The University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) offers an end user training for the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC). This training allows for the development of internal capacity to sustain long-term program evaluation and improvement processes. A description of the CPC, the available CPC variations, and the end user training process is outlined below.

**Description of the Instrument**

The CPC is designed to evaluate the extent to which correctional intervention programs adhere to the principles of effective intervention. Several studies conducted by the University of Cincinnati on both adult and juvenile programs were used to develop and validate the indicators on the CPC. These studies produced strong correlations between outcome (i.e., recidivism) and individual items, domains, areas, and overall score.

The CPC is divided into two basic areas: Capacity and Content. The Capacity area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence-based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains in the Capacity area: (1) Leadership and Development; (2) Staff Characteristics; and (3) Quality Assurance. The Content area focuses on the substantive domains of (1) Offender Assessment and (2) Treatment Characteristics. There are a total of seventy-seven indicators (some items are weighted) worth a total of eighty-three points. The scores in all five domains are totaled, and the same scale is used for the overall assessment score. It should be noted that not all of the five domains are given equal weight, and some items may be considered not applicable, in which case they are not included in the scoring. Each area and all domains are scored and rated as either highly effective (65% to 100%); effective (55% to 64%); needs improvement (46% to 54%); or ineffective (45% or less).

The CPC assessment process requires a site visit to collect various program traces. These include, but are not limited to interviews with executive staff (e.g., program director, clinical supervisor), interviews with treatment staff and key program staff, interviews with offenders, observation of direct services, and review of relevant program materials (i.e., offender files, program policies and procedures, treatment curricula, client handbook, etc.).

There are several limitations to the CPC that should be noted. First, the instrument is based upon an “ideal” program; that is, the criteria have been developed from a large body of research and knowledge that combines the best practices from the empirical literature on “what works” in reducing recidivism. Second, as with all applied research, objectivity and reliability can be an

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1 The CPC is modeled after the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) developed by Paul Gendreau and Don Andrews. The CPC, however, includes a number of items not included in the CPAI. Further, items that were not positively correlated with recidivism in the University of Cincinnati studies were deleted.

2 These studies involved over 40,000 offenders (both adult and juvenile), and over 400 correctional programs, ranging from institutional to community-based. All of the studies are available on our web site (www.uc.edu/criminaljustice). A large component of this research involved the identification of program characteristics that were correlated with outcome.
issue. Although steps are taken to ensure that the information gathered is accurate and reliable, decisions about the information and data gathered are invariably made by the assessors. Third, the process is time-specific; in other words, the assessment is based on the program at the time of the assessment. Though changes or modifications may be under development at the time of the assessment, only those activities and processes that are present at the time of the assessment are considered for scoring. Fourth, the process does not take into account all of the “system” issues that can affect the integrity of the program. Finally, the process does not address why a problem exists within a program or why certain practices do or do not take place. Rather, the process is designed to determine the overall integrity of the program.

Despite these limitations, there are a number of advantages to this process. First, the criteria are based on empirically derived principles of effective programs. Second, all of the indicators included in the CPC have been found to be correlated with reductions in recidivism. Third, the process provides a measure of program integrity and quality; it provides insight into the “black box” of a program, something that an outcome study alone does not provide. Fourth, the results can be obtained relatively quickly. Fifth, it identifies both the strengths and weaknesses of a program and it provides the program with an idea of what it is doing that is consistent with the research on effective interventions, as well as those areas that need improvement. Sixth, it provides useful recommendations for program improvement. Finally, it allows for comparisons with other programs that have been assessed using the same criteria and allows a program to reassess its progress over time.

CPC Variations

Different versions of the CPC have been created for use in different types of correctional contexts. The CPC-Group Assessment (CPC-GA) is geared to stand alone offender-based treatment groups (e.g., Thinking for a Change, Aggression Replacement Training). The CPC-Drug Court (CPC-DC) is used to assess different types of treatment courts and corresponding agencies providing treatment services for the court. Finally, the CPC-Community Supervision Agency (CPC-CSA) is used to assess probation and parole departments and corresponding agencies providing treatment services for the department. While the CPC-GA has been validated, the CPC-DC and CPC-CSA have not been validated. The CPC-DC and CPC-CSA combine elements from the CPC and CPC-GA and include findings from meta-analyses in corresponding topic areas. Training in any of the variations requires an end user certification in the CPC.

Overview of the Initial End User CPC Training

The CPC training protocol involves an initial four day training session. The first two days involve a review of the principles of effective intervention and CPC research and a didactic presentation (including participation exercises) concerning the CPC items and scoring criteria. The third day of the training involves a site visit for the purposes of conducting a CPC assessment. During this time, trainees will observe interviews with staff and program participants, observe treatment sessions, and review client files as well as other relevant program materials. Trainees may also be observed conducting various interviews and be provided feedback on their performance. On the fourth day of the training, trainees will score the CPC based on the information collected during the site visit, take a written exam, and discuss CPC

3 UCCI is currently piloting two other CPC versions, one for mental health courts (CPC-MH) and one for vocation/education programs (CPC-VEP). Training is not available for the CPC-MH or CPC-VEP.
end user certification requirements. The trainers will write a CPC report based on the site visit to be distributed amongst the trainees within four weeks of the initial training. Trainees will review the report and provide recommendations and the draft report will be submitted to the program. The program will be provided the opportunity to respond in writing and a final report will be provided to the trainees and trainees.

