

ACPE Communities of Practice

Last Updated May 16, 2017.

Definition:

A Community of Practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. A Community of Practice has the following three elements:

1. A Community of Practice has an identity defined by a shared **domain** of interest. Membership implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people. They value their collective competence and learn from each other.
 2. The **community** members, in pursuing their interest in their domain, engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other; they care about their standing with each other.
 3. Members of a Community of Practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems – in short a shared **practice**. This takes time and sustained interaction.
 4. For more information on Communities of Practice please read [*Communities of Practice, A Brief Introduction*](#) by Etienne Wenger.
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Purpose:

Communities of Practice will serve as a flagship activity for our association and anchor us in our grassroots tradition. Workshop proposals for national conferences submitted or sponsored by a community of practice will receive priority consideration. As grassroots entities, Communities of Practice within ACPE, have three primary purposes:

1. To foster supportive and challenging relationships among colleagues;
 2. To promote best practices in the field of clinical pastoral education (CPE), and
 3. To provide ongoing professional development for CPE educators, students and clinical members.
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Requirements:

1. All ACPE Educators will participate in at least one ACPE Community of Practice.
 2. All Students in Supervisory Education and Clinical Members are encouraged to participate in at least one ACPE Community of Practice.
 3. Each ACPE Educator will report on their participation with Communities of Practice in the newly instituted electronic individual Annual Report.
 4. Communities of Practice will report annually through their designated contact person to the Professional Well-Being Committee on the membership and activities of the Community of Practice.
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Process:

1. Communities of Practice will be developed in several ways, such as:
 - geography/location, or
 - a specific practice, theory or interest.
2. Any ACPE member in good standing may form and serve as the contact person for a Community of Practice.

3. Each recognized Community of Practice will be registered with the Professional Well-Being Committee. The ACPE National Office will maintain the registry and make it public on the ACPE website. (See [Registration Form](#))
4. Communities of Practice may solicit members person by person, through the ACPE Newsletter, on the ACPE website, or through occasional mailings from the National Office. Invitations will include the goals and objectives of the community, current members, contact information, and plans for convening.
5. The Professional Well-Being Committee will oversee matters related to Communities of Practice, including formation of new groups, review of annual reports regarding member participation, and maintaining a national directory/contact list of Communities of Practice throughout the association.

Structure:

1. An ACPE Community of Practice will ordinarily have a minimum of 8 members. Should a community drop below 8 members, representatives of the group will consult with the Professional Well-Being Committee about next steps, including adding new members, continuing for a specified period with less than 8 members or discontinuing the community.
2. Communities of Practice may convene face-to-face, via audio or video conference or as a part of other ACPE events/gatherings.
3. All approved Communities of Practice are eligible for ACPE funding to support those activities which advance the mission of ACPE and help the community achieve their goals and objectives according to the Finance Policy of the ACPE.
4. Communities of Practice may decide to dissolve at any time for any reason. Should a Community decide to disband, a representative should notify the Professional Well-Being Committee as soon as possible.

Funding:

1. Funding for Communities of Practice will be dedicated annually in the national ACPE budget.
2. Refer to the ACPE Finance policy to guide members regarding what may and may not be funded based on current practices for the support of convening/meeting expenses across the association. Refer to the [application form](#) that provides a process for Communities of Practice to apply for funding (note: not all Communities of Practice may need funding).
3. The Professional Well-Being Committee will receive and review applications for funding and make recommendations to the Finance Committee.
4. Should a Community of Practice not spend their requested/approved budget in a given fiscal year (January 1 – December 31), the remaining funds will not necessarily be available for the following year.
5. All spending by a Community of Practice will require pre-approval by the Professional Well-Being Committee. Any expenses not approved in advance will not be reimbursed.

<https://www.acpe.edu/ACPE/CommunitiesOfPractice.aspx?WebsiteKey=4226fe39-34cc-48f4-a057-3885f8cac917>