



West Liberty University

Intent to Plan

Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling

Prepared: March 2019

**NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO DEVELOP A NEW
MASTER'S PROGRAM WHEN A MAJOR EXISTS**

UNIVERSITY:

West Liberty University, West Liberty, West Virginia

CONTACT PERSON:

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DEGREE AND PROGRAM UNDER DEVELOPMENT:

Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling

DEPARTMENT SUBMITTING PROPOSAL:

Department of Journalism, Communication Studies and Visual Arts, College of Arts and Communication

DATE OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

September 2019

DESIRED IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

Fall 2021

Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling & Mission Alignment

5.2 Request to Develop a Plan

5.2.a Educational Objectives

The purpose of this graduate program is to provide students who have successfully completed a bachelor's degree in Creative Arts Therapy or a related field from a regionally or nationally accredited college or university an opportunity to earn a master's degree from a West Virginia institution. For individuals who wish to further their education in the field of art therapy, the proposed Master of Arts degree program (60-credits) would provide an advanced degree at a reasonable cost. In addition, a Graduate Certificate of 18-credits may be offered to master level students to enhance their knowledge of art therapy in the classroom, counseling, psychology, social work, and related fields.

The Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling will adhere to the standards of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs Standards (CAAHEP) and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Art Therapy. This program will prepare students to apply for art therapy credentials from the American Art Therapy Association including Art Therapy Registered (ATR) and Art Therapy Register-Board Certified (ATR-BC). The master's program will also incorporate the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards to provide an opportunity for students to seek counseling licensure in their State. These specific standards and guidelines will be the blueprint for the development of the program.

Relationship of Objectives to the Mission

West Liberty University's mission is to provide our students the opportunity for high quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. The proposed degree program will enhance university strategic growth through the advancement of innovative and transformative learning opportunities for both traditional and non-traditional students, including mental health practitioners who are seeking to complete a graduate degree in a manner that fits into their active schedules.

West Liberty University is well suited to initiate such a program, as it currently has a successful undergraduate program in Creative Arts Therapy. The proposed program will prepare students for employment in the field of art therapy and counseling at various levels, including high school, collegiate and professional, as well as clinical and community settings. This is especially appropriate timing, as the State of West Virginia is in dire need of health care professionals to address current needs in mental health and substance abuse counseling.

1. Student Success:

- Offering a high-demand art therapy graduate degree program at a regional university that will provide greater opportunity for students to further their education locally.
- Providing a viable career path for both traditional and non-traditional students seeking to enter the workforce expeditiously.

- Providing upward career mobility opportunities for current mental health practitioners of the regional, state, and national workforce.
2. University Excellence:
 - Offering a much-desired Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling, which will create a strong and educated workforce with community and educational ties to West Liberty University and the Ohio Valley.
 - Expanding the visibility and product that West Liberty University has to offer through an increased alumni body and program growth.
 3. State Service:
 - A master's degree program which will meet regional, state, and national workforce development needs by allowing those mental health practitioners currently working the opportunity to enhance both their educational and leadership skills, facilitating further career advancement.
 - Offering a low-residency online program will increase the opportunity for individuals to obtain a master's degree, furthering the development of an educated population and improving public access to psychological services.
 4. Ethical Standards Secured:
 - Professionals in the field of art therapy and counseling adhere to the educational, practice, and research guidelines and ethics set forth by the American Art Therapy Association and the American Counseling Association. These standards guide professors and students in effective research, teaching, management, and training.
 5. Enhancing Diversity:
 - This proposed master's degree program will enhance the diversity of the student population at West Liberty University by providing the opportunity for a diverse cross-section of both traditional and non-traditional students to gain the necessary educational credentials for upward mobility in their chosen career.

Desirability of the Institution

West Liberty University is distinctively qualified to introduce this degree because of its proven success in providing low-cost educational opportunities for traditional students and working professionals. The geographical location of West Liberty University is attractive to students because of its central location. For example, Western Pennsylvania is less than a 30-minute drive and Eastern Ohio is less than a 30-minute drive. The low-residency/online format of this master's degree also has the potential to attract students who live outside the region.

