THE PROFESSIONAL MILITARY CHAPLAINCY:

APC BOARD SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION

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APC® & MCA PARTNERSHIP:
APC BCC-MILITARY CHAPLAINCY!

Timeline:
- 2015: both boards direct research for a BCC-MC
- 2015-2017: research conducted by grounded theory research, literature review, case study, many elite interviews & several focus groups
- 2017: MCA approves draft BCC-MC
  APC Board approves BCC-MC
- Oct 2017-Feb 2018: Documents for the rollout of the BCC-MC are to be finalized by APC
- 1 Mar 2018: APC BCC-MC accepts applicants!
Military chaplains already board certified with APC!

- Typically BCC certification would occur at the Company Grade level (O2-O3) after 4 units of CPE & the 2,000 hours of chaplain experience.
- The BCC-MC specialty is intended for experienced Company Grade (O3)–Field Grade (O4 & above) Chaplains moving into, or in a supervisory capacity.
- However, the chaplain’s rank/time in grade is not the qualifying criteria
  - APC qualifications & demonstrated professional competence during a committee appearance determines a BCC & a BCC-MC certification.
ADVANTAGES OF APC BCC-MC

For the chaplain:

- Assures the public, endorsers & military leadership that one has met established, independent national standards of ADVANCED professional military chaplain competence.
- Assures others that one is held to code of ethics in addition to any required by the military & the faith group.
- Provides for a means of obtaining, documenting & verifying a yearly minimum of 50 hours of continuing education.
- Provides accountability, support network & peership of professional chaplains outside of military & faith group.
- Allows for (does not mandate) military & faith group endorsers to use this nationally recognized certification when considering continuing employment, promotions, job positions and awards, etc.
- Allows for (does not mandate) military to consider this BCC-MC for awards, promotions and job placements
- Provides a nationally recognized credential useful for chaplaincy employment post-military service.
To the Faith Group:

- BCC & BCC-MC credentialing of professional chaplains to be **one essential tool** for assuring and improving the **quality of their chaplain’s care** in a military context.
- **Certification, accountability & continual education** by a nationally recognized professional organization brings an objective accountability to public standards for ethical conduct & professional competence outside of, & in addition to, faith group requirements.
- Chaplains are facing scrutiny of their understanding of the **growing diversity of cultural, spiritual and religious needs** of persons outside of their own faith context; BCC & BCC-MC provides a means to document this professional expertise.
- The requirement of continual **proof of endorsement** is a means of keeping chaplains accountable to their faith group.
- **Allows for** (does not mandate) using this nationally recognized certification when considering a chaplain for continuing endorsement, awards & future employment.
To the Military:

- Leadership will find credentialing of professional chaplains to be **one essential tool** for assuring & improving the quality of chaplain care provided to the organization & military/family members.

- **Certification, accountability & continual education from a nationally recognized, independent, professional organization** brings the added benefit of an **objective accountability** to public standards for ethical conduct & professional competence outside of, and in addition to, the military & faith group systems.

- Inspection & accreditation criteria are giving increasing scrutiny to organizations’ understanding of the **growing cultural, spiritual & religious needs of military members**, as well as leadership’s capacity to meet those needs; chaplains certified as BCC & BCC-MC will provide a means to **document this professional expertise**.

- **Allows for** (does not mandate) using this nationally recognized certification when considering a chaplain for continuing **employment, promotions, job positions & awards, etc.**
APC BCC Requirements & Credentials:
1. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college/university.
2. A master’s degree (72 hrs. or >) in theological studies (or its equivalent) from a Council for Higher Education (CHEA) school.
3. Be endorsed by an appropriate religious authority according to the standard practice and policy of that authority.
4. Have 4 units (1,600 hours) of CPE under:
   - Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE, DoE accredited)
   - The US Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission on Certification & Accreditation.
   - The Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC).
   - Only 1 of these 4 required units may be an equivalency in order to assure that the CPE units are provided by an accredited agency.
5. Demonstrate **30 competencies for chaplaincy** as established by the *Common Qualifications for Professional Chaplaincy.* (bcci.professionalchaplains.org/content.asp?pl=25&contentid=25)

6. Demonstrate **accountability** to: the endorsing faith body, employer and APC.

7. Affirm and practice chaplaincy according to the *Common Code of Ethics.* (professionalchaplains.org/content.asp?pl=198&s=199&contentid=199)

8. **Maintain BCC certification** in APC by:
   - Participating in a **peer review** every 5 years.
   - Documenting at least **50 hours of continuing education** yearly.
   - Providing **documentation of endorsement** every 5 years.
4 units of accredited CPE required.
- ACPE, Catholic or Canadian
- Only 1 non-accredited unit allowed through an equivalency

May be done one unit then a residency, or one unit at a time.

