

Microsoft Teams

Attending:

Jennifer Lee – President, Regulated Member
Arwen Caines – Vice President, Regulated Member
Heidi Knupp – Regulated Member
Carrie Hait – Regulated Member
Whitney McKenzie – Regulated Member
Tiffany Poltz – Public Member
Dr. Tom Smith – Public Member
Christie Bergman – Public Member

Marianne Baird – CEO & Registrar
Mallory Foreman – Recording Secretary

1. Gathering, Overview of the Agenda

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council reviewed the agenda.

2. Approval of the Agenda

There were no changes suggested for the agenda.

MOTION: To approve the March 21, 2022, Council Meeting Agenda – Tiffany (MOVED)
Heidi (SECONDED). CARRIED.

3. University of Alberta Occupational Therapy Department Report

Council welcomed Gayla Grinde, Assistant Teaching Professor, to the meeting.

Ms. Grinde provided updates to Council:

- A collective agreement between the University of Alberta and AASUA was signed on March 8, 2022.
- A selection committee has been struck for the hiring of a Department Chair for the Department of Occupational Therapy (OT). Interviews for this position will begin in the spring.
- Effective July 1, 2022, Suzette Bremault-Phillips has been promoted to Professor.
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Gayla then mentioned other faculty employees' sabbaticals, probationary periods, application changes, and hirings, and reviewed the contents of the report submitted to Council.

Gayla then opened the table for questions.

Q: Is there a way that the university is evaluating the quality of clinical practice of online training vs. in-person training?

A: There are 1000 hours of clinical placements and the national exam to rely on for evidence of quality. Although the skills that the students develop online may be different, they may be a valuable difference and not necessarily less useful. There are discussions on-going with other universities who are tracking this as well.

Q: Are more students able to be admitted due to the online capabilities of learning?

A: The algorithm is tricky. There could be more students, but the demand being placed on the clinical community for placements would increase. The timing of the program could be shifted, but not everything can be taught online.

Council thanked Gayla Grinde for attending and presenting the report.

MOTION: To accept the University of Alberta Department of Occupational Therapy Report to ACOT Council March 21, 2022, for information - Tiffany (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED.

4. Update on Strategic Plan

Council reviewed the Strategic Plan and Marianne highlighted the following updates:

- ACOT has brought forward a suggestion for a Public Advisory Panel that all Colleges can access. The Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions (AFRHP) will be discussing this at its next board meeting.
- Between December 2021 – February 2022, approximately 700 people attended the Continuing Competence Program, registration, and other learning sessions.
- We have been liaising with the University of Alberta on Acting Against Racism and Intolerance (AARI) related items. They have provided ACOT with open access to their Occth 507 course which has relevant content that could be repackaged for registrant learning.
- Alberta Health Services (AHS), the University of Alberta OT Department, and ACOT are looking to collaborate on AARI related initiatives to support registrant learning.
- We are also looking at collaborating with Edmonton Public School Board on AARI related learning.

5. Action Items

Council reviewed the Action Items Report and Marianne highlighted the following updates:

- ACOT has connected with the Society of Alberta Occupational Therapists (SAOT) on hosting an AARI related forum. They are looking into whether they have enough interest and availability of volunteers to host this.
- A few action items have been delayed until April due to the busy renewal period that just occurred (January-February, and into March).

6. Generative Thinking Items

Approach for compensation review in the next budget cycle:

Marianne noted her current approach for determining the general level of compensation is to review what the large OT employers are doing (e.g., AHS and the Government of Alberta have had salary freezes for several years now), inflation rate, what other Colleges are doing when those data are available, and then look at the available budget room.

A Councillor asked whether other Colleges are benchmarking salaries and benefits. Marianne noted the Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions (AFRHP) is looking at doing a benchmarking study on behalf of all the Colleges, and a request for proposal is being developed for this. Council asked that the results of this study come back to Council to inform 2023 budget discussions.

***ACTION:** Marianne to bring the results of the AFRHP compensation review and benchmarking study back to Council to inform 2023 budget discussions.*

Council then moved forward to the “parking” option for practice permits. Some registrants have requested a way to put their practice permits on a pause or “park” them so they could stay connected with the College, but not be on the full register.

Some suggestions/concerns on this item included:

- The *Health Professions Act* should be reviewed to determine if this is an acceptable option
- Occupational Therapists are a hands-on profession, so a course on changes and updates would be needed

- If a one-year pause on registration was allowed, what if that registrant needs to take more than a year off? For example, OTs who are starting a family and have more than one parental leave consecutively
- More administrative support would be needed for ACOT, with budget implications
- How can OTs continue to be health information custodians when they are not actively practicing?
- The main desire for this permit is for OTs to stay connected with ACOT, however all eNews' are connected to the website and available for the public to view.
- Retiring OTs are requesting for a membership style of connection with ACOT. This is outside of ACOT's mandate.

At the end of the discussion, Council agreed not to implement a “park” or “pause” category for registration at this time.

