

Personal Career Professional Development Plan

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Introduction

This is a practical professional planning document for a student in a graduate program studying for an MS-SPP at the University of Western States. This document was created to guide a first-term student on their path of study and professional identity and development. The plan assesses many factors that influence what goes into becoming a professional in one field of mental performance. First, the practice plan is presented, followed by professional collaboration. These two sections look at the practicalities of building a professional practice. A fair amount of time is spent examining the mentorship requirements as these are foundational to any ethical and certifiable mental performance practice. Next, there is a discussion of licensure versus certification and the lack of licensure in the state of Colorado. Then, there is a discussion of the professional association memberships and how these will guide and benefit the student in practice, which is especially important as there is no licensing body in Colorado. Next, there is an overview of the current labor market where the student lives and what they can expect for demand, referrals, and the potential to grow their business as a consultant. After a discussion of specialization opportunities, there is a career development plan that involves self-advocacy and self-evaluation. In summary, this development plan is quite thorough and should provide the student with a road map to succeeding in their MS-SPP Course.

Practice Plan

- I plan to pursue the CMPC certification through my education at the University of Western States. The course work is designed to allow me to sit for the certification exam with the Association of Applied Sport Psychology.
- I intend to practice as a CMPC in the Gunnison Valley, Colorado. I would like to be in private practice. However, I envision working in conjunction with multiple agencies in the area that provide sports and athletic physical training and rehabilitation but offer no mental performance consulting services.
- I see many advantages to this plan. As a private practitioner, I will be able to choose who I want to align my practice with and ideally receive referrals from the physical therapy and rehabilitation clinics that I have mentioned. These include Heights Performance, Alpine Orthopedics, Go Orthopedics, VSON (Vail Summit Orthopaedics & Neurosurgery), Gunnison Valley Health, Adaptive Sports Center, Western Colorado University, and athletic training facilities in the area: Core, Train to Play; Synergy Athletics, The Function Lab, and Crested Butte Physiotherapy. A disadvantage I see to this plan is there is no one else working as a certified CMPC in the area, so for any ethical discussion, I will need to have colleagues that I speak with on the phone or via telecommunication. I also see the potential for feeling isolated and unsupported as my client base grows and I have no one locally to collaborate with.
- I intended to implement and maintain this plan for ideally 3-5 years. I chose this time frame because I have owned other businesses and know how long it takes to establish oneself as an expert and gain the trust of a small community. I also believe in the power

of committing to a business plan and working to build it. Once a foundation has been laid, there can be a time for adjustments. Of course, small adjustments take place daily and monthly, but I will remain committed to this approach to build my practice in the Gunnison Valley

- Realistically, it will take upwards of three years to find complete stability in this professional plan. This is what it has taken me in the past and I also realize there will be periods of adjustment as I work to navigate what works in a small town and what isn't seeing success.
- The personal support system I will need to see success will include the support of the community. The Gunnison Valley is a small college and ski town in rural Colorado with approximately 15,000 residents, many of whom are part-time. Once the community supports someone and their business, it will grow and thrive. I plan to do this by networking with the connections I have had in the area for 25 years. I will also need the support of my spouse as I build my practice, as the business building is challenging and takes a fair amount of time with the after-work aspects. I will also need to maintain an active relationship with my mental health professionals so that I have a sounding board as I work to establish myself as a mental performance specialist.
- Self-care strategies are of the utmost importance to me. I consider my mental health treatment plan crucial to my well-being (ie, seeing my therapist and psychiatrist regularly). I am also alcohol-free, as a personal choice, and I will continue with this lifestyle as I find it very beneficial to have a clear mind and remain focused and engaged in my work. Additionally, I will continue my daily meditation practice, my journaling practice, and communicating with a network of women who have also chosen an

alcohol-free life because of all the benefits they've found in elective sobriety.

Additionally, daily physical activity is a cornerstone of my well-being and I will continue to exercise (lift weights, stretch, and explore the great outdoors when there is time).