Need not always be done at a (civilian) hospital.
- Look for “community-based,” “parish-based,” “extended,” or “distance education” CPE to use your own military assignment for your clinical hours.
- ACPE allows for distance education CPE (webbed in) if meeting live 2-4 times in the unit.
THEN A BCC CAN SEEK TO BE CERTIFIED AS A BCC-MC
Be an APC BCC for a minimum of 1 year.
Be a MCA member.
Have had a minimum of 3 years FT in military chaplaincy.
- Reserve & Guard in a billet for 3 yrs.
Submit 3 letters of recommendation
- Chaplain supervisor, endorser & 04 or above non-chaplain.
Submit a short essay documenting professional progression from point-of-service military chaplaincy to supervisory chaplaincy.
Submit an essay of integrated advanced practice in demonstrating the 30 advanced military chaplaincy competencies.

- Part I Your theory & practice of military chaplaincy
- Part II A Case Presentation
- Part III Work in a Quality Improvement Process

A collaborative PPT & script.
- Either intended to be presented external or internal to the military.

Document three years of a minimum of 50 hours of continuing education with at least 20 hours specific to military care.
MC APPLICATION TIMELINE

- Application process - four months
- Certification interviews
- Presenter’s Report
- Recommendation to Certification Commission
- APC Board of Directors ratification
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 3 APC BCC members (until there are certified BCC-MC to sit on the committee)
  - At least one BCC with Sr. military experience
  - Committee chair
  - Presenter
- A military commander
  - Active/reserve/guard/retired

Note: Every effort will be made to find a committee member from the applicant’s military component & branch
DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Rev. Anna Lee Hisey Pierson, MDiv, BCC-HPCC
Rev. Sharon Burniston, Mdiv, BCC-HPCC
Interview date/time set up by APC staff
- Telephone conference call
- Committee organizes pre-interview time
- Interview with candidate
- Committee deliberates
- Committee notifies candidate of recommendation
- Recommendation provided to APC Certification Commission
- APC Board ratifies the decision
PROFESSIONAL PROGRESSION ESSAY
The best way to approach this essay is simply to tell the story of your movement toward advanced military care chaplaincy.

Who influenced you?

What is your community? For many of us, our story is a story about community and is therefore made up of many stories about people.

Focus on transitions, changes, decisions, new directions, marker events.

Many of the 30 advanced military competencies can be demonstrated in this essay!
This little piece is small but mighty!

The essay is your opportunity to tell the committee who you are and how your life story and life experience are integrated into your ministry and inform your military care chaplaincy.

The essay can give a sense of theme and pattern in one’s life.

Reflect upon the people, times, and incidents that have been significant in your life, particularly in the period since your BCC, and made you the person and chaplain you are today.

These may include:

- Encounters with the Divine (mystical, conversion, charismatic, contemplative, experiences of mercy, nudges, pursuit)
- Moments of repentance
- Crises of faith (doubt, disobedience, depression)
- Crises of circumstance (break-up of a relationship, death of a parent, loss of a job, illness)
- Experiences of growth (intellectual, emotional, relational)
- People who have been exemplars
Who Are You and How Did You Get Here?

- This essay is your opportunity to tell the committee who you are and how your life story and life experience are integrated into the praxis of your military care chaplaincy.
- What has been the inward journey, where you became self-aware and both in touch with and accepting of yourself? How has that played out in your ability to understand and accept military members, families, staff and to experience their reality?
- Discuss your gifts and how you discern and use them.
- Don’t be afraid to explore your failures and your less attractive traits: What are the teachable moments hidden in those times and those life experiences that were not unalloyed successes?
- Do you have growing edges? Barriers? Unrealized dreams? Altered goals? How do these create empathy with your care-recipients, affirming the common struggles and the wisdom they elicit from their own struggles?
- The key is integration!
- Discuss how these things impact you as a pastoral caregiver.
Does your theory and practice of military supervisory chaplaincy demonstrate advanced praxis beyond the BCC level?

You already know and practice the competencies of a Board Certified Chaplain.

What you need to demonstrate, and what your committee will be evaluating, is that you have progressed from BCC skills to advanced skills and knowledges in the area of military supervisory chaplaincy.
THE MAJOR ESSAY

KEEP CALM AND WRITE THE ESSAY
The major essay of 10-12 pages and must include at least three fundamental components:

I. A detailed and integrated portrayal of the theory and practice of your chaplaincy care in military care ministry.

II. A case presentation that is comprehensive in scope of care, and that includes, but is not limited to:
   i. An evolving comprehensive spiritual plan of care
   ii. The progression of your spiritual practice over the case
   iii. The integration of your chaplaincy care to enhance other military disciplines in providing holistic service to military members/family/staff.
   iv. An integrative team approach to the care-recipients

III. Written demonstration of your participation in a quality improvement process that enhances the delivery of chaplaincy care.
The requirement for the case presentation is to offer a comprehensive plan of spiritual care, to demonstrate the progression of your spiritual practice or care over the case, to demonstrate how chaplaincy care was integrated with the other disciplines comprising the military team, and to offer a plan of holistic service.

