

What is the role of the practicing clinician in supporting the Entry-Level Doctoral Degree? Understanding the Capstone Process



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Background

- January 2007 the master's degree became the minimum degree level to enter the profession as an Occupational Therapist in the United States (ACOTE, 1999).
- In 2007 Entry-level doctorate degree programs in Occupational Therapy also became an option for entry-level practice.
- The emphasis that the OTD degree would promote evidence-based practice and research, professional identity, autonomy, and interprofessional collaboration (Ruppert, 2017).
- In 2017 ACOTE mandated that by 2027 all programs would be required to switch to entry-level doctorate programs. AOTA and ACOTE ultimately decided to maintain dual-entry for the profession in 2019.



Learning Objectives

- The learner will understand the important history about the doctoral degree in OT
- The learner will gain insight into the implications of the doctoral degree in practice
- The learner will learn the benefit of supporting entry-level OT students in their Capstone research
- The learner will gain insight and understanding of the Entry- level Capstone research process and how to support students.



Menti Check In



Lets check-in to prepare for today's presentation



<https://www.menti.com/alwjcnzh325z>



The Doctoral Degree in Occupational Therapy

The doctoral degree allowed the profession of occupational therapy to begin to realize its impact and importance in health, prevention, and rehabilitation, but most importantly, it has given the profession a platform in which to promote the fundamental philosophy of occupation:

“doing beyond knowing”

(Rowles, 1991)



Context of Doctoral Capstone

- OT responsive to healthcare trend toward the entry-level clinical doctorate
- Nursing, PA, Psychology, Clinical Laboratory Science, PT
- These fields also define the capstone as *an opportunity to translate evidence into practice*
- Providing students the opportunity to integrate learning into a culminating scholarly project applicable to professional practice broader than just clinical skills, but with the potential to also expand scope of practice.

(Seegmiller, 2015)



Student Contribution to the Profession through the Doctoral Capstone Process

AOTF identified two critical needs for OT: the need for **more evidence** and the need for **more OT researchers**

*The doctoral capstone provides an opportunity for knowledge and scholarship to be translated, disseminated, and integrated into practice, offering a means for the diverse capabilities of the occupational therapy practitioner and profession to be **recognized** and **operationalized**.* (AJOT, 2022)

Recognized


Operationalized



Presbyterian College OTD Program Curriculum Design



Level II Fieldwork

- Two - 12 week FULL time rotations in two different practice settings
 - Objectives are collaborated on AHEAD of the start of the rotation between the school, the site, AND the student
 - Fieldwork rotations for Level I and Level II rotations must have an affiliation agreement in place to send students to the site.
 - At least one fieldwork experience (either Level I or Level II) must address practice in behavioral health, or psychological and social factors influencing engagement in occupation.
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Experiential Learning - Fieldwork

- Fieldwork is an integral process that connects the classroom to clinical practice.
- Fieldwork connects theoretical didactic classroom instruction to clinical practice
- Fieldwork must be integrated within the curriculum, apply core values of the profession, and reflect the curriculum design of each individual program.



Fieldwork Provides Professional Preparation

Fieldwork is guided by **Fieldwork Educators** in collaboration with the **School** and the **Student**

The focus for fieldwork is to develop of the following:

- Clinical Reasoning
- Reflective Practice
- Competence
- Professional Values.

The ultimate goal after successfully passing two Level II Fieldwork Experiences would be that the student achieves **Entry-Level Clinical Competence**



The Doctoral Capstone Experience (DCE)

- **The Doctoral Capstone Experience is guided & directed by the OTD Student.**
- The Doctoral Capstone Experience process allows students the opportunity to thoroughly explore an area/topic that interests them within the field of occupational therapy. The Doctoral Capstone Experience demonstrate synthesis of in-depth knowledge in the concentrated area of study/interest.
- ACOTE requires an intentional curriculum progression within OTD programs that also facilitate a synthesis of knowledge in one of the following designated areas of interest:

Clinical Practice

Research

Administration

Leadership

Program & Policy Development

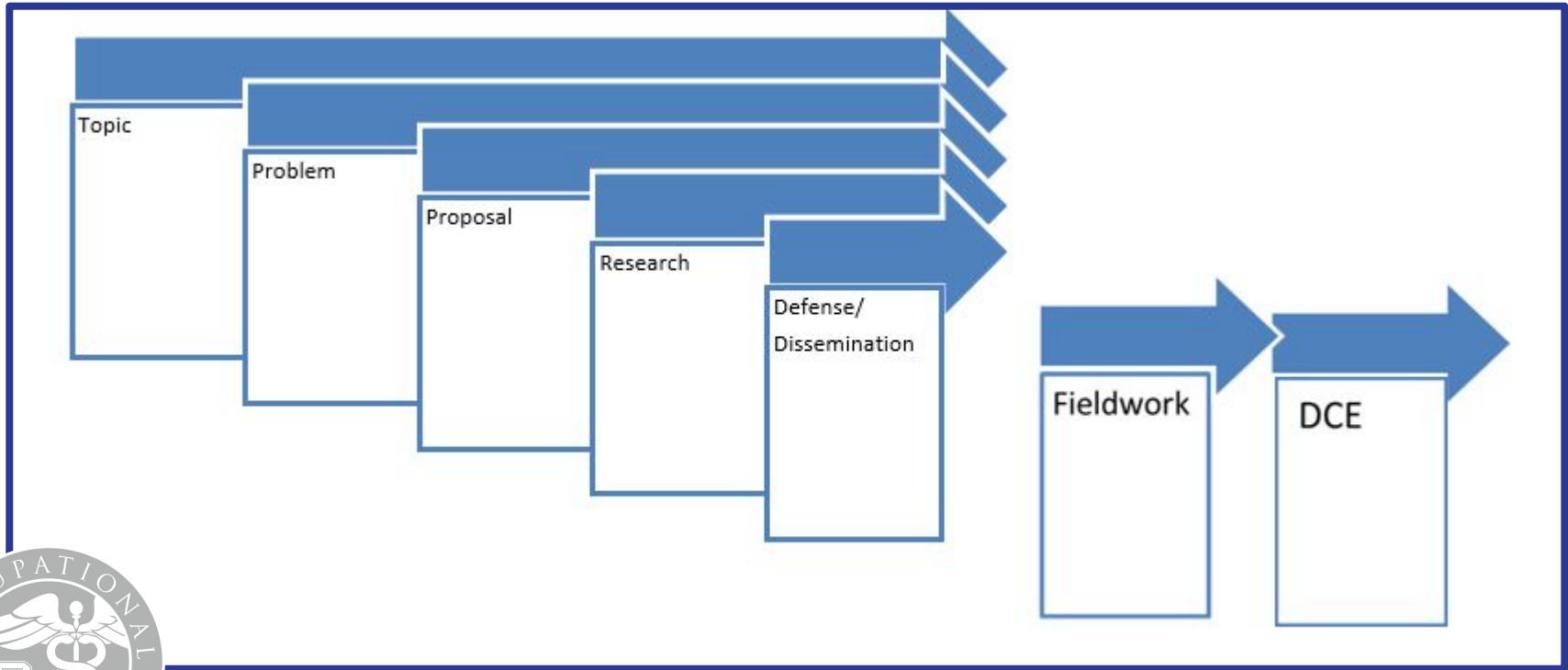
Advocacy

Education

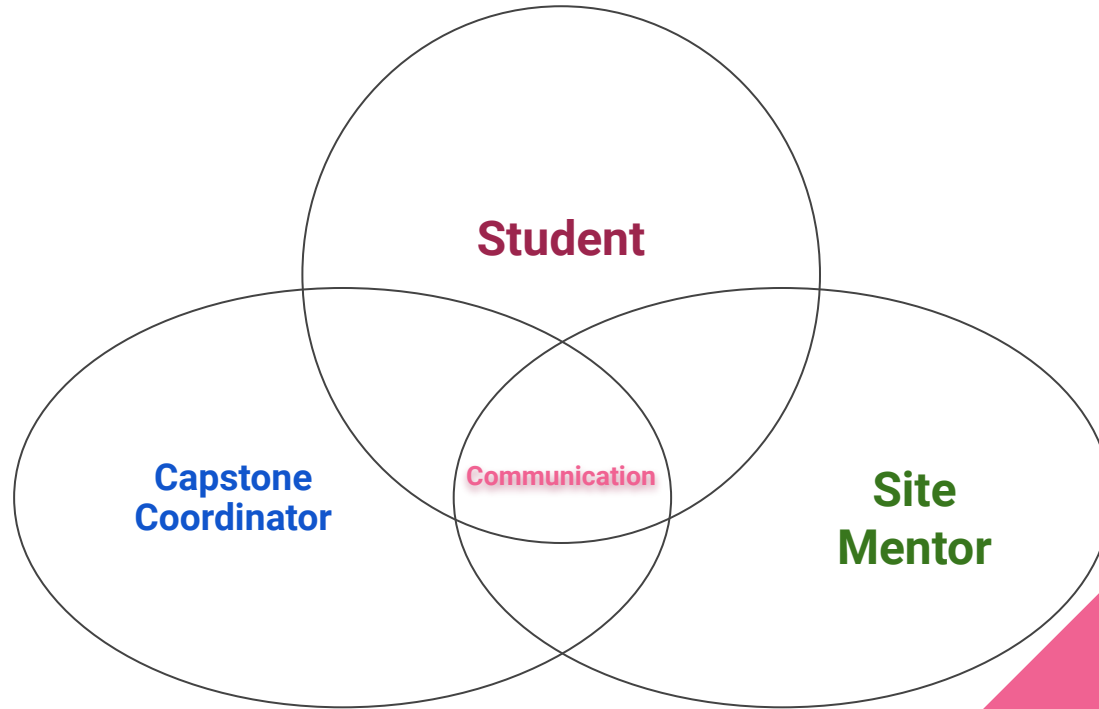
Theory Development



The progression to the Doctoral Capstone Experience



The Capstone Team



Student

Is a vital member of the DCE team

Drives the entire DCE process

- Meets with Capstone Coordinator and DCE Mentor on a regular basis
- Maintains communication with all team members
- Open to feedback

Networking/Professional Development

- Students do their due diligence prior to networking
 - My research shows...
 - Becomes intimately familiar with their area of research

Can present themselves with confidence at potential sites



Capstone Site Mentor

Expert in the Field

- Supporting Documentation
- OT professional vs. Non-OT professional
- Has the education that supports their expertise in their area

Supervising the Doctoral Student

- Provides Mentorship
- Shares their Expertise
- Provides an introduction to the team
- Provides an orientation to the site



Capstone Coordinator

Oversees and monitors the DCE process

Organizes meetings and answers questions

Facilitates the curriculum through the class sequence

- Remains familiar with student's topics
- Guides the student during the process
- Provides feedback
- Reviews student submissions

Performs Site visits

Makes difficult decisions to support the growth of the Capstone Experience.



How Does the DCE Evolve?

Research review

Capstone Development

- Ideas/Areas of passion