Professional Collaboration

- Other professionals I may collaborate with include physical therapists, athletic trainers, mental health counselors, coaches, orthopedic surgeons, acupuncturists, massage therapists, primary care doctors, and mental health counselors. This wide range of collaboration is important because I believe many of these individuals are already working with athletes and performers in different aspects but may not have the right certification or training to positively impact performance outcomes for their clients. I also believe it takes a team approach to achieving full performance outcomes, and my practice will be another link in the team approach.
- To enhance my professional practice, I will collaborate with other professionals to ensure that the full spectrum of my client's needs is being met. An example of this may be working together with a mental health counselor to identify a treatment plan for an athlete struggling with generalized anxiety disorder and performance anxiety. If we can create a comprehensive plan to assist the client in working through both types of anxiety using our two different types of training and potentially different intervention plans, we will then be providing the highest level of care for clients, and this in turn will enhance my professional practice. Clients will see greater results, word will spread that I am a helpful and knowledgeable CMPC, and this will greatly enhance who I can help and in what capacity.

- I will collaborate with other professionals to identify if and when a client needs a referral to someone trained more specifically to assist them in their specific struggles. I will collaborate with the professionals who are sending me these athletes as a referral, to ascertain how they think my services as a CMPC can best support the athlete/ performer on their journey. I will also collaborate with other professionals to determine if my athletes are making progress. This will be done with confidentiality as the highest level of consideration however, ideally, we can work together to incorporate feedback and insight from all the professionals on an athlete's team to ensure every aspect of their needs is being addressed and met. I also see how beneficial collaboration will be in allowing me to gauge whether or not my interventions are beneficial and if my client is making progress.

Supervision Requirements

- The supervision required for the CMPC certificate is 400 mentored hours in the field.
 - “A minimum of 200 total hours (Direct Client Contact, Support Activities, and/or Mentorship) must be spent with sports populations.
 - “Sport” includes skillful, effortful physical activity engaged in by individuals, groups, or teams in which they compete athletically against one another, in relation to a defined performance standard, and based on explicit rules of engagement.
 - All other populations (exercisers, performing artists, military service organizations, high-risk occupations, etc.) are “non-sport” populations.
 - A minimum of 100 of these 200 hours must be spent in Direct Client Contact (see definition below) with sport populations; a minimum of 25 of these 200 hours

must be spent in Mentorship (see definition below) with sports populations, at least 15 of which must be face-to-face mentorship (see definition below) and at least 5 of which must be direct knowledge of services (see definitions below).

- To ensure a breadth of training experience, it is strongly recommended that applicants conduct direct client contact and supporting activities with a wide range of sports, teams, individuals, and other non-sport populations, and, if possible, experiences with a variety of mentors and clients
- Minimum of 200 hours spent in direct client contact:
 - Time spent in in-person contact with individuals (e.g., athlete, coach, exerciser, performing artist, soldier) or groups (e.g., sport team, coaching staff, fitness class, dance troupe, military unit) working on mental skills to optimize performance involvement, enjoyment, and/or 10 personal development. Activities include individual consultation, group facilitation and consultation, psychoeducational workshops, and team-building exercises.
- Maximum of 150 hours spent in support activities:
 - Time spent in activities that pertain to individual or group clients, but do not involve direct client contact. Activities include onsite observation of individual or group clients, record keeping and report writing, reviewing case notes or video/audio recordings, researching and preparing materials for intervention sessions, assessment scoring and interpretation, and case management (e.g., referral, consultation with other professionals).
- Maximum of 10 hours spent in group mentorship:

- Group mentoring is a process where a mentor, listed in the Registry of Approved CMPC® Mentors, meets with no more than 10 mentees in a group to enhance each mentee's professional functioning and to monitor the provision of their mental performance services. Group mentoring is expected to be coupled with individual contact.
- For those utilizing a group mentorship option, up to 10 hours of the mentored experience can be group mentoring if these requirements are met. Please note that group mentoring is not eligible for Direct Knowledge of Service hours
- Minimum of 50 hours of mentorship:
 - Mentorship is defined as a developmental relationship between a mentor and a mentee with the purpose of enhancing the mentee's professional functioning and monitoring the mentee's provision of services. Time spent in mentorship can include in-person meetings (i.e., mentee and mentor are physically present in the same location), distance meetings (i.e., mentee and mentor are not in the same location and interact through a synchronous audio and/or video format), electronic communication (e.g., email), and the mentor's direct knowledge of the mentee's services. The mentor shall base the intensity of mentorship on the mentor's professional judgment of the mentee's credentials, years of experience, and the complexity of the cases with which the mentee works.