5.2.b Description of the Program

The Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling will prepare students with all the necessary knowledge, skills, and assessments to become well-rounded, critical thinking, health care providers. The program will be guided by art therapy (CAAHEP) and counseling (CACREP) standards and competencies and structured in a low residency/online format to allow working students to further their education. A bridge program will also be developed as a 3 + 2-year program in which undergraduate students in the BS-CAT program will enter a first graduate residency in their third year.

The master's degree is 60-credit program which is required for art therapy credentials and counseling licensure. Additional electives (human sexuality, advance

internship, etc.) will be offered to comply with varying state requirements for licensure as well as student interests. The core courses for the master's degree include:

- **History and Development of Art Therapy** (3 credits) includes identifying major contributors and contributions that shaped the field of Art Therapy; identifying the relationship between art therapy approaches and theories from psychology, counseling, and related fields; and comparing and contrasting approaches to Art Therapy unique to the field: a) art psychotherapy, b) art-as-therapy c) open studio and studio based approaches, d) art-based clinical theories, and e) community-based approaches.
- **Materials and Techniques of Art Therapy Practice** (3 credits) includes describing theory of specific properties and effects of art processes and materials informed by current research such as Expressive Therapies Continuum; identifying toxic materials, safety issues with select populations, and allergic reactions; identifying requirements for studio set-up and maintenance; identifying resources and programs for using technology as it relates to creating artwork; adapting tools and materials for clients with disabilities; incorporate ethical and cultural considerations in materials selection and therapeutic applications.
- **Creativity, Symbolism, Metaphor, and Spirituality** (3 credits) includes describing theories and models for understanding symbolism, metaphor, and artistic language; practicing skills for developing awareness and insight into art processes and images; demonstrating belief in the value of using art-making as a method for exploring personal symbolic language; recognizing the need for awareness of and sensitivity to cultural elements which may impact a client's participation, choice of materials and creation of imagery; and valuing the benefits of student/therapist reflective artmaking to inform clinical practice.
- **Group Dynamics** (3 credits) includes theories, practices, methods, dynamics, facilitative skills, and supervised practice; developing approaches to forming groups, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members; demonstrating characteristics, skills, and functions of an effective group leader; considering purpose, goals, population characteristics when designing art therapy groups in a variety of settings; and facilitating ethical and culturally responsive group practices including informed approaches for designing and facilitating diverse groups.
- **Assessment Methods in Counseling** (3 credits) includes individual differences, methods of data gathering and interpretation, individual and group testing, and case study; describing concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing and assessment throughout treatment process (intake, treatment planning, diagnoses, termination); applying risk assessment strategies and tools (danger to self, others); displaying skills for conducting bio-psychosocial assessment, mental status exam, and substance abuse disorder assessments; and recognizing cultural, social, and co-occurring issues that affect assessment outcomes.
- **Assessments in Art Therapy** (3 credits) includes describing historical development of Art Therapy assessments and current assessments and applications; demonstrating the ability to administer and apply appropriate Art Therapy assessments; assessing purposes of Art Therapy assessments to establish treatment goals; citing methods to determine validity and reliability of Art

Therapy assessments; and displaying ethical, cultural, and legal considerations when selecting, conducting, and interpreting art therapy and related mental health fields' assessments.

