

How to Start the Process

Self-Evaluation: When you think you are ready for Certification, we suggest you talk with two or three Faculty members who are familiar with your work. Ask them what they see as your strengths and weaknesses and, and for their assessment of your readiness for examination. Don't push yourself simply because you have completed the required hours. Everyone learns in different ways and at a different pace.

Request Certification Exams: Submit an email request to Certification@GATLA.org indicating when you would like to start the process. Be aware of some requirements for requesting the examination process:

- **Fees will be charged:** The exam process is time-consuming and expensive for the faculty. The fee, which pays only a small portion of our expenses, is \$300 U.S. In cases of significant need, scholarships are available.
- **The number of exams that can be given is limited.** Because the Faculty has limited time, we must limit the number of exams that we can offer in any particular year. Exams will, therefore, be given on a first come, first served basis and the faculty's assessment of your readiness.
- **Faculty assessment of readiness for Certification examination:** You will need references from three Faculty trainers or two trainers and two group leaders to support your request for Certification. Their references will be dependent on the opportunities that you have provided for them to observe your work and discussions of work. The best way to learn is to put yourself "out there" so that you can get feedback. Faculty is sensitive to how hard it is to show our work and

interested in helping, teaching, and being supportive.

Prepare for Outcome: For certification to mean something it must be a serious enterprise for both Faculty and Examinee. That means that we hold high standards and there are "passes" and "fails." There is no negative connotation to not passing. While it is a disappointment for everyone when something fails, it is important to know that the Faculty is supportive and wants a good outcome but can only "pass" based on good performance. In the case when performance is not at a passing level, the Faculty is committed to helping you as much as possible to get ready to retake the exam and hope with you that you will be successful.

Exam Variables	Purpose	Faculty	Vote
Written	Basic theory	2	2/2
Oral	Depth/breadth of theory	3	2/3
Clinical	Assess Clinical skills	3	2/3

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Certification in Gestalt Therapy



Gestalt Associates Training
Los Angeles

Purpose of Certification

What does it mean?

Certification by GATLA is an indication that the institute Faculty has examined your work and is willing to state publicly that you have shown proficiency as a Gestalt therapist.

It confers a title

The title of Gestalt therapist is reserved only for individuals who have taken and passed the required training and have subsequently been certified by a Gestalt Institute. Certification by GATLA means that you can hold yourself out to the public as a Gestalt Therapist.

- **It indicates confidence**

Certification means that GATLA Faculty has confidence in the quality of your work and that you can have confidence in the quality of your skills.

- **Why is it necessary?**

It is increasingly important to achieve proficiency certification in one's practice. Many excellent therapists are seeking training only from GATLA and do not seek certification. Certification is only necessary if you seek the title and faculty approval of proficiency in Gestalt Therapy.

Requirements

Hours: Certification requires a minimum of 200 hours (roughly three years) of training. That minimum, however, does not guarantee your readiness to take the Certification examination.

Mastery of Theory: We expect you to have a good mastery of theory. Being able to use and discuss the theory means that you can clearly explain it, apply it in your clinical work, and

integrate your work.

Clinical Proficiency: GATLA requires that you demonstrate consistent proficiency as a Gestalt therapist over time. Providing repeated opportunities for Faculty to observe your work and discussion of clinical work and theory in an open manner facilitates this process.

Self-assessment Checklist for Readiness for Certification: Below are three checklists which may be useful in evaluating your readiness for the certification process.

Theory

- _Field theory (including OSR)
- _Phenomenology
- _Dialogue
- _Contacting boundary (functions and interruptions)
- _Gestalt therapy personality theory
- _Psychoanalytic theory
- _Cognitive Behavioral therapy
- _Developmental theory
- _Conceptualize and communicate process

Personal Development

- _Able to track own awareness
- _Able to follow awareness of others
- _Able to differentiate cognitions, feelings, and sensations
- _Able to observe self and other processes
- _Has adequate support for dialogue (inclusion, presence, commitment to dialogue)

Assessment and Therapy Skills

- _Sensitivity to field, group, subgroup figure-ground phenomena
- _Attention to client feelings, cognitions, sensations; including behavior and non-verbal information

- _Ability to identify client's relevant phenomenology in the field
- _Recognizes figure-ground phenomena
- _Ability to select interventions that facilitate client awareness
- _Ability to share personal responses appropriately
- _Sensitivity to client's capacity for self-support
- _Ability to discern dominant needs, interests
- _Ability to identify organizing figure
- _Ability to understand character structure
- _Ability to integrate client's field, phenomenology, and contact skills

Steps in the Examination Process

1. Written examination (closed book, 4 questions, 4 hours) on the theory of Gestalt therapy designed to assess your grasp of basic Gestalt theory.
2. An oral examination covering the theory of Gestalt therapy designed to assess the depth and breadth of your understanding of theory as well as your ability to work with and relate the concepts to each other.
3. A clinical examination in which your work will be observed to assess your clinical skills. The clinical exam is traditionally given in a group setting with a group unfamiliar to the examinee. Such an examination tests your abilities on several variables such as group process, focusing on a piece of work, dealing with the anxiety of being observed by people other than the examiners. The group setting is a rich field in which to work.

There is also an option to choose to work with a client in an individual setting.