- Minimum of 40 hours of face-to-face and/or electronic mentorship. A minimum of 30 of these hours must be face-to-face mentorship, and the remaining 10 hours may be face-to-face or electronic mentorship.
- Face-to-face mentorship is defined as mentorship in which a mentee meets with a mentor either in-person or from a distance via synchronous video and audio technology (e.g., Skype, FaceTime) that approximates in-person contact (e.g., mentor and mentee are able to attend to verbal and non-verbal behavior).
- Electronic mentorship is defined as mentorship in which the mentee and mentor communicate with each other in a manner that does NOT meet the definition of face to-face mentorship above (e.g., telephone, email, texting).
- 10 hours of direct knowledge of services. While more hours of direct knowledge of services can be accumulated, only 10 hours are allowed to be counted toward the 50 hours of mentorship. Direct knowledge of services is defined as mentorship in which the mentor is provided with direct knowledge of the mentee's applied work with a sample of the mentee's work with real (i.e., non-simulated) clients using appropriate modalities such as onsite observation, audio or video recordings, live streaming, test and questionnaire protocols, client homework, and/or other client-generated materials. The particular modalities selected should be based on the mentor's consideration of a) the mentee's level of experience, education, and knowledge, b) the purpose of mentorship on the continuum

from training to validation, c) legal 11 requirements, d) ethical standards, e) the specific work environment, and f) availability and appropriateness of specific technical equipment. The specific modalities required is dependent on the developmental level (novice or advanced) of the mentee. (. . .) For novice mentees, 10 hours of audio recording, video recording, or live observation onsite or via distance video technology is required. For advanced mentees, 10 hours of samples provided to the mentor using an acceptable combination of the modalities listed above based on the judgment of the mentor is required” (AASP Handbook, 2023).

- UWS will provide me with a mentor as part of the mentorship class taken over the last 2 terms of the certification program
- I will be engaged with a mentor for the entirety of the 400 supervision hours, and most likely over 2 terms.
- The cost of these services is included in the UWS tuition.
- I am self-employed so I do not foresee anyone but me paying for the mentorship.
- I will utilize the supervision the same way I do classroom materials in this class. I will read all assigned readings, attend Zoom meetings, take notes, and respond to assignments and required interactions. I will complete all homework and engage online as needed.
- I plan to lean heavily on my supervisor by asking them many questions, including about their experience and mine. I plan to be proactive, reaching out to them as the bounds of the syllabus offer and keeping detailed client notes about which I plan to

ask them to review. I will actively engage in seeking out feedback and insight into the interventions I am using and why or why not these are ethical and or effective.

Obtaining Licensure

The UWS program requirements, both clinically and academically will prepare me for the certification exam by the AASP. Since there is no licensing option or requirements in Colorado, that topic is not relevant. The UWS program appears to completely prepare me for the AASp Exam. AASP will be the association responsible for certifying me as a consultant. The application process for AASP certification requires sending in a signed Ethics Code, sitting for the Exam, sending in a sealed transcript, showing proof of mentorship hours, and applying through the AASP portal, Cemetery.

- My state of Colorado has no licensing requirements for the CMPC. The regulating body in Colorado, DORA, does not recognize CMPCs as licensed mental health professionals.
- There are no accreditation requirements in my state. The AASP is the only accreditation body for CMPCs.
- Any questions about applying for licensure do not apply to a CMPC candidate.
- When I apply to the AASP for accreditation, I will need to complete an exam and submit it with my certification application. This cost is \$375. “Applicants are eligible to take the exam following approval of the certification application that documents satisfactory completion of the degree, coursework, and mentored experience requirements described above” (AASP, 2017).