Present the case in whatever format you deem most appropriate. You might be guided by such questions as:

- What was your spiritual, and/or other assessment at the beginning of the case?
- What resources were available? What was needed? What was your plan to use available resources to meet those needs?
- How did you monitor progress? How did your assessment change over time, either as a result of your pastoral care or life circumstance or other variables?
- What was your spiritual plan of care? How did it change over time?
- How was the spiritual plan of care collaborative, interdisciplinary, and possibly transdisciplinary?
The case presentation should show your advanced praxis at work. This is your opportunity to show your committee what you do, why you do it, how nimble you are in adjusting to changing circumstances, and how you collaborate with interdisciplinary peers.

In many ways, the case presentation is analogous to the verbatims you submitted as a BCC applicant with some important distinctions:

- The case presentation is not a snapshot of a moment in time, as a verbatim is, but an arc of care over a period of time.
- It should reflect advanced practice as a military care chaplain. It goes beyond what a good, competent BCC could do in similar circumstances and shows the integration of your advanced study and practical and clinical experience.
- It shows your work in the context of an multi-team approach. This is not simple multidisciplinary cooperation, as you work in parallel with colleagues from other disciplines, but practice that is truly trans- or interdisciplinary and collaborative.
CASE PRESENTATION QUICK CHECK!

- Does your case presentation provide a clear picture of your advanced praxis as a military chaplain on an interdisciplinary team?

- Does it include a spiritual plan of care? . . . And all that a spiritual POC implies?

- Does it show the progression of your spiritual care over the time of the case?

- Does it reflect an integrated team approach that is collaborative and trans- or interdisciplinary?

- Is it holistic?
The major essay must include written demonstration that the applicant has participated in a quality improvement (QI) process that enhances the delivery of chaplaincy care in a military care setting.
To make improvements, an organization needs to understand its own delivery system & key processes.

QI can assume many forms and is most effective when individualized to meet the needs of a specific organization’s delivery system.

A successful QI program always focuses on these four key principles:

1. Focus on systems and processes
2. Focus on care-recipients
3. Focus on being part of the military team
4. Focus on use of data to demonstrate measurable outcomes
Quick Check for Major Essay!

- Does your major essay include all of the required components, addressing most (if not all) of the 31 advanced military care chaplaincy competencies?
- Do you describe in detail your theory and practice of military supervisory chaplaincy?
- Did you include a case presentation?
- Did you demonstrate your participation in a QI project focusing on resources (people, materials, technology, infrastructure), activities (what’s done, how it’s done), & outcomes (how current systems are working, what happens when changes are made, documentation of successful performance)?
- Does your essay address the entire spectrum of military supervisory care?
POWER POINT PRESENTATION PROJECT
The application must include an actual presentation created and presented by the applicant in collaboration with a military colleague to educate the military community or the broader community about spiritual practice in military care.
The presentation may include 20-30 slides.
Must have an accompanying script.
It must be created/presented by the applicant in collaboration with a military colleague.
It must be an original presentation.
All sources must be credited. It is not necessary to cite common knowledge, but any data, tables, quotes, or material created by others must be cited.
The purpose of the presentation must be to educate the military community or the broader community about spiritual practice in military care.
The presentation should demonstrate advanced practice beyond the BCC level.
- A presentation prepared for orientation of new chapel staff or volunteers does not meet the advanced praxis criterion.
Print out the slides and the script to include in your application.
Quick Check: PowerPoint Presentation

✓ Is your presentation collaborative ~ created and presented with a military colleague?
✓ Did you include a script to accompany the slides?
✓ Is it an original presentation?
✓ Are all tables, data, and quotes properly credited?
✓ Does the presentation educate about spiritual practice in military care?
✓ Is this an advanced practice presentation beyond the BCC level?
BCC-MC COMPETENCIES

Competencies
These competencies address your understanding of why professional chaplains do what we do & how you integrate your theology with psychosocial disciplines, religious beliefs & practices, & ethical considerations in your advanced praxis as a military supervisory chaplain.

Paraphrased from APC & BCCI
MCITP1: articulate a history of the military chaplaincy.
MCITP2: be aware of the history & mission of the chaplain’s particular military component & branch as well as the place & mission of chaplaincy within that service’s institution.
MCITP3: be conversant with Joint-Service policies concerning religious support & expectations of chaplains in a joint environment.
MCITP4: MCITP8: demonstrate a working knowledge of the chaplain’s role as an advisor to command on religious/spiritual, moral & ethical issues and individual and unit morale.
MCITP5: integrate learning from the chaplain’s appropriate level of Professional Military Education & Chaplain School Training into a personal theory of chaplain leadership.
MCITP6: be knowledgeable about, & able to articulate, the importance of confidentiality & privileged communication by chaplains in a military environment.

