

MASTER'S IN PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
(MPCAC)

ACCREDITATION MANUAL

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FOREWORD

The Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) Accreditation Manual is intended to present the process and procedures involved in seeking and obtaining accreditation for master's level applied psychology and counseling programs in the United States. MPCAC is an integrated accrediting body that combines the Masters in Psychology Accreditation Committee (MPAC) and the Masters in Counseling Accreditation Committee (MCAC). As such it is a valuable guide for the self-study that is a fundamental and integral part of the process of accreditation for MPCAC.

The manual is divided into three parts. Part I explains the mission, function, scope and structure of MPCAC itself; Part II is a delineation of the MPCAC accreditation process; Part III contains the MPAC and MCAC Accreditation Standards.

SECTION I

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) is to promote training in the scientific practice of professional psychology and counseling at the master's level. Although programs may vary in the specific model of training and professional development utilized, commitment to science-based training in all aspects of psychology and counseling is emphasized. Also, of utmost importance, is the goal of providing services to the public that are culturally responsive and that reflect a social justice orientation to the people who receive professional services and to the public at large.

MPCAC objectives are as follows:

- To promote high standards of master's level preparation in scientifically based psychology and counseling training programs that integrate science and practice as a goal for both practitioners and scientists working in applied areas
- To assist faculty, staff, and administration in institutions of higher education in accessing resources and planning that support desirable change
- To promote continuing review, evaluation and improvement of existing programs of scientifically based psychology and counseling training programs utilizing measurable outcome criteria
- To encourage experimentation and innovation designed to improve psychology and counseling programs with the ultimate goal of enhancing the status of the science and professions of psychology and counseling, and the application of services
- To cooperate with other agencies in promoting quality preparation for master's level psychologists and counselors who will work in a variety of settings in our society

- To provide accreditation for high quality psychology and counseling programs awarding master's degrees in States which mandate students graduate from accredited programs to be eligible for licensure.

FUNCTION, SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF MPCAC

I. FUNCTION

The Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) is responsible for the accreditation of master's programs in psychology and counseling consistent with its recognized scope of accreditation practice, and its published policies, procedures, and standards. In carrying out that responsibility, consistent with the provisions of any organization concerned with post-secondary accreditation, MPCAC shall:

- Be responsible for the development, implementation and promotion of accreditation policies, procedures, and standards
- Be responsible for final accreditation decisions on science-based training programs in psychology and counseling
- Undertake timely and appropriate self-study analysis of its own objectives, criteria, policies, procedures, and practice
- Provide consultation, guidance, and information about the accreditation process and its purposes
- Assist programs in resolving conflicts between accreditation standards and state or local laws governing the institution seeking accreditation
- Have the authority to appoint consultants, committees and task forces in the discharge of its duties, within authorized policy and budget limits
- Discharge other responsibilities as necessary to comply with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) standards and policies.

II. SCOPE

Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) accredits programs in psychology and counseling leading to a master's degree in regionally accredited institutions of higher education in the United States.

III. STRUCTURE

A. Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC)

Function:

The Council awards accreditation to applicant programs, based on the recommendations of the respective Master's in Psychology Accreditation Committee (MPAC, as described below) and Master's in Counseling Accreditation Committee (MCAC, as described below). The Council facilitates communication between MPAC and MCAC ensuring implementation of general principles and operations in both Committees, and developing overall policies and procedures as needed. The Council is responsible for monitoring the application of standards for accreditation and for approving any changes in standards suggested by either of the Committees. The Council has responsibility for all financial aspects of MPCAC, including collecting funds, developing a budget, and establishing fees.

Structure:

The Council consists of seven voting members, all of whom have equal voting privileges and one member who serves as Executive Director. The Executive Director votes only in case of tie votes. Members of the Council include three members from the Psychology Committee (MPAC), one of whom shall be its Chairperson; two members from the Counseling Committee (MCAC), one of whom shall be its Chairperson; and one public member. The public member may be a student, parent, person from business, elected or appointed official, or other appropriate representative of the public. At least one representative from each Committee should be an individual with a terminal master's degree or a master's level license. The Executive Director is nominated and appointed by the Council, in consultation with MPAC and MCAC.

Officers:

The Council elects three officers: chair, secretary and treasurer, each of whom serves two-year terms, for a maximum of four terms. The Chairs of MPAC and MCAC (described below) are not eligible for the position of Council Chair.

The Council Chair has all the powers and performs all duties commonly incident to and vested in the office of a president of a corporation. The Chair serves as Chief Executive Officer and has the responsibility for the supervision of all the business of the Council. The Chair convenes the annual meeting (and other meetings, as necessary), prepares the agenda for all Council meetings and has one vote in all matters decided by vote, appoints standing or special committees, subcommittees, and divisions as may be required for the work of the Council. After the first year of the Chair's term, he or she should indicate a willingness to serve another term, if affirmed by the Committee members. After the first year of the final term, the Committee will select a Chair-elect to serve in conjunction with the Chair during his or her final year and prepare to become Chair in the next year.

The Secretary of the Council performs all duties commonly incident and vested in an office of the secretary of a corporation, including but not limited to the taking and distributing of true minutes of the proceedings of all meetings.

The Treasurer is responsible for budget preparation and monitoring of income and expenditures. The Treasurer shall submit a budget to the Council for its review and approval at the annual meeting. The Treasurer, through the Executive Director, is responsible for attending to all financial matters. Additionally, the Treasurer shall ensure that the Executive Director prepares financial statements showing the financial condition (balance sheet) and results of operations (income statement) providing actual results to budgeted amounts.

