

MPCAC |

Masters in Psychology and Counseling
Accreditation Council
www.mpcacaccreditation.org

MPCAC Accreditation Process Overview

The Beginning

- ▶ Decision to accredit
 - ▶ Seek external validation of program quality
 - ▶ Ensure administrative support
- ▶ Pre-application form on website
 - ▶ Critical components:
 - ▶ 48+ credits
 - ▶ Program location in the institution
 - ▶ Minimum of 4 graduates in past two years

The Self-Study Process

- ▶ Important materials to guide the process:
 - ▶ Accreditation Standards in MPCAC Manual
 - ▶ [www.mpcacaccreditation/applicationprocess/2017 Accreditation Manual](http://www.mpcacaccreditation/applicationprocess/2017%20Accreditation%20Manual)
 - ▶ 2017 Manual
 - ▶ Curriculum Standards with Operational Definitions

Getting started ...

- ▶ Submit pre-application form.
- ▶ Receive approval to begin self-study before beginning to work on the self-study.
- ▶ Recognize self-study as a process
 - ▶ Engage relevant faculty and administrators
 - ▶ Allow sufficient time

Beginning the Self-Study:

Some Details - 1

- ▶ Engage relevant stakeholders in the process, including core faculty, chair, dean(s), support staff, students, alumni/ae, etc.
- ▶ Organize regularly scheduled committee meetings to engage in the review process.
- ▶ Work toward consensus in the decision-making process, “we agree to change this; we agree to keep this.”

Beginning the Self-Study:

Some Details - 2

- ▶ Begin with the first standard, agree on the nature and extent of change required, document that agreement.
- ▶ Move to the next standard.
- ▶ As the discussion and consequent changes are completed for one standard, confirm again that there is consensus.

Beginning the Self-Study:

Some Details - 3

- ▶ Keep careful track of decisions regarding the need for changes (or not) as each Standard is reviewed
- ▶ Begin writing (a draft of) the self-study as each Standard is addressed
- ▶ Check in with the chair/dean(s) to ensure that their support is ongoing, for the accreditation and for the requisite changes.

Overview of Standards:

MPCAC Aim: Students' Competence

Seven sections:

- ▶ Program Mission and Objectives
- ▶ Program Orientation and Core Curriculum
- ▶ Research and Clinical Instruction
- ▶ The Institution
- ▶ Faculty and Staff
- ▶ Program Organization and Administration
- ▶ Evaluations in the Program

Review of Standards:

A. Program Mission & Objectives

- ▶ Does your program have a clear mission statement?
- ▶ Does the program fit with the mission statement?
- ▶ Does the program have current, clearly articulated, measurable objectives which relevant to the MPCAC mission and objectives?

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum - Overall

- ▶ Does the program have a clear identity?
- ▶ Is your program 48 semester credits, at a minimum?
- ▶ Are there 600 practicum/internship hours with 240 (40%) client contact?
- ▶ Is the program built on a scientist-practitioner model?
- ▶ Is there evidence of competence in the curriculum standards that follow here?

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum - Specifics 1

- A. Professional identity and ethical and professional standards
- B. Evidence-based theories and practice of counseling and psychotherapy
- C. Multiculturalism and diversity
- D. Theories of psychopathology and relevant classification systems
- E. Tests, measurements, and other assessments of behavior

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum - Specifics 2

- F. Research methods and program evaluation
- G. Career development and/or the role of work in peoples' lives
- H. Biological basis of behavior
- I. Developmental basis of behavior
- J. Social/organizational/community basis of behavior
- K. Understanding and using supervision during applied experiences

Curriculum Standards *Example:* Professional identity and ethical and professional standards

1. *Ethical/Legal Standards and Policy:* Demonstrates knowledge and application of ethical concepts, and awareness of legal issues regarding professional activities with individuals, groups, and organizations
 - a. Knowledge of ethical, legal and professional standards and guidelines: Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of relevant ethical/professional codes, standards and guidelines, laws, statutes, rules, and regulations

Operational definitions:

Demonstrates knowledge of typical legal issues, including child and elder abuse reporting, confidentiality, and informed consent

Identifies key documents/policies that guide the practice of psychology and counseling (e.g., ACA Ethical Code, APA Guidelines)

Discusses ethical implications of professional work

Recognizes and discusses limits of own ethical and legal knowledge

C. Research and Clinical Instruction

- ▶ Is the scientist-practitioner model evident throughout the program?
- ▶ Is there relevant research application throughout the program? Are students learning to be consumers of research?

D. The Institution

- ▶ Is the Catalogue accurate?
- ▶ Is the program part of the Institution's graduate programs?
- ▶ Is there sufficient budget?
- ▶ Are the facilities and resources appropriate?
- ▶ Is there adequate research support, stipend levels, and departmental support?
- ▶ Are there cooperative relationships on and off campus resources?

E. Faculty and Staff

- ▶ Is there an identified program director?
- ▶ Are faculty degrees, memberships, experience, teaching competence, number appropriate?
- ▶ Is there adequate faculty development, research, service?
- ▶ Is there sufficient staff support?
- ▶ Is faculty load appropriate?
- ▶ Is there diversity among the faculty?

