

Role Competencies for a Fieldwork Educator

Purpose: These role competencies have been developed to assist educational programs in determining and/or evaluating the typical responsibilities for a fieldwork educator associated with an occupational therapy program. The competencies are based on the American Occupational Therapy Association's *Standards for Continuing Competence*. These role competencies are statements describing the typical values, knowledge, skills, and responsibilities that are needed to be successful in the role of a fieldwork educator. The competencies are general statements, as specific competencies may not apply to all situations. Each competency may be modified and should be considered guidelines for institutions or educational settings.

Standard 1. Knowledge: *Occupational therapy practitioners shall demonstrate understanding and comprehension of the information required for the multiple roles they assume.* In addition to the recognized competencies for occupational therapy practitioners, the fieldwork educator must be able to:

- Facilitate the development of competent entry-level occupational therapy practitioners through the provision of supervised quality fieldwork experiences
- Develop learning activities and assignments that encompass the breadth and depth of knowledge in the profession and re-enforce knowledge and skills leading to entry-level competency
- Demonstrate knowledge of effective learning processes that identify individual learning styles and use appropriate and individualized techniques for students at their fieldwork education site
- Demonstrate accurate and current knowledge of the contractual agreement between the colleges/universities and the fieldwork site
- Demonstrate the competence to develop and maintain proficiency in occupational therapy processes and supervision skills through investigation, formal education, continuing education or self-study
- Maintain current knowledge of standards, rules, and regulations regarding supervision of students set by the state, accreditation bodies, and the fieldwork institution

Standard 2. Critical Reasoning: *Occupational therapy practitioners shall employ reasoning processes to make sound judgments and decisions within the context of their roles.* In addition to the recognized competencies for occupational therapy practitioners, a fieldwork educator must be able to:

- Effectively evaluate and share knowledge in the form of new materials, literature, and educational materials relating to fieldwork that enhance the lifelong learning of future occupational therapy practitioners
- Critically integrate and apply theory, literature, and research into practice at the fieldwork education site
- Critically evaluate the curriculum, particularly in terms of its components and their relationship to fieldwork education, and participate in curriculum development in relation to the best practice in the fieldwork setting
- Evaluate interpersonal dynamics between occupational therapy practitioners, other clinical and non-clinical personnel, clients, students to resolve issues and determine

- action plans including contacting the academic fieldwork coordinator
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate critical reasoning behind clinical practice decisions to students and encourage development of critical reasoning in the fieldwork student

Standard 3. Interpersonal Skills: *Occupational therapy practitioners shall develop and maintain their professional relationships with others within the context of their roles.* In addition to the recognized competencies for occupational therapy practitioners, a fieldwork educator must be able to:

- Project a positive image of the fieldwork program to the college or university, student, and community
- Demonstrate a competent and positive attitude towards practice and supervision that will result in effective development and mentoring of fieldwork students
- Effectively supervise and advise fieldwork students in relation to fieldwork and practice issues
- Effectively mediate interpersonal issues between students, clients, and staff
- Demonstrate positive, culturally sensitive interactions with diverse faculty, students, fieldwork coordinators, and practitioners
- Identify and clearly communicate both strengths and areas for improvement to students in a manner that encourages student growth as a practitioner

Standard 4. Performance Skills: *Occupational therapy practitioners shall demonstrate the expertise, attitudes, proficiencies, and ability to competently fulfill their roles.* In addition to the recognized competencies for occupational therapy practitioners, a fieldwork educator must be able to:

- Plan fieldwork experiences within his or her setting that will prepare ethical and competent practitioners
- Develop fieldwork course objectives, course materials, and educational activities and experiences that promote optimal learning for students
- Evaluate students' performance (i.e., learning outcomes) and learning outcomes in relation to fieldwork objectives of the program and the organization
- Design and implement a plan that develops and maintains accurate documentation of student performance, collaboration with academic curriculum, the fieldwork academic coordinator, and/or other documentation required for fieldwork experiences

Standard 5. Ethical Reasoning: *Occupational therapy practitioners shall identify, analyze, and clarify ethical issues of dilemmas in order to make responsible decisions within the changing context of their roles.* In addition to the recognized competencies for occupational therapy practitioners, a fieldwork educator must be able to:

- Act as a role model as an occupational therapy advocate and change agent in situations with professional, culturally competent, and ethical behavior
- Clarify and analyze fieldwork issues within an ethical framework for positive resolution

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Adopted by the Representative Assembly 2005M284