Licensure and Credentialing Information for Prospective Applicants

Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences
Expressive Therapies Division

M.A. Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy

Thank you for your interest in Lesley University’s Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program (the “Program”). Depending on your professional goals, where you reside or plan to practice, and the licensure structures that exist within that state, there are different pathways towards licensure and/or credentialing that may be relevant for you:

I. State Professional Mental Health Counseling Licensure.
II. Art Therapy Step 1 – National Certification: Registered Art Therapist (ATR).
Step 2 – State Modality Licensure, where applicable.

I. State Professional Mental Health Counseling Licensure

Our Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program meets the current educational requirements for Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) licensure in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Professional mental health counseling licensure requirements vary from state to state, are a matter of individual state legislation, and are outside of the control of educational institutions. State licensing boards make determinations as to whether an applicant’s program of study meets the educational requirements for a license at the time of licensure application. Due to our unique focus on the expressive therapies modality specializations, and the variations of professional mental health counseling licensure standards from state to state, our Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program does not completely align with the current educational requirements for licensure as a professional mental health counselor in other states.

State-by-State Listing: Professional Mental Health Counseling Licensure

A. Lesley University has determined that our Program’s curriculum meets the current educational requirements to apply for licensure in clinical mental health counseling in the following state: Massachusetts.

B. Lesley University has determined that our Program’s curriculum does not meet the current educational requirements to apply for licensure in clinical mental health counseling in the following states: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas* (Low Residency, refer to category C.), Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas* (Low Residency, refer to category C.), Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri* (Low Residency, refer to category C.), Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Washington D.C., West Virginia, Wyoming.

– Individuals who intend to pursue professional mental health counseling licensure in one of the states listed in category B are strongly encouraged to request guidance from state licensing boards as to whether supplemental coursework or other actions would be necessary to make them eligible to apply for professional mental health counseling licensure in that state.

C. Lesley University has determined that graduates of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program are ineligible for professional mental health counseling licensure in the following states:

– Low Residency format: Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Wisconsin.

Lesley University’s Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) and approved by the American Art Therapy Association (AATA). The Art Therapy program is not accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and we cannot guarantee CACREP equivalency or a finding by a state licensing agency of CACREP equivalency. In some states, the definition of professional mental health counseling in state licensing regulations, and/or the state licensure board’s interpretation of mental health counseling regulations, specifically excludes educational programs and/or coursework that incorporates training and practice in art therapy. In these states, graduates of our Program may only be eligible to seek a credential or license specific to art therapy, or as a creative arts therapist, which is described below in Section II.

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II. Art Therapy: National Certification, State Modality Licensure

Step 1 – National Certification: Registered Art Therapist (ATR).
Any person looking to obtain their national Registered Art Therapist (ATR) credential to practice art therapy is required to become certified by the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc. (ATCB). Lesley University has determined that our curriculum meets the current educational requirements to apply for the national Registered Art Therapist (ATR) credential. For more information, visit the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) website at https://www.arttherapy.org and the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc. (ATCB) website at https://www.atcb.org/.

Step 2 – State Modality Licensure, where applicable.
After obtaining national certification, some states require an additional state license in order to practice art therapy in that state.

State-by-State Listing: Art Therapy State Licensure

The following information was taken from the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) website, https://arttherapy.org/state-advocacy/.

A. Lesley University has determined that our curriculum meets the current educational requirements to apply for state licensure in art therapy in the following states: Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon.

B. According to the AATA website, art therapists in the following states are licensed under related licenses:
   1. Lesley University has determined that our curriculum meets the current educational requirements to apply for the art therapy related licenses in the following states: New York (Creative Arts Therapist License - LCAT), Wisconsin (Registered Art Therapist with License to Practice Psychotherapy).
   2. Lesley University has determined that our curriculum does not meet the current educational requirements to apply for the art therapy related licenses in the following states: Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah.
      - The states listed in category 2 license art therapists through their professional mental health counseling licenses. Individuals who intend to pursue art therapy licensure in one of the states listed in category 2 are strongly encouraged to request guidance from state licensing boards as to whether supplemental coursework or other actions would be necessary to make them eligible to apply for the art therapy licensure in that state. Our Program offers electives that may satisfy the common additional courses required.

C. According to the AATA website, there currently is no state licensure process required to practice art therapy in the following states, though some states may have legislation in process that could require such licensure in the future: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Washington D.C., West Virginia, Wyoming.

State of Residency, Student Location, and Field Training Placements

– Low Residency format: We are currently unable to admit students who reside in or who are located in the following states into the Low Residency format of the Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy Program due to regulations that exist in those states: Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Wisconsin.
   – Students should also be aware that they cannot move to or complete field training placements in these states while enrolled in the program.

– On Campus format: Students who enroll in the On Campus format of the Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy program are required to complete their field training placements in Massachusetts. If they wish to complete field training placements outside of Massachusetts, they must first obtain approval.

Lesley University has attempted to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information provided at the time this guide was created. Please be aware that state licensure is a matter of individual state legislation and is outside of the control of educational institutions; therefore, the information presented in this guide is subject to change.

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