- Research
- GAP
- ACOTE Areas of Focus

Capstone Comprehensive

- Locate Site and Site Mentor
- Memorandum of Understanding
- IRB
- Proposal near completion

Capstone Experience

- Focus Group Interviews
- Implementation of the project
- Collection of data
- Determination of Effectiveness
- Deliverables
- Sustainability

Dissemination

- On site
- Numerous presentations throughout the DCE
- DCE Symposium
- Local Dissemination/SCOTA
- National Dissemination/AOTA
- Publication



Explaining the Capstone Experience

14 weeks

- 560 hours
 - 80% direct (448 hours)/minimum
 - 20% indirect (112 hours)/maximum
 - Direct vs. indirect hours vs. Balance

Time sheets

- Specifics about time
- Signatures

Evaluations (Created by the PC- OTD Program)

- Midterm evaluation
- Final evaluation
- Student's Site Evaluation



Limitations and Barriers

Capstone Experiences although wonderful also come with some limitations as well:

- Students having difficulty locating a site.
- Lack of Education about the Capstone Process
- Last minute cancellations
- Site attrition



Important Role of the OT Clinician in the DCE Process

- The DCE process encourages the involvement of other disciplines, settings, community, but it is also important to emphasize the need to educate, expand, include, and advance dedicated, skilled, experienced clinicians in this process.
- As student interests are expressed, clinicians can support research by potentially sharing their expertise, their sites, and access to their patient populations for these experiences.



