

Enhancing Connections with the Community through Entry-Level Doctoral Capstones

Presented by: Anne Kiraly-Alvarez, OTD, OTR/L, SCSS; Paula Costello, OTD, OTR/L;
& Kathy Preissner, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA

ILOTA Conference October 2020

Objectives

By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

- Describe the purposes of the entry-level Doctoral Capstone, including the Capstone Experience and Capstone Project.
- Explain the major responsibilities of an on-site Capstone mentor
- Reflect on others' previous experiences and identify future Doctoral Capstone opportunities relevant to one's own practice setting

All About Us

Midwestern University



University of Illinois at Chicago



Rush University



Introduction to the Doctoral Capstone

Capstone Experience

- A “full-time in-depth exposure in a concentrated area that may include on-site and off-site activities that meets developed goals/objectives of the doctoral capstone” (ACOTE, 2018, p. 47).
- **Student requirements:**
 - Complete all didactic coursework & Level II FW
- **Focused tracks:**
 - Clinical Practice
 - Research
 - Administration
 - Leadership
 - Program and Policy Development
 - Advocacy
 - Education
 - Theory Development
- Students are **mentored** at the capstone site by a content expert (**does not need to be an occupational therapist**).

TE, 2018)

(ACO

Capstone Project

- A “project that is completed by a doctoral-level student that demonstrates the student’s ability to relate theory to practice and to synthesize in-depth knowledge in a practice area that relates to the capstone experience” (ACOTE, 2018, p. 47).
- The Capstone Project is related to the experience and helps to inform the kinds of activities in which the student might engage during the Capstone Experience. It does not, however, constitute all the activities of the Capstone Experience.
- Students will complete an individual capstone project.
- Upon completion, students must disseminate their project.

TE, 2018)

(ACO

Differences between Fieldwork and the Capstone Experience

Characteristic	Level II Fieldwork	Capstone Experience
ACOTE Goal	“Entry-Level Generalist”	“Advanced Skills” beyond generalist level
Administrator	Academic Fieldwork Coordinator	Doctoral Capstone Coordinator / Director of Capstone Development
Supervisor & Credential	Fieldwork Educator – OTR/L	Site Mentor – may/may not be an OTR/L
Time	12 weeks full-time (480 hours)	14 weeks (560 hours)
Productivity	Gradual build up caseload....at end typical units of one FTE	May/may not bill for services (depending on the site/experience)

Characteristic	Level II Fieldwork	Capstone Experience
Location	100% of time on site	At least 80% of time on site
Duties	Provide direct or indirect services to client	Provide direct or indirect services to client, organization, or population
Learning Objectives	Site develops (w/ input from AFWC & student)	Student develops (w/ input from Site Mentor & Faculty Mentor)
Evaluation	Fieldwork Performance Evaluation	Individualized evaluation (based on program specific goals and student goals)
Placements	AFWC with student input	Student with Site & Faculty Mentor input

Responsibilities of an On-Site Capstone Mentor

- Collaborate with the student as they conduct a needs assessment to develop their Capstone Project.
- Collaborate with the student and faculty to develop a memorandum of understanding for the doctoral capstone experience that includes:
 - Individualized specific objectives,
 - Plans for supervision or mentoring, and
 - Responsibilities of all parties.
- Provide guidance to the student throughout the Capstone Experience as the student engages in various learning activities and conducts and evaluates their Capstone Project.
- Contribute to the formal evaluation of the student's performance during the Capstone Experience.

(OTE, 2018)

(AC

New Grad Panel

Panelists

- Megan Hunzeker, OTD, OTR/L
- Emily Miller, OTD, OTR/L
- Carissa Montague, OTD, OTR
- Marquie Price, OTD, OTR
- Morgan Stasell, OTD, OTR/L

Description of capstone sites and capstone experiences



Megan



Practice setting

- Rush University Occupational Therapy Department
- In collaboration with the Rush University Prosthetics Club
 - Volunteers with the nonprofit organization Enabling the Future

My Experience

- Gained in-depth experience using 3D printing for OT through:
 - Clinical observations, practical experience, and self-directed learning
 - Creating and implementing 3D printing lesson and project to first year students
 - 3D printing and evaluating upper extremity prosthetics for Enabling the Future



Emily

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

~~MD Anderson~~
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®

Practice Setting:

- University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (Houston, TX)
- The US's top cancer care hospital
- Inpatient stem cell transplant (SCT) unit

My Experience:

