



ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Committee Members Present

Denise Miller – Board President/Chair
Beata Morcos – Board Vice President
Heather Martin – Executive Officer

Board Staff Present

Demetre' Montue - Analyst
Rachael Hutchison – Analyst

Public Attendees Present

Sharon Pavlovich – Loma Linda
Candace Chatman - USC
Deanna Mannarelli - USC
Susan MacDermott – St. Augustine
Mary Kay Gallagher - OT
Judie Bucciarelli - DCA
Clarissa Saunders Newton - OT

Public Attendees Present

Akemi McNeil - Stanbridge
Kathryn Wise - UOP
Penny Stack – Loma Linda
Bryant Edwards – OTAC President
Kristen Neville – AOTA State

1. Call to order, roll call, establishment of a quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 1:07, roll was called, and all three committee members were present. A quorum was established.

2. President/Committee Chair’s Opening Remarks.

Board President and Committee Chair Denise Miller welcomed and thanked everybody in attendance and expressed that she looked forward to a robust and high-level discussion that would help guide the Board.

Vice President and Committee member Beata Morcos said hello to all in attendance and thanked them for their time.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda.

Committee Chair Denise Miller reviewed the public comment submitted regarding supervision of students completing their doctoral capstone. The author stated that she was not exactly sure where the supervision ratio should be set but she believed that a supervisor should not have to supervise more than four or five people at one time. She agreed that there would be variables to consider pertaining to caseload and administrative duties.

4. Consideration and discussion on the maximum number of students completing a non-clinical entry-level doctoral capstone that can be supervised by an

occupational therapist who is concurrently supervising occupational therapy assistants, limited permit holders or students completing their fieldwork.

Committee Chair Denise Miller introduced the topic and invited discussion.

Candace Chatman, Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at the University of Southern California (USC), asked for clarification on definitions. Candace asked if the Board had defined what non-clinical means. As a fieldwork coordinator, she has defined non-clinical as those sites where the student is doing very little work with patients. The students are working more in an administrative or research role without patients/clients. Candace noted that non-clinical can mean something different at each school. She stated that the amount of time with patients can differ from school to school. At USC, clinical placement is defined as more than 60% of the time is spent with clients.

Chairperson Denise Miller asked Ms. Chatman what parameters were used to come up with the 60% reference in clinical placements.

Candace Chatman explained that the 60% was determined by their team but could not recall the specific parameters that were used to make that determination. For her, 60% calculates to about four out of five days of the week, the student was working with patients. Candace noted that USC struggled with Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standards because they are vague in regard to defining what full-time is at each site. This means that USC has the flexibility to decide what fieldwork looks like to them.

Ms. Miller asked Ms. Chatman if three out of five days would be considered less than 60%, meaning non-clinical work.

Ms. Chatman responded that her USC team considered three out of five days to be non-clinical work. However, she clarified, that the distinction may vary by school. She reiterated that USC does not require their occupational therapists to take on a specific number of students.

Chairperson Miller asked Ms. Martin to provide some background as to why this topic is before the committee.

Executive Officer Heather Martin explained that although the statute said that an occupational therapist can supervise no more than three occupational therapy assistants, the language did not address limited permit holders and students completing their fieldwork and doctoral capstone supervision. Ms. Martin noted that a supervising occupational therapist has the continued clinical supervisory responsibility for not only their own clients, but also for the occupational therapy assistants, limited permit holders, level one and level two fieldwork students and students completing their doctoral capstone and she was concerned that the statute didn't accurately reflect real world supervision ratios and wondered if consumer safety could be ensured as the statute was currently written?

Ms. Martin showed the recommended amendment to the regulations that would define a Doctoral Capstone Student as well as the approved language being added to the OT Practice Act, Section 4181 that outlined the number of student(s)/permit holder(s) that

could be supervised at one time. Ms. Martin informed the committee that when that language was approved there was no distinction made between clinical and non-clinical.

Chairperson Miller thanked Ms. Martin for her explanation of the topic at hand and opened the floor for further discussion and public comment.

Susan MacDermott, Doctoral Capstone Coordinator for the University of St. Augustine in San Marcos stated that capstone experiences vary in the amount of time that the students are there as well as their focus such as program development, research, administrative etc. The majority of St Augustine students are not in the same place at one time and most students have a mixture. Ms. MacDermott agreed that the determining the difference of clinical vs. non-clinical is problematic since many of their students are in emerging practice areas; it might be hard to ascertain what is clinical and what is not. Additionally, there is a definition of a sight supervisor and a mentor, each school could also interpret that differently. There are two roles that could be the same person but could also be two different people. Mentoring could be virtual or not at the same site. Both roles could be filled by an occupational therapist or another professional.