- **Professional Orientation, Ethical, and Legal Issues** (3 credits) includes goals and objectives of professional counseling organizations, codes of ethics, legal considerations, standards of preparation, certification and licensing, advocacy, confidentiality, and the role identity of counselors.
- **Addictions Counseling** (3 credits) includes the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of addictive disorders; applying risk assessment strategies and tools (danger to self, others); describing theories, assessment, and treatment of addictive behaviors and disorders recognize cultural, social, and co-occurring issues that affect assessment outcomes; and identifying culturally and developmentally appropriate assessment tools and applications to utilization and interpretation of results.
- **Marriage & Family Counseling** (3 credits) includes planning clinical interventions for the treatment of children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, partial treatment, aftercare, and understanding a systems approach (family, community, political).
- **Human Growth and Development** (3 credits) includes the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, following psychological, sociological and physiological approaches; human behavior (normal and abnormal); describing personality theory, learning theory, dynamics of stress; and examining theoretical and biopsychosocial roots of developmental crises, trauma, disabilities, addictions, and exceptionality on development across the lifespan.
- **Psychopathology and Diagnosis** (3 credits) includes assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders and dysfunctional behavior; identifying major categories and criteria of mental disorders according to the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) and/or the International Classification of Diseases (ICD); describing applications of neuroscience theory and research to art therapy practice; valuing cultural factors impacting the diagnostic process and concepts of health/illness; critiquing use of diagnostic categories in treatment and intervention; and displaying sensitivity to the prevalence of mental illness and impact on individuals and society.
- **Counseling Theories** (3 credits) includes a study of basic theories and principles of counseling and philosophic basis of the helping relationship; identifying evidence-based strategies and clinically grounded approaches for assessment and treatment; and identifying theories of effective programs in various settings including strategies for program development and evaluation.
- **Counseling Techniques** (3 credits) includes individual counseling practices, methods, facilitative skills, and the application of these skills; utilizing art materials and processes within the context of building the therapeutic relationship; performing interviewing skills; demonstrating case conceptualization skills; formulating treatment planning/goal setting; identifying the steps of suicide risk assessment; developing relevant sensory based art therapy interventions; integrating evaluation of treatment; providing examples of referral processes and

- accessing community resources; and planning clinical interventions for the treatment of children, adolescents, adults, and couples.
- **Research and Evaluation** (3 credits) includes statistics, research design, research proposals and evaluation; defining research methodologies (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods) and research design formats used in the field; describing art-based research methodologies; understanding concepts of validity and reliability and applications to selection and application of assessments and tests; demonstrating basic statistical concepts such as scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, variability, distribution of data, and relationships among data as applied in research studies; and recognizing ethical, legal, and cultural considerations used to design, conduct, interpret, and report research
 - **Social and Cultural Foundations** (3 credits) includes studies of social change, ethnic groups, subcultures, mores, urban and rural societies, population patterns, use of leisure time, work, and differing life patterns; describing cultural and social diversity theories and competency models including AATA's and ACA Multicultural and Diversity Competencies; planning strategies for identifying the impact of oppression and privilege on individuals and groups and eliminating barriers, prejudices, intentional and unintentional oppression, and discrimination; making use of experiential learning activities (e.g., cultural genogram) designed to explore and develop student cultural and social self-awareness including self-assessment of attitudes, beliefs, and acculturative experiences; and applying cultural and social diversity theories and competency models to an understanding of identity development, empowerment, collaboration, advocacy, and social justice.
 - **Life-Style & Career Development** (3 credits) includes vocational-choice theory, the relationship between career choice and life-style, occupational and educational information, career decision-making processes, career development exploration and placement techniques; understanding assessment tools and techniques and art therapy assessments relevant to career development; using approaches for assessing the relationship between career development and client match in terms of lifestyle, life roles and mental health factors; and valuing multicultural and ethical strategies for facilitating career and educational planning and development with diverse clients.
 - **Thesis or Culminating Project** (3 credits) includes organizing research on the literature in the field of Art Therapy and Counseling as the basis for an extensive thesis or culminating project; creating an in-depth study of one aspect of Art Therapy or an integration of knowledge and clinical skill in Art Therapy; completing a thesis or culminating project based on established research methods (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based), innovative methods of inquiry, clinical practice, or a synthesis of clinically-based personal and professional growth (e.g., service learning, designing a program, designing a "tool kit" for art therapists).
 - **Supervised Practicum** (3 credits; 100 hours) includes the provision of counseling to bona fide clients and groups seeking services from counselors under the direction of a graduate faculty member who is a licensed professional counselor

or related mental health professional. The course includes critique of counseling either observed or recorded.