Election of Council members:

Council members (except the public member and the Executive Director) are representatives of the MPAC and MCAC committees. Each Committee shall select its Council representative on an annual basis through a self- or other-nomination process. These representatives may serve as many annual terms as are concurrent with their terms on the respective Committees. First year Committee members are not expected to serve as representatives to the Council, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Role of the Executive Director:

The Executive Director is responsible for the implementation of the work of the Council, including assisting the Treasurer with the development and management of the budget, monitoring and tracking the work of MPAC and MCAC, and facilitating communication among the Council, MPAC and MCAC. The Executive Director shall provide an annual report with appropriate dissemination. The role of the Executive Director may include other tasks and responsibilities as necessary and appropriate. The Executive Director has responsibility for notifying and assisting accredited programs to maintain and/or renew their accreditation status; and, with the Treasurer, authorizing MPCAC expenditures. The Executive Director shall receive appropriate compensation and be responsible for supervising all staff.

The Executive Director participates in all Council meetings and, as described below, in all MPAC and MCAC meetings.

B. Accreditation Committees

Two Committees, Masters in Psychology Accreditation Committee (MPAC) and Masters in Counseling Accreditation Committee (MCAC), respectively serve as the recommending bodies under the supervision of the Council.

Function:

The two Committees, MPAC and MCAC, are responsible for reviewing relevant applicant programs to consider their eligibility for accreditation. Committee recommendations are forwarded to the Council for final action. Both Committees are to follow agreed-upon accreditation policies and procedures, as documented in the MPCAC Accreditation Manual.

Structure:

Each Committee (MPAC and MCAC) shall have seven members, including at least four representatives from appropriate masters programs in academic institutions (applied psychology or counseling, as appropriate), and at least two representatives with a terminal master's degree or a master's level license (applied psychology or counseling, as appropriate). All members serve a maximum of three (3) three-year terms. Individuals may serve again after a lapse of a full three-year

term. The Executive Director shall serve *ex officio* on each committee.

Officers:

Each Committee selects its own officers: Chair and secretary, each of whom serves a two-year term. After the first year of the Chair's term, he or she should indicate a willingness to serve another term, if affirmed by the Committee members. After the first year of the final term, the Committee will select a Chair-elect to serve in conjunction with the Chair during his or her final year and prepare to become Chair in the next year.

The Chair of the Committee has the responsibility for the supervision of all the business of the Committee. The Chair convenes all meetings, prepares the agenda for all Committee meetings and has one vote in all matters decided by vote, appoints standing or special committees, subcommittees, and divisions as may be required for the work of the Committee. The Chair monitors the work of each Accreditation Review Committee, ensures the timely implementation of the review process, and conveys the recommendation of the Committee to the Council. The Chair participates as a member of the Council.

The Secretary of the Committee performs all duties commonly incident and vested in an office of the secretary, including but not limited to taking and distributing minutes of the proceedings of all meetings.

Election to Committees:

Members of the Committees solicit nominations for positions on the respective Committees from appropriate individuals. Current members select potential new members from the available nominations; each potential member is recommended to the Council who approves the selection and offers the position to the new member. If the Council has concerns about the nominated individual, those concerns are reviewed with the Committee and an agreement is reached (the nominee is selected or another nominee is proposed). If the Council and the Committee are unable to agree, another nominee is selected.

C. Joint Meeting of MPCAC, MPAC and MCAC

One jointly organized meeting of the Council and both of the Committees shall be held annually. Other meetings of the Council and, separately, of the Committee (in-person, conference calls, etc.) are scheduled as needed.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following general policies guide the work of MPCAC:

1. In accrediting science-based training programs in psychology and counseling, the ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (see Section III) are used as criteria for evaluation by the Committees and by the site visitors.
2. The accreditation process is not to be used as an attempt to control the number of practitioners in the profession or those in preparation programs on the basis of

predetermined limits relating to supply and demand.

3. MPCAC accreditation is not intended to limit responsible experimentation and innovation within training programs. MPCAC acknowledges a healthy variety in achieving excellence; homogeneity of accredited programs (adhering to particular theoretical positions or methods, etc.) is not a MPCAC objective. MPCAC acknowledges that programs have the ability to organize themselves structurally and decide the best use of their resources to attain their programmatic goals.
4. An applicant program may withdraw the application for accreditation at any time prior to final action.
5. A program may withdraw from any status of accreditation at any time by forwarding such notice in writing to MPCAC.
6. Programs accredited by MPCAC must display integrity and responsibility when publicizing their accreditation status. Programs not reviewed by the Committees, even within the same institutional department, should not be represented as accredited. Statements suggesting future accreditation of programs when MPCAC has not made such decisions are not permissible.
7. All reports developed by the site visitors will remain confidential, with details released only to the institution and program involved, except in the event that disclosure of the report is legally required.
8. A program is permitted no more than ten (10) years of accreditation per review. MPCAC may grant a one-year extension under exceptional circumstance.

REVISION OF MPAC AND MCAC STANDARDS

To ensure the public interest is being served, MPCAC will conduct a systematic, comprehensive review of its standards every seven years, at a minimum. The Executive Director will notify all MPCAC-accredited programs and other interested parties of the proposed changes. To obtain input, proposed Standard changes will be posted on the MPCAC website for public comment for a minimum of 30 days. Council members will review and respond to public comments before enacting Standards changes.

Any changes in standards must be proposed by the respective accrediting Committee and submitted to the Council for approval. All such changes must be approved by a positive vote of at least 71% (at least five of seven) of the members of the Council.

A reasonable timetable will be provided for accredited programs and those under review to respond and/or make program changes to meet any alteration in the Accreditation Standards.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF ACCREDITATION

Programs' application and annual fees financially support each Committee's activities. Fees are set by the Council periodically to ensure adequate support for the projected budget. There is no compensation for Committee or site visitors for their work on behalf of accreditation. The program seeking accreditation will cover all site visitor expenses.