Chairperson Miller asked Ms. MacDermott to summarize her statement.

Ms. MacDermott responded that some universities have mentors that are faculty some are occupational therapists. Site supervisors can be defined many ways. It is different from fieldwork where a student is at a particular place and has a supervisor for a certain amount of time. Some of their students have been at one place and some have been at ten for a short period of time during their capstone experiences. Wondering how this would play out for someone who has different focus areas and different time commitments. Most of the time capstones are unique and flexible.

Ms. Miller asked in terms of the categories that the Board look at including limited permit holders, level one and level two students, and doctoral capstone students.

Ms. MacDermott confirmed those as the correct categories for the Board to consider. She further clarified St. Augustine University has their own site supervisor and mentor, but this is not the case at all schools. At other universities the supervisor and the mentor could be the same person. She confirmed for Ms. Miller that the supervisor is not required to be an occupational therapist, and, in fact, the majority of their supervisors are not occupational therapists because a lot of their students are doing emerging area focused projects.

Executive Officer Heather Martin confirmed that the Board does not have jurisdiction over mentors of capstone experiences.

Ms. Miller reiterated that what was before the committee involved the licensed occupational therapist that is supervising in these areas.

Ms. Martin asked if site supervisor is defined in ACOTE standards.

Ms. MacDermott responded that she did not believe it is defined in the ACOTE standards. The ACOTE standards speak to mentorship.

Akemi McNeil, member of The California OT Fieldwork Council (CAOTFC) and Stanbridge University's Master's Program, noted that fieldwork educators should be a licensed practitioner that has at least one year of experience. Ms. McNeil reported that there are a lot of sites that give the fieldwork educator enough control over whether they say yes or no to a fieldwork student and they give it as an option but there are sites that are making it a mandatory once a year commitment. She was aware of a situation where a student was sent to a location by a site coordinator, not the fieldwork educator and a few weeks into the experience the student came to her with performance concerns and reported that the fieldwork educator told the student that they did not want the student there in the first place. Ms. McNeil stated that some sites have such heavy loads with high productivity and are asked to take students on top of that. There are occupational therapists that take students that are more on the director side where they have a lower-case load and can take on more students.

Akemi McNeil expressed concern surrounding the maximum of three student(s)/permit holder(s). She stated that if there were three persons being supervised that it would leave no room for supervision of a Level 1 student. Ms. McNeil also asked that "approval by the Board" be defined and suggested that language be considered that would allow the site to make a judgement call on the maximum number a practitioner could supervise as long as the facility is making patient safety the determining requirement.

Ms. Miller stated that the Board has a statute and consumer safety driven. There are facilities that do not interpret the statute the way that they are supposed to and will take on too many students. The Board does not want to limit what is already a troublesome spot for the fieldwork coordinators trying to find locations, but consumer safety is a priority, and the board is hoping that the committee can advise on that number while considering the public comment letter.

Ms. McNeill stated that from her CAOTFC perspective with six or seven years under her belt, she has not witnessed an educator take on too many students. She even had a couple sites that took groups and that was not a significant concern, which is an indicator for her that the above is not happening across the board. Ms. McNeill felt that the committee should look at the scenarios where it is happening.

Chair Miller steered the meeting to the chat beginning with Penny Stack's comment regarding the role of a site mentor.

Penny Stack, OTD, OTR/L, CLT, Assistant Professor at Loma Linda University mentioned that she struggled with the terms clinical vs. non-clinical as well. If you have a capstone student who is engaged in research of treatment, or modality, or an intervention of some sort they are not licensed so they would need supervision like a level II fieldwork student. Ms. Stack agreed with the prior comments that it is going to vary greatly as far as time spent and she wondered and expressed concern on how to reconcile that and still provide consumer protection and the required educational experiences?

Chairperson Miller responded that Ms. Chatman's facility calculates in terms of time, or amount of days spent and it seemed that Loma Linda calculates by time as well.

Ms. Stack commented that her next question might be unpopular but needed clarification all the same. She stated when comparing practitioners in the field that may provide supervision to a doctoral capstone student, how would those same rules apply to licensed OT faculty that are also supervising capstone students. For example, a capstone student will have a committee or team. The team consists of a capstone coordinator, a faculty mentor, an incitement mentor, and the faculty incitement mentor could be one person or two. The doctoral capstone student will have a team behind them supporting them whereas in fieldwork they do not have that kind of set up. If the board is sanctioning how many fieldwork students a practitioner can supervise, how does that impact faculty of a doctorate program that has 40 students and there may be 10 faculty. Does that fall under the same regulation?

