

Admissions Policy (ACPE Standard 4)

It is the policy of Covenant HealthCare to select CPE students from the applications received, based on aptitude, ability, and potential for ministry without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical or mental disability or medical condition or as otherwise provided under applicable laws.

This program is open to people who have a commitment to personal growth and the development and enhancement of professional skills in ministry. The program is particularly suited to seminarians, clergy, religious professionals and lay people who demonstrate qualities for learning and ministry. Given the experiential nature of CPE, personal maturity and readiness for supervision are significant criteria for admission.

This policy notwithstanding, all students accepted into the program shall be able, with reasonable accommodation, to physically perform the duties as described in the [*Students' Rights & Responsibilities*](#). At all levels, the CPE student needs to sustain sufficient physical and emotional health to deliver spiritual care. The student must demonstrate the capacity to consistently establish and maintain relationships at significant levels and be open to self-reflection, learning, change, and growth. The CPE student must demonstrate a certain level of flexibility and capacity to endure at least moderate amounts of chaos, which is a normal part of the cultures within the clinical settings in which they serve.

Admission Criteria

- ▶ A completed application and \$35 application fee are required for all levels of CPE training at Covenant HealthCare.
- ▶ An undergraduate degree is preferred for the **CPE Internship/Initial Unit**. Mandatory is a high school diploma or completion of a GED.
- ▶ For **CPE Residency**, preferred, though not mandatory, is a graduate degree from a CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) accredited school in divinity or theology with the required semester hours completed for professional certification such as through the APC or NACC, for example.
- ▶ An initial phone or virtual (e.g., Zoom) interview conducted by a certified ACPE certified educator.
- ▶ Applicant must demonstrate a sense of call to ministry, a motivation to learning and professional development, an aptitude for interpersonal work, the ability to self-reflect, ability to change and grow, and the awareness of physical and/or mental unbalances that may impact his or her abilities in both clinical and academic work.

- ▶ The ability to perform with reasonable accommodations required clinical work, including physical requirements such as the ability to walk several miles a day, or stand for several hours at a time, unless extenuating needs are discussed, and solutions are mutually agreed upon. Covenant HealthCare requirements, including those outlined in Covenant HealthCare Policy #703 “Fitness for Duty” apply to CPE students who must provide required medical records such as vaccination history, and comply with standard safety protocols including, but not limited to, physical examination and background check.
- ▶ Covenant CPE values diversity within the peer group as an important dimension of learning in pastoral care. Attempts will be made during the interview process to compose peer groups of qualified persons who encompass diversity in religious or faith traditions, ages, races and ethnic backgrounds, and gender.
- ▶ Verification of legal right to work in the United States of America.

Application Process

- ▶ Inquiries regarding the CPE program and application process will be answered in a timely manner either by phone or email. Marketing materials may be provided to interested parties who will be directed to our webpage for more information: www.covenantpastoralcare.com.
- ▶ Candidates complete and submit the standard ACPE application form (found at www.acpe.edu and also available via a link found at www.covenantpastoralcare.com). A \$35 non-refundable application fee must be submitted with written material. The application fee check is made out to “Covenant HealthCare” or the applicant may use a credit card by calling 989-583-6037. The preferred method to submit an application is via e-mail to kbonn@chs-mi.com. However, the application materials and check may be mailed to Kathy Bonn; Pastoral Care and Education Dept; Covenant HealthCare; 1447 N. Harrison; Saginaw, MI 48602.
- ▶ An applicant will be informed by the CPE certified educator or designated representative within forty-eight hours of their application’s arrival and any missing items that would need to be submitted before the application can be considered. The CPE certified educator will review *completed* applications within 30 days of receipt and inform the applicant if an interview will be scheduled. A phone or virtual (e.g., Zoom) interview may be conducted to discern whether to invite the applicant for a panel interview, ideally on site. If an interview is not scheduled, notice will be sent thanking the applicant for applying, and denying program admission.
- ▶ Appropriate candidates for the intern program will be interviewed by the certified educator who may choose to include additional interviewers such as members of the PECC or Pastoral Care & Education Department Director. All interviews will be conducted in person or, under extenuating circumstances, the candidate may be interviewed by electronic means such as Zoom.
- ▶ Appropriate candidates for the residency will be required to complete a panel interview—comprised of a subset of our Pastoral Education Consultation Committee (PECC), including the Pastoral Care & Education Department Director. The interview will ideally be conducted on-site (at applicant’s expense). A Covenant HealthCare HR Employment Specialist will also interview potential residents. Generally, a day-long visit is scheduled for selected candidates to tour our facility and meet our care team to encourage their discernment process to enforce mutuality of our approach. Under extenuating circumstances, the candidate may be interviewed off site by the panel via electronic means such as Zoom.

- ▶ Applicants accepted into any of the Covenant HealthCare CPE programs will receive notice by phone and electronic mail, then a letter of invitation. Interns will receive a training agreement to be signed and returned along with half of the tuition due. This is non-refundable. Resident students will be sent a training agreement to be signed and returned within a specified time frame.
- ▶ If, after the interview, the applicant is not accepted into the program, she/he will be notified in writing. If the program is filled and a candidate is not considered for admission, the \$35 fee will be returned to the applicant. Application materials of candidates who are not accepted will be destroyed unless the applicant requests that the materials be returned.

Policy Review Date: 7/18/2021

Policy Reviewed By: Beth Newton Watson and Kathy Bonn

Policy Approved By: Beth Newton Watson and Kathy Bonn