



**Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences**  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Occupational Therapy Department

# Student Fieldwork Handbook AY 2015-2016

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**Purpose:**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the student with curricular information, current policies and procedures of the fieldwork component of the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy degree. This information is necessary to ensure successful fieldwork experiences for each student.

**Introduction:**

Fieldwork education is an important part of your professional preparation as a student and it is integrated as a component of the OT department curriculum design. The fieldwork experiences provide you with the opportunity to carry out professional responsibilities under supervision, as well as for role modeling (ACOTE, 2008). The fieldwork experiences will provide you with the opportunities to experience occupational therapy in the clinical settings, thus preparing you for the transition from an occupational therapy student to an occupational therapy practitioner.

**Glossary of Fieldwork Terms:****Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) –**

ACOTE is the American Occupational Therapy, (AOTA) accrediting body. It accredits occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs. For details on specific accreditation standards visit:

<http://www.aota.org/Educate/Accredit/StandardsReview.aspx>.

**Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) -** This person coordinates the fieldwork program for an academic institution. The AFWC has to meet the *Role Competencies for an Academic Fieldwork Coordinator* set by AOTA. The AFWC is responsible for ensuring the fieldwork program reflects the sequence, depth, focus and scope of content in the curriculum design as well as ensuring that the fieldwork educators and faculty collaborate in the design of the fieldwork experiences.

**Fieldwork Education -** Fieldwork education provides experiences to students to integrate academically acquired education with clinical practice. The term encompasses opportunities and experiences provided to students throughout the curriculum including Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

**Fieldwork Educator (FWE) –**The fieldwork educator was formerly known as the clinical instructor (CI). Emphasis is now focused on the important role of the therapist educating the student during the fieldwork experience. FWEs are qualified personnel who supervise students in the clinical setting.

For Level I fieldwork, fieldwork educators include, but are not limited to: currently licensed or credentialed occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, nurses, and physical therapists.

For Level II fieldwork, the FWE must be a currently licensed or credentialed occupational therapist who has a minimum of 1 year of practice experience subsequent to initial certification, and is adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator.

**Fieldwork Educator Coordinator (FWEC)** - At each clinical site, the individual who coordinates, arranges, and assigns occupational therapy students for a fieldwork experience is the FWEC. The FWEC communicates with the AFWC, the FWE, and student regarding student placement and issues between students and fieldwork educators. The FWEC is responsible for ensuring that students have quality clinical learning experiences that meet the program objectives.

**Practice Standards** - Standards that you will uphold as an occupational therapy student during your fieldwork experiences and later on as an OT practitioner. These are translated in your adherence to the AOTA Code of Ethics.

### **Curriculum Design and Fieldwork:**

Facilities that meet the educational objectives, are reflective of the sequence, depth, focus and scope of content in the curriculum design are selected as fieldwork sites. Our curriculum is organized using the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model revised by Christiansen & Baum (2002). This conceptual model of practice organizes the dynamic, complex relationship between people, environments, and occupational performance.

Students acquire knowledge and understanding about the person's factors, including psychological, cognitive, neurobehavioral, physiological, and spiritual capacities and constraints. Frames of reference that focus on remediation of these areas are introduced and explored within the context of the broader occupation-based theory. For example, the biomechanical frame of reference is appropriately applied for assessment and intervention of physiological issues, and the cognitive function frame of reference is appropriately applied to assessment and intervention of cognitive issues. By understanding the Person-Environment-Occupation-Model, students recognize that when following a frame of reference that primarily addresses aspects of one's personal capabilities and deficits, individual roles and environmental issues equally contribute to occupational performance.

Environmental issues that may enable or create barriers include social support mechanisms, social policies and attitudes, cultural norms and values, and physical settings and geography. These factors make up the context for individual occupational performance. Students examine physical barriers within existing structures and recognize the importance and need for universal design. Learning experiences to explore cultural norms and values are embedded in courses that focus on individual and community service delivery. Students are given opportunities to analyze and appreciate

the significance of complex systems, from service delivery models to larger political-economic structures.

Occupational performance is central to the PEOP Model, thus, occupation is embedded throughout the curriculum. Students learn the meaning of both, individual and cultural occupations. They analyze the underlying demands of occupation, such as the cognitive, motor, sensory, and perceptual components. Students develop therapeutic plans using occupations to promote, restore, or enable occupational performance.

Although other models and frames of reference are utilized throughout the curriculum, the PEOP Model provides a solid guide to the consideration of clients' life roles, social and physical environments, along with personal performance capacities and constraints. The PEOP Model provides a structure for assimilation and integration of information leading to mastery of effective clinical reasoning in occupational therapy assessment and intervention.

The use of the ideas and descriptions from this conceptual model of practice provides a guide for occupational therapists to work within the medical model, the community model and non-traditional occupational therapy service settings.

### **Level I Fieldwork:**

The overall purpose of Level I fieldwork is to introduce the student to the clinical environment. It provides basic experiences in observation, evaluation, treatment planning, treatment implementation, documentation, and the application and integration of occupational therapy theory in a closely supervised setting. Level I fieldwork also provides the opportunity for developing professional behaviors.

Level I fieldwork is integral to the academic program's curriculum design. It is not intended to develop independent performance, but to "include experiences designed to enrich didactic coursework through directed observation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process" (ACOTE, 2006).

Services may be provided to a variety of populations through a variety of settings. Experiences may include those directly related to occupational therapy, as well as other situations to enhance an understanding of the developmental stages, tasks, and roles of individuals throughout the lifespan. Day care centers for children, schools, neighborhood centers, hospice, homeless shelters, assisted living residences, community mental health centers, frail- or well- elderly programs, and vocational training centers are among the many possible fieldwork sites.

