express a mind-body-spirit union (Hooper & Wood, 2019). Occupational therapy practitioners view this transactional relationship as the foundation for using occupation as therapy. This knowledge sets occupational therapy apart as a distinct and valuable service for which a focus on the whole person is considered stronger than isolated aspects of human functioning (Hildenbrand & Lamb, 2013).

In agreement with the AOTA's Philosophy on Occupational Therapy Education (AOTA, 2018), Colorado Mesa University's Occupational Therapy Program views humans as occupational beings, occupation as a health determinant, and participation in occupations as a fundamental human right. Students develop skills in critical thinking, professional reasoning, evidence-based practice, and professionalism. Through this process, students build the foundation of their professional identity.

To fulfill the mission and vision of Colorado Mesa University, the Occupational Therapy Program's philosophy reflects seven values: Love, Dignity, Courage, Humility, Resiliency, Curiosity, and Power.

References

- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (4 ed.). *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(Supplement_2), 1-87. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>
- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2017). Philosophical base of occupational therapy. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 71(Supplement_2), <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2017.716S06>
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- Hildenbrand, W. C., & Lamb, A. J. (2013). Occupational therapy in prevention and wellness: Retaining relevance in a new health care world. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 67(3), 266–271. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2013.673001>
- Hooper, B., & Wood, W. (2019). *The philosophy of occupational therapy: A framework for practice*. In B. A. B. Schell & G. Gillen (Eds.), *Willard and Spackman's occupational therapy* (13th ed., pp. 43–55). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Curricular Threads

Curricular threads represent thematic strands woven throughout a curriculum. These threads provide a framework for integrating knowledge and skills to foster deeper understanding over time. The following themes have been threaded into the MSOT program: occupation and the occupational therapy process; critical thinking and professional reasoning; scholarship and evidence-based practice; and professionalism.

1. Occupation

Content related to occupation addresses client-centered practice; therapeutic use of occupation; occupation as end and means; influence of context; performance patterns, performance skills; and client factors on occupational performance.

2. Critical Thinking

Content related to critical thinking and professional reasoning addresses the interaction between client, context, and meaningful occupations; and the impact of mind-body-spirit connection on engagement in occupations.

3. Scholarship and Evidence-Based Practice

Boyer's Model of Scholarship (1990) outlines four interrelated types of scholarship that can be applied across disciplines. Applying Boyer's Model to the MSOT program demonstrates the broad contributions faculty and students can make to the profession and society. Content related to scholarship and evidence-based practice addresses:

- **Scholarship of Discovery:** Involves generating new research and the dissemination of findings through presentation and publication. Faculty and students conduct original research that advances understanding of occupational performance, disability, and health.
- **Scholarship of Integration:** Involves interpreting, synthesizing, and applying knowledge to create a more comprehensive understanding. Students and faculty integrate knowledge and ideas from multiple disciplines to make connections and draw conclusions that add new meaning.
- **Scholarship of Application:** Involves application of knowledge to address real-world problems. Students apply knowledge and research evidence during fieldwork experiences, service-learning projects, and partnerships with local organizations to benefit individuals, groups, and the community.
- **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning:** Involves systematic study of teaching practices and learning outcomes. Faculty assesses the effectiveness of instruction and teaching methods. Students participate in peer-teaching projects and reflect on their development of critical thinking and professional reasoning skills, advance learning and skill mastery with students, clients, and colleagues.

4. Professionalism

Content related to professionalism and ethics addresses professional identity and leadership; ethical reasoning and integrity; cultural humility and diversity; professional communication and

collaboration; advocacy for client, self and profession; and professional development and lifelong learning.

Please click the links below for MSOT Curriculum/Course Sequencing and Program Course Descriptions, Pre/Co-Requisites.

<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/occupational-therapy/overview.html>

<https://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/course-descriptions/occu/>

The Fieldwork Experience

Overview

In occupational therapy educational programs, fieldwork is the bridge between academic learning and real-world practice. Fieldwork experiences allow students to apply theoretical knowledge, develop clinical reasoning, and gain hands-on experience in diverse settings (i.e.: hospitals, schools, community, etc.) under direct supervision. The goal of fieldwork is to prepare students to become competent, entry-level occupational therapists through hands-on experience and application of clinical skills.

Fieldwork education is an integral component of the CMU MSOT curriculum design. The purpose of fieldwork education is to aid students in gaining knowledge surrounding the facets of health care and the health care system. These experiences should be educational in nature and allow students to work with licensed occupational therapy practitioners or other professionals. Intra- and interprofessional experiences provide students with opportunities to understand the needs of diverse populations in both traditional and non-traditional settings.

There are two types of fieldwork experiences students participate in during the MSOT program. Level I fieldwork aims to “introduce students to fieldwork, apply knowledge to practice, and develop understanding of the needs of clients” (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education [ACOTE], 2023). Level I fieldwork experiences are completed concurrently with didactic instruction. No portion of the Level I Fieldwork placement may be substituted for any part of a Level II Fieldwork placement.

The purpose of Level II fieldwork is to “develop competent, entry-level generalist occupational therapists” (ACOTE, 2023). Two Level II fieldwork experiences take place during the last two semesters of the program, after all didactic coursework is completed. Each rotation is twelve weeks long, full-time, in two different settings, with a fieldwork educator (FWE).

