POLICY

In order to be eligible for graduation and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) exam, students are required to successfully complete two Level I fieldwork experiences in addition to two full-time, twelve-week Level II fieldwork experiences (for a total of 24 weeks). Circumstances requiring prolonged absences jeopardize the attendance requirement; you may need to remain at the facility until the required number of weeks has been completed. This is determined by the Fieldwork Educator and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

Purpose

In order to establish guidelines for all enrolled WMU OT students the following are established as minimum standards. Fieldwork site standards may exceed these guidelines. The following have been taken into consideration in defining the Fieldwork Attendance Policy:

- AOTA and ACOTE requirements
- NBCOT exam
- Level I and Level II experiences
- Professional responsibilities
- Job requirements
- Holidays
- Excused Absence
- Unexcused Absence

The establishment of departmental standards must be consistent for all students participating in fieldwork. Students are expected to attend and report on-time for all fieldwork responsibilities.

1. For Level I fieldwork, the following policy applies:
   a. Tardy/Absence Calculation:
      - Tardiness is not acceptable.
      - Three (3) unexcused absences may result in one of the following Instructor Choices:
        - Lower final grade
        - Student fails fieldwork experience and the course
      - A total of 4 or more absences (excused, unexcused or combination) = student meeting with WMU instructor to discuss plans for course completion. If WMU instructor deems appropriate, student may be withdrawn from class.
   b. Excused Absence:
      - Student is sick: doctor’s note required
      - Students child is sick: doctor’s note required
      - Immediate family member is sick or requires immediate medical attention: note from hospital staff person required
      - Death in immediate and/or extended family: note from funeral home required
   c. Unexcused Absence
      - Wedding
      - Vacation
      - Non-emergency doctor or dentist appointment
      - Other job schedule conflicts
      - Travel time to and from fieldwork site
For Level II fieldwork, the following policy will apply when the fieldwork site does not have a specific attendance policy. If the site has a policy, the student and school will defer to the site.

Students must attend all scheduled days of fieldwork. Students are allowed to miss up to three (3) work days per experience. This time should be used for excused absences only (see below for definition). Students are not permitted “vacation days”, or “days off,” during the experience, other than what has been provided or determined appropriate by the fieldwork site.

a. Tardy/Absence Calculation
   - Tardiness is not acceptable.
   - A total of 4 or more absences (excused, unexcused or combination) = student must meet or speak with the WMU Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Fieldwork Educator to discuss plans for course completion.
     - Options:
       - If fieldwork site and school deem appropriate the fieldwork experience may be terminated.
       - Students must make up the missed days either by working extra days during the experience (e.g. Saturdays), or may extend the experience beyond the scheduled completion date.

b. Excused Absence
   - Student is sick: doctor’s note required
   - Students child is sick: doctor’s note required
   - Immediate family member is sick or requires immediate medical attention
   - Death in immediate and/or extended family

c. Unexcused Absence
   - Wedding
   - Vacation
   - Non-emergency doctor or dentist appointment
   - Other job schedule conflicts
   - Travel time to and from the fieldwork site

d. Flex Schedules and Work Hours
   - Some fieldwork sites have flex schedules. There may be alternate work schedules required during the week such as working a ten-hour day and/or working weekends. The student must defer to this schedule.

e. Students are expected to be at their fieldwork sites “full time”. Each site will have a different required number of hours to define “full time” status. Most sites will require at least 35 – 40 hours a week. Professional Commitment
   - You may be required to complete additional work outside of work hours to prepare for your patients. You are preparing for a professional career in which this type of work is a standard part of patient treatment.
f. Holidays
   - Each fieldwork site determines the holiday observances and/or leave time that will be
     granted to employees and students. If the fieldwork site supervisor determines that
     you are not meeting the minimum number of hours for attendance, you may be
     required to make up those days.

g. Field Visits
   - Students may be allowed to make two or three field visits during each experience. In
     general, the center visited should have some relationship to the site where the
     student currently is doing fieldwork, and the student should be expected to report (at
     least informally) on parallels and contrasts between the two centers.

REFERENCES

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Standards and Interpretative
Guidelines

RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Fieldwork Coordinator
   - Develop specific written fieldwork attendance standards
   - Communicate process, rationale, standards and consequences to students
   - Clarify process for addressing violations
   - Monitor and enforce standards
   - Work with students to address any challenges they have meeting standards
   - Review the Fieldwork Attendance Policy standards every 3 years

Students
   - Responsible for meeting all above requirements
   - Be knowledgeable of program and fieldwork site-specific standards
   - Adhere to standards of the program and any site affiliate in which you work
   - Communicate to Academic Fieldwork Coordinator any challenges in meeting standards and
     work cooperatively to address problem

Department Chair
   - Sponsor, review and approve the Fieldwork Attendance Policy standards every 3 years
   - Support Fieldwork Coordinator in appropriate application and enforcement of the
     departmental policy

SPONSORS

Chair, Department of Occupational Therapy

REVIEW CYCLE

Biannually

APPROVAL

September 1, 2013

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