Level I fieldwork may also include service management and administrative experiences in occupational therapy settings and community agencies. Populations served may also

include individuals with disabilities, well populations, age-specific and diagnosis-specific clients.

Qualified personnel for supervision of Level I fieldwork include, but are not limited to: occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants who are initially certified nationally and credentialed according to state requirements, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, and physical therapists.

Each Level I fieldwork has specific objectives and assignments which will be reviewed prior to starting the rotation.

During the first summer in the program, you will complete a four-week, 8 hour/day fieldwork experience. This fieldwork is part of OTH 5430L- Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Musculoskeletal Disorders Lab. The experience will provide you with an opportunity to integrate the knowledge learned during the first year of the program with actual clinical practice. For OTH 5430L, you will have 24 hour access to e-Campus discussion board where you will post your assignments and share with faculty and class members your experience during fieldwork.

In the spring semester of the second year, you will complete a two-week, 8 hour/day psychosocial fieldwork as part of OTH 5843. In OTH 5843, you will gain intense preparation to effectively engage in various levels of clinical reasoning (procedural, pragmatic, interactive, and conditional) to optimize the occupational performance of individuals living with mental health disorders. You will also develop advanced group leadership skills, become proficient in documentation in a mental health setting, and analyze environmental factors that promote or hinder occupational performance. You will have the opportunity to apply the skills you acquired in the classroom.

Fieldwork is focused on providing you with a variety of experiences with various populations and settings.

### **Level I General Objectives:**

1. To provide the student with the opportunity to apply and practice the skills learned in the academic coursework with actual patients/clients/consumers.
2. To provide verification of the knowledge acquired in the academic setting.
3. To provide the opportunity for the student to expand the knowledge acquired in the academic setting.
4. To provide the student with the opportunity to develop the interpersonal skills and attitudes necessary for effective interaction with:
  - Individuals having physical, psychosocial and/or developmental disabilities
  - Individuals from varied cultures and backgrounds
  - Members of the healthcare team

5. To provide the student with constructive criticism on their professional performance and to assist the student in developing strategies to use this feedback to modify and improve their professional performance.
6. To promote the development of self-evaluation & problem-solving skills.
7. To provide the student with role models in direct service to patients, clients, and consumers.
8. To assist in the transition from the role of student to the role of an occupational therapy practitioner.

**Professional Behaviors:**

Students’ professional behaviors are assessed by the fieldwork educators on each of the two Level I fieldwork experiences using the *Student’s Performance Report*. Students who receive ratings of “2” or less are required to meet with their academic advisor to draft a corrective action plan. Both parties will discuss the plan as well as the strategies for achieving the goals. Failure to correct or modify behaviors identified in the academic or fieldwork settings and described in a formal Corrective Action Plan (Appendix I) will result in disciplinary action.

**Level I Fieldwork Schedule:**

Semester	Year	Type	Length
Summer OTH 5430L	First Year	Choice of Physical Disabilities, Hand/Outpatient, Pediatrics, Geriatrics	4 weeks 40 hr/wk
Spring OTH 5843	Second Year	Psychosocial / Mental Health	2 weeks 40 hr/wk

**Level I International Fieldwork:**

We have a limited number of fieldwork contracts with sites outside the USA such as, but not limited to: Bahamas, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Perú, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Trinidad. Students are encouraged to complete their Level I fieldwork abroad. Students who are or have been on warning or probation are not eligible to complete their Level I fieldwork outside of Florida. International fieldwork placements will be at the discretion of the AFWC and faculty based on student’s performance at the time of the request. Policies and Procedures related to International Clinical Education Experiences from the Office of Education Abroad for FIU will be followed. (<http://educationabroad.fiu.edu/>). FIU does not have resources to assist students with housing or travel costs associated with fieldwork. Obtaining these resources is the responsibility of the student.

**Level II Fieldwork:**

Fieldwork standards (ACOTE 2011) state that the goal of Level II fieldwork is “to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapists.” Similar to Level I fieldwork, Level II fieldwork must be integrated into the curriculum design. Level II fieldwork experience provides students with the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with the application of skills in a practice setting through “an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupations” (ACOTE, 2011). This experience also includes research, as well as administration and management of occupational therapy services. The fieldwork experiences are to be in settings that expose the students to a variety of clients across the life span and in a variety of practice settings.

Level II fieldwork shall be designed to promote clinical reasoning and reflective practice, to transmit the values and beliefs that enable the application of ethics related to the profession, to communicate and model professionalism as a developmental process and a career responsibility, and to develop and expand a repertoire of occupational therapy assessments and interventions related to human occupation and performance. In all settings, psychosocial factors must be understood and integrated for the development of client-centered, meaningful, occupation-based outcomes.

A minimum of 6 months of Level II fieldwork is required by ACOTE. The six months of fieldwork is divided into two 12-week affiliations in two different settings. This provides the student with a variety of experiences and an opportunity to view different service delivery models. Upon completion of Level II fieldwork, the student must be able to demonstrate entry-level competency.

All fieldwork must be completed within 24 months following completion of all didactic coursework.

Direct supervision for Level II students is provided by a licensed or credentialed occupational therapist with at least one year of experience subsequent to initial certification and is adequately prepared to serve as a fieldwork educator.

The AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) form is used to evaluate the student’s performance on each Level II fieldwork rotation. Many facilities have specific objectives and assignments unique to their settings for Level II fieldwork.

