

# CASPER COLLEGE Occupational Therapy Assistant Program **FIELDWORK NEWSLETTER**

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## PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S CORNER

*By Cassady Hoff, MSOT, OTR/L*

The Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program has some exciting news. In Fall 2025, the Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program will move locations

to the Casper College campus's Myra Fox Skelton Energy Institute. The program will enhance its lecture environment and lab-learning classrooms with this exciting relocation. The occupational therapy assistant program will have an occupational therapy rehabilitation gym of approximately 840 square feet, an acute care and outpatient setting room of approximately 490 square feet, an occupational therapy assistant apartment of 900 square feet, a designated classroom for assistive technology and gerontology certificates, and a large flexible seating and interactive lecture classroom. The additional benefit to the classroom space is the collaboration that the occupational therapy assistant program will have with the kinesiology and health promotion and athletic training students at Casper College.

## OTA PROGRAM — MISSION

The mission of the Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant program is to provide an environment that encourages students of diverse learning styles, ages, and backgrounds an opportunity to gain mastery over their education at the associate level through the progression of academic and experiential learning opportunities. Each semester, students gain greater confidence, cultivate critical thinking, and demonstrate enriched professionalism essential to work as a generalist occupational therapy assistant. Through the learning opportunities, students will view themselves and their clients as holistic, occupational beings and appreciate the importance of occupation-based activities to improve the lives of those they encounter. By the end of the program, students are invested in the importance of lifelong learning and stewardship of the occupational therapy profession, populations served, and their communities.

Casper College provides equal opportunity in education and employment — [caspercollege.edu/nondiscrimination](http://caspercollege.edu/nondiscrimination).



## FIELDWORK NOTES

*By Missy Neff, MSOT, OTR/L*

### Level I Fieldwork:

For Level I fieldwork, the OTA students complete one-week fieldwork experiences in the clinical setting. During the spring semester, the students complete one-week fieldwork experiences in adult physical disabilities and geriatric settings, with an additional 16 hours completed in developmentally delayed, emerging, and nontraditional settings. During the fall semester, OTA students complete fieldwork experiences in both traditional and nontraditional pediatric and mental/behavioral health settings.

The spring semester Level I fieldwork dates are scheduled for **April 28-May 2, 2025**. Students will complete their spring Level I fieldwork experiences in adult physical disabilities and geriatrics and an additional 16 hours in both nontraditional and emerging practice settings. If you are interested in supervising a student for Level I fieldwork, please contact me!

The fall semester Level I fieldwork dates are scheduled for **Oct. 27-31 and Nov. 17-21, 2025**. Students will complete their fall Level I fieldwork rotations in pediatrics and mental/behavioral health settings. If you are interested in supervising a student for Level I fieldwork, please contact me!

We appreciate your continued support of the OTA program and your willingness to supervise the OTA students. As a fieldwork educator, if there are any questions or additional fieldwork resources we can help with, please contact Missy Neff, academic fieldwork coordinator, by phone at 307-268-2054 or by email at [melissa.neff@caspercollege.edu](mailto:melissa.neff@caspercollege.edu).

# CULTURAL HUMILITY AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

For years, the occupational therapy profession has recognized the importance of incorporating cultural competence into practice. As clients continue to become more diverse, it is imperative for the profession to understand what cultural humility is and why it is important to incorporate these components into OT practice. In an article by Joy Agner (2020), Agner discusses the importance of a shift in the OT profession from cultural competence to cultural humility. The article identifies the differences between cultural competence and cultural humility, including focusing on learning versus knowing, recognizing the client's cultural perspectives as valid, and providing an increased understanding of how power differences affect health care (Agner, 2020). In 1998, Dr. Melanie Tervalon and Dr. Jann Murray-Garcia introduced the term cultural humility. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) defined cultural humility as an approach to cultural competence that emphasizes lifelong learning, self-reflection, and recognizing that cultural knowledge is always evolving. The core components of cultural humility include self-reflection and lifelong learning, addressing power imbalances, and developing mutually beneficial partnerships. (Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998).

Cultural humility is important in OT practice for several reasons. Occupational therapy utilizes a holistic, client-centered approach that takes into consideration the client's environment, as well as the client's cultural and social contexts. By incorporating these contexts into practice, OT practitioners can better provide culturally sensitive care that reflects the client's values, preferences and needs.

Secondly, cultural humility builds rapport and trust by acknowledging the client's cultural identity and experiences. The therapeutic relationship between the client and OT practitioner is further developed through open communication, actively listening to the client, and incorporating cultural contexts into client care.

Cultural humility allows OT practitioners to understand better health disparities and power imbalances that clients may experience. Through increased understanding, the OT practitioner is able to provide treatment with respect and empathy, increase access to OT services, and reduce misunderstandings/misconceptions that may impact client care.

Lastly, cultural humility is important in OT practice to address the client's cultural needs to ensure inclusive care. Incorporating the above components into treatment supports a respectful and ethical

practice that honors the diversity of all clients. As the OT profession continues to grow and evolve, occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant programs must incorporate the components of cultural humility at the academic level.

## References:

Agner, J. (2020). *Moving from cultural competence to cultural humility in occupational therapy: A paradigm shift. The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(4), 7404347010p1-7404347010p7. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.038067>

Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). *Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. Journal of Health Education*, 29(3), 143-147.