- The requirements for ethically practicing telehealth/ distance services are listed as follows: “Mentees who have met the following requirements are permitted to provide virtual consulting services to their clients:
 - Completion of at least 50 hours of mentored in-person consultation before virtual consultations;
 - Completion of at least 5 hours of documented training pertaining to ethical, competent service delivery using virtual modalities. Examples of such training are provided by APA, AASP, university courses, etc.
 - Mentees may count virtual consultations for up to 100 hours of their required 200 hours of direct contact with clients.
 - The 10 hours of required Direct Knowledge of Services should be split proportionally, consistent to the proportion of hours with in-person and virtual consulting.
 - The mentor is responsible for explaining and monitoring the mentee’s compliance with these requirements” (AASP, 2022).
- I don’t foresee any problems locating or interacting with a mentor. There is one consideration and that is I am responsible for finding a “sports” team to work with for my hours of direct contact. Fortunately, I believe this should go fairly smoothly as I know several coaches in my community and believe they will allow me to work with their teams to complete my mentorship requirements. The AASP CMCP Candidate handbook encourages working with a broad range of sports, athletes, and performers so I will need to seek out different types of teams and athletes in my area to ensure I get the full range of training and interaction. I’ve begun to compile a list and these

include basketball teams, ski racers, mountain biking teams, competitive dancers, firefighters, and a search and rescue team.

Maintaining Credentialing and Association Memberships

- CMPCs are required to pay for a certification through the AASP which is \$375.
 - Credentialing candidates are not required to be members of the AASP association.
- There are no additional credentials related to a CMPC certificate that would be wise to hold, however, the rigor of the program itself (having a Master's in a sport or psychology-related field ensures that CMPC's have a high level of education)
- I will apply for AASP membership. "AASP offers the following types of annual memberships: · **Professional Member (\$199)** · Early Professional Member (\$149) · Affiliate Member (\$125), Student Membership \$85." (AASP, 2017).
- There are many benefits to paying to be an AASP member:
 - Lists of job opportunities
 - Reports about trends and compensation, access to all research about the field of Sports and Performance Psychology. This access includes a subscription to 4 AASP Journals
 - Access and discounts for registering for webinars and conferences, both in-person and virtual
 - Access to submit for grant funding
 - Access to AASP Newsletter, a bimonthly publication
 - Access to professional liability insurance coverage
 - Access to a members-only section which helps increase knowledge and networking in the field.

- The ability to be a recognized member of the AASP Community
- I plan to utilize these benefits by signing up for a student membership before the next term starts. I would like to have access to all of these extensive benefits. Once I am a practitioner I will certainly utilize the opportunity for private insurance coverage.
- There are no CEU requirements for the State of Colorado.
- The AASP requires a recertification every 5 years. This recertification also requires 75 hours of CEUs. The cost of recertification is \$125.00
- Documentation of CEUs is required by obtaining and submitting a certificate for all of the CEU courses taken over the last 5 years. There is a re-certification link via the AASP website where I will submit these.

Current Labor Market

Labor market opportunities in my area are high. As mentioned, my geographical location is an isolated one with a very sport and exercise-focused population. Numerous Olympic athletes live there. Nearly all children play multiple sports, ranging from downhill skiing, nordic skiing, ice hockey, basketball, soccer, and everything in between. It is one of the most active communities in the United States. This is anecdotal, but I've seen the contrast between the Gunnison Valley and many, many other places in the United States multiple times. It is not an over-exaggeration to say that everyone is obsessively passionate about sports and physical activity in the Gunnison Valley. Currently, there are many races (on skis, bikes on foot, on snowmobiles, on kayaks) through the mountains and the surrounding areas. I believe the area is ripe for a CMCP. As a parent of an athletic child who needed help with mental performance anxiety, no one in the area could offer assistance. We had to reach out to someone in Boulder, Colorado (5 hours away) and all work was done via telehealth. This experience alone

demonstrated the need for a certified mental performance consultant in the area. As far as compensation, this remains to be determined. I plan to assess once I graduate what other CMPCs are charging hourly in the greater Colorado area and mimic their pricing format. I am waiting to complete this because of the economic instability and seasonal economy in Colorado. I plan to charge hourly for my services.

Specialty Training

- There is no additional training required in this profession to market me as specializing in a topic or population. I will stay within the scope of athletics and performance.
- I would like to pursue a sports nutrition certification in conjunction with my mental performance certification. The National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) offers a certification that can be completed online.
- The costs appear to vary depending on which certification option is chosen, but I am interested in their CNC (Certified Nutrition COach Program) which is \$599.
- I will pursue this a year after establishing my practice.
- I will closely follow the AASP guidelines for telehealth practice and I will also stay up to date on the latest research regarding telehealth ethics and best practices.
- Regarding the implications of telehealth for consulting, I will have to consider Ethics, as discussed by the APA, ACA, and AASP, including confidentiality and storage of all information and sessions discussed. I will want to utilize the most current platforms to give my clients the best possible telehealth experience.
- I don't anticipate telehealth trends creating many difficulties concerning the future of consulting professions. I will state that I will not do any consulting work with clients

via social media platforms. I will perhaps connect with them via these platforms, but I will not provide services over these platforms. This is very important as I feel many coaches, etc (uncertified individuals) are offering programs over social media platforms and there is no oversight of the material they are sharing and no concerns regarding the ethics of this approach.

