

ADDICTION COUNSELOR TRAINING (ACT)

Certificate Program Application

Note: There are NO stipends associated with this Certificate.

ACT Policies

Selection Process

MSW students in good academic standing and post-graduates in direct practice-related disciplines are welcome to apply to the Addiction Counselor Training (ACT) Certificate Program. MSW students in the traditional (on campus) program may apply at any time but optimally in the year before they enter their advanced year field placement; students in the traditional (on campus) Advanced Standing MSW program should apply to ACT upon their acceptance to the MSW program.

ACT is a highly competitive program and acceptances will be limited. Applications will be reviewed by ACT Program staff and will be carefully evaluated based on a number of criteria, including academic achievement, commitment to the field of addiction, prior experience, and scheduling availability. (Please note: a majority of classes are taught on weekends and not necessarily offered on every campus each semester). Application decisions will be emailed to all applicants after review. Decisions are final and confidential, and we do not discuss individual decisions with applicants. As part of the application process, ACT Program staff may also review applicants' transcripts and first year/undergraduate field evaluations.

We strongly recommend that applicants in recovery from addictions be secure in their own recovery for a period of at least two (2) years prior to application to the program in order to best protect the interests of the clients we serve.

Policy Post Acceptance

Placement Process:

Once accepted into the ACT Program, students will be placed in an ACT-focused field agency for their advanced year field placement (and possibly for their generalist placement, if applicable). It is important to note that program staff will make an effort to accommodate student preferences with regard to schedule and location; however, it is the students' responsibility to successfully complete field. Due to the demands placed on staff and the number of placements, it will generally *not* be possible to change field placements for reasons other than unavailability of the placement agency. During the placement process, the student will be referred to an ACT field agency by the ACT field staff for an interview. Failure to be accepted into the first agency will lead to a referral to the second agency. The Program will refer the student to a maximum of two agencies. The student will be required to meet with the Program faculty after the first rejection, to understand and address challenges that may be interfering with the internship.

acceptance process. Failure to secure the internship at the second agency will result in the student being dismissed from the ACT Program. If the student attends an interview for an initial placement and is accepted but decides not to accept the placement (for personal or professional reasons) at that agency, s/he will be provided one more referral to an agency for an interview. The student will be required to accept the internship in the second placement if accepted by the agency and to remain in that placement until completion of field. Program staff will review students' field placement progress on an ongoing basis. The ACT Program faculty reserves the right to terminate students from the program based on difficulties in field placements. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure sufficient scheduling flexibility to accommodate field placements.

****Please note that field agencies' criteria may include items such as (but not limited to) a set length of time in recovery for applicants with a history of addictions; abstinence from substances that may include maintenance medications (such as Buprenorphine, Naloxone, Methadone) and medical marijuana; drug testing; and a criminal background check. These differing criteria reflect divergent philosophies/approaches/shifting policies in the field that will be addressed in your coursework. If students are in need of a disability accommodation for field education, please contact the Rutgers University Office of Disability Services at <https://ods.rutgers.edu>. We (the ACT program and the RU SSW) do not set nor can we influence these agency criteria. We will work with you to find the best fit agency, but as noted above we cannot guarantee student acceptance at a field agency and a successful placement.**

Course work:

The student is also expected to complete the six-course requirement for the Certificate [refer to course requirements for the ACT Program]. It is important to note that students are required to attend ALL sessions of EACH course and are not permitted to attend sessions in different course sections to accommodate their schedules. In cases of medical or other emergency as determined by the ACT Program Director, the staff will work to accommodate a student in another section; work requirements, personal holidays (aside from those specifically addressed in the University Religion Policy) and special events and/or conferences will not be considered emergencies requiring rescheduling. Students who fail to attend one or more class meetings of a course without approval of the Director will be required to drop and retake that course.

Grounds for Termination:

Failure to achieve a **minimum grade of B in any ACT course** or failure to successfully complete an ACT generalist or advanced year field placement will result in dismissal from the program. Failure to successfully complete the assigned field placement may include a termination initiated by the field agency, and/or the student and agency's mutual agreement to terminate the field internship due to the student's inability to fulfill the expectations and/or recommendations made by the field agency and the Rutgers Field faculty. This may refer to an "F" grade or to a "W" grade where recommendations made to address concerns that resulted in the first field termination were not followed. *The ACT Program retains the right to terminate students for violations of academic integrity, the University Code of Student Conduct, the NASW Code of Ethics, or other*

factors that bear on the ability to maintain the standard of care in social work and addictions counseling practice. Accepted students may be required to go through a background check, drug test, and/or to obtain medical clearance prior to beginning their field placements per agency requirements.

If a student defers acceptance to the MSW program after being admitted to the ACT Program, s/he will have to reapply to ACT when beginning the MSW program.

If a student is dismissed or suspended from the Rutgers MSW program for any reason, s/he is automatically dismissed from the ACT Program. Should the student be reinstated to the MSW program, s/he will not be automatically reinstated to the ACT Program and must reapply.

If an MSW student takes a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the MSW program for one semester, s/he will remain in the ACT Program and will not have to reapply when MSW studies are resumed. Prior to returning from a LOA, the student must notify the ACT Program of her/his imminent return by emailing ACT@ssw.rutgers.edu. If a LOA is for a period of more than one semester, the student will be required to reapply for admission to the ACT Program.

Students may opt to withdraw from the ACT Program at any time and without any penalty by giving written notice to the ACT Program by emailing ACT@ssw.rutgers.edu.