Students may complete fieldwork on a part-time basis, as long as it is no less than 50% of the full-time equivalent at the fieldwork site. Students may complete their required weeks of fieldwork in a minimum of one setting if it is reflective of more than one practice area and a maximum of four settings.

The student shall have the opportunity to develop increased knowledge, attitudes, and skills in administration, research, and professional relationships. These include

experiences in collaboration between the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant, other staff, clients, family members, and /or significant others.

An optional Level II fieldwork experience can be completed in a foreign country as long as the student has completed two Level II fieldwork experiences in the USA. The fieldwork educator must have at least one year of experience in practice; must have graduated from a World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT) approved program, and the experience cannot exceed 12 weeks. Additional information about international fieldwork experiences can be found at <http://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Educators.aspx>.

We have fieldwork contracts with sites outside the state of Florida. Students who are or have been on warning or probation are **not** eligible to complete their Level II fieldwork outside of Florida.

Level I fieldwork is not substituted by any part of Level II fieldwork. Level II fieldwork rotations occur during the summer semester of the second year and the fall semester of the third year. OTH 5845 is the first Level II fieldwork experience and OTH 5846 is the second Level II fieldwork experience. Both OTH 5845 and OTH 5846 fieldwork courses include a web-assisted component. Students post their required assignments through e-Campus. Postings include topics such as, but not limited to: evidence-based practice, cultural issues, and psychosocial factors.

#### **National Certification Review Course:**

Students are required to attend a 2-day national certification review course. All students enrolled in the MSOT program are required to register for the TherapyEd review course in OTH 5846. **Failure to enroll in the review course will constitute a failing grade in OTH 5846.**

#### **General Objectives for Level II Fieldwork:**

Fieldwork objectives serve several purposes to the student and to the FWE. They indicate to the student the performance that is expected of him/her; may serve to promote self-directed learning and accountability. To the fieldwork educator, fieldwork objectives serve as a guide in planning learning experiences for the student. Fieldwork objectives also serve to guide student's evaluation process.

The student will be provided with opportunities to master competencies in the following domains. Upon completion of the Level II fieldwork experience, the student will be able to:

#### **Fundamentals of Practice:**

1. Follow the American Occupational Therapy Association, (AOTA) Code of Ethics in their practice.
2. Follow fieldwork Level II site specific policies and procedures.
3. Follow fieldwork Level II site safety regulations that are specific to setting/client(s).

4. Demonstrate good safety practices in all fieldwork activities for both self and others.

**Basic Tenets:**

5. Demonstrate the ability to communicate the roles of the OT & the OTA.
6. Demonstrate the ability to define occupational therapy, its values and beliefs.
7. Demonstrate the ability to use evidence-based practice
8. Demonstrate the ability to communicate the value of occupation & its desired outcome.
9. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with the client & those significant to the client.

**Evaluation and Screening:**

10. Demonstrate competency in all aspects of the evaluation and screening process used by the Level II fieldwork site.

**Intervention:**

11. Demonstrate competency in the intervention of occupational therapy service including selecting, implementing, and modifying service.
12. Demonstrate the ability to use occupation-based practice.
13. Demonstrate the ability to implement client-centered practice.

**Management of Occupational Therapy Services:**

14. Understand appropriate responsibilities to assign to occupational therapy assistants and occupational therapy aides at fieldwork Level II site.
15. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with other disciplines at Level II FW site.
16. Understand reimbursement for occupational therapy services at Level II FW site.
17. Demonstrate appropriate organizational & time management skills to meet the demands of Level II fieldwork site.

**Communication:**

18. Demonstrate clear and effective verbal and nonverbal skills when interacting with clients, client support system, other disciplines, service providers, and public.
19. Produce clear and accurate documentation following Level II fieldwork site guidelines.

**Professional Behaviors:**

20. Demonstrate ability to collaborate with supervisor.
21. Demonstrate ability to accept feedback from supervisor & modify behavior as needed.
22. Demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills.
23. Demonstrate appropriate demeanor and professional appearance.
24. Take initiative to seek out learning opportunities.
25. Demonstrate respect for diversity.

*All students must become familiar with the fieldwork objectives listed previously. These objectives **must** be met while at the fieldwork site.*

**Level II Fieldwork Schedule:**

<b>Semester</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Length</b>
Summer Second Year	<p><b>Hospital-based settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-Patient Acute</li> <li>• In-Patient Rehab</li> <li>• SNF/ Sub-Acute/ Acute LTC</li> <li>• General Rehab Outpatient</li> <li>• Outpatient Hands</li> <li>• Pediatric Hospital/Unit</li> <li>• Pediatric Hospital Outpatient</li> <li>• In-Patient Psych</li> </ul> <p><b>Community-based settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pediatric Community</li> <li>• Behavioral Health Community</li> <li>• Older Adult Community Living</li> <li>• Older Adult Day Program</li> <li>• Outpatient/Hand Private Practice</li> <li>• Adult Day Program for DD</li> <li>• Home Health</li> <li>• Pediatric Outpatient Clinic</li> </ul> <p><b>School-based settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Intervention</li> <li>• School</li> </ul>	OTH 5845  (first Level II)	3 months
Fall Third Year	<p><b>Hospital-based settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-Patient Acute</li> <li>• In-Patient Rehab</li> <li>• SNF/ Sub-Acute/ Acute LTC</li> <li>• General Rehab Outpatient</li> <li>• Outpatient Hands</li> <li>• Pediatric Hospital/Unit</li> <li>• Pediatric Hospital Outpatient</li> <li>• In-Patient Psych</li> </ul> <p><b>Community-based settings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pediatric Community</li> <li>• Behavioral Health Community</li> <li>• Older Adult Community Living</li> <li>• Older Adult Day Program</li> <li>• Outpatient/Hand Private Practice</li> <li>• Adult Day Program for DD</li> <li>• Home Health</li> <li>• Pediatric Outpatient Clinic</li> </ul>	OTH 5846 (second Level II)	3 months