Application fees are applied to the costs incurred during review of the self-study document submitted to the Committee. The application fee shall be submitted with the self-study. All application fees are non-refundable. Each degree program pays the full application fee. If a degree program has less than 50% overlap in courses with another degree program from the same institution, it should be considered an additional degree program.

The Executive Director shall recommend to MPCAC that probationary accreditation status be imposed if a program fails to pay yearly dues within six (6) months of due date. A recommendation for suspension of accreditation will be sent to MPCAC if a program fails to submit payment within twelve (12) months of due date. To have accreditation reinstated due to lack of payment, the program must pay \$300 a year for each delinquent year. Programs may appeal these actions according to normal procedures.

Notice of due date for yearly dues will be sent by the Executive Director three (3) months prior to due date.

SECTION II

THE MPCAC ACCREDITATION PROCESS

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Accreditation is a voluntary process of evaluation of the program by itself and by others. The self-evaluation process entails an assessment of the program's resources, objectives, strengths, and limitations. The ultimate purpose of this aspect of the evaluation process is to improve the educational effectiveness of the program by those individuals responsible for the program's operations. Evaluation by others involves a review of the self-study document against a set of established standards using program assessment procedures.

The MPCAC accreditation process entails the assessment of a program's ability to meet standards established by the profession and adopted by Council. This process involves: 1) submission of a programmatic self-study documenting the program's compliance with the standards, 2) validation of the submitted documentation by site visitors, 3) decisions of the Committee based upon the written self-study documentation, site visitor report, institutional corrections to the site visit report, and 4) submission of interim or continuation reports as required by MPCAC to provide for periodic review of a program's compliance with specified standards.

To ensure that the integrity of this accreditation process is maintained and that this process remains an effective catalyst for continuous growth and educational quality, the application process must be based on clearly and accurately stated documentation of the program's operation. The self-study narrative and accompanying materials must accurately represent the program and not claim or imply resources, objectives, strengths, or limitations that exceed the program's level of operations. If intentional misrepresentation is found to have occurred, the Committee reserves the right to withhold or rescind accreditation.

OVERALL STEPS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

See the following section for details

1. Applicant requests pre-application form from the MPCAC office (595 New Loudon Road #265, Latham, New York 12110) or downloads this form from the MPCAC website.
2. Applicant submits either the MPAC or MCAC Pre-Application form to the MPCAC Executive Director for review.
3. The Executive Director notifies applicant (and the appropriate MPAC or MCAC Chair) regarding the program's eligibility to apply for accreditation.
4. Applicant conducts comprehensive self-study following the guidelines in the MPCAC Manual with the aim of ensuring that the program meets the appropriate MPAC or MCAC Standards.

5. Within 2 years after notification of eligibility, applicant submits one copy of the self-study to the MPCAC office. Applicant pays all required fees at the time of the submission of the self-study (See Schedule of Fees).
6. The MPCAC Executive Director completes a review for completeness of the self-study. When the Executive Director notifies the program that the self-study is acceptable, the applicant is required to submit four additional copies of the self-study.
7. The chair of the appropriate committee (MPAC or MCAC) appoints an Accreditation Review Committee (ARC) chair and two ARC members. Two site-visitors are selected.
8. The ARC conducts a review of the applicant's self-study and may forward questions to the applicant.
9. The Chair of the ARC and the applicant plan the site visit.
10. The site visitors conduct a site visit and complete a report.
11. The site visit report is forwarded to the program for clarification of errors of fact.
12. MPAC or MCAC acts on the application and notifies the Council of its recommendation.
13. The Council reviews the recommendation from the Committee and votes on the accreditation decision.
14. The applicant may appeal the decision.

INITIAL ACCREDITATION PROCESS

STAGE 1: INITIAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

A. Eligibility Requirements (Pre-Application)

The program faculty should compare their program against the following Accreditation Eligibility Requirements:

1. The academic unit is located in a psychology, counseling, or counselor education department (as appropriate) and supported by an educational institution accredited by regional accrediting bodies.
2. The academic unit must have students currently enrolled, and at least four graduates over the previous two years in each program area for which accreditation is sought.
3. The program must comprise a minimum of 42 semester credit hours or the equivalent if seeking accreditation from MPAC, or a minimum of 48 semester credit hours or the equivalent if seeking accreditation from MCAC.

B. Program Self-Study

1. A self-study shall be conducted to determine if the program meets or exceeds the Accreditation Standards as described in Section III. Evaluation shall include a review of the program's goals and objectives, resources, evaluation method, program outcome measures, and plans for continuous improvements. This process shall include representatives of the faculty, students, graduates, administrators, and employers.
2. The self-study shall result in a detailed report that clearly documents the program's compliance with the Accreditation Standards. External advisors may be chosen to review the self-study report, to visit the institution, and/or provide feedback regarding compliance with the standards.
3. It is the responsibility of each training program to provide sufficient evidence of quality, science-based training. Each program must provide student outcome data and demonstrate students' readiness to work with the public.

C. Submission of Application Materials

1. The Accreditation Application must bear the signature of the institution's President or CEO, or his or her designee, to verify the institution's commitment to the accreditation review.
2. The institution shall submit a letter of intent to meet the financial expenses of the site visitors.

3. The program shall submit one copy of the self-study, and one copy of the letter of intent, and the application fee to MPCAC at 595 New Loudon Road #265, Latham, New York 12110. Following a review for completeness of the self-study by the Executive Director, the program shall submit four (4) additional copies of the self-study.
4. Departments applying for accreditation must submit the appropriate application fee(s) (See Schedule of Fees). Application fees are not refundable.
5. The Executive Director is responsible to ensure that the appropriate Committee chair is notified that application materials have been received and are available for review.