MOTION: ACOT will not implement an additional registration (park or pause) category at this time – Whitney (MOVED) Heidi (SECONDED). CARRIED.

7. Practice Inquiries Activity

Council viewed the Practice Issues Report and Marianne summarized the updates:

The volume of practice inquiries increased significantly again in the last reporting period, which is not unusual for the time around registration renewals. The highest volume of inquiries continues to be about documentation, ethical scenarios, and general registrant support. Marianne described an example of the complexity of ethical scenarios being brought forward and noted it is great to see these coming to the College for clarity.

Private practice inquiries – ACOT has developed private practice resources as there have been many requests about this topic as well. This may be due to more OTs going into private practice due to the changes in various practice settings. It is advantageous that the University of Alberta has a combined OT/MBA option now, it will help those targeting private practice.

MOTION: To accept the Strategic Plan Update, Action Items Update, and Practice Inquiries Report for information – Arwen (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED.

8. Review Risk Register

The Risk Register has been grouped into categories since the last Council meeting. The categories include Legal & Regulatory Environment, Technology, Human Resources (Council & Staff), and Stakeholders.

Updates included:

- Item closed: "Potential for fewer OTs graduating due to vaccine mandate." This is closed as the vaccine mandate was lifted in March 2022.
- Item regarding front line OT burnout: A Councillor mentioned that comments have been heard that there is a lack of some skills in specialized work.
- The item on how there may be a perception that OT work can be performed by other professions was noted to increase in risk in areas of Alberta where there is a struggle to find/hire OTs. Further increasing the risk, the public may not be receiving the proper treatment if a different health professional is performing the work, without the knowledge, skill and abilities an OT would bring. The risk may be further exacerbated by recent discussions of potential wage rollbacks which could prompt some OTs to leave the profession.

MOTION: To approve the Risk Register March 2022 Report with adjustments discussed – Whitney (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED.

9. Committee Reports

Governance Committee

Governance Committee (GC) updates included:

- The plan for onboarding of new Councillors has been updated. Whitney and Carrie have developed questions to guide the discussions between mentors and mentees
- Reviewed board policies to manage and improve performance
- Reviewed self-evaluation and training for individual councillors

A question was then presented to the Public Members: Was there anything GC could have provided to new Public Members that explains the role of an OT?

Answers/suggestions included:

- An OT "cheat-sheet" or primer would be a great idea. This could be a short guide on what Occupational Therapists do
- One Public Member mentioned that he looked at the documents that ACOT had, such as the Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and the *Health Professions Act*
- Asking friends about the profession helped

- Although a short guide would be helpful, it is also valuable for Public Members to explore and research on their own

It was then suggested to bring this discussion and suggestions forward to the next Executive Meeting.

***ACTION:** To bring forward the discussion about having each regulated OT Council Member provide an explanation of what their area of practice is to the next Executive Meeting.*

Competence Committee

The Competence Committee is preparing for the second year of review and evaluation work. There are two sessions in April scheduled for training.

The 2021 Continuing Competence Program (CCP) Review Report was provided to the University of Alberta Rehabilitation Research Center for preparation of future journal publication. The U of A has suggested that ACOT gather one more year of data to develop a more fulsome report.

The CCP Review Report has been published on ACOT's website.

Registrants will be notified via eNews that the review and evaluations will commence in Spring/Summer 2022.

MOTION: To approve the Governance Committee and Competence Committee Reports as presented – Tiffany (MOVED) Christie (SECONDED). CARRIED.

10. Consent Items

Review of the February 22, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes

Changes to the minutes included:

- Page two: Change the sentence to state “When the new eLearning modules are ready, they will be required in alternate years.”
- Page 3: Under RL 8 & RL 8.1, change the wording to state “to defer to a future Council Meeting” rather than “March 21, 2022, Council Meeting”.

MOTION: To approve the February 22, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes with adjustments discussed – Tiffany (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Complaints Activity

Council viewed the latest open and recently closed complaints on the Complaints Activity Report.

MOTION: To accept the Complaints Activity Report as presented for information– Heidi (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Ends Policy

Council Members viewed the Ends Policy to determine if any changes needed to be made. With no suggested amendments, a motion was created.

MOTION: To continue applying the current Ends Policy as written – Tiffany (MOVED) Heidi (SECONDED). CARRIED.

11. Reflection on Governance

Council members indicated the March 21, 2022, Council meeting met the Ends Policy goals, noting:

- It was an excellent meeting
- There were great discussions
- The focus continues to be on protection of the public
- There are healthy conversations
- Happy to be a part of Council
- We are working together effectively

12. Meeting Survey

Council then took five minutes to complete the March 21, 2022, ACOT Council meeting survey.

13. In-Camera Session

Council then agreed to move to an in-camera session.

MOTION: To move the March 21, 2022, ACOT Council Meeting to an in-camera session – Tiffany (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.



14. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the March 21, 2022, ACOT Council meeting - Arwen (MOVED) Tiffany (SECONDED). CARRIED.

The March 21, 2022, ACOT Council meeting ended at 8:24 p.m.