

Re: Teaching Collaborative Practice/Collaborative Law

*[Name or Gentle People]:*

On behalf of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals (IACP), we are reaching out to you in the hope that we can help each other with developing and offering course offerings in Collaborative practice either as full classes or shorter modules within other curricula.

As widely known, over 50% of marriages end in divorce with that percentage rising significantly for second and third marriages. These families need help to make the transition as easily and smoothly as possible. Collaborative practice sprung from the reality that divorce encompasses more than just legal issues, but is more about properly and thoroughly addressing emotional, relational and financial issues. Therefore, in Collaborative practice Lawyers, Mental Health and Financial Professionals join together to utilize their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to successfully help these families manage a process that will set the context for a successful transition toward restructuring their families and their relationships.

Collaborative Practice is a client driven method of alternative dispute resolution that sets the context for trained professionals to aid couples navigating matters such as divorce and parenting issues in a process grounded in good faith, cooperation, integrity, honesty, transparency and professional ethics. Collateral damage is significantly minimized, and post-divorce familial relationships are enhanced relative to the traditional litigated divorce process but focusing on the future, not fighting about the past.

IACP is an international community of legal, mental health and financial professionals working in concert to create client-centered processes for resolving conflict. The mission of IACP to transform the way families resolve conflict by building a global community of Collaborative Practice and consensual dispute resolution professionals. IACP promote the education, training, and integrity of professionals doing engaging in this practice.

The IACP Collaborative Higher Education Task Force (CHETF) has been charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To create programming to educate students about Collaborative Practice on an interdisciplinary basis;
2. To establish what higher education institutions are teaching Collaborative Practice and how it is being presented; and
3. To create educational partnerships through which we can expand the learning opportunities for students to get an introduction to and later a deeper understanding of Collaborative practice.

Currently, the CHETF is:

1. Conducting the enclosed survey of existing institutions around the world who currently have courses or modules focused on Collaborative Divorce;
2. Gathering and developing existing Collaborative Law or Collaborative practice class/course syllabi that will be appropriate for students seeking degrees from Law, Mental Health and Financial Programs; and
3. Providing the enclosed Release and Authorization that provides you the opportunity to have input on how any material that you provide us is to be used, and what acknowledgement is needed.

With the increasing passage of the Uniform Collaborative Law Act, the education of the next generation of Collaborative professionals is upon us, and together we have an opportunity to have a positive impact on their development. There are many highly successful programs presently in place, and it is our hope, that with your help, such education will grow exponentially over the coming years.

We are available to you to discuss this in more depth and guide you through increasing student awareness and interest, as well as implementation of programs such as the ones we are discussing in this letter. Our experience has been that this material is directly related to career development for students.

If you have an interest, please let us know how we can further assist you in this very meaningful and beneficial endeavor.

Sincerely,

Co-chairs - IACP Higher Education Task Force