

Sacap Master of Social Science in Community Mental Health Promotion expands online access

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The disruptions caused by the global pandemic over the past two years have fundamentally shifted our views, and our appreciation for what we can achieve in the online environment, especially when it comes to education. Sacap (South African College of Applied Psychology) has a well-developed online campus that has been a thriving place for teaching and learning that pre-dates the pandemic-driven scramble for remote learning.



With lecturers and student advisors already adept in the online environment, Sacap has now looked to extending educational programmes via its online campus, and to also expand access through its online facilities for part-time, working students and those who do not live in South Africa's major cities. The latest online upgrade is to the [Sacap Master of Social Science in Community Mental Health Promotion](#) programme which is offered through its Cape Town and Johannesburg campuses.

This sought-after programme is highly relevant as it enables these Masters students working in their own communities throughout the country to focus on their location-specific projects while accessing most of the teaching and learning they need in the flexible, expert online space. Out of the 10 programme modules, only the four intensive modules require in-person attendance at either the Johannesburg or Cape Town campus.

For many community-based mental healthcare workers, a common motivation in their working lives is their wish to support others who are facing similar challenges that they themselves have experienced. It's a strong impetus that, underpinned by their training, usually makes them finely attuned to their clients and highly effective in their own communities. Sacap Masters students are brought together in a dynamic online environment which includes access to the Practice Dialogue Workshop Series, our specialised online webinars which connect our post-graduate students with local and international experts.

Recently, international visiting scholar, Rahim Thawer was the guest presenter at the *Practice Dialogue Workshop, Cultural Safety and Countertransference: Working in the Communities You Belong To*. Both practitioners and Sacap's under- and

post-graduate students joined the conversation about the clear advantages and potential drawbacks presented by working with clients and in communities where one identifies strongly with specific causes and groups of people. A leader in Canada's LGBTQ community, as well as a psychotherapist, sessional lecturer, clinical supervisor, public speaker and writer, Rahim provoked new thoughts and offered guidance to students and practitioners about how to optimise one's innate urge to make a difference to people, and in the communities they identify with. The webinar is available [here](#).

Completing this Master of Social Science degree mostly online gives students unparalleled flexibility in balancing their work and life commitments, while still ensuring that they access the same high level of expertise and learning opportunities offered in the brick-and-mortar space. The Sacap Master of Social Science in Community Mental Health Promotion, which includes gaining significant in-field experience, is a two-year, part-time programme. This qualification is aligned with the National Skills Development Strategy 111 and the 2030 National Development Plan. It is NQF9 and CHE-accredited. Admissions to the [Sacap Master of Social Science in Community Mental Health Promotion](#) are open until 30 January 2022.

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