All current fieldwork sites are available for students to view on Exxat. Some sites have additional information and requirements listed in their Exxat profile, while most provide these details to the designated students prior to the start of the fieldwork experience.

Fieldwork Experiences in Relation to the Curricular Design

The didactic, experiential, and assessment components of fieldwork experiences ensure students demonstrate in-depth knowledge and scholarly application as evidenced by the following educational outcomes:

1. Critically apply the latest research and knowledge bases that support occupational therapy practice and contribute to the growth and dissemination of research and knowledge.

2. Articulate and apply therapeutic use of occupations with individuals or groups for the purpose of participation in roles and situations in home, school, workplace, community, and other settings.
3. Develop and implement client-centered care that is inclusive of cultural values, beliefs and needs.
4. Articulate and apply occupational therapy theory and evidence-based evaluations and interventions to achieve expected outcomes, as related to occupation.
5. Plan and apply evidence based occupational therapy interventions to address the physical, cognitive, functional cognitive, psychosocial, sensory, and other aspects of performance in a variety of contexts and environments to support engagement in everyday life activities that affect health, well-being, and quality of life, as informed by the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF).
6. Exemplify professionalism by employing therapeutic use of self and science-driven evidence in all practice areas and settings inclusive of a direct care provider, consultant, educator, manager, researcher, and advocate for the profession and the consumer.
7. Uphold the ethical standards, values, and attitudes of the occupational therapy profession in all aspects of practice and professional interactions.

Fieldwork-Related Laws

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA/Buckley Amendment):

FERPA provides uniform standards of educational institutions regarding the privacy of student records. Fieldwork is an extension of the academic program. Faculty cannot release student records to a fieldwork site without a release-of-information signed by the student. This includes information regarding a failed/reassigned Level II Fieldwork experience. The student can choose to disclose information personally, sign a statement allowing the AFWC to disclose this information to the reassigned site, or decide not to disclose this information.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504):

Section 504 protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination. It ensures that individuals cannot be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be treated unfairly in any program or activity that receives federal funding.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The ADA is a national mandate to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public services, public places, transportation, and communication services.

Fieldwork is viewed as a pre-employment situation as it is a graduation requirement. Fieldwork sites must use the same standards for students as they do for their employees. The ADA requires fieldwork sites to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability to perform essential job functions.

Disclosure of a Disability

The decision to disclose or not to disclose a disability is solely the right of the student. Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, educational institutions (including fieldwork sites) are obligated to make reasonable accommodations for the known limitation(s) of an otherwise qualified student with a disability (U.S. Department of Education, 2025). According to the ADA National Network (2026), a reasonable accommodation is any change to the job or work environment that allows a person with a disability to perform the essential functions of that job and enjoy equal opportunities. Accommodations are considered “reasonable” if they do not create an undue hardship for the employer (e.g., fieldwork site). At CMU, the Educational Access Services (EAS) office is responsible for determining appropriate accommodations. Students seeking accommodations must contact EAS by phone (970)248-1856, or email eas@coloradomesa.edu.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator does not have the right to disclose a student’s disability status to a fieldwork site without written permission from the student. Students with disabilities who wish to utilize accommodations during fieldwork are encouraged to disclose their disability to their fieldwork educator or give the AFWC permission to disclose *after* the placement has been made.

References

ADA National Network. (2026). *Reasonable accommodations in the workplace*.

<https://adata.org/factsheet/reasonable-accommodations-workplace>

U.S. Department of Education. (2025). *Section 504*.

<https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/individuals-disabilities/section-504#:~:text=Section%20504%20ensures%20that%20students%20with%20disabilities,A mendment%20Act%20of%202008%20on%20Section%20504>

CMU MSOT Program Policies and Procedures

Fieldwork Site Selection, Development, Availability, and Cancellations

The selection and development of FW sites is a lengthy process that often begins prior to a cohort starting the program. The process is the responsibility of the AFWC, in conjunction with the Department of Kinesiology Clinical Education Database Manager. Considerations for the use of sites include, but are not limited to:

- Securing a written, signed, and mutually agreed upon affiliation agreement.
- Qualification of a potential FWE.
- Alignment of the CMU OT program mission and goals with the fieldwork site program.
- Collaboratively developed objectives, learning activities, and experiences available to students sufficient in scope and breadth to allow students to achieve competency as entry-level OTs.
- Appropriate personnel to provide adequate levels of student supervision.
- Availability of individuals and groups that are adequate to facilitate student learning.
- Opportunities for evaluation of student performance and development.

Students may NOT contact fieldwork sites or fieldwork educators to set up experiences. Students interested in a facility/site, practice area, or geographical location, must discuss this with the AFWC.

Not all developed CMU fieldwork sites can provide reservations for each cohort. The AFWC will ensure that students have experiences with individuals and/or groups with various occupational performance needs requiring skilled occupational therapy across the lifespan, multiple practice settings, and experiencing traditional and/or emerging roles.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, a FW site may have to cancel a reservation. Students will need to be prepared to make last-minute changes related to travel, relocation, or scheduling. Should a cancellation occur, the AFWC will make every effort to secure an alternative placement as soon as possible. Cancellations may result in the student completing the fieldwork rotation later than planned, which may result in a delayed graduation.

Once an affiliation agreement has been executed, students will have access to site information and requirements. If site objectives are different than the MSOT program fieldwork objectives, they will be uploaded to the Exxat platform.

