2016-17 Application Guide

It is important that students review and follow this guide when completing the application form and writing the required essays. Members of the Stipend Selection Committee who have read and scored previous applications were able to discern by the thoroughness and quality of an application that the student used this guide. The rubric used by the Stipend Selection Committee to score an application is based on this guide. See "Scoring Information" on the scoring points allocated to the essays.

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

Students need the following documents, which can be downloaded from Phillips' website, www.pgu.edu, under MFT Consortium/California State Stipend Program:

- *The 2016-17 California Educational MFT Stipend Program Information*
- The *2016-17 Application Form - Parts I, II & III*
- This *2016-17 Application Guide*
- The *IRS W-9 Form* www.irs.gov

Students are eligible to apply if their school and campus is a member of a regional MFT Consortium, which are listed on Phillips' website under the tab MFT Consortium/Qualifying MFT Schools. There are eight regional consortia and students may apply to any of the eight regions they plan to complete the post degree employment obligation regardless of the regional membership of their school. However, students may select and apply to only one of the eight regional consortia.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- ☐ Students need to meet with the school's stipend representative to discuss their interest and eligibility in the State Stipend Program. For example, a student must be in a public mental health field placement (practicum). The school stipend representative for each school/campus is provided on Phillip's website; see "Qualifying MFT Schools" under the MFT Consortium link.
- ☐ Students need to retrieve the application from Phillips' website. It is highly recommended that the application information in Part I and II be typed for legibility and printed for signature. The application can be saved as an Adobe PDF file but it cannot be saved on the website.
- ☐ The essays in Part III must be typed in a separate document using 12 point font and double spacing. Each essay cannot be more than 150 words.
- ☐ The completed application must be signed by the school stipend representative. However, the school representative can submit an email directly to the MFT Stipend Office to verify the student's eligibility at mftconsortium@pgu.edu if signature cannot be obtained.
- ☐ The first page of the *IRS W-9 Form* needs to be submitted with address, social security number and applicant's signature.
- ☐ The completed application (Parts I & II), the typed essays (Part III), and page one of the *IRS W-9 Form* need to be mailed together or hand delivered to the MFT Stipend Program at Phillips Graduate University by October 5, 2016. Copied, faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted. Do not include any other items such as résumé or cover letter.

2016-17 Application Guide – Completion of Part I

STUDENT IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Full Name: The student's full name needs to be provided with no abbreviations. The name must match the name provided on the *IRS W-9 Form*.

Address: Complete fully the student's current address which may be the address used when attending school. A more "permanent" address can be included on the *IRS W-9 Form*.

Emails: All communication with the student will be through the primary email address on the application form. Students must regularly check their primary email address to respond to time sensitive items regarding application eligibility and selection status.

Phone Numbers: Both cell and home phone numbers are required. If the phone numbers are the same, that should be indicated on the application.

Student Signature: The signature affirms the student read the *2016-17 California Educational MFT Stipend Program Information,* understands employment payback is required of stipend recipients, has truthfully completed the application form, and will qualify for intern registration upon graduating.

School Name and Campus Site: Name of school and campus site are both necessary, especially for schools that have multiple campuses. The student's school/campus needs to be listed on the Phillips' website located at www.pgu.edu>MFT Consortium of CA>Qualifying MFT Schools for 2016-17 California Educational MFT Stipend Program.

Enrollment Date and Anticipated Degree Conferral Date: These dates do not have to be verified with official documents. It is sufficient that the school representative verify these dates with his/her signature. The degree needs to be a terminal degree and one that qualifies the student to register as an MFT Intern upon graduation. The anticipated degree conferral date refers to the date that will be posted on the student's transcripts.

School Representative: The name and signature of the school representative needs to be provided. The advisor's signature on the application form verifies that the student is currently enrolled, in good academic standing and is eligible to apply because she/he will graduate with a degree conferral date between July 1, 2016 and August 31, 2017. The school representative has the option to verify students' academic status via email in lieu of their signature in the application form. However, some schools require their students to meet with the school representative and obtain the representative's signature. Verification by email needs to be submitted by the application deadline and needs to include the student's name, enrollment status and anticipated conferral date. Students need to make sure that the school representative's email verifying enrollment is sent by the application deadline.

Selection of Regional Consortium: Students can only apply to one of the eight regional consortia. If awarded a stipend, the student will be required to complete the 12 month post-degree employment obligation in a county served by the regional consortium the student selected.

