

FEBRUARY 2025



COX COLLEGE OTD PROGRAM

THE CAPSTONE CURRENT



Leading Capstone with a Service Heart

How is Capstone linked to Community Service?

Capstone Experiences are often placed in community settings. Students gain an in-depth, immersive experience with their population of interest. After thoroughly investigating the problems people face, the student gains a deeper understanding with seeing real day-to-day challenges. Capstone students are placed where they can make the most impact with implementing their capstone project to generate REAL difference in the community.

How is Capstone linked to Professional Service?

By partnering with the community, OT students have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and inject "occupational therapy essence" into solving everyday problems. Students align their personal and professional goals with capstone to let their strengths shine through during Capstone Experience. Gathering data and outcomes of the project is an integral part of determining the effectiveness of the capstone. Dissemination plans are also an important, planned initiative that often leads to greater dissemination opportunities to share with the OT profession and communities. While professional service is about giving to the profession, it is often rewarded with opportunities.

How does Capstone promote Occupational Therapy?

Many times Capstone Experience sites are not familiar with OT or students may have a Content Expert Mentor (Site Mentor) that is not an occupational therapist. Capstone Experiences and Projects help educate communities on the power and impact of occupational therapy. Capstone may even be used as a part of a plan to create a new job for an occupational therapist after graduation!

Did you know the majority of capstone experience placements do not occur in a traditional OT setting? Capstone is an opportunity to collaborate with community partners - with a service heart!

What is happening with Capstone Currents?

- C2 OTD Students are exploring different populations of interest in Capstone Seminar
- C2 OTD Students are learning about the problems their population of interest face and brainstorming solutions for groups and populations
- C1 OTD Students are gaining valuable experience on their Level 2A Fieldwork Placements and will be pitching their plans to Capstone Site Mentors in Spring - Summer



Written By: Jamie Bergner, OTD, OTR/L, CHT, COMT

Capstone Coordinator Corner

The occupational therapy profession strongly believes in the power of occupation - the purposeful, meaningful things we do that contribute to overall well-being, sense of identity, and participation in life. An OT Capstone is no different - it is the opportunity to pick a population that you LOVE so you can LOVE what you do in Capstone!

Combining 'loves' can lead to very interesting and unique capstones! Capstone is the marriage of capstone project and capstone experience. Capstone project is the what you design in response to the literature, based on a documented need AND in collaboration with your site guided by a needs assessment. You will be implementing this project in the context of your experience and measuring its effectiveness and outcomes.

The capstone experience is a placement carefully selected with maximum exposure to your population of interest and ability to implement your project. You will design unique learning opportunities from different perspectives and different contexts to gain in-depth knowledge and advanced skills with your population of interest. Capstone project and capstone experience are a perfect match for OT to lead with a service heart.

Rafting Reflections

Lead Rower Reflections: Capstone Opens Doors to Professional Service and Leadership

Written By: **Cryslan Daughtry, OTS**

Current Problem the Capstone Project is addressing:

The scarcity of occupation-based educational support for families of children with Congenital Hand & Upper Limb Deficiency (CHULD) results in parental distress, diminished empowerment, and decreased or delayed guidance for adaptations to support the child.



My capstone has been a **catalyst for leadership and service** opportunities within American Society of Hand Therapist (ASHT), particularly through the Pediatric Hand Therapy Task Force. This volunteer experience allows me to collaborate with like-minded, yet experienced, pediatric hand therapists to **generate ideas, expand awareness, and advocate for the growth** of this distinct and essential area of practice. With the Task Force, I am able to contribute to the profession in small, but mighty ways.

My interest in both pediatrics and hand therapy has driven my exploration in intersecting these specialties - where the need for specialized support is often overlooked. Through professional service with leading organizations, like ASHT, opportunities to **elevate my capstone mission on a larger scale are possible**. This will not only help support bridging gaps, but also promote awareness, and foster empowerment to best serve patients and families of children with congenital hand and upper limb differences.



Capstone Current, Volume 3

Guest Editor:

Cryslan Daughtry, OTS

Faculty Editor:

Jamie Bergner,
OTD, OTR/L, CHT, COMT

Map of the Capstone River

Content Expert/Site Mentor

- A formal mentor that signs a contract to collaborate with students through the capstone preparation and experience
- Signs a Written Agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) and helps to facilitate signing of a contract between the facility and Cox College
- Has specific expertise pertaining to the capstone

Faculty Mentor/Content Expert

- Has a doctorate degree (as of July 31, 2025)
- Understands the Capstone Process
- Mentors the Student, supports community connections, expands ideas, keeps the project reasonable but comprehensive
- Communicates with Doctoral Capstone Coordinator regularly to keep capstone work in compliance

Doctoral Capstone Coordinator

- Responsible for oversight of the capstone program and adheres to ACOTE Standards (D Standards)
- Serves as a mentor to all capstone students, faculty mentors, advisors, and content experts (may serve in additional roles as needed)
- Maintains records, agreements, monitors outcomes, and ensures rigorous, impactful, evidence-based, and occupation-based capstones that incorporate the curriculum design throughout the capstone continuum