- **Supervised Internship** (6 credits; 700 hours) supervised internship includes actual on-the-job counseling experience under the tutelage of an on-site supervisor who is a licensed professional counselor or related mental health professional.

Targeted Population

The Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling will provide a needed educational opportunity for traditional and non-traditional students:

1. With a master's degree seeking a graduate certification (18-credits) to enhance their knowledge about the use of art therapy in their chosen career.
2. Undergraduate (BS-CAT) students at WLU who wish to complete their studies at a graduate level in a bridge program (3 + 2).
3. Those who have completed a bachelor's degree at an accredited university/college who wish to continue their studies at WLU in this graduate program (60-credits).
4. Those wishing to enter a doctoral program in Expressive Arts Therapy or related field.

Intellectual Value

The bridge program and graduate studies will prepare students for the American Art Therapy Association's credentials (ATR and ATR-BC), and for counseling licensure and preparation for the National Counselor Examination (NCE). Art therapy credentials and licensure as a counselor are required to work as a professional in this field. In addition to the 60 graduate hours, those seeking credentials and state licensure will be required to complete post-graduate supervision hours. Students should consult their state licensing requirements to ensure compliance. Electives will be offered above the 60-credit program to cover any required courses needed for licensure in other states. This proposed master's degree complies with the West Virginia State Licensing requirements for Licensed Professional Counseling (LPC).

5.2.c Assurance of Quality

West Liberty University is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This master's program goals and student learning outcomes will be aligned to the art therapy (CAAHEP) and counseling (CACREP) accreditation standards and appropriate accreditation will be sought. The ethical guidelines of the American Art Therapy Association and the American Counseling Association will also provide quality assurance. An assessment plan, including procedures for the evaluation of the program objectives is required by the CAAHEP for accreditation, and will be complete at the inception of the program. Additional assessments specific to clinical sites and external professionals influencing student learning will be in place. Further, the program will report all necessary information to the WLU Office of University Effectiveness and participate in the standard 5-year program review process. Results of the assessments and standards will be constantly monitored and utilized for continued program improvement and growth.

5.2.d Similar Programs

At this time, there are no 60-credit graduate art therapy programs in West Virginia. WVU offers an 18-credit graduate certification to the master's in art education students, but this is not sufficient to enable these students to apply for art therapy credentials (ATR, ATR-BC). However, WVU does offer a 60-credit counseling program in school counseling or community counseling. The Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling at WLU would be unique program to this region (see Appendix A).² The nearest art therapy program to WLU is offered at Seton Hall University in Greensburg, PA. Seton Hall offers a Master of Arts in Art Therapy Specializing in Counseling.

The proposed program at WLU will need to also include counseling to allow graduate students to apply for licensure under state counseling boards. Currently, there is no licensure for art therapists in West Virginia. Instead students must be licensed under the counseling requirements for their state. This is why this graduate program requires the word "counseling" in the title of the degree. The Virginia Board of Health Professions (BHP) recently voted to recommend licensure for art therapists in the state of Virginia. It is expected that in due time this step will be taken in West Virginia. Meanwhile, students attending this proposed graduate program will receive educational courses consistent with CAAHEP art therapy standards and CACREP standards for counseling programs. Additional electives will be provided to accommodate different state requirements for licensing. The dual role of art therapy and counseling will enhance marketability of this master's program.

5.2.e Statement of Need

Societal

According to the *Behavioral Health Barometer* (SAMSHA, 2015), 10,520 children and adolescents (aged 17 or younger) were served in West Virginia's public mental health system in 2015. About 79,000 adults aged 18 or older (5.5% of all adults) reported a serious mental illness, and 60,000 adults (4.2% of all adults) had serious thoughts of suicide. About 100,000 individuals aged 12 or older (6.3% of all individuals in this age group) reported being dependent on or abusing alcohol, and about 46,000 (2.9% of all individuals in this age group) were dependent on or abused illicit drugs within the year prior to being surveyed (2013-2014).²