Professionalism

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors throughout all levels of fieldwork. This includes engaging in self-advocacy, advocating for clients and the occupational therapy profession, demonstrating a commitment to lifelong learning, and exhibiting ethical reasoning, effective professional communication, and cultural humility.

Dress Code and Professional Appearance Standards

The CMU MSOT program requires professionalism reflected in the appearance of those in the program. We expect our students to be clean, neat, and groomed. When in doubt, always err on the side of professionalism. During Level I and Level II Fieldwork, students should adhere to the established dress code and professional appearance standards at the fieldwork site. The following are general guidelines for professional dress and appearance.

- **Name Tags**

Students must wear their CMU OTS name tag to all professional and fieldwork assignments. Replacements for nametags will be a \$10 charge, and you will need to contact the MSOT Staff Assistant to order a new one. If the fieldwork site requires a facility specific name tag, then students will be required to wear the assigned name tag during their experience.

- **Footwear**

Closed toe, closed heel shoes with nonskid soles should be worn at fieldwork sites.

- **Clothing**

OT students are expected to wear clean, pressed attire appropriate to their fieldwork setting, such as a facility polo shirt with khaki pants. Acceptable alternatives may include business casual attire or scrubs, in accordance with site-specific guidelines. It is the student's responsibility to talk with the fieldwork educator before starting the rotation to determine what the site requires as acceptable dress.

- **Clothing Stains/Damage**

Students should be aware that clothing may be exposed to sweat, blood, or cleaning fluids while on fieldwork experiences. If clothing is damaged, the CMU MSOT program will not assume responsibility for the cleaning or replacement of any damaged garments.

- **Jewelry/Body Art**

Students should wear minimal jewelry during their fieldwork experiences. It is recommended that students wear no more than two studded earrings per ear and no dangle/hoop earrings. It is also recommended that all facial piercings be removed during fieldwork experiences. Students are expected to cover all tattoos during fieldwork using clothing, bandage, or a wrap.

- **Hair**

Students are encouraged to maintain a natural hair color and ensure that long hair is neatly secured away from the face. Facial hair, if worn, must be kept clean, neat, and well-trimmed.

Conflict of Interest

To avoid any conflict of interest, students will not be placed at fieldwork sites where the following situations exist:

- Is or has been employed in the department within the last year.
- Is or may be supervised by a relative, close friend, or mutual acquaintance of a family member or close friend.
- Is or has been a patient/client at the FW site within the last year.
- Has a scholarship, loan, or work commitment with a facility or company.

If a potential conflict of interest occurs during a FW experience, the student is to contact the AFWC immediately. The AFWC will make a final decision regarding student site placement. Conflicts of interest, whether actual or potential, must be disclosed in writing to the AFWC. If a student chooses not to disclose and begins an experience at the site, the student will be removed from the experience with a failing grade.

Additional Requirements

Liability Insurance

Students are required to have liability insurance specifically for Level II fieldwork experiences. The student is financially responsible for obtaining this liability insurance before the start of their Level II fieldwork experience. Students can purchase insurance through the [Proliability website](#).

HIPAA and Bloodborne Pathogens

Students are required to complete HIPAA and OSHA bloodborne pathogen certification before the start of fieldwork. Students are financially responsible for obtaining these certifications and are required to complete these trainings annually. Both certifications can be purchased through the [HIPAA Exam](#) website and certificates must be uploaded to the Exxat platform in the student compliance section.

International Fieldwork

International Fieldwork Placements may be available at the discretion of the Occupational Therapy Program. On a case-by-case basis, the student will be evaluated on prior performance and must have the approval of the faculty. This type of fieldwork placement is most appropriate for a third, specialty placement, although some exceptions may be made. The CMU MSOT Program and the fieldwork placement site must have a current affiliation agreement in place. The fieldwork supervisor must be an occupational therapist who graduated from a program approved by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists who has at least 1 year of experience in practice.

Fieldwork experiences outside of the United States require students to:

- Obtain personal health insurance that covers care in the foreign country, evacuation to the United States if necessary for medical emergencies, and a repatriation policy.
- Collaborate with the AFWC and OT Program Director to complete the approval process for international fieldwork.
- Acquire all required immunizations for the destination country.
- Provide a copy of their flight itinerary to the AFWC.
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for international fieldwork.

Compliance and Immunization Requirements

The MSOT program follows Colorado State Law, as well as CDC vaccination recommendations. Students are required to provide documentation for health compliance and immunizations. This information must be provided prior to starting the program and should be uploaded to Exxat via the student's profile. Requirements are subject to change as mandated by professional sites or changes in the law.

Due to the requirements of our program's fieldwork partners, students are required to receive their annual flu shot in the fall and a TB test. Students who qualify for a medical exemption to not receive these vaccinations must provide documentation from a medical provider.

- NOTE: Any student who chooses not to meet the immunization and health screening requirements, or does not complete an exemption form, may be unable to complete their fieldwork on time and experience a delay in graduation.

A complete list of compliance and immunization requirements for starting the MSOT program is provided below. Additional site-specific requirements may be requested prior to starting fieldwork.