Clinic = Practice Setting

- The OT *Clinician* reflects the diverse knowledge & skills required by the chosen practice setting.
- The **doing** pointed out by Rowles (1991) earlier in his theoretical premise of occupation emphasized the role of the *clinician*. .
- ***Doing is accomplished by application of evidence-based theory to practice & a focused synthesis of advanced knowledge in a practice area focused on outcomes through research & completion of a culminating project.***

(Deluliis, 2019)



More Research is Needed to Develop OT Evidence-Based Interventions & Predictable Outcomes

- Clinicians can play a key role in student success!
- Clinicians just need to be aware of opportunities that can expand their role, embrace their professional obligations, and expand their interest from just managing a caseload to visualizing a sample, developing a protocol, and realizing the consistent outcomes achieved by ‘what they do every day’!
- OT interventions need to be researched within practice to prove their clinical effectiveness & be identified as exclusive OT-specific, skilled interventions.
- OTD Capstone process/students can help formalize this process & minimize challenges & perceived obstacles.



Every Clinician is a Researcher

- OT-Specific
- OT-Initiated
- OT-Delivered

- Nothing we do in clinical practice is haphazard, we just don't stop to 'look at' what we do consistently for the outcomes we accomplish!
- *Clinicians need to be supported in their efforts to demonstrate & prove clinical effectiveness of their interventions & outcomes.* (Lindstrom, Bernhardsson, 2018)



Present and Future Implications of the Doctoral Degree in Practice

- Opportunity for students to connect/network with clinicians.
- Opportunity for students to discover clinician ideas comparable to theirs, share ideas, research and experience with potential research or Doctoral Capstone Experiences for building evidence based practice and predictable outcomes.
- Opportunity to expand capstone validity to protocol/program development/publication.
- Opportunity to be more than a project or experience, provides the evidence and format required for higher level research projects over-time, identifying OT as the distinct profession for implementation/change.



Doctoral Capstone Experience (Example)

OT Practitioner Idea -

Creation of a protocol that utilized some of the evidence-based approaches identified to be effective with stroke rehab & began to informally implement protocol. Read articles, attended CEUs.

1. Became aware of many stroke patient dissatisfaction following discharge from rehab.
2. Always disagreed with assumptions indicating a 1 year optimal recovery following stroke.

During PP-OTD program developed protocol with direct evidence-based support.



Doctoral Capstone Experience (Example continued):

First OTD Student interested/assumed protocol & available background research as Doctoral Capstone Project, but COVID prevented the implementation of the protocol and the project resulted in a Scoping Review to further explore evidence-based approaches.

Second OTD Student interested in stroke rehab. Upon sharing interest with faculty did further updated literature review to locate updated evidence-based support for her Doctoral Capstone Project. Student assumed the protocol and with her research/faculty mentor created a survey distributed to people who experienced a stroke within the last 5 years to support researcher assumption of dissatisfaction.

Doctoral Capstone Experience will be implemented through outpatient clinic in Union, SC, protocol implementation will be conducted by OTD Student, supervised by 2 PTs. Student and faculty interest paired together to bring culmination into a clinic based Capstone project.

Doctoral Capstone Experience Examples

Capstone Projects:

Past- Capstone

- Nutrition with Mothers a the Living Vine
- Upstate Warriors Solution
- Creating a pipeline for underrepresented students to study OT

Upcoming:

- Defining OT in Hospice Care
- Considerations for Sleep with Concussion Rehab



Breakout Session



Future Opportunities to Expand Professional Collaboration: Examples of how PICOT Questions and Hypotheses can develop from an Idea

I have been implementing a different progression for pre-writing skills

I have found that laying out clothes in a consistent order is more effective than demonstration with dementia clients

I have documented better outcomes with a dynamic wrist hinge splint vs 6 week immobilization s/p CTR

What is the most effective visual-perceptual assessment for pre-driving assessment?



PICO - T-T-T- Breakout discussion

P: (patient, population)

I: (intervention)

C: (comparison/ control)

O: (outcome/effects)

T: Time

T: Type of Question

T: Type of Study Design





Please scan this QR code if you are interested in hosting a Capstone student project from the Presbyterian College OTD program.



Questions?

Please feel free to email the speaker with any questions:

- Dr. Cindy Erb: cferb@presby.edu
- Dr. Moni Keen: mkeen@presby.edu
- Dr. Allie Turner: axturner@presby.edu



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