



## COMTA-ENDORSED CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **Institutional Eligibility** - Institutions offer training at a post-secondary level only and must be legally organized and licensed by the appropriate state education and/or state licensing agency which authorizes the conduct of business in that state.
- 2) **State Approvals** - The programs under consideration have current approval(s) as required by law and regulation in their jurisdictions, including state education agencies, state private postsecondary regulators, or massage licensing boards.
- 3) **Program Eligibility** –There have been at least five (5) students enrolled in or graduated from each of the programs included in the application.
- 4) **Program Length** - The program length complies with one of the following:
  - a. Professional licensing/credentialing hours for the applicable jurisdictions.
  - b. In the absence of state licensing, a minimum of 625 hours of classroom and clinic/fieldwork that are directly supervised by qualified faculty members.
  - c. Program length is calculated using COMTA’s definition of clock hour: “a clock is defined as a 60 minute block of time consisting of 50 minutes of instruction with appropriate breaks.”
- 5) **Curriculum Content** - The program’s curriculum content is coherent and demonstrates that it has been designed according to professional licensing and/or credentialing requirements for the applicable jurisdictions.
- 6) **COMTA Curriculum Competencies** - The program’s curriculum content demonstrates that it includes *at minimum* the COMTA Curriculum Competencies.
  - a. Curriculum competencies set standards of professional knowledge and abilities. Evaluating a program in terms of student competency places the emphasis on student learning, as opposed to how much time is devoted to each topic.
  - b. The Commission’s six general competency areas are as follows:
    1. Plan and organize an effective massage and bodywork session or esthetic treatment.
    2. Perform massage therapy and bodywork or esthetic treatments for therapeutic benefit.

3. Develop and implement a self-care strategy.
  4. Develop successful and ethical therapeutic relationships with clients.
  5. Develop a strategy for a successful practice, business, or employment situation.
  6. Identify strategies for professional development.
- c. Schools/programs must demonstrate how these competencies are being taught and assessed using the COMTA Competency Chart.
- 7) **Syllabi** - Programs ensure documentation and consistent implementation of the curriculum through the use of clear syllabi distributed to students at the beginning of each course.
- 8) **Clinic/Fieldwork** - The clinic/fieldwork experience is a vital component of student learning. Clinic/fieldwork should be considered an integral part of the instructional process.
- a. Students are supervised and evaluated by qualified faculty members.
  - b. Clinic/fieldwork hours are appropriate to the length of the program and adhere to the following:
    - i. Hours do not exceed 25 percent of the required hours of the program.
    - ii. A minimum number of hours/client sessions on the general public must be performed and documented.
    - iii. See COMTA Clinic Guidelines for additional information.
- 9) **Externship (optional)** – If a program includes an externship experience, the following apply:
- a. Externship hours are appropriate to the length of the program and adhere to the following:
    - i. Hours are over and above the minimum 500 hours.
    - ii. Hours do not exceed 20 percent of total program hours.
  - b. Student performance is supervised by an onsite supervisor who is legally qualified to do so.
  - c. Student performance is evaluated by a qualified faculty coordinator (employee of the school).
- 10) **Faculty Qualifications** - All instructors are academically and professionally qualified, based upon the following:
- a. Instructors are qualified and/or trained in instructional methods and classroom management.
  - b. Instructors of theory and technique have a minimum of two (2) years of practical experience and are able to demonstrate the appropriate knowledge or expertise as required by the course learning objectives.
  - c. Instructors teaching anatomy, physiology or pathology must demonstrate that they have completed science training which is broader and/or deeper than the course(s) being taught. If a program's science faculty do not meet this criterion, the program is responsible for effectively

demonstrating to the Commission how its faculty members meet the intent of the standard/requirement.

- d. Instructors of theory and technique hold a current professional license, certification or other credential as required by applicable laws.

## 11) Program Advertisement, Recruitment and Disclosures

- a. Institutions must use ethical recruitment and enrollment practices and ensure that all recruitment and enrollment practices comply with applicable regulations. “Recruiting practices” include all activities designed to attract students and lead to student enrollment. These include but are not limited to advertising, public outreach and promotion, correspondence with prospective students, and completing enrollment documents. “Recruiting personnel” refers to anyone whose primary responsibility is recruiting, contacting, or responding to prospective students. These staff positions may have different titles at different institutions, but all must comply with the following standards. All activities should provide prospective students with complete and accurate information about the institution so that students can make informed enrollment decisions.
- b. All advertising and promotional materials (including the institution’s website) are clear, factually accurate and current, and avoid leaving any false or unsupported impressions of the institution or program, including location name, educational programs, services, policies, and accreditation status.
- c. Advertising of Endorsement/Approval/Accreditation Status - Institutions and programs are encouraged to promote the COMTA-Endorsed Curriculum achievement, but must accurately represent their status at all times.
  - i. No institution or program may use the term “accredited” unless it is accredited by an accrediting agency and indicates by what agency or organization it is accredited.
  - ii. Institutions or programs only use the phrase “COMTA-Endorsed Curriculum” and may not imply accreditation by the agency in published written or visual form or verbal representation.
  - iii. Only the current COMTA-Endorsed Curriculum badge may only be used in the form provided by COMTA. The COMTA logo may *not* be used.
- d. Required Disclosures include:
  - i. Costs - Total program costs are clearly disclosed for prospective students.
  - ii. Licensing requirements - Institutions or programs must publish in the catalog or student handbook current licensing requirements, including:
    - 1. A brief description of regulations in the state of training, as well as contact information in the state of training, with a statement that requirements in other states may differ;
    - 2. Reference to a reputable resource that lists the names, addresses, and licensing requirements for all the appropriate regulatory agencies in all states that regulate the practice of massage therapy and bodywork and/or esthetics/skin care (e.g., AMTA, ABMP, or similar resource that is updated regularly with information for ALL states);

iii. Salary and Employment Expectations (optional)

1. If institutions or program provide information about salary or employment opportunities to prospective students, either in written or verbal form, such information must be accurate and identify the source and date.

**12) Transcript Verification and Authentication**

- a. Institutions and programs monitor and maintain records of students' progress throughout the program.
- b. Institutions use appropriate measures to ensure transcript authenticity (e.g., watermark paper, embossed seal).

**13) Student Outcomes** - To maintain and/or improve program effectiveness, institutions or programs monitor and report completion, placement, and licensure exam pass rates on an annual basis.

**14) Distance Education (optional)** – If programs include distance education (both fully online or hybrid courses), the following requirements apply:

- a. Distance education must meet the criteria of supporting regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor. Independent study or correspondence courses do not meet that criterion.
- b. Hours awarded for distance education constitute no more than 49 percent of the program clock hours or credits (whichever is less). This includes any general education hours that may be included in a degree program.
- c. Institutions and programs must be approved to offer distance education for both in-state and out-of-state students where applicable.
- d. Course content does not require on-site, hands-on, or immediate monitoring of student work.
- e. If any COMTA Competencies are taught or assessed via distance education, methods appropriate to the language of the Competency are used.
- f. See COMTA's Distance Education Guidelines for additional information.