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# Entry-Level Doctoral Capstones: Promoting Passion and Purpose in Occupational Therapy

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# 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 a capstone site 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 Chicago



Rush University



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# Introduction to the Doctoral Capstone

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# 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**).  
(ACO  
TE, 2018)

# 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)

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# Differences between Fieldwork and the Capstone Experience

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Characteristic	Level II Fieldwork	Capstone Experience
<b>ACOTE Goal</b>	“Entry-Level Generalist”	“Advanced Skills” beyond generalist level
<b>Administrator</b>	Academic Fieldwork Coordinator	Doctoral Capstone Coordinator / Director of Capstone Development
<b>Supervisor &amp; Credential</b>	Fieldwork Educator – OTR/L	Site Mentor – may/may not be an OTR/L
<b>Time</b>	12 weeks full-time (480 hours)	14 weeks (560 hours)
<b>Productivity</b>	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
<b>Location</b>	100% of time on site	At least 80% of time on site
<b>Duties</b>	Provide direct or indirect services to client	Provide direct or indirect services to client, organization, or population; Engage in professional development activities
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	Site develops (w/ input from AFWC & student)	Student develops (w/ input from Site Mentor & Faculty Mentor)
<b>Evaluation</b>	Fieldwork Performance Evaluation	Individualized evaluation (based on program specific goals and student goals)
<b>Placements</b>	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.

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# **New Grad & Site Mentor Panel**

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# Panelists

## Lawrence Hall Foster Care Services

**Graduate:** Kelly Naughton, OTD, OTR/L

**Site Mentor:** Carly Jones, EdD

## Shirley Ryan AbilityLab

**Graduate:** Samantha Souza, OTD

**Site Mentor:** Kelsey Watters, OTR/L, BCPR

## Special Gifts Theatre

**Graduate:** Samantha Conrad, OTD

**Site Mentor:** Elise Larsen, R-DMT

## Fox College OTA Program

**Graduate:** Haley Collins, OTD, OTR/L

**Site Mentor:** Kristine Yung, OTR/L

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# Introduction to Capstone Sites

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# Lawrence Hall Foster Care Services

**Dr. Carly Jones**

Our foster care program is located at 400 W. 76th Street, which borders the Auburn/Gresham & Greater Grand Crossing communities. Our agency has several programs for at risk youth and families, however our foster care program provides supportive services to both families and youth in care ages 0-21. Our service array includes:

- clinical services
- foster parent licensing
- training and support
- case management
- community linkages.



**Kelsey Watters, OTR/L, BCPR**

Samantha Souza, OTD

Viktoriya Landar, OTR/L

## Shirley Ryan AbilityLab: Vision OT Lab

- Wide variety of patient populations on the inpatient rehab units
  - Acute vision changes due to neurological impairment
  - Premorbid low vision
- Role of OT
  - Comprehensive vision assessment and careful interpretation of patient's presentation
  - Providing appropriate interventions such as: low vision strategy training, environmental adaptations recommendations, interdisciplinary vision clinic, prescribe vision home exercise programs, refer community resources, recommendations for therapy
  - Collaborate with optometrist in neuro-optometry clinic

# Special Gifts Theatre

DREAM ★ BELIEVE ★ ACHIEVE

**Elise Larsen, R-DMT**

Samantha Conrad, OTD



**Special Gifts Theatre (SGT)** is an extracurricular educational and therapeutic drama program for youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

**Mission:** The mission of SGT is to foster self-confidence, social, speech and language skills in individuals with disabilities, using educational and therapeutic techniques with the stage as the platform, integrating creativity and fun.

## **Programs Offered:**

- **Creativity in Motion** (*ages 7+*)  
Embodied storytelling using music, props and dance.
- **Musical Theatre** (*ages 10-22*)  
Students engage in educational and therapeutic workshops resulting in a full musical production.
- **Creating Outside the Lines** (*ages 22+*)  
Adult program that results in team-based performances.
- **Performance Troupe** (*ages 14+*)  
Students partner with peers from the Dance and Music Academy to prepare community-based performances.
- **Peer Mentorship** (*ages 7+*)  
Pairs all members of SGT with a typically-developing “buddy” throughout the season.
- **NEW: Stand Out!** (*ages 14+*)  
A technical-theatre workshop created and piloted by our capstone student, Samantha Conrad.





