



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Workforce Development Committee **Date:** April 10, 2024
From: Christy Berger, Regulatory Manager
Subject: Discussion of Additional Coursework Requirements for Board-Regulated Professions

The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of “additional coursework” requirements for all of the Board’s regulated license types for applicants who hold an **in-state degree** (primarily). This overview will help form the basis for a holistic review for all additional coursework requirements for consistency, clarity, and relevance.

What is “Additional Coursework”?

“Additional Coursework” means the courses that are required, in most cases, to be completed in addition to the degree required for licensure. Note that for LMFT and LPCC applicants who began a degree program on or after January 1, 2012, nearly all courses are required to be part of their degree program, though these types of applicants are included in this discussion. This topic is somewhat intertwined with degree requirements, which specify required coursework for LMFT and LPCC professions. It is also related to specific continuing education (CE) required of new licensees at first renewal, as there are several topic areas that were written into law in a manner that ensures both applicants and licensees obtain the content. The Telehealth course requirement is a recent example of this.

Why is a holistic review of additional coursework necessary?

New additional coursework requirements in specific topics were added to the law at various times over the last few decades on a piecemeal basis. The requirements are inconsistent across license types, and in some cases, inconsistent within the practice act for a single license type depending on certain factors, such as the date an applicant obtained their degree. Course requirements are also inconsistent in terms of when courses are required; who must complete the courses; course topics and content; and, the number of hours required for each course. However, it is important to keep in mind that there may be reasons for differences among the professions.

The **attachment** provides an overview of additional coursework and specific CE requirements for each license type, indicating when the course must be taken, the course length and any exceptions to the course requirements. The chart also allows for comparing requirements across professions.

Why are some LMFT and LPCC applicants required to have additional coursework within their degree program, in some areas with no specific number of hours specified, instead of being allowed to take it outside of their degree program and with a minimum number of hours specified?

The Board undertook a holistic review of MFT educational requirements in 2007-2008, resulting in major changes in requirements for degree programs via Senate Bill (SB) 33 (Chapter 26, Statutes of 2009). This law change applies to individuals who matriculated into their degree program on or after January 1, 2012, and as part of the new degree requirements, **integrated the additional coursework that existed at the time into the degree program and removed specific hour or unit requirements for most courses.** This was for several reasons, as described below:

1. Providing the flexibility of fewer specified hour or unit requirements was seen as allowing for greater innovation in curriculum design. Since the number of required degree units were increased significantly (48 semester/72 quarter units to 60 semester/90 quarter units), this allowed ample room for additional content to be integrated. The completion of all education before registration (as opposed to prior to licensure) was discussed as a potential benefit in terms of practice competency.
2. Incorporating the additional coursework as required degree content was also seen as an advantage for students, because they don't have to take extra classes prior to licensure (though this has changed in the past few years with the addition of the Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention and Telehealth course requirements). The drawbacks are that some schools potentially only provide minimal coverage of a topic since no minimum number of hours are specified; and, an in-state degree not containing all of the required content will not qualify for licensure. However, the Board worked extensively with all of the schools offering a degree program in California, so this has only rarely resulted in a nonqualifying degree.

The same year that SB 33 passed, the legislation that established the LPCC profession also passed (SB 788, Chapter 619, Statutes of 2009). In contrast to LMFT degree requirements, LPCC degrees have more requirements for a specific number of units in core content areas, as the degree requirements were modeled on standards set forth at that time by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to facilitate portability. For individuals matriculating on or after January 1, 2012, the bill also required the additional coursework to be integrated into the degree program without specific unit or hour requirements, similar to LMFT degrees, and for the same reasons.

What about other types of applicants?

LMFT Applicants with an older (pre-2012) degree:

LMFT applicants who entered a degree program prior to January 1, 2012 must take a variety of additional coursework, which may be gained during or after their degree program. However, there are some inconsistencies in requirements for these applicants. For some courses, the number of hours vary depending on exactly when the applicant

matriculated into their degree program, which results in certain applicants not being required to take certain courses, such as Psychopharmacology, at all. In addition, some courses are required prior to Associate registration, and some courses are not required until applying for licensure.

LPCC Applicants with an older (pre-2012) degree:

LPCC applicants who entered a degree program prior to January 1, 2012 must take a variety of additional coursework, which may be gained during or after their degree program. Because LPCC law was written more recently, there is consistency in the requirements, and all courses must be completed prior to registration as an Associate.

LCSW and LEP Applicants:

LCSW degree requirements have been the same since the inception of the license – a degree awarded by a school accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The Board has never set specific degree requirements for LCSW applicants, but has set some additional coursework requirements. All additional coursework is required prior to LCSW licensure, with the exception of a California Law and Ethics course, which is required prior to Associate registration.

Since at least 1984, the basic LEP degree requirements have been the same – a minimum of a master's degree in psychology, educational psychology, school psychology, or counseling and guidance, and completion of 60 semester hours of postgraduate work in pupil personnel services. The degree must qualify for a credential as a school psychologist, and the degree requirements for this credential are [specified by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing](#) (CTC). LEP applicants have far fewer additional coursework requirements than the other three professions, some of which are required at first license renewal as part of their CE requirements.