Compliance Requirements	
Background Check	Must be completed through Universal Background Screening. • Additional background checks may be required by fieldwork sites. • Once you have submitted your application, results should be received within 48-72 hours. If it has been over 72 hours, please contact Universal Client Services at ExxatCS@universalbackground.com. • If there is a question about billing/accounting, please contact Universal Background Screening at ExxatCS@universalbackground.com
Drug Screen	Must be completed through Universal Background/Drug Screening. • Additional Drug Screening may be required by fieldwork sites. • Results should upload automatically to EXXAT within two weeks. • If it has been two weeks without any results and you have a question, please contact Universal Background at ExxatCS@universalbackground.com • If there is a question about billing/accounting, please contact Universal Background Screening at ExxatCS@universalbackground.com
CPR (BLS for Health Care Providers)	Must include CPR and AED training for adults, children, and infants. • Must be in accordance with the American Heart Association guidelines (AHA) or American Red Cross. • Must be a hands-on/face-to-face component. • Upload front and back of the card or copy of the certificate. • Expiration date will be auto-filled as per school guidelines
First Aid	Certification may be completed by any online vendor. • Must be a separate class from the BLS (CPR/AED/First Aid).

	• Upload front and back of the card or copy of the certificate. • For expiration date, enter renewal date on the card/certificate.
Health Insurance *Annual requirement	Students must maintain health insurance through duration of program. • Upload the front and back of card. • Student name should be on the card OR if a student is a dependent and does not have their own health insurance card, upload documentation from health insurance showing dependency. • Enter completion date as document uploaded. • Expiration date will be auto-filled as per school guidelines.
Driver's License	• Upload front and back copy of your driver's license. • Enter expiration date as 'renewal date' shown on card.
Immunization Compliance	
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	• Two documented vaccinations OR positive antibody titer (lab report required) • If titer is negative, must repeat the series of two vaccinations • If titer is low/equivocal, students must complete and upload booster dose. • History of chicken pox is not accepted.
Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap)	• Tdap vaccination within 10 years. • Td is not accepted. • Expiration date will be auto-filled as per school guidelines.
Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)	• Two documented vaccinations OR positive antibody titer for all three components (lab report required). • If titer is negative, must repeat the series of two vaccinations • If antibody titer is equivocal/low, students must upload booster dose.
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	• Require three documented vaccinations OR positive antibody titer (lab report required). • If titer is negative/low/equivocal, must repeat the series of three vaccinations. • A repeat titer is not required. • For students who have not completed the full series (three injections), proof of the completed vaccinations for Hepatitis B must be uploaded by the due date. The full series of injections must be completed by the end of the first semester of the program.
Polio	• Documentation of completed primary series (three vaccinations) OR positive antibody titer (lab reports required). • If titer is negative, must repeat series of three vaccinations OR booster dose as per healthcare professional recommendation. • Childhood immunizations accepted.
Influenza (Flu) *Annual requirement	• Documented flu vaccination for current flu season (starting in September). • Pharmacy receipt or prescription as proof of vaccination is accepted if the document includes flu shot name, manufacturer, date of administration, administered by, health care facility. • Expiration date will be auto-filled as per school guidelines.
COVID-19 *OPTIONAL 08/2026	• Please upload proof of COVID vaccination either one-dose or a two-dose series, including booster doses if applicable.

	• Vaccination card must include brand name and date administered • Enter completion date as date last vaccination was administered.
Tuberculosis (TB) Test *Annual requirement	• Please upload the two-step PPD test result. The interval between the steps should be at least one to three weeks. • QuantiFERON Gold or T-Spot (blood test) is accepted (lab report required). • If two-step PPD or QuantiFERON Gold test is positive provide a negative Chest X-Ray (valid for 1 year). • For PPD skin test, enter expiration date one year from result date. • For QuantiFERON and Chest X-Ray expiration date will be auto-filled as per school guidelines.
HIPAA Training, OSHA Training (Blood Borne Pathogens), and the Program Liability Waiver will be completed in the first semester of the program prior to starting Level I Fieldwork.	
Contract Information Release Forms, Health Financial Responsibility Waivers, Health Information Release Forms must be completed and uploaded to Exxat before starting the program.	

Level I Fieldwork

Purpose

Level I fieldwork experiences are an integral part of the MSOT program's curriculum design. Opportunities for direct observation, participation, and clinical reasoning will be provided by qualified competent FWE's, who may or may not be occupational therapists. These experiences are designed to enhance initial learning of basic material and are not considered substitutes for Level II fieldwork experience.

Objectives

The fieldwork site agrees to adhere to these objectives when supervising students from the CMU MSOT program.

By the end of the Level I experience the student will be able to:

Professional Behaviors and Ethics

- Demonstrate professional behavior, including punctuality, appropriate dress, and respectful communication with clients, families, and team members.
- Adhere to ethical standards, confidentiality (HIPAA), and site-specific policies.
- Accept and respond constructively to feedback from supervisors and staff.

Understanding the Role of OT

- Describe the role of occupational therapy within the fieldwork setting and how it supports client participation in meaningful occupations.
- Identify the scope of OT practice and differentiate it from other professional roles on the interprofessional team.
- Explain how occupational therapy services align with the setting's mission, population, and service delivery model.

Observation and Clinical Reasoning

- Observe OT evaluations and interventions and identify key components of the OT process (evaluation, intervention, outcomes).
- Discuss clinical reasoning used by occupational therapists to select occupations, activities, and interventions.
- Identify occupational performance issues and contextual factors affecting client participation.

Psychosocial

- The student will **observe, describe, and discuss** psychosocial factors (e.g., motivation, emotional regulation/coping skills, social support, roles/routines, environmental supports/barriers) that influence a client's engagement in meaningful occupations.