**FOX COLLEGE®**

## **OTA Program**

**Kristine Yung, OTR/L**  
**Adjunct Faculty**  
**Haley Collins, OTD, OTR/L**

**Course: OT165 Occupational  
Performance: Physical  
Rehabilitation**

- Fox College offers a 20 month Accelerated Associate of Applied Science degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant.
- Mission Statement: Fox College is an institution of higher learning that combines general education and professional education in applied programs that prepare motivated students for success in specialized careers.
- Core Values: *Learning, Professionalism, Structure, Guidance and Quality*
- Terms are 8 weeks in length.
- Class size: 26 students for January 2021 section.

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# Summaries of Capstone Experiences & Projects

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# Lawrence Hall Foster Care Services

**Kelly Naughton,  
OTD, OTR/L**

## Capstone Experience:

- Understanding the intersection of foster care and occupational therapy
- Developed a relationship with site mentor, staff, and foster families
- Provided OT services for foster children and their families
- Educated foster care staff and families on the importance of occupational therapy
- Created resources for agency staff and families

## Project:

- Increase Lawrence Hall foster parent, biological parent, and staff access to educational resources while enhancing their knowledge regarding child occupational participation and occupation focused strategies for improving participation



Kelsey Watters, OTR/L, BCPR

**Samantha Souza, OTD**

Viktoriya Landar, OTR/L

## Experience Objectives:

- **Develop clinical competency** to identify and manage occupational performance/needs for those with visual impairments particularly within the inpatient rehabilitation setting.
- Determine **current care standards** for patients with visual impairments and blindness within the inpatient rehabilitation setting.
- Develop **leadership and management skills**
- Translate **clinical knowledge** into practice

## Project:

- Staff training to enhance staff confidence in meeting the needs of the VI population

# Special Gifts Theatre

DREAM ★ BELIEVE ★ ACHIEVE

Elise Larsen, R-DMT

**Samantha Conrad, OTD**



## Experience Objectives:

1. Discover current barriers and supports to extracurricular engagement for the IDD population and provide client-centered adaptations and modifications to increase occupational participation at Special Gifts Theatre.
2. Examine the relationship dynamics between students with IDD and their peers and the staff/volunteers at Special Gifts Theatre.
3. Implement a 10-week technical theatre workshop for adolescents with IDD to foster increased levels of self-determination
4. Prepare 3 presentations for the participants, parents and staff/volunteers at SGT on how to best support self-determination in all participations.

## Project

- Create and implement a **10-week technical theatre workshop** for young adults with an intellectual or developmental disability
  - Use Self-Determination Theory (SDT) within sessions to promote self-determination within the participants.
  - Use the Cognitive Orientation to Daily Occupational Performance (CO-OP) approach with participant's and peer mentors to best support this growth in participant's self-determination.



# FOX COLLEGE®

## OTA Program

**Haley Collins, OTD, OTR/L**

**Course: OT165 Occupational  
Performance: Physical  
Rehabilitation**

### **Capstone Experience:**

- Understand the curriculum within an OTA program and the educational setting for adults
- Collaboration with faculty members as a team in addition to OTA students within the program
- Learn about the current curriculum in place and areas for improvement
- Understand the student learning needs for the current cohort of students
- Inclusion of the Adult Learning Theory and Psychomotor Skill Acquisition Levels

### **Project:**

- Program enhancement project to the existing course curriculum within the OT-165 Occupational Performance and Physical Disabilities course with the inclusion of enhancing psychomotor skill acquisition

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# Benefits of Capstones to Capstone Sites

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# Lawrence Hall Foster Care Services

**Dr. Carly Jones**

Lawrence Hall remains excited in the collaboration with our OT interns. The ability to connect staff and families with enhancement services to engage with families with additional supports. This educational instruction that can be continued by parents and enhanced level of understanding by staff.

