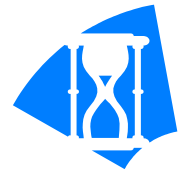




# Models of Fieldwork

## Full-Time Student : Part-Time Educator



### **Description:**

A fieldwork model that involves one student completing a full-time placement while being assigned to a supervising therapist who works on a part-time basis.

### **How it Works:**

In this model, the student is paired with one fieldwork educator who takes responsibility for the overall placement while working on a part-time basis. This model is suitable for a clinician who only works part-time, or who works in two different programs/facilities where only part of the workload or caseload may be suitable for a fieldwork placement. The student consults with this fieldwork educator throughout the placement for skill learning, reflection on practice, and guidance on the role of occupational therapy in that particular setting. Different approaches can be used to maximize the student's learning during the time that the fieldwork educator is not on-site. These include:

**Delegated Direct Service:** the student continues to be involved with the fieldwork educator's caseload on days when he/she is not present. The fieldwork educator and student develop a plan that the student can engage in while the therapist is off-site; how the student will be coached by the fieldwork educator in his/her absence (e.g. via phone and/or e-mail for consultation) ; other staff that are available for consultation; and emergency contact personnel (e.g. Academic Fieldwork Coordinator).

**Invited Learning:** the student seeks out learning opportunities from other staff members (who may or may not be occupational therapists) at the site during the fieldwork educator's absence.

**Non-clinical Roles:** When the fieldwork educator is not on site, the student engages in non-clinical roles such as working on a project, program planning, and/or research.

It is important that the student have two support systems in place should concerns arise while the fieldwork educator is off-site. One support system should be that of another staff member of the site, to answer facility specific questions. Additionally, the student should have contact with an occupational therapist for urgent situations. This back up may be another OT on site, or may be access to an occupational therapist via telephone and/or e-mail.

### **Strategies for Success:**

The **role of the fieldwork educator** in this model is to facilitate student learning. Strategies are as follows:

- ➔ Provide comprehensive orientation material for the student so that less direct time needs to be spent providing orientation and to increase independence in the fieldwork educator's absence.
- ➔ Prepare clear and measurable objectives for the student in advance of the placement which will be reviewed with the student at the beginning of the placement period and further individualized to include student-identified needs and objectives.
- ➔ Review placement objectives regularly to address any concerns and ensure attempts are being made to meet them in order to eliminate any surprises at evaluation time.
- ➔ Make use of tools such as a learning contract, observation logs and/or a reflective journal.
- ➔ Provide plenty of opportunities for the student to practice skills in a supportive environment.
- ➔ Establish a regular meeting schedule (at least once a week) in order to address performance issues, answer questions, offer feedback, review placement objectives, and address any concerns.
- ➔ Set up an environment that encourages open communication.
- ➔ Promote the student as a junior colleague in the profession.
- ➔ Role model clinical skills and reflect out loud actions and decisions to facilitate development of professional reasoning in the student.
- ➔ Role model collaboration with other occupational therapists and health care professionals.
- ➔ Facilitate other learning opportunities in the setting that may complement the student's experience.

The **role of student** in this model is to be an equal participant in the learning process by accepting responsibility for his/her own learning and to work collaboratively with others. Strategies for doing this are as follows:

- ➔ Share ideas and intervention planning with the fieldwork educator when available.
- ➔ Self-evaluate and reflect on interactions with clients, family members, and other health care professionals.
- ➔ Be an active learner by expressing interest, seeking out information from sources other than the fieldwork educator, and by asking questions.
- ➔ Clearly understand the learning objectives and request clarification as needed.
- ➔ Request assistance from other staff at the facility and/or organization when appropriate.

The **role of the facility/organization** in this model is to provide an appropriate level of back up support for the student when the fieldwork educator is not present.

The **role of the University** includes: educating students and fieldwork educators about this model, and assisting with preparation for a placement for both the fieldwork educators and student to ensure that all have the same information and that roles/expectations are clear. The University will also be available to provide ongoing guidance and advice to the student and fieldwork educator during the placement. Assistance with providing off-site supervision during the fieldwork educator's absence may be provided if appropriate.

**Advantages to this model include:**

- ➔ The student takes more responsibility for his/her own learning and learn to function independently while still having support at a distance.
- ➔ The student has increased time to reflect on practice without the fieldwork educator present.
- ➔ Open communication is promoted among all members of the learning team.
- ➔ Teamwork and communication skills are emphasized with other members of the facility.
- ➔ Clinicians with part-time positions have the opportunity to be actively involved in student learning by providing fieldwork placements.

**References (Note: Suggested readings are marked by an \*)**

Desrosiers, M., Bossers, A., Gage, M., and Hartley, M. (1997). Part-Time therapist/Full –Time Student Resource Manual. Toronto: Ontario Council of University Programs in Rehabilitation.

\*Edwards, M. & Baptiste, S. (1987). The Occupational Therapist as a Clinical Teacher. Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 54(5), 249-255.

\*Etcheverry, E. & Ripat, J. (1991). Increasing Student Involvement and Independence in Fieldwork. National, 6.

\*Steele-Smith, S & Armstrong, M. (2001). 'I would take more students but ...': Student Supervision Strategies. British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 64(11), 549-551.

Please contact the Outreach Developer for your region or the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at (204) 789-3992 if you would like more information about this model or the fieldwork program.



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