Participation and Skill Development

- Participate in OT service delivery with supervision (e.g., preparing materials, leading portions of activities, documenting observations).
- Demonstrate basic therapeutic communication skills when interacting with clients and groups.

- Apply foundational OT concepts—such as occupation, client-centered care, and activity analysis—to practice situations.

Documentation and Communication

- Observe and identify documentation formats used in the setting (e.g., SOAP notes, daily notes, goals).
- Communicate observations clearly and professionally through verbal or written summaries.

Interprofessional Collaboration

- Identify members of the interprofessional team, describe their roles in client care, and discuss how OT contributes to team-based care.

Professional Growth

- Articulate how fieldwork experiences contribute to professional identity development as an occupational therapy student.

Fieldwork Planning and Advising

Level I fieldwork placements are held locally (within a 60-mile radius of CMU's main campus). These placements occur in community-based organizations or in traditional clinical settings. The AFWC will determine fieldwork placements. Collaboration with the co-requisite course instructor may occur to determine the best placement. If there are any questions regarding placement or a conflict of interest, students may schedule a meeting with the AFWC to discuss a change in sites.

Fieldwork Prerequisites

Students need to be up to date on all compliance and immunization requirements and in good standing with the program. Requirements at fieldwork sites include but are not limited to the following: criminal background checks, drug screening, health requirements, and immunization requirements. The AFWC will communicate via email or through Exxat regarding any additional site-specific requirements.

Students who qualify for a medical exemption for vaccinations must acknowledge the following:

- There are a limited number of medical sites that allow unvaccinated individuals.
- They may not get their desired sites.
- Graduation may be delayed ensuring they get a variety of sites for fieldwork that meet accreditation requirements.

Fieldwork Settings and Schedules

Level I Fieldwork courses and experiences are designed to run concurrently with the MSOT program's core classes. There are three Level I experiences throughout the curriculum. Students will complete up to 30 hours during each experience.

OCCU Curriculum (Cohort 2027 and previous)

- Spring Semester- Older adult population
- Summer Term- Adult population
- Fall Semester- Pediatric population
- Spring Semester- Community-based/Mental health population

OCTH Curriculum (Cohort 2028 and future)

- Fall Semester- none (FW Prep course)
- Spring Semester- Pediatric population
- Summer Term- Adult population
- Fall Semester- Community-based/Mental health population

Level I Fieldwork Supervision

Level I FWE's are informed of the MSOT program's curriculum, fieldwork design, and student objectives. FWE disciplines may include, but are not limited to, occupational therapy practitioners, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, physicians, speech-language pathologists, nurses, and physical therapists.

Fieldwork Ratios

The ratio between students and FWE may be up to four students per educator. This will depend on setting and FWE preference. The AFWC will work with the FWE to determine the best student-to-supervisor ratios for the experience.

Fieldwork Attendance

Professionalism in attendance and punctuality is an expectation during all fieldwork experiences. In the event of illness or emergency, the student must first notify the FWE according to site policies, then inform the AFWC via email. The student and FWE will arrange to make up missed time, and the student must email the AFWC with details of when and how the time will be completed. Students must log their fieldwork hours weekly in Exxat to ensure consistent participation and to support time management skill development.

Level I Fieldwork Communication

The AFWC will communicate with the students via email or Exxat regarding FWE contact information, as well as site-specific expectations and requirements. Once the student has received their placement information, it is the student's responsibility to contact the FWE with any questions regarding the fieldwork placement.

Initial contact should include:

- Confirmation of the beginning and ending dates of fieldwork
- Request for information regarding reporting time, location, and parking on first day
- Request for dress code information

- An expression of your appreciation for their participation in your professional development

Once the fieldwork experience is complete, students are encouraged to write a letter or card of appreciation to the facility and staff.

Financial Responsibilities

In addition to the tuition and fees required by the Colorado Mesa University, students assume responsibility for transportation to and from fieldwork sites as well as any uniform and meal costs.

Evaluation of Student Performance: Required Documentation

A link to the electronic Level I Fieldwork Competency Evaluation (FWCE) will be provided to the FWE. A link to view the evaluation is included here: [LI FWCE](#). The Level I FWCE can also be found on the CMU OT program website under Fieldwork Resources. Students are responsible for communicating with their FWE to schedule a time to review the Level I FWCE. In addition to a completed FWCE, students must complete all assignments from the seminar portion of the course. The AFWC is the instructor of record and is responsible for final grades.

Evaluation of Fieldwork Site and Educator: Required Documentation

Students will complete an evaluation of the fieldwork site and the FWE after completing a Level I fieldwork experience. A link to the electronic form, Level I Student Evaluation of Fieldwork, will be provided in Exxat. Students are expected to complete this form as part of their Level I Fieldwork experiences (A, B, C, and D) and related seminar courses.

Fieldwork Failure, Termination, or Withdrawal

Immediate removal from fieldwork by the AFWC and/or FWE may occur when a student exhibits unethical or unprofessional behavior, has a failing grade, or does not meet fieldwork objectives. Should this occur during a Level I fieldwork experience, the student would fail the fieldwork course and program procedure is implemented. Details of the program procedure are outlined in the [Student Handbook](#).

A fieldwork site may terminate a fieldwork experience at any time for any reason. This situation is unlikely, but it is possible. If the termination is at the request of the fieldwork site at no fault of the student, the AFWC will reassign the student.

