

Reading and Evaluating Position Papers Advice for Readers

*Created by:
ACPE Certification Commission*

Remember: If while you are reading a set of papers you have questions and/or you need consultation, please contact the Chair of the Certification Commission or the Chair of the Regional Certification Committee

Five Aspects to Consider

The review of position papers

Includes these five aspects:

- The Candidate
- The Candidate's Supervisor
 - The Readers
 - The Papers
- Theoretical Base of CPE

The Candidate

- The Candidate has worked hard to create these position papers.
- They are sitting on “pins and needles” as they await the response from the readers.
- The Candidate’s future is affected by the outcome of this review of the papers.
- It is **ESSENTIAL** the Contact Reader is in timely contact with the Candidate.

The Candidate's Supervisor

- The Supervisor has been working with the Candidate and is invested in the outcome.
- The Supervisor wants to know where to support the student in the process of learning theory.
- The Supervisor wants to know if the feedback that has been given has been on track.

The Readers

- The readers are volunteers AND busy.
- They have knowledge and experience that informs their assessment of the papers.
- They have a commitment to quality supervision in CPE.
- They play an important role in the ongoing education of supervisors in ACPE.

The Papers

- Each set of papers represents ONE person's attempt to address the questions for each of the three position papers.
- Each paper needs to be “good enough” to provide theoretical support to supervision.
- The contents of the papers provide essential theory to inform supervision.

Theoretical Base of CPE

- Over the years ACPE has identified three areas of theory that inform supervision:
Theology – Personality – Education
- CPE embraces a process oriented, inductive approach to teaching/learning.
- Respect for uniqueness, diversity, cultural humility, inclusiveness informs supervision

First Things First

- Notify Candidate Position Papers have been received.
- Notify ACPE that you have received the position papers.
- Contact the other readers to determine a time to discuss the papers.
- Set aside time to review the papers before the agreed upon time to discuss them.

The First Read Through

- Read the newly Revised Composite Report Appendix 10, sent along with the papers from ACPE.
- Read the papers.
- Read the Revised Composite Report again.
- Score the individual papers.
- Be bold in assessment!

Then What?

- Let the convener know you are prepared to discuss the papers.
- Convener will set up a conference call or a time to meet to discuss the papers.
- With your preliminary ratings on the Revised Comprehensive Report in hand, talk to each other!
- After taking notes and listening to each other, consider reading papers one more time.

Next

- Convener will set up another conference call or meeting if needed.
- Team discusses scoring until consensus is reached.
- Convener writes draft letter during conference call if possible.
- Readers send comments to convener for inclusion in report.

Finally (or almost)

- Convener writes letter to candidate with the decisions on the three papers along with a scored Revised Composite report of the three papers.
- If revision is recommended, the convener will make substantive recommendations for inclusions or reorientations or emendations of the papers.
- Wait for the revised papers to come back!

Theological Excellence

- If you read a theology/spiritual practice paper that is well-organized, articulate, coherent, intelligent and beautiful to read.....
- Recommend it for the Len Cedarleaf award!

Theory Papers

- Readers are looking for:
 - Integration of theories with writer's history
 - Evidence of knowledge
 - Writers should be answering these questions:
 - Does the writer know the concepts of the theory?
 - Has the writer used significant primary resources?
 - Is the writer able to apply concepts to the practice of supervision?

Theory Papers

- Readers are looking for:
 - The theorists/theologians the writers use
 - Whether the writers show evidence of familiarity with relevant literature
 - 1) Are these current theorists? If not, why?
 - 2) Can these theories be applied to CPE Supervision?
 - 3) Are the theories compatible with one another?

Theory Papers

- Readers are looking for:
 - The writer's answers to the questions in the certification manual and the Revised Composite Report
 - The use of both the manual and the Revised Composite Report
 - The articulation the “why” of supervision rather than “how”

Theology/Spiritual Practices Paper

- Focus on the writer's understanding of Transcendence/God and the impact this understanding has on the manner in which the writer will function as a CPE Supervisor
- The represented concepts of Transcendence/God should be consistent with the writer's religious traditions, its teachings, and practices

Theology/Spiritual Practices Paper

- Addresses:
 - The writer's understanding of God/Divine
 - Characteristics of God/Transcendent
 - The impact of these characteristics on the writer's supervision
 - The writer's understanding of persons as creatures of God/Divine/Transcendent
 - The writer's awareness of the impact of cultural background has on the understanding of God/Transcendent

Theology/Spiritual Practices Paper

- Addresses:
 - The writer's' understanding of suffering, sin, illness
 - How humankind relates to the Divine/Transcendent
 - The impact this concept of the Divine/God on human relationships
 - The authors/theologians that speak to the writer's understanding of God/Divine?
 - How does the writer make use of these theologians/authors?
 - Key concepts and understanding of these concepts

Theology/Spiritual Practices Paper

- Readers may ask if writer is able to
 - Represent the authors/theologians accurately
 - When using a concept, is there an example of its use in supervision?
 - Write so that the concepts flow together? Are the concepts congruent with one another?
 - Articulate the “why” of supervision, not the “how” of supervision (3/4 – 1/4 or 2/3 – 1/3 rule: that is to say the ratio of the “why” to the “how”. Another way to say it: the ratio of the theory that informs supervision to the examples of how the writer does supervision.)
 - Demonstrate “critical purchase” of their theologians’ writings

Critical Purchase Defined

- When your primary theorist comes up short or does not address how to deal with or address certain dynamics, issues that you encounter in supervision, where do you turn to? What other authors, resources offer insight and/or understanding to inform your supervision?