## Benefits of the Doctoral Capstone:

- Support for staff
- Support for bio-parents/ foster parents
- Leading small groups
- Contributing to foster parent education
- Overseeing bioparent visits to aid support in understanding various domains of play and daily living.
- Providing materials and resources to clients





Kelsey Watters, OTR/L, BCPR

Samantha Souza, OTD

Viktoriya Landar, OTR/L

## Deliverables and Take-aways

- Onsite **training** for PCTs and RNs
- **Recorded training** developed for staff to reference in the future
- Summary of **research** on low vision interventions for allied health staff (esp OTs)
- Revisions to the **onboarding/training process** for OTs interested in learning about vision/low vision
- Visit to **OT Practice Council** to share about the OTD student experience

# Special Gifts Theatre

DREAM ★ BELIEVE ★ ACHIEVE

**Elise Larsen, R-DMT**

Samantha Conrad, OTD



## Deliverables and Takeaways

- Stand Out: 15 finished productions, websites, playbills and viewing parties
- 3 Self-Determination and CO-OP Training Seminars
- Hands-on experience with behavioral management and sensory processing strategies

## General Satisfaction With The Project

### ● Participant Satisfaction

*"I really loved doing this workshop. I'm so glad it was a **low pressure environment** and a small group. It made learning about how to improve ourselves easier..."*

### ● Peer Mentor Satisfaction

*"I also feel more **confident in my own abilities to support others** through skill building activities and to function in a leadership role ...which will definitely help me going forward. I have the impression that **my buddies have greater agency in making their own choices** and this skill will extend beyond creating their own shows."*

### ● Parents and Caregivers of Participants

*"I think it was **very empowering!** She told everyone this summer what she was working on and was **very proud of her accomplishments...** I highly recommend this for others and think it should be a regular offering."*



**FOX COLLEGE®**

## **OTA Program**

**Kristine Yung, OTR/L  
Adjunct Faculty**

**Course: OT165 Occupational  
Performance: Physical  
Rehabilitation**

### **Deliverables and Takeaways:**

- Revision of the OT165 course
- A course binder with week by week class information and resources for repetition of the class
- Outcome results from the students demonstrating increased Psychomotor Skill Acquisition with as noted with increased confidence
- Improved functional transfer competencies and treatment planning rubrics reflecting OTPF language and psychomotor skill acquisition
- SOAP Note Documentation Folder with Individual study

### **General Satisfaction with the Project:**

- Student perception of having role in the education process was significant
- Instructor satisfaction scores were higher than 3.8 out 4 overall.
- Faculty education with the Adult Learning Theory and transition to use of the similar forms within the other classes

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# Mentoring Lessons Learned

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# Lawrence Hall Foster Care Services

**Dr. Carly Jones  
&  
Kelly Naughton,  
OTD, OTR/L**

- Supervision is key to a successful internship experience.
- Develop a consistent check in schedule
- Don't be afraid to share ideas- always evaluate what's working/what's not.
- Celebrate all victories big and small.
- Communication with site mentor/mentee as well as other agency staff is very important
- Understanding your site's specific needs and what OT can uniquely bring to the table



Kelsey Watters, OTR/L, BCPR

Samantha Souza, OTD

Viktoriya Landar, OTR/L

- Fantastic opportunity to build leadership skills
  - Initiating conversations with OTs and other disciplines about patient care and projects
- Collaborate with your site mentor to work towards your professional objectives you may not have been able to meet in your school curriculum - but be prepared and have options for independent learning
- Opportunity to generate helpful feedback on training and mentoring process for a complex practice area

# Special Gifts Theatre

DREAM ★ BELIEVE ★ ACHIEVE

**Elise Larsen, R-DMT**

**Samantha Conrad, OTD**



## Student Perception of Mentorship:

- Wonderful opportunity for OT students to practice program development in community-based settings.
- Student engaged and learned about the various components that go into running a non-profit organization.
- Was able to pilot using the Cognitive Orientation to Daily Occupational Therapy (CO-OP) approach with participants and peer mentors - which will now be used for future peer mentor and volunteer trainings.

## Site Perception of Mentorship:

- Site understood the value of incorporating OT practice into leisure and extracurricular occupations for their population.
- Site understood the benefit of having new students to promote fresh therapeutic knowledge and ideas.



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## **OTA Program**

**Kristine Yung, OTR/L**  
**Adjunct Faculty**

**Haley Collins, OTD, OTR/L**

**Course: OT165 Occupational  
Performance: Physical  
Rehabilitation**

- Collaboration and communication with each faculty educator is vital for overall improvements
- The Adult Learning Theory concepts are beneficial to the adult population of students
- Celebrate the small wins! You are making more of an impact than you think
- The educational setting is the groundwork for teaching the “right” skills
- The ability to use technology to assist with the presentation of the information to enhance learning
- The excitement of learning is contagious for all individuals involved
- The use of self-assessments within the course allowing students to impact their learning during the course to enhance their knowledge.



# 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!**

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