Voluntary withdrawal due to extenuating life circumstances should follow the course withdrawal policy outlined by the MSOT program handbook and university Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual. Students may be reassigned at the discretion of the AFWC and Program Director pending availability.

Level II Fieldwork

Purpose

Level II fieldwork experiences are a core component of the MSOT program's curriculum design. According to the ACOTE Standards the "goal of Level II fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapists" (ACOTE, 2023). Within Level II fieldwork, experiences must include delivering OT services, applying purposeful and meaningful occupations and evidence-based practice, and administration and management of OT services.

Level II fieldwork requirements include a minimum of 24 weeks of full-time fieldwork, or part-time fieldwork that is equivalent to 24 weeks. Part-time is equivalent to at least 50% of a FTE at the fieldwork site. Part-time fieldwork placements must be agreed upon by the site and AFWC and documented as such prior to the start of fieldwork. These placements are usually divided into two 12-week periods. Fieldwork placements may take place in one setting (e.g., hospital), if covering multiple practice areas (e.g., acute care, inpatient rehab). In total, both Level II placements should take place in no more than four different settings overall.

Objectives

Level II fieldwork objectives are based on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) for the Occupational Therapy Student. *The fieldwork site agrees to adhere to these objectives when supervising students from the CMU Occupational Therapy program.*

By the end of the Level II experience the student will be able to:

Fundamentals of Practice

- Demonstrate professional behavior, including reliability, punctuality, and appropriate communication.
- Consistently adhere to ethical, legal, and professional standards and follow site-specific policies and procedures.
- Demonstrate consistent safety awareness for self and others during all clinical activities and adhere to safety regulations including documentation and communication of incidents.
- Present a professional appearance consistent with site expectations.

Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy

- Articulate the role and value of occupational therapy as a profession to clients, caregivers, colleagues, service providers, administrators, and the public.
- Use client-centered and occupation-based approaches in all aspects of care.

Evaluation and Screening

- Gather relevant client information through chart review, observation, and interview to guide the evaluation process and determine a client's occupational profile.
- Select and administer appropriate assessments based on client needs and setting, modifying assessments as needed.

- Analyze and interpret evaluation data to identify strengths, limitations, and occupational performance needs.
- Contribute to the development of appropriate goals in collaboration with the client and team.

Intervention

- Apply occupational therapy theoretical models and frameworks to guide practice and articulate rationale for the intervention process.
- Plan and implement individualized, occupation-based interventions while incorporating evidence-based practice into clinical decision-making.
- Demonstrate effective therapeutic use of self to build rapport and support engagement.
- Select, modify and adapt interventions and plans of care based on client response and progress to match client abilities and therapeutic goals.
- Provide education to clients, families, and caregivers as appropriate.

Management of Occupational Therapy Services

- Manage time and workload efficiently to meet clinical demands.
- Demonstrate increasing independence in planning and carrying out responsibilities.
- Work effectively as part of the interdisciplinary team while maintaining responsibility for occupational therapy services and interventions.
- Utilize resources, documentation systems, and site-specific procedures appropriately.
- Demonstrate an understanding of costs and funding systems related to billing and funding sources related to OT services.

Communication and Professional Behaviors

- Communicate clearly and professionally with clients, families, and team members.
- Accurately document evaluations, interventions, and progress in a timely manner.
- Seek, accept, and incorporate feedback to improve performance and enhance learning.
- Use reflective practice to identify strengths, limitations, and areas for growth.
- Respect diversity and provide culturally responsive care.

Psychosocial Factors

- Independently identify and address psychosocial factors that influence a client's occupational performance by incorporating appropriate, client-centered strategies into evaluation and intervention.

Objectives adapted from: *Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) for the Occupational Therapy Student*. (2025, August 1). AOTA.org; AOTA Press. <https://www.aota.org/-/media/corporate/files/educationcareers/fieldwork/fwpe-fillable-forms/fwpe-form-ot-blank.pdf>

Fieldwork Planning and Advising

Planning for Level II fieldwork begins early in the program. Students will participate in a mandatory Level II workshop during the first semester of the MSOT Program. This workshop provides information about the purpose of Level II fieldwork and the timeline of the fieldwork process. Students will then complete the Level II fieldwork WISHLIST found in Exxat. This

information will help the AFWC identify each student's preferred settings for Level II fieldwork rotations. Each student will then meet with the AFWC to discuss additional factors for fieldwork placements. Students will ultimately be placed in fieldwork experiences based on availability and optimal fit.

Interviews

Some fieldwork sites require interviews prior to finalizing a placement. The AFWC will connect students with fieldwork site coordinators to schedule the interview. Once interviews are completed and final decisions are communicated, students will be informed of the next steps.

Level II Fieldwork Readiness Survey

During the final didactic semester, faculty will complete a fieldwork readiness survey for each student. Students are also expected to complete the survey on themselves prior to meeting with their faculty advisor to review and compare the results. This discussion is designed to assist students in understanding their strengths and areas for improvement before starting Level II fieldwork.

Level II Fieldwork Pre-Requisites

Students are required to be up to date on all compliance and immunization requirements, and in good standing with the program. Requirements at fieldwork sites include but are not limited to the following: criminal background checks, drug screening, health requirements, and immunization requirements. The AFWC will communicate via email or through Exxat regarding additional site-specific requirements, including trainings that may be required.