F. Program Organization and Administration: 1

- ▶ Does the program have a coherent structure?
- ▶ What are the entrance requirements?
- ▶ Are those public? Is there diversity recruitment?
- ▶ Are there published programs of study?
- ▶ What are the retention policies and remediation procedures?

F. Program Organization and Administration: 2

- ▶ Is there curricular flexibility? Syllabi adequate and available?
- ▶ Are there assistantship policies?
- ▶ Does every student have an advisor? Are there mandatory meetings?
- ▶ Are students engaged in outside activities?

G. Evaluations in the Program

- ▶ Are the program objectives evaluated?
- ▶ Are there follow-up studies of students, graduates, supervisors?
- ▶ Are results available? How are the results used?
- ▶ Is there an annual evaluation of student performance? What is the feedback mechanism?
- ▶ Is there an assessment of student competence prior to program completion?⁹

Back to the Self-Study:

The Write-up

- ▶ Begin with a very general description of the setting for the program
- ▶ Document the program's achievement of each standard
- ▶ Provide a curricular mapping of the standards
- ▶ Provide data as appropriate:
 - ▶ E.g., Number of applicants, enrollees, graduates, remediations, adjuncts, supervisors, etc.
- ▶ Limit the self-study to 35 pages (max.) with syllabi, faculty CVs, etc. in appendices

Next Steps: 1

- ▶ Contact MPCAC Executive Director
- ▶ Site pays application fee
 - ▶ Currently \$2000
- ▶ Site receives access to Dropbox
- ▶ Site uploads materials (self-study, faculty CVs, syllabi, etc.) into appropriate folders

Next Steps: 2

- ▶ MPCAC Associate Chair for Accreditation
 - ▶ Appoints Accreditation Review Committee (ARC)
 - ▶ Chair + two site visitors for one program
 - ▶ Chair + three site visitors for two programs
 - ▶ Seeks institutional approval for visitors (no conflicts of interest)

Next Steps: 3

- ▶ ARC chair and site visitors (SV) review materials, identifying questions, need for clarification, etc.
 - ▶ Must be answered prior to site visit:
 - ▶ chair sends to site for response
 - ▶ Adequate responses must be received before site visit can be scheduled
 - ▶ Must be answered at site visit
- ▶ Questions appropriately addressed? Schedule site visit

Setting Up the Site Visit

Evolution of the Visit:

- ▶ Setting the dates
 - ▶ ARC Chair obtains potential dates from SV and works with site to set dates

Travel Arrangements

- ▶ ARC chair communicates with SV about arrangements.
- ▶ Some sites schedule all travel arrangements; some prefer SV to make their own arrangements and submit receipts for reimbursement.
- ▶ Site makes all local accommodation and transportation arrangements.

Setting Up the Site Visit:

Logistics for ONE Program

Basic structure of the visit (variable by site):

- ▶ Visit usually lasts 48 hours for one program
 - ▶ Day One: SV arrive afternoon - possible meetings that afternoon; introductory social gathering, usually over dinner with program director and faculty.
 - ▶ Day Two: majority of meetings; SV alone for working dinner.
 - ▶ Day Three: finish meetings, exit interview, depart by midday.

Setting Up the Site Visit: Logistics for TWO Programs

Basic structure of the visit (variable by site):

- ▶ Visit usually 72 hours for two programs:
 - ▶ Day One: all SVs arrive morning:
 - ▶ meetings with Program One-only (faculty, students, alums, supervisors, etc.);
 - ▶ introductory social gathering, usually over dinner, with both program directors and faculty.
 - ▶ Day Two:
 - ▶ Complete Program One-only meetings.
 - ▶ Meetings with administrators for both Programs (chair, dean, etc.).
 - ▶ SVs alone for working dinner.
 - ▶ Day Three:
 - ▶ finish meetings for Program Two.
 - ▶ exit interview.
 - ▶ depart by midday.

Setting Up the Site Visit:

Key Meetings

Site visit should include meetings with:

- ▶ Program director, faculty teaching in the program, students (one hour each)
- ▶ Dept. chair, alumni/ae, supervisors, adjunct faculty (45 minutes to one hour each)
- ▶ Dean(s), Provost, other faculty in the dept., admissions, advisors, support staff, other relevant groups (e.g., library liaison) (30 to 45 minutes each)

Final Step: Post-Site Visit

- ARC chair send draft site visit report for correction of errors of fact (30 days)
- Site corrects and returns report
- SV modify report and send to MPCAC Board with recommendations
- MPCAC Board makes accreditation decision
 - Process usually takes 6 to 8 months (completion of self-study to MPCAC decision)

Finally, Accreditation Decision

- ▶ Decision from MPCAC:
 - ▶ 10 year
 - ▶ 4 year or 2 year, with stipulations (must be accomplished to extend accreditation)
- ▶ Recommendations: SV suggestions, should be addressed at interim report

The end!