There is a growing need for art therapists and counselors to help address the national demand for assistance in managing mental health and substance abuse issues in various populations including children and adolescents, older adults, veterans, trauma survivors, and those diagnosed with special needs. This proposed program will help to alleviate a shortage of healthcare professionals qualified to address these needs. Art therapists and counselors work in a variety of settings including schools, clinical, community, and academic.³

Occupational

Although the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018) does not collect data on art therapy occupational growth, they did report that employment of substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors is projected to grow 23 % from 2016 to

2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth is expected as people continue to seek addiction and mental health counseling. Currently there are 260,200 counselors employed in West Virginia.⁴ Students enrolled in the current BS-CAT program have requested access to a graduate program because entry into the profession of Art Therapy requires a master's degree. The proposed program offers this opportunity to students in the Upper Ohio Valley region of West Virginia, and surrounding states.

Public Service

Due to the lack of advanced educational opportunities in the geographical area, many students have difficulty in continuing their educational goals. The majority of WLU student body comes from the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia, Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, and therefore the state and this region need adequate programs to train, educate and prepare students for success in a growing and highly desired field of Art Therapy and Counseling. The proposed master's degree will fulfill the growing need for Art Therapists in West Virginia in addition to providing high quality Counseling services to the community.

5.2.f Additional Resources

The current BS-CAT program has one full-time faculty member. At the inception of this master's program, one additional full-time faculty member would need to be added to serve as a dual instructor in the graduate and undergraduate programs. In addition, four adjunct faculty members in the field of Art Therapy and Counseling will be needed to teach core Art Therapy courses. These faculty members must possess the required educational qualifications outlined by the art therapy (CAAHEP) standards. These include Art Therapy credentials (ATR-BC) and Counselor licensing as well as a minimum of a master's degree, a doctorate in a health care related field is preferred. Qualified WLU faculty in the psychology, social work, or other appropriate programs may teach other courses in this graduate program. These courses may be taught by faculty with a minimum of a master's degree, doctorate preferred, and expertise in the content area. Additionally, there will be a need for clinical settings where the students will participate in on-the-job learning and training. Other teaching resource requirements will be minimal, as existing facilities and administrative structure for the BS-CAT Program will be shared. Other costs would be related to the 7-10-day residency which will take place during each summer over the course of study (3 years). This residency will either be located at WLU campus or at the Highland campus. Costs will also include office supplies, printing, postage, statistics software, some office equipment.

It is anticipated that this program will result in positive financial growth for the WLU by year 2 or 3. At this time consideration should be made for the hiring of an additional faculty member to ensure continued educational and financial growth. The additional workload accumulated with the implementation of the graduate program could be eased by the addition of 2 graduate assistantship positions (either full or part time) for the department to aid the faculty and to provide educational opportunities for students.

5.2.g Instructional Delivery Methods

This proposed master's degree will utilize a low residency/online format to make

it more accessible to working students. The summer residency will be a 7-10 day session held at either the WLU main or Highlands campus. It will include traditional face-to-face courses, studio, hybrid classes, and problem-based learning scenarios offered by program faculty who engage students in collaborative research. Students will also learn from clinical scenarios in practicum experiences facilitated by area specialists in the field. All courses will include competencies required by art therapy (CAAHEP) and be aligned to counseling (CACREP) standards as well as others that are program-specific. They will be supported by the university's on-line learning management system, Sakai.

References

1. Best Counseling Degrees. (2018, August). *33 best master's degrees in art therapy, ranked by affordability*. Retrieved from <https://www.bestcounselingdegrees.net/best/masters-degrees-in-art-therapy/>
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2015). *Behavioral health barometer*. Retrieved from https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/2015_West-Virginia_BHBarometer.pdf
3. Torpey, E. (2015, April). Art therapist: Career outlook. *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2015/youre-a-what/art-therapist.htm>
4. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2018, July 13). *Occupational outlook handbook: Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/substance-abuse-behavioral-disorder-and-mental-health-counselors.htm>