D. Formation of Accreditation Review Committee (ARC)

1. Upon receipt of the application materials and fees, the Chair of the appropriate Committee (MCAC or MPAC) will name the Chair of the ARC, who will be a current member of the respective Committee. Two additional individuals will be appointed who will serve either as a site visitor or as a non-visiting member (if the ARC Chair also serves as a site visitor).
2. The Chair of the ARC will coordinate the selection of site visitors based on availability, willingness, and board approval. Two visitors are normally appointed, although departments with more than one program seeking accreditation may require at least one additional site visitor.
3. The Chair of the ARC will send the list of proposed site visitors to the program for review and approval.
4. The program shall provide a range of acceptable visitation dates and the Chair of the ARC will help to coordinate arrangements for the visit.
5. The Executive Director is responsible for distributing copies of the self-study report to members of the ARC.

STAGE 2: SITE VISIT

A. Site Visit

1. The site visitors will meet with faculty, administrative officers and students, graduates, off-site supervisors and others deemed related to the program.
2. Before leaving, the site visitors will present an oral exit report that conveys general impressions, program strengths and weaknesses with reference to specific standards, and general recommendations. The visitors will not convey specific

recommendations concerning accreditation status during this oral report.

3. Site visitor expenses are paid by the institution seeking accreditation.

B. Site Visit Report

1. Site visitors shall provide a written draft of a final report that represents a consensus of the visitors' views. The report shall contain analysis of the program's compliance with Standards and may contain other observations or recommendations.
2. The site visitors' draft report shall be forwarded to the Chair of the ARC within 30 days of the conclusion of the site visit.
3. The Chair of the ARC shall send a copy of the draft of the site visitors' report to the program. The program shall have the opportunity to correct any errors of fact by responding to the Chair of the ARC within 30 days.
4. If agreement on errors of fact between the site visitors and the program representative cannot be reached within 60 days, the Chair of the ARC will consult the Committee (MPAC or MCAC) concerning the discrepancies. If the Committee perceives the discrepancies are vital to the granting of the accredited status, the Chair of the Committee may appoint another Committee member as a mediator between the ARC and the program representative, or may decide to arrange for another site visit. Once agreement is reached and the site visit report is finalized, the report is sent to the chair of the relevant Committee.

STAGE 3: ACCREDITATION DECISIONS

A. ARC Recommendations

In making its accreditation recommendation, the Accreditation Review Committee will take into consideration the following data: the application, the self-study report, any pertinent correspondence from the institution, the site visitors' report, and the program's response to the visitors' report. ARC recommendations are determined by consensus; any ARC variations in those recommendations will be communicated to the Committee (MPAC or MCAC).

B. Committee Decisions

At the first MCAC/MPAC meeting following the acceptance of the ARC report by the program under review, the ARC Chair shall present a brief summary of the self-study and site visit, followed by an analysis of how well the program meets accreditation standards, recommended accreditation action, and any recommended stipulations for continued accreditation. Members of the site visit team may supplement the chair's report and respond to questions as appropriate. The Chair of the ARC shall enter a motion for action and a vote shall be taken regarding its adoption following a discussion period. All members of the

MCAC/MPAC committee shall receive electronic copies of the ARC report prior to the meeting for their review.

In the final Committee voting and discussion on each program visited, no Committee member will be present for deliberation on any program in which that person is either a faculty member, or otherwise has a conflict of interest. All final votes are recorded in the minutes, including decisions about stipulations and other recommendations. Committee members may participate by phone, computer conferencing, or by mail. The accreditation recommendations made by the Committee are communicated to MPCAC.

C. MPCAC Council Decision

MPCAC meets (in person, by phone or by computer conferencing) to vote on the accreditation decision. The chair of the Committee presents the report, any stipulations, recommendations and other relevant information. No Council member will be present for deliberation on any program in which that person is either a faculty member or otherwise has a conflict of interest. All final votes are recorded in the minutes, including decisions about stipulations and other recommendations. All members of MPCAC will receive electronic copies of the ARC report and Committee recommendations prior to the meeting for their review.

D. Notification of the Academic Unit

Only the MPCAC Chair is authorized to release any information regarding accreditation decisions. Accreditation decisions and actions to be taken are forwarded, in writing, to the program represented in the application.

Accompanying the decision is specific information regarding any stipulations that are attached to the accreditation and which might limit the length of the accreditation. In addition, MPCAC may provide suggestions for improvement, which are at the discretion of the program to implement. Any recommendations will be clearly identified as separate from stipulations attached to initial or continued accreditation requirements.

In the event of denial of accreditation, the report will include a specific statement of reasons for that action. The program will be informed of the right to appeal and of the deadline for filing an appeal.

E. Appeals Procedure

Denial or withdrawal of accreditation can be appealed to the Chair of the Council or, if the Chair is a member of the ARC responsible for review of the applicant program, to the Executive Director. . A letter of intent to appeal must be submitted by the appealing program and received by the Council Chair no later than 30 working days after the Committee's decision has been rendered and communicated to the program. All materials to be reviewed in the appeal are to be received no later than 60 working days following the Council's decision. The appeal process authorizes continuation of current accreditation

status of the program until an appeal decision has been rendered.

A decision by the Committee to deny may be appealed on the following grounds:

1. The Committee's decision was not justified based on the information available at the time of the decision.
2. The Committee did not follow its established procedures in rendering its decision, and this caused the decision to be unfair.
3. The decision of the Committee was based on inferior, false, or incomplete information.

The Chair of the Council, or the Executive Director if required, shall appoint an Appeal Review Team (ART). The ART shall comprise three reviewers selected from the MPAC and MCAC committee member rosters, two from the Committee not responsible for the applicant's original review and one from the Committee responsible for the review. The ART will review the self-study, the site visit report, and the corrections of factual errors from the program. The ART will conduct one meeting via conference call with the program to allow for a discourse regarding concerns about the original ARC decision. The original ARC team will attend this meeting, and may ask clarification questions or provide information regarding the original decision to the review team. Following this, the ART will make a recommendation to MPCAC and that recommendation will be voted upon. That vote will be the final decision. This process shall occur within a 90 day time frame. The applicant is responsible for any costs associated with the appeal. In all cases the burden of proof regarding the appeal rests with the program making the appeal.

MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITED STATUS

THE INTERIM REPORT

Each accredited program is required to submit an Interim Report to the Executive Director during the 4th and 8th years following receipt of accreditation. The appropriate Committee (MCAC/MPAC) shall review and act on each report within 60 working days. The report documents significant changes in program curriculum, staffing, instruction and so forth. In the event there are significant changes reported which may call into question a program's ability to maintain its compliance with the standards, the Committee Chair will notify the program of the Committee's concerns and questions, in writing, and request supplemental information. If concerns remain, following review of the supplemental information, the Committee will initiate a review of the accredited status of a program and may impose stipulations to be implemented by a specific date. Failure to comply could result in suspension of accreditation status. Such action may be appealed by the program, utilizing the appeals procedures outlined above.

The Executive Director will recommend to MPCAC probationary accreditation status for programs

not submitting the Interim Report within six (6) months of the due date. A recommendation for suspension of accreditation will be sent to MPCAC if a program fails to submit the Interim Report within twelve (12) months of due date. Programs may appeal these actions according to normal procedures.

Notice of Interim Report due dates will be sent to programs by the Executive Director six (6) months prior to the due date.

THE ACCREDITATION CONTINUATION REPORT: LESS THAN TEN-YEAR ACCREDITATION

A program cannot be partially accredited. Programs that substantially meet the requirements, but which have deficiencies which must be addressed to ensure compliance with the Standards, may be granted accreditation for a period of less than ten years.

These time periods are given to allow programs to address the deficiencies which are outlined as specific stipulations in the accreditation notification letter sent to the program's representative. Prior to the end of the accreditation period, the program must submit an Accreditation Continuation Report that addresses, through narrative and documentation, how each stipulation has been met.

The Committee (MCAC or MPAC) will review the Accreditation Continuation Report and make one of three recommendations to MPCAC: 1) removal of accreditation status, 2) continued accreditation for an additional period (with one or more stipulations remaining in effect), or 3) continued accreditation to the end of the initial ten year cycle with all deficiencies removed. MPCAC will make the final decision.

RE-ACCREDITATION AFTER TEN YEARS

At least twelve (12) months prior to the expiration of its accreditation, the Executive Director will notify programs of their status. Programs wishing to continue their accredited status must follow the accreditation process in effect at that time.

ADDING A PROGRAM ACCREDITATION MID-CYCLE

Only institutions with two or more years remaining until their renewal deadlines for reapplication may apply to add new program areas. The academic unit must submit an addendum updating its materials and addressing the new program area(s).

The Accreditation Review Committee completing review of the new program area may choose to recommend waiver of the on-site visit. The remainder of the procedures will remain the same as for an initial application.

When the originally accredited program area's renewal application is due, the additional program area(s) must be reviewed as well to bring all programs into the same review cycle.

PUBLICATION OF ACCREDITATION STATUS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Council and the Committees regard the text of the self-study report, site visit report, institutional response, and accreditation notification letter to the program representative as confidential material. Upon request from the institution, however, this information may be made available where appropriate. Likewise the information may be disclosed only if it is legally required to do so, or as is required to maintain its status as an accrediting agency.

Annually, the Council publishes a list of its accredited programs on its website (www.mpcacaccreditation.org). This list includes the year of the next scheduled accreditation review. Programs which voluntarily withdraw their accreditation or programs which have their accreditation status removed by the Council will have the withdrawal or removal published in the annual report.

MPCAC accredited programs should include notice of their program specific accreditation status on their websites and in any materials made available to the public. The following wording is appropriate:

The _____ program is accredited by the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) for the period _____(DATE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION) through _____ (DATE OF ACCREDITATION EXPIRATION).

SCHEDULE OF FEES

Degree program application fee.....	\$2000
Site visitors' expenses.....	(per visit)
Degree program yearly maintenance fee.....	\$300
Re-accreditation fee.....	\$2000

SECTION III

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

All programs will be evaluated according to standards specified in sections A-G. These standards should be dealt with in their entirety by a department's faculty undergoing a self-study in preparation for a site visit. The faculty should evaluate the program(s) against each standard as given in this Manual. Required documentation is listed at the end of each section. Note these are minimal expectations and programs are expected to provide whatever documentation is needed to demonstrate compliance.

A. PROGRAM MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

1. The program must have a mission statement that guides the structure and content of the curriculum. The mission statement should reflect a commitment to practitioners who bring scholarship and reflection to their work; and an understanding of diversity in clientele, methodology, and application. In addition MCAC accredited programs must show a commitment to evidence supported practice; and an overarching philosophy that embraces cultural competence, human development, strength-based helping strategies, and social justice as core values for professional practices.
2. Coherence with the mission statement shall be reflected in each program's rationale for curriculum and graduation requirements, the epistemological perspective taught, and the systems for self-evaluation and self-improvement within each program.
3. The program's objectives shall flow from its mission statement. They should reflect current knowledge from lay and professional groups concerning the present and projected psychological and developmental needs of a multicultural society. Further, the objectives shall reflect consideration of concerns from all persons involved in the conduct of the program including program faculty, current and former students, and personnel in cooperating agencies. The objectives shall be directly related to program activities and written so that they can be evaluated objectively. Finally, each program's objectives shall promote innovation and continuous improvement that emanates from a scientific base which culminates in the application of psychological and/or counseling practice.

*Expected Documentation:

- Mission Statement
- Program Objectives
- Evidence of input from relevant constituent groups

B. PROGRAM ORIENTATION AND CORE CURRICULUM

Curricular experiences, demonstrated knowledge, and skill competence in the common-core areas shall be required of all students in their particular program.