	<b>School-based settings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Intervention</li> <li>• School</li> </ul>		
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**Fieldwork Selection Guidelines:**

- Students cannot complete their fieldwork experience at a facility unless there is a valid Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the facility and FIU.
- FIU has fieldwork contracts with sites in the state of Florida, the country, and abroad. Resource files are located in the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator’s (AFWC) office.
- Students will be given a choice of fieldwork sites based on the availability indicated by the individual facilities. Not all facilities in the resource files will be able to accept students for fieldwork.
- Students select five equally ranked sites for each fieldwork placement.
- In the event that a facility is selected by more than one student, assignments will be made using a lottery format.
- Attempts will be made to base placements on a good match between the student and the facility.
- Fieldwork sites are assigned to provide an equitable arrangement for all students.
- Students must be prepared to travel anywhere within the Tri-County area to complete their fieldwork experiences.
- Students may not get any of their choices.
- The AFWC will make the final decision regarding fieldwork placements.
- The AFWC will post the list of available in-state fieldwork sites on the fieldwork bulletin board located in the hallway at AHC3-A, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.
- Students are not allowed to set their own fieldwork with any facility with an established MOU with FIU.
- Students are encouraged to read the facility resource files located in the AFWC office prior to making their fieldwork choices.
- Changes of site are not allowed after the placement has been confirmed with the facility, except for the following:
  - The facility cancels the fieldwork, in which case the student will be assigned by the AFWC to an available facility.
  - There is a real and immediate emergency which the student could not have foreseen, which requires a change in the fieldwork. Emergencies do not include weddings, divorces, moving, or elective surgery.
- New MOUs are established when the facility meets the guidelines for providing fieldwork education and agrees to the contractual relationship.
- Students should be aware that the process of setting up a MOU can last as long as one year and MOUs may not always be finalized.

- Students must contact the AFWC when they want to set up a MOU with a new facility.
- When a student initiates a contract with a new facility, the placement at the facility will be reserved for the student.
- Students should not request to be placed in facilities where they are currently employed or have previously been employed.
- Under no circumstances is a student to telephone or meet anyone at a facility with an established MOU for the purposes of interviewing, touring, meeting staff members, or obtaining information in an attempt to secure a fieldwork slot.
- All fieldwork experiences are completed at sites that comply with FIU guidelines and ACOTE accreditation guidelines.
- The AFWC will post lists of available in-state slots on the fieldwork bulletin board located in the hallway at AHC3-A, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Students are required to attend all fieldwork meetings. Attendance will be taken. It is the student's responsibility to personally contact the AFWC if unable to attend a meeting.
- Students are responsible for researching their fieldwork choices prior to completing their fieldwork selection. Each fieldwork site has a file in the AFWC's office. Any information that the site has provided to the AFWC will be made available to students by appointment. Usually included in each file is:
  - a current Fieldwork Data Form
  - site specific fieldwork objectives
  - brochures and general descriptions of the facility
  - Student Evaluation of the Fieldwork Experience (SEFWE) completed by students who have affiliated at the facility in the past

**Students must not remove information from the student fieldwork files.** It is the students' responsibility to maintain the files in alphabetical order and in a neat manner. *If a file is empty, this likely means that it is a new site that has not completed its paperwork and it could still be a viable option.* However, the presence of a file does not guarantee that the facility has a spot for an FIU student.

- Students are responsible for checking the site requirements for each fieldwork facility they are scheduled to attend.
- Students must show compliance with America Data Bank- Immunization Tracking System before being assigned to a fieldwork site.
- All requests regarding fieldwork issues must be given to the AFWC in writing, not by phone.
- After a placement for fieldwork has been confirmed, the student is responsible for contacting the facility and to schedule an interview, especially for Level II fieldwork experiences.

- Any student with a disability that may affect their fieldwork performance should discuss their accommodation needs with the fieldwork educator prior to the start of the fieldwork experience. Students, who neglect to do this, may find out that the facility may not be able to accommodate their needs on short notice.
- Students are responsible for paying any additional background checks, drug testing, and/or finger printing required by the facility.
- Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to the fieldwork site.
- Upon completion of their fieldwork experience, students are responsible for submitting all fieldwork documentation to the AFWC in a timely manner.
- Students are responsible for maintaining a current address and phone number on file in the OT office at all times.
- Students who may become off-track are responsible for contacting the AFWC to plan and schedule their fieldwork experiences.

It is expected that the student will integrate didactic knowledge into the fieldwork experience through verbal communication, written documentation and professional conduct. In general, the responsibilities of students while on Level II Fieldwork include:

- Remembering that fieldwork is a learning experience. It is appropriate for students to ask questions, seek advice and guidance, explore resources, and engage in other activities that support learning and growth.
- Students must display professional behaviors at all times. If a student is unable to attend or may be late on a particular day, the fieldwork educator must be contacted as soon as possible. Missed days must be made-up.
- Students must follow the facility dress code requirements. Each facility will determine the type of clothing that is appropriate to the setting. Name tags may be required. In any setting, the following items are not appropriate: open toe shoes/sandals, tank tops/midriiffs, facial piercing, acrylic and/or long fingernails, dangling jewelry or suggestive clothing (e.g. low cut tops, leather, short skirts, low riding pants). A neat appearance, in terms of clothing and grooming, is required. See Appendix II.
- Fulfilling all duties and responsibilities identified by the clinical fieldwork educators and AFWC within the designated timelines.
- Keeping a current name, address, and phone number on file at Florida International University.
- Notifying the AFWC immediately should any problem arise during fieldwork.