## STUDENT SUPERVISION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT FOR WY LICENSURE

Did you know that the Wyoming State Board of Occupational Therapy will allow occupational therapists and certified occupational therapy assistants to count student supervision toward their continuing education requirements for licensure? Occupational therapists or certified occupational therapy assistants who supervise occupational therapy students or occupational therapy assistant students for Level II fieldwork or doctoral experiential students may receive continuing education credit for student supervision. The fieldwork educator can earn one continuing education credit for every week of student supervision, for a maximum of 12 continuing education credits earned for each biannual period. Additional information can be found on the Wyoming State Board of Occupational Therapy's website at [occupationaltherapy.wyo.gov/rules-statutes](http://occupationaltherapy.wyo.gov/rules-statutes), which is located under "Current Rules, Chapter 8: Renewal."

## UPCOMING LEVEL I AND LEVEL II FIELDWORK

### Level I Fieldwork Dates Spring 2025:

April 28-May 2, 2025

### Level I Fieldwork Dates Fall 2025:

Oct. 27-31, 2025

Nov. 17-21, 2025

### Recommended Level II Fieldwork Dates 2025:

May 26-July 18, 2025

July 28-September 19, 2025

The Occupational Therapy/Occupational Therapy Assistant program is accredited by the accreditation council for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association, Located at 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is 301-652-AOTA, and its web address is [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org).



## CERTIFICATE UPDATES

*By Theresa Robinett, MOT, OTR/L*

As we reflect on 2024, I am excited to share the progress and new opportunities within the certificate programs. We focused on strengthening our role as a community resource while enhancing student learning through hands-on experiences.

### Assistive Technology Practicum:

Our partnership with Wyoming Assistive Technology Resources expanded significantly. We hosted monthly open labs at Natrona County Library and offered sessions at the Casper Senior Center. We look forward to partnering more with the Natrona County Library to bring virtual reality to local nursing homes in the Casper area. Throughout the year, students engaged directly with community members, assisting with hearing and vision needs through WATR devices and smart device accessibility features. This hands-on experience has been invaluable, helping students develop real-world problem-solving skills while giving back to the community.

If your facility is interested in hosting an open lab or assistive technology session, please reach out — we're excited to collaborate and provide access to WATR's loan closet for adaptive devices.

### Gerontology Practicum:

The gerontology practicum has evolved into a responsive, community-centered program designed to prepare students for working with older adults. Through partnerships with Wyoming Dementia Care and the Wyoming Center on Aging, students participated in support groups, art therapy, and music therapy sessions. Guest speakers from the Wyoming Center on Aging led customized workshops, enhancing students' motivational interviewing and communication skills with older adults. The practicum emphasized understanding the aging process, conducting life reviews, and fostering self-awareness — key competencies for future OTAs.

I was able to participate in a special for Wyoming PBS last year focusing on caregivers in Wyoming and mental health, airing in May of 2024. Several experts and individuals featured in this program have contributed to the gerontology practicum and provided immense knowledge and resources for students.

### Equine-Assisted Therapy Practicum:

This practicum, Offered during the summer semester, provided students with transformative learning at Ropes and Roses with Karol Santistevan, MOT, OTR/L. Under Santistevan's guidance, students learned how equine-assisted therapy can create meaningful change in clients' lives. Santistevan and her team have provided invaluable insight to help students better look at and understand not only equine-assisted therapy but the use of alternative modalities as well. This hands-on experience encouraged innovative thinking while strengthening clinical skills and preparing students to incorporate equine therapy into therapeutic practice.

We are proud of how these practicums have evolved, blending academic coursework with community engagement. Students continue to build essential skills such as resourcefulness, creative thinking, and collaborative problem-solving to prepare them for fieldwork and future careers.

**Thank you for supporting our growing program. Here's to continued success in 2025!**

## FIELDWORK EDUCATOR RESOURCES:

Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Website:

[caspercollege.edu/program/occupational-therapy-assistant](https://caspercollege.edu/program/occupational-therapy-assistant)

Casper College OTA Program Fieldwork Newsletter:

[caspercollege.edu/program/occupational-therapy-assistant](https://caspercollege.edu/program/occupational-therapy-assistant)

American Occupational Therapy Association, AOTA, Fieldwork Education Resources: [aota.org/education/fieldwork](https://aota.org/education/fieldwork)

Fieldwork Educators Certificate Workshop: [aota.org/education/fieldwork/fieldwork-educators-certification-workshop](https://aota.org/education/fieldwork/fieldwork-educators-certification-workshop)

ACOTE: [acoteonline.org/about/](https://acoteonline.org/about/)

Casper College NBCOT School Performance:

[nbcot.org/Educators-Folder/SchoolPerformance](https://nbcot.org/Educators-Folder/SchoolPerformance)

## THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We would like to thank the following Level I and Level II fieldwork sites and fieldwork educators for their continued support of the Casper College OTA Program. WE APPRECIATE YOU!!!

Advancing Abilities	Live Inspired
Banner Health	Monument Health
Casper Mountain Rehab	Natrona County School
Casper Orthopedic	District #1
Therapy Center	NoCo Pediatric OT
Child Development Center of	Ropes and Roses
Fremont County	Therapy Services
Child Development Center of	Sensational Kids
Natrona County	Sheridan Physical Therapy
Children's Resource Center Cody	South Lincoln Hospital District
Early Intervention Program	St. John's United
Elite Therapy	Teton Therapy
Elkhorn Valley	Utah State Hospital
Rehabilitation Hospital	Wyoming Behavioral Institute
I-Reach 2	Yellowstone Boys and
Learning Solutions	Girls Ranch
Life Care Center of Casper	