

## U.S. Department of Education Staff Report

to the

Senior Department Official on Recognition Compliance Issues

### Recommendation Page

1. **Agency:** American Occupational Therapy Association ( 1952 / 2012)  
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation of occupational therapy educational programs offering the professional master's degree, combined baccalaureate/master's degree, and occupational therapy doctorate (OTD) degree; the accreditation of occupational therapy assistant programs offering the associate degree or a certificate; and the accreditation of these programs offered via distance education.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** 06/20/2017
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for 5 years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None

### Executive Summary

#### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a professional association of more than 42,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy.

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a programmatic accreditor. ACOTE membership is voluntary and its principal purpose is to accredit higher education programs.

ACOTE accreditation is required for access to the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) Program which was established via the Disadvantaged Minority Health Improvement Act of 1990, Section 737 of the Public Health Service Act. As a programmatic accreditor, ACOTE is not required to meet the separate and independent requirements in the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

ACOTE currently accredits almost 400 programs (15 Doctoral-Degree-Level for OT, 158 Masters-Degree-Level for OT, 224 Occupational Therapy Assistant) located in institutions of higher learning throughout the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

#### Recognition History

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) was first recognized by the U.S. Commissioner of Education as one of several review committees under the umbrella of the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) of the American Medical Association in 1952. The last review of CAHEA that included ACOTE occurred in May 1988, and resulted in a grant of continued recognition for four years.

CAHEA subsequently disbanded and AOTA elected not to become a part of the new organization but to establish itself as an independent accrediting agency known as the AOTA Accreditation Committee. On January 1, 1994, the AOTA Accreditation Committee changed its name to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) and, functioning independently of CAHEA, established the ACOTE as a standing committee of the AOTA Executive Board. The agency has been periodically reviewed and continued recognition has been granted after each review.

The agency was last reviewed for renewal of recognition at the spring 2012 meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Both Department staff and NACIQI recommended to the senior Department official to renew the agency's recognition for a period of five years. The senior Department official, Acting Assistant Secretary David Bergeron, concurred with the recommendations.

Since the agency's last review, the Department has received no complaints and no 3rd party comments.

In conjunction with agency's petition, Department staff reviewed the agency's supporting documentation and observed an on-site evaluation in February 2017.

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## **PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

## **PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS**

The Department did not receive any written third - party comments regarding this agency.