Students will be required to take a Pre-Level II OT Knowledge Exam, consisting of 100 questions, during their last didactic semester of the program.

Students who qualify for a medical exemption for vaccinations must acknowledge the following:

- There are a limited number of medical sites that allow unvaccinated individuals.
- They may not get their desired sites.
- Graduation may be delayed ensuring they get a variety of sites for fieldwork that meet accreditation requirements.

Fieldwork Settings and Schedules

Level II Fieldwork rotations will occur after completion of the didactic coursework in the summer and fall term of the program's second year. The AFWC will communicate site placements as soon as possible before the start of the first fieldwork rotation. The goal is to confirm the site 3-4 months prior, but this cannot be guaranteed. Each rotation is 12 weeks in length and full-time, unless otherwise agreed upon with the AFWC and the site.

Level II Fieldwork Supervision

FWE's must be currently licensed as an occupational therapist (OTR/L) and have a minimum of one (1) year of practice experience. The FWE must be an employee at the site. In rare cases (i.e. emerging practice sites), the FWE will be a designated faculty member of the MSOT program. Supervision should initially be direct, and then gradually decrease to less direct supervision depending on the needs of the setting, the needs of the clientele, and the abilities of the student to progress to entry-level competence.

Fieldwork in a setting with no occupational therapy services must have a documented plan for providing services and supervision by a currently licensed occupational therapist. The supervising OT must have at least three (3) years of full-time professional experience. Supervisors must include a minimum of eight (8) hours of direct supervision each week of the fieldwork experience. Supervision must be available via a variety of contact measures during all working hours. An onsite supervisor designee of another profession must be assigned when the OT supervisor is off site.

Fieldwork Ratios

There are several fieldwork models for Level II fieldwork experiences. Depending on the type of setting, the preference of the fieldwork educator, and the needs of the student, the models will vary as will the ratios between student and fieldwork educator. The Commission on Education (COE) describes the models below (AOTA, 2024).

- **One-to-One:** One student is paired with one FWE. This is a traditional apprenticeship model.
- **Collaborative:** Two or more students work with a single FWE. This model allows more collaboration, cooperation, and near-peer mentoring between students, allowing students to become less dependent on frequent direct supervision from their FWE.
- **Shared Supervision:** Two or more FWEs working with one student. This model allows a student to work with multiple educators and gain a broader clinical perspective. It also can provide a more robust system for feedback and reflection. This model also provides built-in collaboration with other team members.
- **Multiple Mentorship:** One or more students work with a team of FWEs who share responsibility for supervision, mentoring, and evaluating the students. This model allows FWEs who do not work fulltime, or have smaller but unique specialty caseloads, to participate in fieldwork education and share their unique experiences with students. It also allows students to have access to more practitioners, more variety of practices, and/or unique practices that would be inaccessible in an exclusively one-to-one supervision model.
- **Faculty-Led Mentorship:** One or more students is placed in a fieldwork setting where a faculty member from the sponsoring academic program is on-site and provides fieldwork education. This model allows students and faculty to engage directly in the learning process and eliminates the need and demand for a supervisor to be assigned from the facility.

- **Fieldwork Where No OT Services Exist:** Students completing Level II fieldwork in a setting that does not have a permanent, full-time, established occupational therapist must follow the following plan for provision of occupational therapy services. Per ACOTE (2023), all Level II FWEs must have at least 3 years of post-certification experience, provide 8 hours of direct supervision per week, and other indirect supervision or support as needed. This includes availability to the student during all scheduled work hours. The supervision may be provided virtually. While the primary FWE is not on-site, a staff member at the practice setting must be available for day-to-day supervision of fieldwork students. FWEs in these settings may be employees of the practice setting, consultants, or employed by the academic program to provide service and fieldwork education at the site.
- **International Fieldwork Experience:** Requires the FWE to be a graduate of a program accredited by ACOTE, approved by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT), or be otherwise regulated in the country in which the students are completing fieldwork. The FWE must have at least 1 year of experience in practice prior to the onset of Level II fieldwork. This typically works best as a third or specialty fieldwork experience.

Fieldwork Attendance

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism regarding attendance and punctuality during all fieldwork experiences. If a student needs to be absent due to illness or emergency, it is the student's responsibility to notify the FWE first based on the established policies and procedures of the fieldwork site. The student will inform the AFWC of the absence via email after the FWE has been notified.

Arrangements to make up the time missed will be made between the student and the FWE. The AFWC requires students to communicate in writing via email regarding when and how the missed time will be made up. Unusual circumstances may occur where the student may need time off. The FWE is responsible for granting or denying any requests. Any time missed will need to be rescheduled with the FWE. This may include working weekends or extending the length of the fieldwork rotation. Communication with the AFWC is requested via email.

Students are expected to follow the established schedule of their FWE, which may include observing facility holidays. Vacation time is not permitted during fieldwork; this does not include requesting 1-2 days off for illness or personal reasons. Depending on the setting, schedules may also include regular or occasional weekend assignments. University holidays do not apply during fieldwork rotations. **Weekly time logs need to be completed in Exxat.** This ensures that students maintain regular progress in their fieldwork and remain on track. The FWE will approve time logs for all Level II fieldwork experiences.

Fieldwork Communication

The AFWC will communicate with the students via email or Exxat regarding FWE contact information, as well as site-specific expectations and requirements. Once the student has received their placement information, it is the student's responsibility to contact the FWE with any questions regarding the fieldwork placement.