- Re-development of mental health group programming on the stem cell transplant unit
 - Designed new group sessions
 - Re-formatted implementation of sessions
 - Mental health areas addressed: cancer-related fatigue, cancer-related cognitive impairment, sexuality/intimacy, role changes, finding meaning (depression & anxiety), stress/coping
- Quality improvement project on the stem cell transplant unit
- Various other educational experiences--ex: observations, cancer core curriculum, co-authoring 2 articles, adapting sessions



Carissa



Emerging practice setting

- Inpatient migraine care unit for acute exacerbation of chronic headache conditions
- Interdisciplinary Team
 - Physicians, nursing, behavioral health, PT, acupuncture, and nutrition

My Experience

- Introduced occupational therapy services to unit
- Designed and implemented group and individual treatment sessions using a Lifestyle Redesign[®] approach
- Designed and conducted capstone project assessing effectiveness of occupational therapy on unit



Marquie

The Non-traditional Site:

- Hybrid government/non-profit organization
- Mission: “to provide hope, healing and justice for children (and non-offending family members) who have endured physical and sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child pornography, neglect, and exposure to violence” (Will County CAC, 2020).
- Serves children who have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse, violence, or neglect, and their families.

The Doctoral Intern (Me):

- Facilitated staff in-services and presented at a conference
- Co-developed telehealth policy in light of the pandemic
- Completed occupational profiles and cultivated an occupational performance screening tool
- Developed and implemented my capstone project



Morgan



- **City of Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**
 - Experience:
 - Non-traditional and non-clinical site
 - "Needs assessment"
 - Information and referral
 - Census outreach
 - Attendance at city-wide meetings, advocate for disability needs
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program
 - Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation (ITAC)
 - Accessibility Compliance Unit
 - Architectural reviews
 - COVID planning
 - Summer programming for youth with disabilities
 - Job Shadow Day
 - One Summer Chicago
 - MOPD Collaborations- CTA (ASAP), CDOT (Accessible Pedestrian Signals)

Examples of Capstone Projects

Megan

Need

- Emerging evidence supports 3D printing provides a customizable, low-cost technology for providing items such as adaptive equipment and prosthetic devices
- Research on OT-specific outcomes as well as knowledge of practical considerations (time, cost, etc.) compared to current practices are lacking

Project

- Completed a cost-effective analysis of ten pieces of 3D printed adaptive equipment in comparison to comparable commercially available items
- Identified and discussed other benefits and barriers including time, customizability, and replicability

Results

- All 3D printed items were 10.5 times more cost-effective than commercial items, with the average material cost for the 3D printed items at \$3.37
- 3D printing can replicate commonly used adaptive equipment for a comparable cost as well as create and customize a novel item
- User-friendly computer aided design software allows for easy customization of items in house
- Average print time was 4 hours, 11 minutes; however no prints require supervision enabling the ability to leave in print running in preparation for a client



Emily

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center
Making Cancer History®

Need:

- Cancer patients commonly have a disruption in occupational participation/performance due to mental health challenges
- Needed education in coping skills to manage mental health challenges
- Previous group programming did not meet these needs

Project:

- Conducted Needs Assessment, Literature Review, interviewed OT group leaders, performed chart reviews, created new sessions and found supporting documents, created marketing tools, began implementing sessions, feedback from patients post-sessions
- Weekly OT mental health group session with rotating topics

Outcomes:

- OT group *leaders felt more comfortable* leading sessions (with new format)
- There was an *increased patient and health care provider awareness* of the impact of cancer on mental health
- Cancer patients were *educated* on impacted mental health areas and coping strategies



Carissa

Need

- Chronic migraineurs are at risk of decreased participation in valued roles, habits, and routines
- Areas of greatest impact include work and social/family participation

Project Design/Implementation

- Quantitative pre-test, post-test study to determine the the impact of OT on self-efficacy, headache burden, and occupational performance satisfaction
- All participants completed surveys at admission and four weeks post-discharge to assess carryover
- Study participants agreed to participate in at least 3 individual or group occupational therapy sessions
- Sessions included client-centered pain management strategies, pain education, self-advocacy, occupational self-analysis, and incorporation of health promoting habits into daily routines

Results

- Study participants showed significant increases in occupational performance satisfaction on COPM, also showed increases in self-efficacy
- Control participants showed significant decreases in self-efficacy

Marquie

Gaps and needs:

- Disruptions in occupational participation, performance, and engagement
- Barriers to engagement in meaningful, age appropriate occupations
- The child and family's skills and environment are often the focus of treatment

Implementation:

- Program Development: the refinement of 4 existing group curricula (early childhood, childhood, adolescent/teen, and parent/caregiver)
- Advocacy: the development and implementation of external educational on trauma informed care for facilities that frequently interact with children who have experienced abuse/neglect