1. Masters in Psychology Accreditation Committee (MPAC)

The Committee considers that the Standards of Training developed at the 1990 National Conference on Applied Masters Training in Psychology (Norman, OK) (Lowe, 1990), revised at the 1994 National Conference on Applied Masters Training in Psychology (Edmond, OK) (Yeatman, 1995), and approved by CAMPP members (May, 1995), will serve as the guiding framework in the evaluation of masters programs in applied psychology. The standards are intended to promote the preparation of scientist-practitioners in the field of applied psychology, at the master's level.

1. The program should be identifiable as a psychology program. This is to be defined primarily in terms of the disciplinary affiliations of those that teach in and administer the program.
2. The program should be the equivalent of at least two academic years of full-time study. This would normally include a minimum of 42 semester hours, or the equivalent.
3. The program must include evidence of professional competence in the following areas:
 - a) A base of general/theoretical Psychology to include the following:
 - 1) Biological bases of behavior, to the degree that it is appropriate for the sub-discipline;
 - 2) Acquired or learned bases of behavior;
 - 3) Social/cultural/systemic bases of behavior;
 - 4) Individual or unique bases of behavior.
 - b) Understanding of methodology used to investigate questions and acquire knowledge in the discipline. This could include study in research design and/or methodology, statistics or critical thinking and scientific inquiry. At a minimum, there should be one course in research methods and/or statistics as applied to psychological questions.
 - c) Applied Psychology
 - 1) Coursework in the theory, history, and applications of psychological principles and theories appropriate to the sub-discipline;
 - 2) Significant supervised experience appropriate to the sub-discipline;
 - 3) Ethical and professional standards;
 - 4) Sensitivity to social and cultural diversity, resulting in appropriate assessment and intervention strategies and other professional behaviors;
 - 5) Teaching of assessment relevant to goals of the training program (e.g., interviewing techniques, program evaluation).

*Expected Documentation:

- Syllabi of all course offerings making up the curriculum of the program with a list of actual frequency of offerings.

- Url for Course Catalog
- Curriculum map indicating where standards are addressed.

2. Masters in Counseling Accreditation Committee (MCAC)

The standards for accreditation are intended as guidelines for the preparation of scientist-practitioners at the master's level in the counseling or closely related profession with an emphasis on multiculturalism and a social justice perspective. These standards should be dealt with in their entirety by a department's faculty undergoing a self-study in preparation for a site visit. The faculty should evaluate the program(s) against each Standard as outlined in this manual.

1. The program should be identifiable as a counseling or closely related professional training program. This descriptor is to be defined primarily in terms of the coursework, field work, and disciplinary affiliations of those that teach in and administer the program.
2. The program should be the equivalent of at least two academic years of full-time study. This time period should include a **minimum** of 48 semester hours, or the equivalent quarter hours. Programs seeking MCAC accreditation can include as many course credits/semester hours as appropriate that are consistent with the mission, philosophy, and purpose of the program.
3. The program must include evidence of promoting competence in the following professional domains:

a. Professional Counselor identity, ethical behavior, and social justice practices. Including but not limited to: assisting students to acquire knowledge related to the history of the helping profession; professional counseling roles and functions; ethical standards related to professional organizations in the field of counseling; and public policy processes including system advocacy strategies on behalf of the profession, clients, and the communities that counselors serve.

b. Human development and wellness across the life span. Including but not limited to: the study of life span development; maturational and structural theories of human development; wellness counseling theories; strategies to deal with developmental processes and transitions; human behavior; disabilities; environmental, contextual and multicultural factors that contribute to healthy human development and relevant culturally competent counseling practices; and the promotion of social justice in society.

c. Neuroscientific, physical, and biological foundations of human development and wellness. Including but not limited to: facilitating students' acquisition of new knowledge related to neuroscience, health and wellness; addictions; and the use of neuroscientific research findings for culturally competent counseling practices and social justice advocacy interventions.

d. Ecological, contextual, multicultural, social justice foundations of human development. Including but not limited to: the study of culture from ecological, contextual, multicultural, and social justice perspectives; evidence-based strategies for working with diverse groups (related to but not limited to age, race, culture, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion/spirituality); the impact of power, privilege, and oppression and micro/macro aggressions on human development; and culturally competent counseling and social justice advocacy interventions.

e. Counseling, consultation, and social justice advocacy theories and skills. Including but not limited to: training in preventive counseling; consultation; individual, group, couples, marriage, family and addictions counseling; systems change intervention strategies and skills; and social justice advocacy interventions.

f. Group theory, practice, and social justice advocacy. Including but not limited to: principles of group dynamics, group process, and group leadership; theories and methods of group counseling; and the application of group work theory and practice to organizational dynamics and social justice advocacy in different environmental settings (e.g., family, school, university, workplace, and community settings).

g. Career and life development. Including but not limited to: the study of vocational/career development theories and decision-making models; career assessment instruments and techniques; occupational and related educational systems; career development applications; career counseling processes/techniques; and the application of social justice theories to people's vocational/career development.

h. Assessment of human behavior and organizational/community/ institutional systems. Including but not limited to: assessment and diagnosis of individual psychiatric disorders as defined by classification systems such as the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD); understanding of defined diagnostic disorders relative to the helping context; knowledge of cultural biases associated with classification systems; assessment strategies designed to promote healthy human functioning; and assessment strategies that focus on organizational/community/social justice advocacy dynamics as they impact human development, wellness, and the perpetuation of psychiatric disorders as listed in various classification systems.

i. Tests and measurements. Including but not limited to promoting an understanding of the theoretical and historical basis for, as well as knowledge of cultural biases associated with: assessment techniques; testing methods; knowledge of various types of tests and evaluation strategies that result in knowledgeable selection, administration, interpretation; and use of assessment/evaluation instruments and techniques that foster social justice among diverse client populations.