STUDENT REQUIRED QUALIFYING INFORMATION

County Operated or County Contracted Field Placement Training. Students must receive their field placement training (practicum) at an agency that is operated or contracted by a county mental health or county behavioral health department. Student must include all the information requested. If the student has accepted but has not started field placement training, include the anticipated start and end dates. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the field placement training.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT QUALIFYING INFORMATION

Indicate in this section any additional training and/or personal capacity you bring to mental health practice. It is not expected that students will be able to check all four boxes in this section. However, each box that applies, and if correctly completed, will considered by the Selection Committee.

Note: Only students who completed the "Student Required Qualifying Information" may complete this section and the essays. Students without qualifying field placement training are not eligible for the stipends.

1. County Operated or County Contracted Employment/Volunteer Experience. Students that have current or prior experience as an employee or volunteer at an agency that was operated or contracted by a county mental health/behavioral health department and is not their field placement training (practicum), can check this box. The employment or volunteer experience needs to be in a capacity that exposed students to the population served in the public mental health delivery system but not necessarily in providing direct clinical services. Students need to include all the information. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the county experience.

Note: Employment/volunteer experience is an additional experience to their field placement training.

2. A Second Field Placement Training. Students with a second field placement training experience at an agency that provided specialized training to promote students' capacity to serve those in the public mental health system can check this box. It is not required that this additional field placement be county contracted but it should provide training, clinical experience, and community-based services that prepares students for public mental health practice. Students need to include all of the information requested and may elaborate further in the essays as appropriate. Students' scores will be based on the type of specialized training received. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the field placement training.

3. Cultural Capacity. Students who have the experience and competency to provide mental health services in underserved and diverse communities can check this box. Be specific in identifying the community or communities, which may include race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, age, and veteran. Students may elaborate further the extent of their cultural competence in the essays as appropriate.

4. Language Capacity. Students who have the proficiency to provide mental health services in a non-English language or in American Sign Language can check this box. Students' proficiency in the second language will not be evaluated in the application process. If a student, who checks this box, is awarded a stipend yet is not able to demonstrate proficiency in the second language to mental health agencies, the student will be required to return the stipend amount awarded.

ESSAYS RESPONSES

The essays are based on the five objectives of the state's MHSA Workforce, Education and Training programs, administered by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development. The points allocated to the essays is located under "Scoring Information". The five MHSA objectives are listed in the *2016-17 California Educational MFT Stipend Program Information* on Phillips' website.

Include the typed essay responses with the completed application. Clearly indicate each essay response with the essay number. Each essay cannot be longer than 150 words, must be double spaced and use 12 point font such as Calibri or Arial. See "General Guidelines" for essay writing suggestions.

For anonymity in scoring, student's name and school must not be included anywhere in the essays.

1. **ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE STIPEND PROGRAM IS TO RECRUIT STUDENTS WHO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES SERVED BY THE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM. EXPLAIN HOW YOU MEET THIS OBJECTIVE.**
   An underserved community is one where residents with multiple needs due to socioeconomic factors, depressed economic conditions, language and/or cultural barriers, or other systemic problems which either diminish the types of services available in the community or create barriers to accessing available services, or both. The Mental Health Services Act funds programs that serve these communities and also provides funds to increase access to these services, such as providing services at schools or in homes.

   In responding to essay #1, include the following information about yourself:
   - Your personal experiences living in an underserved community
   - Your professional, employment, or volunteer experience serving individuals/families living in an underserved community
   - Your experience providing in-the-field clinical services to those with the lived experience of mental health illness

2. **ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE STIPEND PROGRAM IS TO RECRUIT STUDENTS WITH THE CAPACITY TO SERVE THE CULTURALLY DIVERSE NEEDS OF PERSONS IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE. EXPLAIN HOW YOU MEET THIS OBJECTIVE.**
   The three cultural groups that comprise the largest proportion of public mental health system users in California are Caucasian, Latino and African American, followed by multi-race, Asian American, American Indian, Pacific Islander, and LGBT. In addition, there are regional needs for students with the capacity to provide clinical services in a second language. A list of needed languages for each of the eight regions is located at www.pgu.edu>MFT Consortium of CA> Qualifying MFT Schools.