- Complying with the laws, regulations, and professional standards identified by the fieldwork supervisors, the University, state licensure boards, and the American Occupational Therapy Association.
- Sending all completed forms to the AFWC in a timely manner in order to earn a final grade.

### **Academic Requirements:**

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all academic requirements are completed prior to beginning Level II Fieldwork. Students who are on warning or probation will not be allowed to complete their Level II fieldwork. Students must be *"in good standing"* with the University in order to participate in fieldwork activities.

### **Health Requirements:**

Students must comply with the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences health and immunization screening, and background check policy. The health and immunization screening includes the following requirements:

- Immunization and/or titers of:
  - Varicella, Rubeola and Rubella, Mumps or MMR vaccine
  - Tetanus Toxoid booster; diphtheria; pertussis, or ADACEL vaccine
  - Hepatitis B Vaccine (3 doses) or signed declination
  - PPD- 2 step-if 1<sup>st</sup> time taker
- Medical history and physical exam
- CPR/BLS – for health care providers from AHA or American Red Cross
- Proof of major medical health insurance coverage
- 7-year employment verification

Florida International University-Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences utilizes American Databank as the background clearing house and for tracking student immunization records.

Students are: a) required to complete the Immunization Tracking System, b) submit accompanying medical documentation of compliance to American Data Bank and c) to keep the requirements current for each semester, submitting documentation updates as needed.

## **Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing:**

To be approved for placement in clinical facilities, students must complete and pass criminal background checks and drug testing conducted in accordance with clinical background check and drug test requirements. The background check includes: social security number search (residency history, state and year SSN issued), criminal search (7 years), sex offender search, federal criminal search, and healthcare exclusion list.

Criminal background checks and drug testing information will be released to the Office of the NWCNHS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean or her/his designee will review the results of the NWCNHS students' criminal background checks and drug testing. A student's failure to pass the criminal background check and/or drug testing may result in non-approval for assignment to clinical facilities and may prevent the student from completing the program and/or from attaining the appropriate licensing.

Students must disclose to FIU Graduate Admissions charges and or convictions made before applying to the OT Program and to the NWCNHS during program progression. If convicted, charged with a criminal offense, or subject of any criminal proceedings, students must inform the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or its designee, in writing within 48 HOURS of its occurrence.

Clinical agencies and professional licensing/certification may require students and applicants to provide background checks and/or drug test results directly to them. The expense associated with background checks and drug testing is the responsibility of the student.

Students must sign and submit the NWCNHS Consent and Release form.

Student's criminal background and drug testing information will be placed in secure, locked storage files within the Office of the Dean or designee. Only the NWCNHS Associate Dean and her/his designees who assist in the interview procedure will have access to the information. The student's information will be destroyed when the student graduates or upon separation from Florida International University.

Given a positive background check, the flagged incident will be reviewed by the NWCNHS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with the Chair/Director or designee. A clearance decision will be made based on a number of factors, including but not limited to: agency requirements, date of conviction, nature of conviction, number of similar convictions, the relationship the conviction bears to professional and ethical duties and responsibilities in clinical facilities, completion of debt to society, and successful efforts in rehabilitation. If a student cannot be placed in one or more clinical agencies, that student may not progress in the program and, thus, the student will be dismissed from the program.

If a drug test is positive or diluted, the student will be given one additional opportunity to take a drug test **WITHIN FIVE DAYS** of receipt of the initial positive test. Students must

report **ALL** medications being taken on the drug test form. The student will **NOT** be allowed to attend a clinical site unless the second drug test is negative or cleared.

### **Guidelines for Background Check Evaluation:**

Offenses directly related to being “unsuited” for direct patient care include but are not limited to:

1. Violent Crime
2. Criminal sexual conduct in the third degree
3. Assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature
4. Unlawful neglect of a child or helpless person by a legal custodian
5. Child, elder and/or spouse abuse
6. Abuse or physical or mental injury to client or patient
7. Lewdness or indecent exposure
8. Possession, sale, and/or distribution of illegal substances
9. Administering or attempting to administer poison
10. Unlawful and malicious tampering with a human drug product or food
11. Any fraudulent practices including but not limited to Medicare/Medicaid fraud or perjury
12. A criminal offense similar in nature to above listed crimes committed in another jurisdiction or under federal law.

### **HIPAA, HIV/AIDS, Medical Errors:**

Prior to participating in clinical experiences, students are required to complete 3 courses [HIPAA, Medical Errors and HIV/AIDS-Universal Precautions] and submit their final exams to the AFWC. Students must earn a minimum of 80% in the exam. A certificate of completion is issued to the student upon completion of the courses. The medical errors course is required for participating in fieldwork and does not meet the requirement for licensure.

### **Health Insurance:**

Occupational therapy students are required to have personal health insurance (major medical) coverage. You are personally responsible for all of your health care expenses. As a student health care practitioner, exposure to infectious pathogens and injury are potential hazards. Neither the University nor any of the fieldwork sites are responsible for any medical expenses that may occur while enrolled in this program. It is mandatory to have appropriate (major medical) insurance coverage in case of illness, accident or injury.

### **Social Network:**

Being a health care professional, you now need to consider the following social network guidelines to ensure you are not unintentionally noncompliant with HIPPA regulations.

