

Art Therapy Graduate Programs

ART 357.01

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Lesley University (Cambridge, Massachusetts)

Program: Expressive Therapies: Art Therapy and Mental Health Counseling

Mission Statement:

Lesley's Art Therapy Specialization endeavors to prepare competent entry-level Art Therapists in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains. Specifically, the program aims to prepare its students to become skilled, knowledgeable, compassionate art therapy professionals who are able to work in a diverse world.

What is different?

- On-campus and low-residency options (same requirements)
- Pioneers in the field: Lesley's graduate program was the first in the U.S. to train professionals in expressive therapies

Why this program?

Accessibility: According to Mental Health America, Massachusetts is the best state in the nation for mental health care, with excellent access to care for both youth and adults.

Accreditation: 1,005 counselors, therapists, and other mental health practitioners were trained at Lesley University in the last 5 years, making them the largest provider of training for licensed mental health counselors in New England.

Financial Aid: The institution provides scholarships and grants.

State License:

Provides licensure information for different and specific programs such as: licensing and psychology, education, expressive therapies, and social work.

<https://lesley.edu/about/accreditations-licensure-state-approvals/licensure-and-credentialing-information>

Steps for licensure:

1. National Certification as a Registered Art Therapist (ATR)
2. State Modality Licensure (depending on state)

School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, Illinois)

Program: Art Therapy and Counseling

Mission Statement:

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling (MAATC) program is one of the oldest professional Art Therapy programs in the Midwest. The three-year curriculum is designed to foster critical thinking so that students are actively involved in creating the learning environment, questioning dominant discourses in the field, and taking part in the production of new ideas.

What is different?

- credit/no-credit system (credit is earned if you get a B and above, no gpa system)
- eventual registration and board certification (ATR-BC) with the Art Therapy Credentials Board and application for the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor exam in the state of Illinois

Why this program?

Financial Aid: The institution provides scholarships and grants.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Students are encouraged to explore and experiment with other disciplines and new concepts.

Cultural Diversity: Chicago has 77 distinct neighborhoods with diverse groups of people. Faculty and alumni connections provide a multitude of networking opportunities.

Facilities and Resources: SAIC provides students with training and access to an array of resources from day one. They also have 3 media centers that loan out equipment.

State License:

The MAATC program is designed to meet Illinois counseling licensure requirements. Due to the variable requirements of art therapy and counseling credentials in different states or countries, students and alumni are given access to a licensure specialist to assist with post-graduation applications for Illinois professional counseling licensure and similarly designed credentials in other states or countries.

<https://www.saic.edu/sites/default/files/MAATC%20Program%20Guide%202021-2.pdf>

What do they have in common?

60 credits total of classroom and fieldwork study

2-3 year program

Preparation for a career in different environments (mental health clinics, schools, hospitals, correctional facilities, assisted living facilities, etc.)

Teach cultural competencies/DEI

Prerequisites:

- 12 psychology credits
- 18 studio art credits

- E-portfolio
- Life experience and volunteer work (art therapy related)