MCITP7: demonstrate the integration of theories from the behavioral sciences, the chaplain’s faith tradition, & appropriate military traditions and expectations with the chaplain’s theory of supervisory practice.

MCITP8: incorporate a working knowledge of the unique aspects of group process & organizational behavior within a military environment.
These competencies address your use of family systems theory, community resources, personal boundaries and integrity, and the role of your own social location in your advanced military supervisory chaplaincy.
MCPIC1: use one’s pastoral authority, supervisory authority & military rank in differing situations while maintaining the necessary tension between one’s chaplain and officer roles.

MCPIC2: incorporate an awareness of, & respect for, pastoral & personal boundaries with others: command staff, subordinates, military & family members.

MCPIC3: distinguish between what religious/spiritual support the chaplain’s subordinates might be able to personally provide & what to do about religious/spiritual needs that the staff cannot personally provide for others.

- This may be demonstrated with a current, past or hypothetical staff.
MCPIC4: function as a mentor for subordinates professionally & personally, while being sensitive to the subordinate’s faith tradition & personal & professional developmental stage.

MCPIC5: function as advisor to command on moral, ethical, & religious accommodation issues within the military unit in which they serve.

MCPIC6: model the ability to cooperate with diverse populations, especially but not limited to a diversity of culture, race & faith positions, without compromising one’s own beliefs and traditions.
These competencies address your supervisory pastoral care of military members and their families in diverse settings and in response to wide-ranging needs in conventional and crisis situations.

Paraphrased from APC & BCCI
 MCPPS1: provide effective administration & leadership of a chapel section/department.
 MCPPS2: effectively supervise staff & volunteers.
 MCPPS3: provide coordination & oversight of spiritual care during mass-casualty, real-world or exercise situations.
 MCPPS4: articulate an understanding & methods of assessing spiritual & moral implications of policies & actions on military personnel, populations within the chaplain’s sphere of influence, & larger communities; frame & present such assessments to other professionals, command staffs, & senior commanders.
- MCPPS5: articulate an engagement plan of ethical & moral challenges that might arise within the military environment while maintaining one’s personal integrity, beliefs, & values & the mission of the military.
- MCPPS6: demonstrate a working knowledge regarding when to seek professional consultation, when to refer to others & when to recuse oneself.
- MCPPS7: articulate the unique professional role of chaplains as spiritual care leaders to command staff, in deployed situations & international arenas.
- MCPPS8: develop & implement a sabbatical plan for subordinates.
- MCPPS9: mentor subordinates’ professional training, development & professional credentialing.
These competencies address the skills you bring to the profession, serving among other chaplains and in interdisciplinary roles, and promoting the role of military supervisory chaplaincy in a variety of settings.
MCOL1: demonstrate organizational & family systems theories incorporated into the practice of supervision of subordinates & the administration of a chapel section/department.

MCOL2: demonstrate the ability to work as a team member in liaison with command & other military units, specialties & personnel.

MCOL3: demonstrate the ability to interact effectively with community government & faith group leaders in humanitarian, charity, &/or religious/spiritual events that involve both military & community members.

MCOL4: apply culturally appropriate, evidence-informed strategies & practices for communicating & interacting with community faith leaders for the purpose of supporting the spiritual & practical needs of military/family members.
MCOL5: integrate chaplaincy care into the military environment through appropriate measures, such as policies & procedures, special projects, use of evidence-informed spiritual care, & education of others concerning the role & utilization of a chaplain.

MCOL6: describe the role of the chaplain in a quality improvement project(s) within the chapel section &/or military community & its impact on the military environment.

MCOL7: demonstrate situational awareness concerning the level of severity of incidents within the chaplain’s sphere of influence; determine what & who needs to be informed & what communication means is appropriate with respect to tactical, operational, & strategic level impact.
APPLICATION COMPLETE?

Apply now
Follow the instructions
Do not fold, spindle, mutilate, staple, clip, bind, or place in plastic
Include everything! Check your list twice!
Enclose all fees
Submit a complete application: If your application is not complete, the committee cannot evaluate your praxis
Incomplete applications will be returned
Final Checklist

✓ Is your application complete?
✓ Recommendations?
✓ Progression essay?
✓ Major essay? Case presentation? QI project? PowerPoint presentation?
✓ CEUs?
✓ Does your application demonstrate all 30 advanced military competencies?
✓ Does your application demonstrate advanced praxis beyond the BCC level?
✓ Does it consistently demonstrate collaborative interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary work?
✓ Is this the application of a highly skilled, well-educated, clinically experienced, research-informed chaplain with specialized expertise in the integrated practice of military supervisory chaplaincy?
Association of Professional Chaplains
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