j. Traditional and social justice-oriented research and evaluations. Including but not limited to: quantitative and qualitative research design and methods; statistical analyses, principles, practices, and application of needs assessments; the design and process of program evaluation; organizational, community, and social justice advocacy evaluation strategies; and knowledge of cultural biases associated with research practices.

k. Practicum/Internship experiences. At least two (2) academic terms of supervised field placement experiences that focus on issues related to the promotion of mental health, human development, wellness, cultural competence, and social justice advocacy (at least three semester hours or five quarter hours per academic term in a counseling and/or related human service setting with 300 hours of supervised field training). The practicum/internship experience (commensurate with program goals and State licensure requirements) shall be completed under the clinical supervision of appropriately credentialed professionals (e.g., licensed professional counselor, social worker, marriage and family therapist, school counselor, psychologist, or physician with a specialty in psychiatry).

*Expected Documentation:

- Syllabi of all course offerings making up the curriculum of the program with a list of actual frequency of offerings.
- Url for Course Catalog
- Curriculum map indicating where standards are addressed

C. RESEARCH AND CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

1. The scientist-practitioner-based program provides training in both research methods and delivery of professional services. These programs are intended for individuals pursuing careers in which they will integrate and apply the results of research to professional practice and/or be active producers of research. The levels of research and clinical instruction shall be commensurate with the scientist-practitioner model and the goals and objectives of each program which may include academic and research training, laboratory experiences, practicum, and internships which are taken throughout a student's program. Internships shall include practice in assessment procedures, where appropriate.

2. Evidence of the use and production of research data and/or scholarship among program faculty (and students, as appropriate) shall exist and minimally include frequent use of and reference to relevant research findings in instructional experiences, supervision of student research activities by program faculty, and students having the opportunity for collaborative involvement in the research activities of program faculty.

Expected Documentation:

Data regarding applicant program's concern for the integration of science and practice, and any supporting, materials and/or information relating to this process, such as faculty research, supervision of student research and theses, student authorship on publications/presentations, and the integration of research and practice in curricular and co-curricular experiences.

D. THE INSTITUTION

1. The current institutional catalogue or bulletin shall accurately describe the program, including admission criteria, minimum program requirements, and matriculation requirements (e.g. examinations, academic-standing policies, and financial policies).
2. The program for which accreditation is sought shall clearly be identified as part of the institution's graduate program and shall have a minimum of four (4) graduates within the prior two years.
3. The institution shall provide a budget sufficient to ensure the operation of the program, including sufficient equipment and materials, etc. The institution shall also provide encouragement and support for program faculty to participate in professional organizations and activities (e.g., professional travel, research, and offices held).
4. Library, training, and computer facilities and their resources shall be appropriate for scholarly inquiry, study, and research by program faculty and students.
5. Research support, stipend levels, and departmental support shall be adequate for program faculty and students.
6. Evidence shall exist of cooperative relationships between the program and other institutional academic units and off-campus professional and community resources that contribute to the professional preparation of students in the program.

Expected Documentation:

- Relevant sections of the institutional catalog or bulletin
- Name and title of all other individuals in the reporting hierarchy from program director and department chair up to and including the applicant institution's president (or chancellor, etc.). Also, please include an organizational chart for the applicant institution, showing the applicant program's position within that structure.
- A statement describing how resources are accessed and distributed.
- A statement regarding departmental and institutional support for program faculty and students, such as stipend levels and travel funds.
- A statement regarding departmental and institutional support for program functioning documenting supplies, and equipment.
- A description of applicant institution's library resources relevant to psychology and/or counseling.
- Evidence of cooperative relationships such as listing of off-site supervisors.

E. FACULTY AND STAFF

1. One faculty member shall be clearly designated as the program director for each program in which accreditation is sought, and is responsible for the coordination of the entire program and is the one to whom inquiries regarding the program are addressed. The program director shall hold a graduate degree in psychology, counseling or a closely related field, have professional experience in

the program area, hold membership(s) in appropriate professional organizations, be employed by the institution and be regularly involved in the instructional activities of the program (e.g., teach courses, supervise students, etc.).

2. In addition to the program director(s), the other full-time, adjunct, and/or affiliate program faculty members shall hold graduate degrees in psychology, counseling or closely related fields, hold membership(s) in professional organizations, and have had professional experience in the program area. Program faculty members shall be assigned to provide classroom, research, and clinical instruction and supervision only in areas for which they have demonstrated competence. The program will have a sufficient number of appropriately trained faculties to accommodate the labor-intensive nature of teaching the skills of applied psychology and counseling.
3. During the three-year period preceding the date of application for accreditation of the program, the program faculty shall have engaged in activities for professional development/renewal (e.g., attended appropriate program area meetings, conventions, workshops, and seminars), research (e.g., publications and grants), and service (e.g., program presentations, workshops, consultations, speeches, and direct services).
4. Regular, adjunct, and affiliate program faculty who provide on-campus or off-campus instruction and/or supervision shall have relevant professional experience and degrees and have demonstrated competence in the program area at levels appropriate for the students' program.
5. Each program shall have appropriate secretarial and other support staff relative to the needs and objectives of the program.
6. The teaching loads of program faculty shall be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program and are an integral part of professional preparation, and incorporate allocated time for advisement for, and supervision of, student research, professional research, and, if applicable, administrative responsibilities.
7. There shall be evidence that the institution has sought to recruit and/or retain program faculty members representative of the diversity among people in society.

*Expected Documentation:

- A list of all faculty who instruct, their FTE and percentage of time contributed to the program, and their vitae.
- A statement regarding faculty teaching loads and any course releases for faculty members.
- A statement regarding applicant program's concerns for diversity within its faculty and staff, and any supporting data materials and/or information relating to this issue.
- A list of adjunct faculty used by the program within the past three years, the courses they teach on a yearly basis, and their vitae.
- A list of administrative support staff associated with the program.

F. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The program and its curriculum should have a coherent organization and structure that reflects its mission statement. Policies and practices within the program are developed and implemented by program faculty, and shall recognize the role of the institution in setting institutional priorities and ensuring that the program fits appropriately within the institutional structure and operating policies.
2. Entrance requirements should reflect the responsibility that the program has to the public. Efforts should be made to ensure that students have the intellectual and personal capabilities required to perform as competent professionals. The level of students matriculating in the program shall comprise a level of preparedness deemed appropriate by each program within the guidelines of the program's mission.
3. The program admissions criteria and selection procedures into the program shall be distributed to prospective students. The criteria and procedures shall include consideration of the goals and objectives commensurate with each individual program. A written policy of commitment to recruitment of students representing a variety of societal subgroups and subcultures shall be developed and implemented by the program faculty. Personnel in various areas of the program and relevant job settings shall be available to discuss pertinent areas of interest with prospective students.
4. Published, planned program of studies, plus appropriate supplemental materials (e.g., institutional catalogues or bulletins and student handbooks) shall be available for use by prospective students, students, and program faculty advisors. The planned programs identify prerequisite curricular experiences, core curriculum requirements, research studies requirements, specialized studies requirements, supervised practicum and internship requirements (if applicable), and appropriate elective curricular experience.
5. Available information should include a written student retention policy, explaining procedures for possible student remediation and/or dismissal from the program for other than academic (i.e., grade point average) reasons, personal and professional expectations held by program faculty for students enrolled in the program, information about professional organizations, involvement, activities potentially appropriate to students in the program, and written program objectives.
6. Flexibility shall be provided within the program's curriculum to accommodate individual differences in student competencies and understandings acquired before entering the program. Course (or other curricular experience) syllabi shall be available for review by all students enrolled in the program which shall include objectives, content areas, required texts and/or readings, student performance evaluation criteria and procedures.
7. Where assistantships are provided for students in the program, the program faculty shall clearly define the policies for selection, assignment, and continued employment of program students who receive graduate and/or other assistantships.

8. All students shall have an approved faculty advisor at all times. Faculty advisors shall hold an appointment recognized by the institution in the institutional academic unit in which the program is housed.

9. Students shall have the opportunity to participate in workshops, seminars, or similar professional activities that enhance program requirements and facilitate students' personal and professional development (e.g., attendance at regional meetings, webinars, outside speakers, etc.).

*Expected Documentation:

- Retention/graduation rates for the previous five (5) years (or less if fewer than 5 years of graduating classes).
- Copies of all materials which describe the applicant program's nature and requirements for admission, for graduation, etc., which are available to prospective and/or participating students.
- A description of applicant program's de facto admissions procedures (e.g., evaluation of prerequisite coursework for admission, etc.).
- A description of applicant program's de facto admission standards and retention policy (e.g., GRE scores, previous coursework in psychology, etc.).
- The names of bachelor's degree granting institution, the individual bachelor's level GPA and all entrance test scores for individuals accepted into applicant programs over the last three years.
- A statement regarding applicant program's concern for students of ethnic and other forms of diversity. Also, supply any supporting data, materials and/or information relating to this issue, including efforts to attract and retain diverse faculty, staff, and students.
- Policies relating to graduate assistantships.
- Policies relating to assignment of advisor.
- Description of professional development opportunities for students.

G. EVALUATIONS IN THE PROGRAM

1. Outcome evaluation shall be conducted in reference to each individual program's purposes, goals, and objectives and is essential in the self-study process. Students' and alumni achievements, faculty development, and/or program change may be used to measure the evaluation. Through the self-study process, program objectives shall be reviewed and/or revised on a regularly scheduled basis with input from program faculty, current and former students, and personnel in cooperating agencies, and shall be developed in accord with pertinent professional organization positions and perspectives.

2. Continuing evaluation of the program and its outcome shall follow a formal procedure that includes regularly scheduled review by program faculty of program emphases, curricular offerings, current professional trends in the program area, and types of students seeking admission into the program. Evaluation shall also include follow-up studies of graduates of the program, employers of program graduates, field placement supervisors, and personnel in cooperating and associated agencies regarding the assessment of their perceptions and evaluations of the major aspects of the program.

3. The results of program evaluations shall be made available on a systematic basis to students currently enrolled in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators and personnel in cooperating and associated agencies. Students shall have regular and systematic opportunities to evaluate formally the curricular experiences in which they participate.

4. The program will provide evidence describing procedures used for an annual review of student performance, assessment of students' skills development, and progress in the program with clearly described procedures for feedback to the student, and appeal processes.

5. Students will demonstrate competence and professional behavior consistent with each program's mission statement and goals prior to the completion of the program.

*Expected Documentation:

- Description of process for annual student progress evaluation and documentation of this process.
- Results from current student surveys about the program and outcomes.
- Alumni outcome data, including employment and licensure data.
- Results of program evaluations (e.g. student learning outcome data)
- Description of program modifications resulting from program evaluations.
- Field placement supervisor survey data.
- Description of faculty development with examples.

* Programs are not limited to providing only expected documentation. The lists of expected documentation are intended as a guide and programs are encouraged to provide additional documentation if available.

PRE-APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION FORM

Available on the website (<http://www.mpcacaccreditation.org/>)

REFERENCES

Lowe, R.H. (Ed.) (1990). Proceedings of the National Conference on Applied Masters Training in Psychology. Available from CAMPP, Rosemary H. Lowe, Department of Psychology, The University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL 32514.

Yeatman, F.R. (Ed.) (1995). Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Applied Masters Training in Psychology. Edmond, OK: CAMPP. Available from Frank R. Yeatman, Department of Psychology, Avila Colleg