- When speaking with your peers while on fieldwork, you must realize that you cannot share any specific patient information on Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- It is a HIPPA violation if you mention a client/patient with enough information that the person might be identified, even if you avoid PHI. The consequences for violations, as you know, are severe.
- Names of supervisors, comments, and/or criticism about sites or information about what is happening at sites are not appropriate on social network sites.
- Students should not put posts or photos on social networks about fieldwork experiences (including location, clients, diagnosis, treatment, fieldwork educators and staff etc...).
- Publicizing where you are placed for fieldwork is up to you, but there might be problems with you being identified. Consider if you want privacy from clients, patients and staff.
- Use your official FIU e-mail address for all professional correspondence needed for all fieldwork related issues.
- Do not ask your supervisor to “friend” you while on fieldwork. This puts your supervisor and yourself in an awkward situation where personal information about each other can be accessed. If you mutually decide to do this after the fieldwork experience, this is your personal choice.
- If there are any questions or you are unsure of something regarding social networking, contact your FWE or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for advice.
- If you are attached to your cell phone and have to look at it constantly, it is advised you leave your cell phone in your car or in the office so you are not tempted to pull it out while you are with a patient, caregivers, your FWE, etc.
- Consider what you post on any social networking site. Many potential employers go to these sites to see what you have posted and often determine if they are interested in having you as an employee. Consider typing your name in the web to discover what others can see about you on the Internet.

**Attendance:**

Students are required to complete 24 weeks of Level II fieldwork experiences. This is a requirement mandated by AOTA for accredited programs. There may be situations in which the student must complete additional days or weeks in order to meet fieldwork objectives.

Any prolonged or frequent absences may jeopardize the fieldwork placement, possibly resulting in a cancellation of the fieldwork experience. All missed time will need to be made up. The FWE and AFWC must be contacted regarding missed time.

**Absences:**

Students are allowed two (2) excused absences per each Level II fieldwork for emergencies only. Any additional time or leave for personal reasons must be made up.

**Holidays:**

Holiday time will be determined by each individual facility. Students are expected to adhere to the facility policies, therefore if your supervisor is working a holiday you also will be required to work. If a student requires leave time for a religious holiday, they must arrange to make up the days. Contact the FWE regarding religious holidays.

**Schedules:**

Students are expected to follow the facilities work schedules. Many facilities work 6-7 days a week with flexible scheduling. Students will be required to follow their supervisor's schedule, which may require working on Saturday and/or Sunday, or ten-hour days. The students work time should not exceed the full time schedule for the facility (usually 40 hours).

**Fieldwork Sites Policies & Procedures:**

It is the student's responsibility to obtain and/or inquire about the facilities "Policies and Procedures". The student is expected to adhere to all policies and procedures of the clinical facility. Failure to comply with facility policies and procedures may result in early termination of an internship and a failing grade.

**Incident Report:**

If a student is involved in any incident in which there is potential for a professional liability action to be filed, the student must:

- Immediately notify the FWE and/or FWEC
- Immediately notify the AFWC of the incident.
- Provide the AFWC with a copy of any incident reports (if available) that are completed. In the event that a copy of incident report is not available for the student to provide to the AFWC, the student must document the incident, include the date, time, location, and details to the best of their knowledge, and submit this information to the AFWC.

**Injuries to the Student:**

Students are responsible for the management and costs incurred if they are injured during a fieldwork experience. They must follow the procedures requested by the facility and contact the AFWC as soon as possible. Absences will be handled as stated under

section “Absences”, and may require documented proof of ability to return to the fieldwork site.

If a student is injured during the internship timeframe, but not at the facility, absences will be handled as under section “absences”, and may require documented proof of ability to return to the clinical affiliation. *Neither the fieldwork site nor FIU has any responsibility for the injury.*

### **Clinical Site Visits:**

Knowledge of the clinical education programs is an important aspect of the AFWC’s job. Periodic visits are made to programs, within geographic capabilities. Telephone communication is used extensively as well. Any site should expect and request the assistance of the fieldwork coordinator while students are completing fieldwork experiences. Every attempt will be made to visit any student whose performance on fieldwork is problematic.

### **Reasonable Accommodations:**

The OT Department makes every effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities that may affect their fieldwork performance may request reasonable accommodation(s) for clinical placements. Students must be eligible under the definitions of the ADA in order to request accommodation and must be registered with the Disability Resource Center at FIU (<http://drc.fiu.edu>). Students with disabilities are encouraged to work with FIU’s Disability Resource Center to develop a request for reasonable accommodations that would allow for successful completion of the fieldwork component of their program.

It is highly recommended that students disclose a disability prior to starting fieldwork. Students who neglect to do so may find that the site cannot accommodate their needs at the last minute. The AFWC will work with students requiring accommodation to provide the student equal opportunities in fieldwork while meeting their individual needs.

### **Grading:**

Assignments for Level I fieldwork will be graded by the instructor of the related course (refer to the course syllabus for grading).

Level I (2 weeks-OTH5843); (4 weeks- OTH 5430L), and Level II (OTH 5845 & OTH 5846) fieldwork are graded Pass/Fail. Students at fieldwork must satisfactorily complete all associated assignments.

For Level II fieldwork, each student’s performance on fieldwork must be evaluated using the standard Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) adopted by the AOTA in August 2002. The FWPE is a formal assessment tool for evaluating a student’s

competence at the completion of a Level II experience. The FWPE evaluates the student's competence for entry-level occupational therapy practice. Performance items include: Fundamentals of Practice, Basic Tenets of OT, Evaluation and Screening, Intervention, Management of OT Services, Communication, and Professional Behaviors. In order to successfully pass the Level II fieldwork, the student must earn a minimum score of 122 and score at least a "3" in the Fundamentals of Practice items.