- Specific Telehealth training requirements for the CMPC are:
 - “Mentees who have met the following requirements are permitted to provide virtual consulting services to their clients:
 - o At least 50 hours of mentored in-person consultation prior to virtual consultations.
 - o Completion of at least 5 hours of documented training pertaining to ethical, competent service delivery using virtual modalities. Examples of such training are provided by APA, AASP, university courses, etc.
 - o Mentees may count virtual consultations for up to 100 hours of their required 200 hours of direct contact with clients.
 - o The 10 hours of required Direct Knowledge of Services should be split proportionally, consistent with the proportion of hours with in-person and virtual consulting.
 - The mentor is responsible for explaining and monitoring the mentee’s compliance with these requirements.” (AASP, 2023)

Career Development

- Service projects that will enhance my professional development are volunteering my time to be around teams in a casual setting. That is, if there are fundraisers, I can volunteer. If there is an athletic event (half marathon or 5k) being held, I can volunteer my time. I can also seek out opportunities to volunteer for groups like the Booster Club and other groups designed to support sports organizations, to

familiarize myself with the sports teams, athletes, and performance groups that exist locally.

- Advocacy work that will enhance my career is reaching out to the state of Colorado Department of Regulatory Agency (DORA), informing them about the CMPC certification and all that is involved in this certification, explaining more about the AASP and that the program has been certified by the NCCA, and asking them to look into offering licensure or considering regulating the term “mental performance coach.” As of now, there is zero regulation of this term and I believe that does a disservice to certified performance consultants.
- Career development will be very important to me, especially at the beginning of establishing my practice. I anticipate spending 5-10 hours, in addition to working with clients, to continue to develop my career so as not to feel like an imposter!
- Intentionally utilizing self-evaluation practices in my career is an area where I am slightly unsure. I believe having an AASP membership will be very important for tracking my progress and evaluating myself and my client's progress. It is through this portal and networking that I will be able to connect with other professionals. I also believe that another good starting point is taking inventory at the end of the day and at the end of the week, to sit and consider how sessions went. This could be written out or done verbally, but the important piece here is the self-reflection.

Summary

The first topic that is the most useful to me in my professional development is the closer look at the mentorship requirements to apply for the CMPC certification. I learned about the

different requirements in terms of direct contact, the hours required to work with different populations, as well as what to expect when it comes to interacting with my mentor.

This is helpful to me because when I started the UWS SPP program, I knew there were mentorship requirements, but I did not know the specifics. Now, I am beginning to think about the various connections I have that will allow me to ask if I can work with their athletes, teams, performers, and even the volunteer firefighting department. It is very useful to begin to imagine and visualize what that process will look like so that as I work through the next year of education I can visualize how these topics and interventions will apply to potential mentorship experiences.

The second topic that is most useful to me in my professional development is the discussion of collaboration. I realize that my career will not happen in a vacuum, but rather as part of a more holistic community approach to well-being and athletic success. When you live in a small town, as I do, people like to take responsibility for the success of others, and being able to offer myself a resource who is reliable and has a good reputation and rapport with a variety of professionals is critical to my professional success. I also really look forward to learning more about the various agencies, mental health professionals, medical professionals, athletic trainers, coaches, and anyone else who is working with athletes and performers in a hands-on manner. I am excited about how I can positively impact the community, from its oldest athlete who has been competing casually for the last 20 years, to younger athletes who are just learning to love a sport and want to pursue higher elite training.

In closing, this assignment allowed me to focus on both the macro and micro requirements and considerations of the CMPC certification. I have a greater sense of how I want to use this certification to benefit my community, as well as develop my professional practice. I

feel as though I now have a roadmap to the requirements for fully developing myself as a highly trained, skilled, and ethical practitioner.

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