Critical Purchase Defined

- Does the primary theorist(s) have limitations? When one encounters these limitation what theory informs the supervision?
- Which theorist(s) assists the writer when the primary theorist does not address an issue? How?

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for:
- The focus of this paper is on the writer's understanding of how the personality is formed and how one grows and develops
- How the writer's understanding of personality informs supervisory assessment, goals, strategies and interventions?

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for:
 - Who are the theorists that inform the writer's understanding of personality?
 - The writer's understanding of the theorist and a deep working knowledge of the theory
 - The writer's:
 - understanding of human nature
 - how personality develops
 - concepts and terms from the theory
 - theorist presented accurately

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for
 - Do the central themes resonate with each other?
Does this paper flow and do the concepts build upon each other?
 - Does the writer use various sources, primary and secondary sources?
 - Does the writer make use of relevant literature?
 - What is the writer's critical purchase of this theory?
 - What works and doesn't work?
 - What does one do when the theory breaks down?

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for
 - How does one make use of this theory to make assessments of the student's readiness for learning?
 - How does this theory inform the goals for the student?
 - How does this theory inform the supervisor's interventions and supervisory alliance?

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for
 - Is this theory congruent with the writer's theology paper?
 - Is this theory congruent with the writer's educational theory?
 - How does the writer's cultural background influence her/his understanding of personality theory and development

Personality Theory

- Readers are looking for
 - The “whys” of the theory not the “how's” of supervision ($3/4 - 1/4$ or $2/3 - 1/3$ rule: that is to say the ratio of the “why” to the “how”)
 - When the writer uses a key concept, is it followed with an example of supervisory practice?
 - The paper is to flow, not be spliced together
 - Whether the writer has mastery of the materials

Educational Theory

Readers are looking for:

- If the focus of this paper is on how people learn – individually, dialogically and in groups
- Whether the writer's understanding of the clinical method of learning relates to his/her theory of education
- How does the writer's and the students' cultures influence the educational process?
- The “whys” of the theory not the “how's” of supervision ($\frac{3}{4} - \frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{3}$ rule: that is to say the ratio of the “why” to the “how”)

Educational Theory

- The Readers are looking for:
 - What educational theory guides the writer in her/his understanding of how one learns
 - What are the key concepts of this theory? Does the writer have a good working knowledge of this theory?
 - How does this theory assist the writer in making assessments and interventions with the students?
 - How does this theory assist the writer in the evaluation of students?

Educational Theory

- The Readers are looking for
 - The writer's understanding of how an individual learns
 - The writer's understanding of how an individual learns in the group setting
 - How the educational theory assists the supervisor to form a supervisory alliance with the student
 - How the writer's theory makes use of the various components of the CPE process
 - Orientation, verbatim seminar, IPR, evaluation process

Educational Theory

- The Readers are looking for
 - Understanding of group theory – learning within a group setting
 - Critical purchase of the theory
(see previous slide – “Critical Purchase Defined”)
 - That the theory is coherent with personality theory and theology
 - A good working knowledge of the theory

Educational Theory

- Readers are looking for
 - Definition of key concepts
 - Examples from supervisory practice
 - Awareness of the writer's cultural influences, and integration of theory with the writer's personhood, as well as awareness of the cultural differences between supervisor and students

Theory Papers

- Readers
 - Are looking for integration of theory/principle, self and practice.
 - Know these papers are not research papers
 - Understand that these are papers which should reflect the supervisor's understanding of God/Transcendent, personality and learning.

New 2014 – New Option

- There are times when you as a reader are reviewing the position papers that you say to yourself, “These papers are really close, but not quite there yet.” Beginning in 2014 a new option is being added to reading position papers required for certification as an Associate CPE Supervisor.
- **PLEASE READ ON!**

NEW 2014 – New Option

- If when you and the rest of the readers team are reading the position papers and you sense they are very close but not quite there, it is suggested you might consider this option:
- Communicate with the Candidate that the papers are very close, but not quite there.
- Rank the papers. Which is strongest, which is second and which is third.

New to 2014 – New Option

- Indicate what needs to be enhanced in the strongest paper and suggest a short deadline for resubmitting the paper – say one week or so.
- Indicate what needs to be enhanced in the second strongest paper and suggest a bit longer deadline for resubmitting the paper –say two weeks or so.

New 2014 – New Option

- Indicate what needs to be enhanced in the third strongest paper and suggest a bit longer deadline for submitting, say something like 30 days.
- The Candidate can agree to this process or they can opt for the traditional process of submitting re-writes of the position papers on their own schedule.

New 2014 – New Option

- If the writer opts for this expedited second/third write of their position papers the team of readers will read, review and evaluate each paper as it is submitted.
- If the readers deem that the Candidate has addressed their concerns they can affirm that the paper is satisfactory.
- If the readers deem that the Candidate has not addressed their concerns they can indicate the paper is unsatisfactory.

New 2014 – New Option

- If the papers (any one, two or three of them) are deemed unsatisfactory, it is appropriate to return them to the Candidate. Invite the writer to resubmit the paper(s) when the writer assesses that the concerns have been addressed and the paper(s) is ready for final review by the reader team.

Final Steps

- Always remember to communicate with the Candidate in a timely manner.
- Always remember to communicate with ACPE in a timely manner where you are in the process of reading the position papers.
- Always remember to keep track of the importance of timeliness when reviewing these position papers.

Thank you

- Thank you for your willingness to be a reader
- Thank you for your contribution to excellence in clinical pastoral education
- Thank you for your collaborative work as a team
- Thank you for being timely in your response to the writers
- Thank you, thank you, thank you!