What are the next steps in the holistic review process?

At this and future meetings, there will be one or more agenda items that address the requirements for a specific course topic for each of the professions. The Committee will discuss the requirements and may decide to make recommendations for law changes to be brought to the full Board for consideration. See the **attachment** for the additional coursework and specific CE topics for each license type that will be discussed at future meetings.

Note Re: Out-of-State Applicant Coursework

While this holistic review currently only covers in-state applicants in order to keep the review process manageable, please be aware that out-of-state applicants for LCSW, LMFT or LPCC licensure must also complete additional coursework.

The coursework for these applicants must be completed at the graduate level (unlike most in-state additional coursework, which may be completed at the undergraduate level). The amount of coursework depends on which license they are applying for, and whether they are applying via Path A (streamlined path for those licensed for two or

more years in another state) or Path B (licensure via evaluation of education and experience).

If the Committee recommends that certain coursework for in-state applicants should remain at the undergraduate level, course level requirements for out-of-state applicants should be brought into the discussion for consistency and parity.

Attachment

Visual Chart of Additional Coursework Requirements

ATTACHMENT

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS						
Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
1. Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention	L	L	L	L	6 hours	None
2. Provision of Mental Health Services via Telehealth	L	L	L	L	3 hours	None
3. Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting	R	L	A/L	A	7 hours	None
4. Alcohol and Substance Abuse	R	L	⊙/A/L	A	15 hours*	LMFT applicants who matriculated prior to 01/01/2986: Not required ⊙
						LMFT applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
						APPC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: 3 semester units or 4 quarter units

LEGEND

- L** Required prior to Licensure
- R** Required at first Renewal
- A** Required prior to Associate registration
- * See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS

Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
5. HIV and AIDS	⊘	R	R	R	7 hours	None
6. Human Sexuality	⊘	L	A/L	A	10 hours*	AMFT and APCC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
7. Aging, Long-Term Care and Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse	⊘	L*	A/L	A	10 hours*	AMFT or APCC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
						LCSW applicants who matriculated prior to 01/01/2004: 3 hours
8. Spousal/Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection and Intervention	⊘	L*	A/L*	A	15 hours*	AMFT and APCC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
						LCSW and LMFT applicants who matriculated prior to 01/01/2004: 7 hours

LEGEND

⊘ Not required

R Required at first Renewal

L Required prior to Licensure

A Required prior to Associate registration

* See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS

Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
9. California Law and Ethics <i>(6 hours also required for all licensees each renewal; 3 hours for registrants each renewal)</i>	⊖	A	A/L	A	Varies*	LMFT applicants who matriculated prior to 08/01/2012: 2 semester units or 3 quarter units
						AMFT applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
						APCC applicants who matriculated prior to 08/01/2012: 18 hours
						APCC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: 3 semester units or 4 quarter units
						ASW applicants: No specific number of hours

LEGEND

⊖ Not required

L Required prior to Licensure

A Required prior to Associate registration

* See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS

Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
10. Psychopharmacology	⊕	⊖	⊖/A/L	A	Varies*	LMFT applicants who matriculated before 01/01/2001: Not required ⊖
						LMFT applicants who matriculated between 01/01/2001 and 08/01/2012: 2 semester units or 3 quarter units
						AMFT applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of units. Must be within degree.
						APCC applicants who matriculated before 08/01/2012: 2 semester units or 3 quarter units
						APPC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: 3 semester units or 4 quarter units

LEGEND

⊕ Not required by BBS law, but is required as part of degree program leading to an LEP's School Psychologist credential

⊖ Not required

L Required prior to Licensure

A Required prior to Associate registration

* See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS

Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
11. Psychological Testing (LMFT) / Assessment, Appraisal and Testing (LPCC)	⊕	⊖	⊖/A/L	A	Varies*	LMFT applicants who matriculated prior to 01/01/2012: Not required ⊖
						LMFT applicants who matriculated between 01/01/2001 and 08/01/2012: 2 semester units or 3 quarter units
						AMFT applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: No specific number of units. Must be within degree.
						APCC applicants: 3 semester units or 4 quarter units. Must be within degree.

LEGEND

⊕ Not required by BBS law, but is required as part of degree program leading to an LEP's School Psychologist credential

⊖ Not required

L Required prior to Licensure

A Required prior to Associate registration

* See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.

OVERVIEW OF IN-STATE ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK / SPECIFIC CE REQUIREMENTS

Course	LEP	LCSW	LMFT	LPCC	Length	*Exceptions
12. Crisis or Trauma Counseling	⊕	⊖	⊖/A	A	Varies*	AMFT applicants who matriculated before 08/01/2012: Not required.
						AMFT applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: “Effects of trauma” ONLY. No specific number of hours. Must be within degree.
						APPC applicants who matriculated before 08/01/2012: 15 hours
						APCC applicants who matriculated on/after 08/01/2012: 3 semester units or 4 quarter units

LEGEND

⊕ Not required by BBS law, but is required as part of degree program leading to an LEP’s School Psychologist credential

⊖ Not required

A Required prior to Associate registration

* See Exceptions column

Note: Multiple codes are listed within a column when the law specifies different requirements for applicants at different stages of the licensure process.