The deadline for submission of grades for fieldwork to the Registrar follows the regular academic calendar. Students whose completion of fieldwork is "out-of sync" with the academic calendar will receive an incomplete (IN) until they have successfully completed the fieldwork experience. Passing grades will only be given when the completed FWPE and required documents have been received by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Final fieldwork evaluations are kept in the individual student's record in the Occupational Therapy Department Office at FIU and are not sent to AOTA.

**Withdrawal or Termination of Fieldwork Due To Inadequate Performance:**

Students who withdraw from a fieldwork or are asked to withdraw due to inadequate performance will receive a *failing* (F) grade for that fieldwork. Inadequate performance may include unprofessional workplace behaviors, poor skill performance, poor clinical judgment, and any behaviors that put a patient/client at a safety risk. If an internship is terminated due to inadequate performance, there will **not** be any credit granted for partial time completed.

Any student who fails or withdraws from a fieldwork loses the right to choose clinical placement sites. Students who withdraw or are withdrawn from a scheduled fieldwork are not eligible to start another fieldwork until the next scheduled rotation. A student who marginally passes a fieldwork may be required to complete an additional fieldwork.

Students will be placed a maximum of three (3) times for clinical sites. The student will be required to meet with the AFWC and may be required to sign a contractual letter regarding responsibilities for subsequent clinical placements. Students who fail an internship may repeat one and only one internship. Students who fail two clinical internships will be dismissed from the program. Students who need to withdraw from a fieldwork due to illness are required to provide a physician's statement indicating the student's ability to resume full duties before being rescheduled for a clinical internship.

Students who have not completed six months of Level II fieldwork are not eligible to receive their Master of Science degree in occupational therapy. Students must complete all Level II fieldwork within 24 months of the completion of the didactic coursework.

## **What to do if you are having difficulty during your fieldwork?**

1. Attempt to discuss the issues with your fieldwork educator.
2. Keep a journal of meetings with the fieldwork educator and challenges you are facing as well as your strengths, weaknesses, and your activities.
3. Contact the AFWC to discuss options for a successful continuation and completion of your fieldwork. A site visit may be suggested to discuss the issues presented.

### **Appeals:**

Students desiring to appeal a fieldwork grade may do so by following the NWCNHS Student Academic Grievance/Appeal Procedure. Refer to Appendix III.

### **Licensing Information:**

Most states, including Florida, require licensure to practice. An updated list of licensed states may be obtained from AOTA (4720 Montgomery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220, telephone number, 301-652-2682 or 1-800-SAY-AOTA, for members of AOTA). State licensure in Florida requires successful completion of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) examination. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT Certification Examination or attain state licensure. Students should be aware that it is difficult (or impossible) to obtain a license if they have ever been convicted, plead guilty, or nolo contendere to a felony violation.

For the specific statutes that regulate the practice of occupational therapy in Florida, go to <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/occupational>

### **CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION:**

Once a student has successfully completed all academic and Level II fieldwork requirements, he/she is eligible to sit for the National Certification Examination. The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) offers continuous, computer-delivered, on-demand testing.

Students are responsible for obtaining the NBCOT Certification Examination Schedule, Candidate Handbook, and application form from NBCOT and submitting examination application and application related documents (e.g., special accommodations documentation) to NBCOT.

Steps for applying for the NBCOT exam:

1. Check PantherSoft for grades and degree to be posted
2. Request from the Office of the Registrar official transcripts (with degree posted) to be sent to NBCOT:  
National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.  
800 South Frederic Avenue - Suite 200  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
Telephone 301-990-7979  
[www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)
3. Complete NBCOT application form.
4. When the candidate's application is complete at NBCOT (i.e., application filed, fees paid, official transcript filed, and any other required examination-related documentation is filed), NBCOT will send the candidate the "Authorization to Test" (ATT) letter. Upon receipt, the candidate may schedule a time to take the certification examination at a Prometric Test Center.

### **Temporary License:**

The laws vary but, in most states including Florida, students can obtain a temporary license after successfully completing their Level II fieldwork and PRIOR TO CERTIFICATION.

The requirements for licensure may be found in Chapter 468, Part III, Florida Statutes and Rule Chapter 64B11, Florida Administrative code. For specific requirements and deadlines, check the Florida Board of Occupational Therapy website <http://floridasoccupationaltherapy.gov/licensing/occupational-therapist>.

The temporary license application process can take up to 6 weeks to complete. In Florida, it is against the law to practice occupational therapy without a license or temporary license. Individuals who begin to practice as an occupational therapist without a license jeopardize their chances of getting a license.

Students who plan to work outside of Florida need to follow the requirements for the state in which they intend to practice and are responsible for all necessary procedures.

FWEs are encouraged to send the Fieldwork Evaluation to the AFWC IMMEDIATELY upon the student's completion of the fieldwork experience in order to avoid any delays in the student's obtaining completed transcripts, and therefore, a license. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION IS RECEIVED BY THE LICENSING BOARD IN A TIMELY FASHION. THIS IS NOT DONE BY THE AFWC.

**APPENDIX I**



**Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences**  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Occupational Therapy Department

**Corrective Action Plan**

Student Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Corrective Action:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Outline of Corrective Action Plan:	Expected Outcome (include date/time frame for completion):

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX II

### PROFESSIONAL DRESS CODE

As a representative of Florida International University and the Occupational Therapy Department, the following dress code must be observed during fieldwork:

Uniform: Varies with the facility.

