MPCAC

Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council

www.mpcacaccreditation.org

MPCAC Accreditation Process Overview

March, 2018

The Beginning

- Decision to accredit
  - Seek external validation of program quality
  - Ensure administrative support

- Pre-application form on website
  - Critical components:
    - 60 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

　▶ https://mpcacaccreditation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/MPCAC-2024-Accreditation-Manual.pdf

　　▶ 2024 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, contributing faculty, dean(s), site supervisors, 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

Eight sections:

A. Program Mission and Objectives

B. Program Orientation and Core Curriculum

C. Counseling/Clinical Instruction

D. The Institution

E. Faculty and Staff

F. Program Organization and Administration

G. Evaluations in the Program

H. Communication and Record-Keeping

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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

1. Does the program have a clear identity?
2. Is your program two years and 60 semester credits or the equivalent, at a minimum?
3. Are there 600 practicum/internship hours with at least 240 (40%) client contact?
4. Is the program built on a scientist-practitioner model?
5. Is there evidence of competence in the curriculum standards that follow here?

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum – Organizing B.5.a-j

1. Develop a curriculum map, identifying the course or courses in which each of the Standards is covered. A form is available on our website.

2. Ensure that the syllabus for each course includes the requisite material that covers the Standard or Standards identified for that course.

3. Include a general discussion of how the curriculum aims to address the Standards in the self-study.

Curriculum Standards *Example*: B.5.a. Ethical and professional standards

Syllabus (syllabi) includes how the following are covered:

- 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

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum – Specifics 1

A. 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. Methods of evaluation of individuals

B. Program Orientation & Curriculum – Specifics 2

F. Research methods

G. Career development and/or the role of work in peoples' lives

H. Biological basis of behavior

I. Developmental basis of behavior

J. Systems basis of behavior

C. Counseling/Clinical Instruction

- Is there sufficient instructor interaction for the level of skill training?
- Does the program include significant supervised experiences and sites that are committed to the students' skills training? With written agreements? With adequate orientation?
- Is there a minimum of one hour of supervision for 20 hours of field placement?
- Does the evaluation of the student include direct observation?
- Do all clinical instruction modalities comply with state and federal laws relating to confidentiality?

D. The Institution

- ▶ Is the Catalogue accurate in describing the program?

- ▶ Is the program part of the Institution's graduate programs?

- ▶ Is there sufficient budget for the program and support for faculty professional activities?

- ▶ Are the facilities and resources appropriate?

- ▶ Is there adequate & appropriate research support, stipend levels, and departmental support for faculty and students?

- ▶ Are there cooperative relationships on and off campus resources for students' professional development?

E. Faculty and Staff: 1

▶ Is there a clear identification of Program Core Faculty? Appropriate training consistent with the program's mission statement?

▶ Is there a clear identification and oversight of Contributing Faculty?

▶ Is faculty load appropriate and sufficient to carry out their responsibilities?

▶ Is there a commitment to diversity among the faculty and staff?

▶ Are faculty competent in their subject matter and appropriately credentialed?

E. Faculty and Staff- 2

- Are faculty numbers sufficient? Do Core Faculty teaching loads exceed the loads of Contributing faculty?

- Is there a clearly identified program director?

- Is there a clearly identified field placement coordinator?

- Are Core Faculty engaged in professional activities during the last three years?

- Is there sufficient staff support?

F. Program Organization and Administration: 1

- Does the program have a coherent structure that reflects its mission statement?

- Does the program fit appropriately with the institution's structure and operating policies?

- What are the entrance requirements? Are those public?

- Does the program provide admissions information to perspective students?

- How does the program demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity & inclusion?

F. Program Organization and Administration: 2

- Are there accurate and publicly available published programs of study and supplemental materials?

- What are the retention policies and remediation procedures?

- Does every student have an advisor? Are there mandatory meetings?

- Do students have access to outside professional learning activities?

- Are there assistantship policies? If yes, are they available to students?

G. Evaluations in the Program

1. Are the program objectives evaluated and are the results used to determine needed changes?

2. Are there regularly scheduled evaluations of the program, with relevant stakeholders, students, contributing faculty, graduates, site supervisors, etc.? How are the results used?

3. Are the evaluation results systematically and widely disseminated?

4. Is there an annual evaluation of student performance? What is the written feedback mechanism? Is there an appeal process?

5. Is there an assessment of student competence prior to program completion? 19

H. Communication and Record-Keeping

- Are the annual program data posted, including admissions, retention, graduation, and program outcome data?

- Is the program in compliance with the MPCAC Accreditation Standards, policies, and procedures and will it maintain that compliance?

- Is (or will) the program notifying MPCAC of substantial changes in one's program?

- Is there (or will there be) an accurate statement regarding the program's accreditation status on their website?

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

NOTE: Process can take up to 18 months (completion of self-study to MPCAC decision)

▶ Contact MPCAC Executive Director

▶ Site pays application fee

  ▶ Currently $3000 per program

  ▶ Currently an additional $1000 per location or mode of delivery

▶ Site receives access to Dropbox

▶ Site uploads materials (self-study, faculty CVs, syllabi, etc.) into appropriate folders

Next Steps: 2

- Central Office/Accreditation Coordinator
  - Appoints Accreditation Review Committee (ARC)
    - Two site visitors for one program
    - More than two site visitors for multiple programs
  - Seeks institutional approval for visitors (no conflicts of interest)

Next Steps: 3

- Site visitors (SV) review materials, identifying questions, need for clarification, etc.
  - Must be answered prior to site visit:
    - Central Office 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

   ▶ Central Office obtains potential dates from SV and the program then works with site to set dates

Travel Arrangements

▶ **Central Office covers all travel, accommodations, and food expenses related to making the site visit happen.**

▶ **Program is responsible for all expenses directly related to the site visit, e.g. meals during site visit, travel between the site and accommodation location.**

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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.

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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, contributing faculty in the dept., admissions, advisors, support staff, other relevant groups (e.g., library liaison) (30 to 45 minutes each)

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Final Step: Post-Site Visit

➢ Central Office sends draft site visit report for correction of errors of fact only (30 days)

➢ Site corrects and returns report (30 days)

➢ Reports must be received two months in advance to be put in the Committee on Accreditation (CoA) schedule

➢ SV modify report and send to CoA with recommendations

➢ CoA sends report with their recommendations to the MPCAC Board

➢ MPCAC Board makes accreditation decision

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Finally, Accreditation Decision

▶ Decision from MPCAC:

    ▶ 8-year Accreditation

       OR

    ▶ Deferral (Time to address stipulations)

The end!