Initial contact should include:

- Confirmation of the beginning and ending dates of fieldwork
- Request for information regarding reporting time, location, and parking on first day
- Anticipated schedule including days worked, start time, estimated end time
- Request for dress code information
- Confirmation of any additional requirements including immunizations, CPR, etc.
- An expression of your appreciation for their participation in your professional development
- Information regarding bringing personal items, including personal laptop

Once the fieldwork experience is complete, students are encouraged to write a letter or card of appreciation to the facility and staff.

All formal communication between students, the FWE, and the AFWC will occur via email. Course shells for OCCU 554 (FW Level II A), 555 (FW Level II B), and 594 (FW Level II B Seminar course) will house the syllabi for each Level II Fieldwork rotation. The seminar course will take place online, as students will be on-site for their fieldwork experiences. Appointments can be made with the AFWC either in person, by email, or telephone/text. Meetings can take place in person, or online.

Students will have opportunities for virtual check-ins with their peers and the AFWC throughout the course of their Level II fieldwork experiences. These meetings provide an opportunity to ask questions and receive support during the experiential portion of the program.

Financial Responsibilities

In addition to the tuition and fees required by Colorado Mesa University, students must assume responsibility for the costs of housing, transportation, uniforms, and meals. Occasionally, facilities may provide housing and/or meals for students either free of charge or at a reduced rate. Information on each fieldwork site is frequently updated to identify facilities that provide these benefits. If additional background checks, drug screens, or testing are required, the student will assume financial responsibility. Additional information can be found on the fieldwork site's Fieldwork Data Form, located in their profile in Exxat.

Evaluation of Student Performance: Required Documentation

It is strongly recommended that FWEs hold supervision meetings with students at least weekly, if not more frequently. These meetings are designed for students to receive feedback on a regular

basis, and for FWEs to document progress throughout the fieldwork rotation. A link to view an example weekly review form is included here: [Weekly review](#). Additional supervision resources can be found on the CMU OT program website, under the [Fieldwork Information page](#).

Each student must be evaluated using the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) at the half-way point (6 weeks) and the end of their Level II fieldwork (12 weeks). The goal of Level II Fieldwork is for students to be ready for entry-level practice. The AOTA (FWPE) is sent out electronically to FWEs prior to the midterm and final week. A link to view the FWPE is included here: [FWPE](#).

Evaluation of Fieldwork Site and Educator: Required Documentation

Students are expected to complete the Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Educator (SEFWE) by the end of each Level II fieldwork rotation. This form assists the AFWC in understanding the fieldwork site more clearly and providing accurate information to future students. A link to view the SEFWE is included here: [SEFWE](#). This form is available in Exxat under 'learning activities' in each fieldwork rotation course.

Additionally, the AFWC will complete an in-person or virtual site visit at each fieldwork site. A site visit provides an opportunity to discuss the students' progress, see each site individually, and gain a better understanding of what each site has to offer.

Fieldwork Experience Failure, Termination or Withdrawal

Immediate removal from a fieldwork site by the AFWC and/or FWE with a failing grade may occur if a student exhibits inappropriate, unethical, unprofessional behavior on a fieldwork experience, and/or does not meet all fieldwork objectives. Should removal from a fieldwork site occur, the student will fail that fieldwork course. Based on the offense, the student may be offered a remediation plan or be dismissed from the MSOT program.

A site may terminate a fieldwork experience at any time for any reason. This situation is unlikely, but it is possible. If the termination is at the request of the fieldwork site due to extenuating circumstances unrelated to student conduct, the AFWC will reassign the student to a new site.

Voluntary withdrawal due to extenuating life circumstances should follow the course withdrawal policy outlined in the University Catalog, under 'Registration Policy and Procedures' > [Withdrawal Procedures](#). Students may be reassigned at the discretion of AFWC and Program Director, pending availability.

Completion of Level II Fieldwork

NBCOT Certification Exam

To apply for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification examination, students must have successfully completed both of their Level II Fieldwork rotations, have grades posted for graduation, and have no outstanding financial obligations to Colorado Mesa University. Individual candidates are responsible for creating a MyNBCOT account and completing the NBCOT application. Individuals are solely responsible for ensuring that all application materials are submitted. After the registration process is completed, the student will receive an Authorization to Test letter with instructions on how to schedule the exam. The NBCOT examination is offered at certain test sites throughout North America. Be sure to review the 'exam scoring calendar and important dates to consider when scheduling your exam,' especially if there is a certain date scores are required by. For current information on the NBCOT exam, visit: www.nbcot.org.

State Licensure

State licensure is different from NBCOT certification. All 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam, require occupational therapists to be licensed before providing OT services. State licensure requirements differ state-to-state. Please see the following link for state licensing information on the CMU OT webpage: [State licensing for OT](#). It is strongly recommended that candidates also contact the appropriate licensing entity in the state in which you are, or plan to be, practicing.

Colorado State licensure is required before beginning the practice of occupational therapy in the state of Colorado. Contact the Colorado State Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) for information about occupational therapy licensure. DORA phone number: (303) 894-7855 or website: <https://dora.colorado.gov/>

Some states have begun to offer an Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact which allows you to obtain one license and practice in multiple states. Please visit the website for additional details: <https://www.aota.org/advocacy/issues/ot-licensure-compact>