   In responding to essay #2, include the following information about yourself:
   - Your experience living or working in culturally diverse communities and how that exposure will be a strength when providing mental health service to members of these communities
   - Your cultural background and describe how you have used this personal dimension in providing mental health care in your field placement training
   - Your second language proficiency as indicated in Part II, Item 4, and describe how you have used this personal dimension in providing mental health care in your field placement training

3. **ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE STIPEND PROGRAM IS TO PROMOTE THE ACADEMIC AND CLINICAL PREPARATION OF MFT STUDENTS. EXPLAIN HOW YOU MEET THIS OBJECTIVE.**
   Educational institutions participating in the stipend program have implemented curricula that promote the values and principles of the Mental Health Service Act to prepare students to the transformation of public mental health delivery as informed by the MHSA.

   In responding to essay #3, include the following information:
   - As appropriate, your experience, or those of your family, with mental illness and mental health care, and explain how this will be a strength in your public mental health service
   - How your graduate education specifically exposed you to the concepts espoused by the MHSA and to the lived experience of those with serious mental illness
   - The extent to which your field placement training prepared you to serve children, adolescents, adults, and/or older adults living with serious mental illness

4. **ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE STIPEND PROGRAM IS TO PROMOTE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE AS A LONG TERM CAREER OPTION FOR MFT GRADUATES. EXPLAIN HOW YOU WILL MEET THIS OBJECTIVE.**

   In responding to essay #4, include the following:
   - A statement of your career objectives as a MFT professional
   - How your post-degree employment and training as a stipend recipient will promote your career objectives
   - How you envision your practice in public mental health as a licensed professional

5. **ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE STIPEND PROGRAM IS TO PROMOTE CLINICAL SERVICES IN A GEOGRAPHIC AREA IN NEED OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS. EXPLAIN HOW YOU WILL MEET THIS OBJECTIVE.**

   An objective of the stipend program is to serve communities that are in need of mental health professionals. Through the stipends the state wants to serve counties that in the past have been minimally served by stipend recipients and the MFT regional consortia want to serve geographic areas within their counties that are in need of mental health professionals.

   In this essay students can identify the geographic areas they are willing to serve and can explain how serving these areas will promote the objective of the stipend program.

   In responding to essay #5, include the following:
   - The geographic areas you are willing to serve in fulfilling your service obligation. Be specific, identify these areas by name, be it a region, city, town, or community. Explain why you want to service these geographic areas.
   - A statement of your personal or professional experience in the geographic areas you are willing to serve in fulfilling your service obligation.

SCORING INFORMATION

The applications will be scored by regionally established Selection Committees of professionals, consumers and government representatives familiar with the mental health delivery system in California. MFT educators cannot serve on the Selection Committee. Applicants will be given an ID# by the MFT Stipend Office to ensure anonymity in scoring. All regional Selection Committees will use a scoring matrix based on the *Application Guide*. Note the following scoring information:

1. In Part II, the five additional qualifications will each earn up to 3 points. The number of points earned will be based on how well each of these qualifications is supported by the essay responses. Information that is not provided will not earn points for that item.
2. In Part III Essay Responses, the recommended responses in the *Application Guide* preceded by a diamond (◆) will each earn 0 to 3 points. The number of points earned will depend on how specific and informative those responses are within the 150 word requirement.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Applications submitted late, or submitted with mistakes or omissions can disqualify an application.

Reasons for disqualification of previous applications:

- In Part I, the date given for the degree conferral date was not within the eligible timeframe
- In Part I, the application was not signed by the student
- In Part I, the application was not signed by the school representative and verification of enrollment and conferral date was not submitted
- In Part III, the essays were not submitted as directed
- Sections of the application were missing

Suggestions to strengthen an application provided by previous Selection Committees:

- Begin the advisement process with the school representative early to meet school deadlines
- Submit application early to allow time to resubmit any omissions
- Verify with your field placement agency whether it is county operated or contracted with a county's mental health or behavioral health department
- Use the *Application Guide* to complete the application as the scoring matrix used by the Selection Committee will be based on the information in the *Guide*
- Keep each essay response within the 150 words requirement; text beyond the 150 word requirement will not be read or scored
- Review essay responses for grammatical and spelling errors

Application Deadline: October 5, 2016

Applications postmarked after October 5, 2016 will not be accepted.
As this is a publicly funded program, no exceptions can be made on the deadline.
Students will be notified of the receipt and eligibility of their application by October 21, 2016.
All communication with students will be through the primary email address provided on Part I of the application form. Inquiries may be directed to mftconsortium@pgu.edu.

The MFT Stipend Program is funded through the Mental Health Services Act and administered by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development