Outcomes:

- OT influence addressed play, education, and sensory regulation skills
- Prevention of continued abuse, health promotion, wellness, improved quality of life, and access, self-advocacy, and justice
- Continued OT services would provide opportunities for staff and caregiver training on home-care techniques and strategies
- "OT and trauma therapy work hand-in-hand and compliment each other"

Morgan

- Lack of programming on the hotel experience of people with disabilities.
 - Hotel stays are involved in a variety of occupations, including health, leisure and work activities
 - Still encountering difficulty and barriers despite adoption of Title III of the ADA
- Qualitative Phenomenological Research Study-The Hotel Experience of People with Disabilities
 - 8 semi-structured interviews (Zoom or in-person with ASL interpreter)
 - Various disabilities represented
 - 6 themes
 - Customer service, reservation process, traits and skills, built environment, use of technology, and safety and emergency preparedness
 - Implications for OT:
 - Advocate for accessible places of lodging and equal access to hospitality services, consult with hotels for increased awareness of disability needs, provide direct intervention with clients who wish to travel

Lessons Learned

Megan

Takeaways

- The opportunity to gain experience with leadership in the academic setting teaching and grading students
- The opportunity to be the primary investigator on a research study
- Learned how to be an adaptable and self-directed learner
- Interprofessional collaboration with medical students, engineers, and prosthetists
- Gained a concrete skill in using 3D printing for applications in OT
 - Advocating for and implementing what I have learned while working in the future



Emily

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

~~MD Anderson~~
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®

Takeaways:

- Health professionals don't always understand the role that OT can play in mental health
 - Especially in traditional physical disability settings
 - We need to **advocate** for ourselves!
- The mental health of cancer patients is severely affected by diagnosis and treatments
 - **Disruption** of roles, routines, relationships, and environments!
- Patients need to learn positive coping skills that they can carryover into their daily lives
- It is important for multi-disciplinary collaboration when it comes to mental health practice
 - Ex: Psychiatrist
- We need to **adapt** to better meet our patients needs



Carissa

Takeaways

- Occupational therapy can play a vital role in patient empowerment for individuals with chronic pain
- Advocacy for occupational therapy is a dynamic, ongoing process within and beyond the interdisciplinary team
- Professional collaboration enhances delivery and outcomes for all services
- It is important to meet patients where they are to stay truly client-centered
 - Understanding past experiences, current relationship with condition, and readiness for change

Marquie

- Realistic expectations and adaptability
- Children's resilience and survival skills
- How prevalent trauma from abuse and neglect is in our society
- How trauma impacts nearly every area of occupation
- Leadership skills
- Advocating for the value and impact of OT profession in non-traditional settings
- The importance of bilingual services, representation, and cultural humility- and how these factors are not always considered in every aspect of service provision

Morgan

- Occupational therapy perspective is helpful even in non-traditional and non-clinical settings.
 - People skills, activity-analysis on how to approach projects, health literacy
- Qualitative research requires a well-thought out process and takes time
 - Phenomenological study
- There is work to be done to improve the hotel experience for people with disabilities.
 - While there has been some improvements in this industry, more can be done. OT practitioners can play a role in this!

Reflection

- How can you see an OTD student participating in a Capstone at your site?
 - What needs does your department/facility have?
 - What are the needs of the clients you serve?
- What other community organizations can you envision benefitting from an OTD student's efforts through a Capstone?
- If you have questions or comments, please email us!

Feel free to
contact us!

Paula J. Costello, OTD, OTR/L
Doctoral Capstone Coordinator
Rush University
312-942-4713
Paula_J_Costello@rush.edu

Anne Kiraly-Alvarez, OTD, OTR/L, SCSS
Director of Capstone Development
Midwestern University
630-515-7340
akiral@midwestern.edu

Kathy Preissner, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Capstone Coordinator
University of Illinois at Chicago
312-996-5220
kpreiss@uic.edu

References

- Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education [ACOTE]. (2018). 2018 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) standards and interpretive guide. Retrieved from [https://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/StandardsReview/2018-ACOTE-Standards-Interpretive-Guide.pdf](https://www.aota.org/~/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/StandardsReview/2018-ACOTE-Standards-Interpretive-Guide.pdf)
- Cleary, D. & Kemp, E. (April 2018). *Clinical & Experiential Education: Current Roles & Experiences*. Presentation at the AOTA Academic Fieldwork and Capstone Coordinators Academic Leadership Council, Salt Lake City, UT.