Ms. Miller thanked Ms. Stack for raising that question and opened the floor to Ms. Martin to weigh in first.

Ms. Martin reminded the audience that the Board has already made recommendations on the clinical portion. For the sake of the conversation, the non-clinical is the other four areas that the capstone can be completed in. For example, research, administration and leadership, policy program and policy development, advocacy education in theory development. She recommended defining non-clinical capstone experience and include that list in the committee's recommendation. Ms. Martin believed Ms. Stack brought up a great point and does not have an answer for her.

Chairperson Miller asked the audience if they saw the non-clinical capstone as needing its own separate set of guidelines? Is it hard to get to a maximum number because of the capstone being put in with these other areas? Originally, the capstone was not in there, but has now been added.

Ms. Stack agreed with Chairperson Miller.

Ms. Miller asked if the committee had the ability to agree on no more than four fieldwork students under section (d)(4) and include a subset that calls out the capstone students. Ms. Miller stated it's her belief that the committee was having a hard time getting to a number because doctoral capstone was included rather than a subset.

Ms. Martin responded that she felt the impasse was due to clinical versus nonclinical doctoral student supervision. The board discussion came after this language so perhaps it's worth going back and including and identifying doctoral capstone experience in a clinical practice setting and possibly except the non-clinical doctoral capstone.

Ms. Miller thanked Ms. Martin for her input.

Candace Chatman responded that she was in favor of the way it was described by Ms. Martin with the exceptions making a lot of sense. There is not a threat to consumers in the non-clinical areas. Ms. Chatman thought consensus could be reached if non-clinical was excluded.

Kathryn Wise, OTD, MHSc, OTR/L and Assistant Clinical Professor and the Doctoral Capstone Coordinator at the University of the Pacific in Sacramento stated that capstone coordinators have thought about mentorship and admittedly struggled to figure out time associated with mentorship. Ms. Wise agreed that the challenge is making mentoring and supervision all-encompassing which poses difficulty because mentorship and supervision are two very distinct skill sets and the impact on the consumers would be very different.

Kristin Neville, AOTA State Affairs Manager introduced herself. She is not a trained occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant. She works on regulations at AOTA and reads them and tries to interpret them in a way that an occupational therapist would. Ms. Neville asked for clarification on the previously approved language and whether it was a total of three student(s)/permit holder(s) or three of each type of student and permit holder mentioned.

Executive Officer Martin stated that the intent was a total of three and she agreed that the language would be clearer with “no more than a total of three...”.

Chair Miller stated that she was unsure if language could be drafted to give that permission to a site.

Executive Officer Martin said that the committee could still recommend that the Board increase the maximum number of persons supervised, however, from a regulatory standpoint it would be a real challenge to get language approved that referred to each site determining that maximum based on safety.

5. Consideration of possible recommendation to the Board on the maximum number of students completing a non-clinical entry-level doctoral capstone that can be supervised by an occupational therapist who is concurrently supervising occupational therapy assistants, limited permit holders or students completing their fieldwork.

Chair Miller explained that next steps would be for the committee to decide if they were at a point to make a final recommendation. If so, the committee members would state their agreement or changes to the offered language and give reason or whether they felt another meeting was warranted. If another meeting was needed, Ms. Miller asked that the committee members place their opinions in writing regarding the maximum total number of student(s)/permit holder(s) that could be supervised by a practitioner at one time. Their opinion should include real world scenarios to justify their position as well as a list of exceptions to include for the Doctoral Capstone. These opinions would be discussed at a subsequent committee meeting before bringing the ideas before the Board so it could make a decision with the committee’s input in mind.

Vice Chair Beata Morcos and Executive Officer Heather Martin both agreed that the committee would need a second meeting.

Ms. Martin prefaced her ask with the fact that “mentorship” cannot be used in the language and she encouraged the committee members to think of another way to phrase the use of “supervision” in the proposed language regarding clinical practice areas.

6. New suggested agenda items for a future meeting.

Chair Denise Miller asked the committee to look at the language presented at the meeting and think through the scenarios, the capstone role, and the exceptions that were discussed and to bring those thoughts to the next meeting in writing.

Ms. Martin asked that the committee provide information and/or direction regarding the differentiation in research that involves patients, students, clients etc. as opposed to just the research for a capstone student and to think of another way to phrase the use of “supervision” in the proposed language regarding clinical practice areas.

7. Consideration of the Committee’s next steps.

Chair Denise Miller stated that the Administrative Committee would follow up with an email outlining the information needed for the next meeting.

Ms. Miller thanked everybody for their time and expertise.

Meeting adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.