*Level I fieldwork:* Unless otherwise instructed, students are to wear their FIU-Occupational Therapy polo shirts and khaki slacks.

*Facilities may require the following:* White, short lab coat with FIU OT student emblem (lab coats and emblems are available in the bookstore) or scrubs.

*General dress considerations:* Students should always dress conservatively, even when casual dress is specified. Shirts/blouses must have collar and be long enough to tuck into skirt/slacks. Any tattoos should be covered. Shorts and jeans should never be worn, and skirts/dresses should be at or below the knee. Wear socks, closed toe shoes - no sandals, high heels or tennis shoes (unless specified by the clinical setting). When in doubt, be conservative.

Name Tag:

FIU Name Tag

Jewelry:

Be conservative. **NO** large earrings, bracelets, pins, flowers, pendants, or large rings are allowed.

Hygiene:

Hair: Clean and neatly styled. Beard or mustache must be neatly trimmed.

Body: Clean, use deodorant.

Perfume: Do not wear perfume or cologne to the clinic.

Nails: Neatly trimmed, clean, and less than ¼ inch in length. Nail polish, if worn, must be muted colors and not chipped.

Make-up: Conservative and low key.

Professional Behavior:

Smoke only in designated areas. Chewing gum is not allowed.

Do not bring cell phones to clinic. Always arrive on time. Do not plan to leave early.

## APPENDIX III

### NWCNHS Student Academic Grievance/Appeal Procedure (revised 12-7-11)

NWCNHS students have the right to grieve/appeal academic grading/course complaints/ controversies and program progression/dismissal decisions. According to the FIU Student Policy (undergraduate and graduate) written guidelines:

The FIU Academic Grievance Procedure indicates the reasons (nature of appeal) for an academic grievance include: “covers academic grievances which are defined as any complaint or controversy alleging: 1) unprofessional conduct by a professor which adversely affects either a student’s ability to satisfy academic expectations, whether in the classroom, the field, or a lab, or the student’s actual performance; 2) improper admission counseling; 3) improper counseling by an adviser; 4) arbitrary grading for coursework, comprehensive examination, thesis or dissertation; and 5) arbitrary non-renewal of a graduate assistantship or arbitrary dismissal from a course or program.” Students who wish to appeal MUST FIRST follow the NWCNHS academic grievance/appeal procedure.

1. Speak with the course faculty member(s) about grade or other controversies/course complaints within two (2) business days after grade is posted.

If a grade impacts the student’s progression for the subsequent semester and the student wishes to appeal, the student must begin the appeal process within two (2) business days after the grade is officially posted by speaking with the faculty member. The student must explain the nature (what is the reason) and condition (what are the facts to support the complaint/controversy) of the appeal.

A student who is dismissed from a program and files a grievance will NOT be allowed to enroll in courses until the grievance process is completed.

2. If unresolved at the faculty level, the student has seven (7) business days to proceed with the appeal to the level of the department chair/director (or designee), if the student desires. The appeal must be in writing and include the nature (reason) and condition (set of factors with data) of the grievance, and a summary of previous efforts to resolve it. The written appeal must be addressed to the department chair/director; a hard copy must be signed by the student grievant, and must be date-stamped by program staff upon receipt. In addition, the student must include a current address and telephone contact number(s). An email notification is not acceptable. An appointment to meet with the department chair/director will be made.

3. After the student submits the written appeal and meets with the chair/director of the program, a written response to the student via certified mail from the administrator or his/her designee will occur within seven (7) business days of the date-stamped appeal. If a student has not received a certified letter within ten (10) business days of the submitted appeal, the student MUST contact the office of the administrator.

4. When the student receives the letter from the chair/director of the program, he/she has seven (7) business days from the date on the letter to proceed with the appeal to the level of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (or designee), if the student desires. The document must include the nature and condition of the grievance, plus a summary of previous efforts to resolve it. The written appeal must be addressed to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; a hard copy must be signed by the student grievant, and must be date-stamped by program staff upon receipt. An appointment to meet with the Associate Dean will be made.

*NOTE: For a clinical course or clinical progression complaint/controversy, the student appeals to the Faculty Assembly Student Affairs Committee following the same process as stated above in 4. The level of appeals for a clinical course or clinical progression complaint/controversy is first (#1)—faculty member; second (#2)—Chair, Faculty Assembly Student Affairs Committee; third (#3)—Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; and fourth (#4)—Dean.*

5. After the student submits the written appeal and meets with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, a written response to the student via certified mail from the administrator or his/her designee will occur within seven (7) business days of the date-stamped appeal. If a student has not received a certified letter within ten (10) business days of the submitted appeal, the student **MUST** contact the office of the administrator.

6. When the student receives the letter from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, he/she has seven (7) business days from the date on the letter to proceed with the appeal to the level of the Dean (or designee), if the student desires. The document must include the nature and condition of the grievance, plus a summary of previous efforts to resolve it. The written appeal must be addressed to the Dean; a hard copy must be signed by the student grievant, and must be date-stamped by program staff upon receipt. An appointment to meet with the Dean will be made.

7. After the student submits the written appeal and meets with the Dean, a written response to the student via certified mail from the administrator or his/her designee will occur within seven (7) business days after the date-stamped appeal. If a student has not received a certified letter within ten (10) business days of the submitted appeal, the student **MUST** contact the office of the administrator.

**8. The Dean's decision is final.**



**Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences**  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Occupational Therapy Department

By my signature, I verify and confirm that I have received and read the Student Fieldwork Handbook. I acknowledge my responsibility to comply with the policies and procedures required by the Occupational Therapy Department.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_