UCCI can accommodate a maximum of eight trainees. We divide the training participants into two smaller groups during the site visit (four participants per trainer). This is done in order to minimize the disruption to the correctional agency and ensure all trainees receive exposure to the different evaluation components. Moreover, limiting the number of trainees to eight allows us to better assess the knowledge and skills of the participants. Please see the sample agenda in Appendix A for more details on the specific topics covered during the initial training.

**Selection of Trainees**

It is extremely helpful for all trainees to have prior knowledge and experience working with offender populations. As such, we strongly recommend that trainees have: (1) a graduate degree in a helping profession and at least two years of experience; or (2) an undergraduate degree in a helping profession and at least three years of experience.

In order to avoid conflicts of interest, we do not train contract providers or private entities; only state or county employees are eligible to attend the training. It should be noted, however, that we are willing to assess prospective participants on a case-by-case basis. All trainees should forward their resumes to UCCI in order to be approved prior to the initial training. All trainees must read all of the required readings prior to the formal training. Please see Appendix B for a list of references that will be disseminated to participants prior to the initial training.

**IMPORTANT:** It is critical that participants attend all four days of training. Please note that we will not certify trainees who are absent for any part of the formal training.

**Certification of Trainees**

Trainees are evaluated as satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) on four components: Performance in the training and mock assessment conducted as part of the four-day training process; score on the CPC Certification Test taken during the four-day training process (must score 80% or higher to receive an S); knowledge and application of the scoring criteria in a scoring session conducted after the first independent CPC assessment; and performance in the writing of a CPC report. Trainees must be rated as satisfactory in at least three of the four components to be certified as a CPC assessor.

After the training, each trainee will be provided a document indicating their performance during the training and their test score. They will also receive a copy of their test to review. Trainees are encouraged to assess a program as soon as possible after the initial training. Multiple assessments may be required before final certification is granted. If substantial assistance and coaching is needed from UCCI, additional costs may be required (process and pricing to be determined on an individual basis).

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4 Additional trainees may be included at an additional cost.
Ongoing Use of the Instrument
There is no cost to use the tool once training has been completed. Scores for each program assessed with the CPC must be forwarded to UCCI. Please note that we review these scores for quality assurance purposes and scores will also be added to our database to calculate norms. We will not release the results under any circumstances, nor will we publish any of the findings.

Trainees will also be required to sign a memorandum of understanding with UCCI. Please note that successful completion of the training protocol does not certify participants to train others on the use of the instrument. As a general rule, we do not train trainers on the CPC.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
Individuals certified as CPC assessors, they are only permitted to conduct CPC assessments within the scope of their employment with the contracting agency. Any exceptions to this must be granted by UCCI. If a certified end user is no longer with the contracting agency, they forfeit all rights to conduct CPC assessments unless specific permission is granted by UCCI. At the time of the training, all trainees are required to sign the MOU (see Appendix C) that outlines these restrictions. If participants do not sign the agreement, they will not be certified.

Training and Certification in the CPC Variations
Once trainees are certified as an end user on the CPC, they are eligible to be trained as an end user in the CPC-GA, CPC-DC, and CPC-CSA. Trainees may be provided additional reading materials in advance of the training and these readings should be read in their entirety in advance of the training.

Training on these tools is shorter than the CPC, typically two and a half days to three days. Trainees will spend one day in the classroom to review the scoring criteria and prepare for the site visit, one day conducting the evaluation, and a half day to one day scoring the program and crafting recommendations to be included in the report. Since trainees have already been certified on the CPC, trainees will take the lead on writing the report. The report will be approved by UCCI staff and then submitted to the program by the trainees. Trainees will be certified in the CPC variation given a satisfactory performance during the training and report writing process. As with the CPC, UCCI will not certify trainees who are absent for any part of the formal training.

CPC End User Training Costs
The initial four day CPC training for up to 8 staff is $18,000 within driving distance or $20,000 if UCCI staff will be flying. For additional trainees, the cost will increase $5,000 per four trainees.

Training in any of the CPC variations for up to 8 staff is $15,000 within driving distance or $17,000 if UCCI staff will be flying. For additional trainees, the cost will increase $5,000 per four trainees.

If you are interested in learning more or scheduling a CPC end user training, please contact Jen Scott at Jennifer.Scott@uc.edu or 513-556-7765.
APPENDIX A
SAMPLE AGENDA

DAY 1: TRAINING

AM SESSION

Introductions

Overview of the CPC and training

Review “what works” research and the principles of effective intervention

Review assessment and scoring protocol for the CPC

PM SESSION

Review of the research on the predictive validity of the CPC

Begin review of the CPC scoring guide

Video of CPC interview and practice scoring exercise

DAY 2: TRAINING

AM SESSION

Complete review of the CPC scoring guide

Video of CPC interviews/treatment session and practice scoring exercise

PM SESSION

Interviewing skills

Writing reports and response letters

Preparation for the CPC assessment on Day 3
DAY 3: CPC ASSESSMENT

Conduct site visit

*Participants will shadow trainers for interviews, observations, and review of program documents, and may perform some of these tasks on their own.

DAY 4: SCORING THE CPC AND NEXT STEPS

AM SESSION

Scoring the program under review

*Individually, participants will use interview guides and program documents to score each section of the CPC.

Review of CPC scoring

*Each section is reviewed with trainers for scoring discrepancies.

PM SESSION

Written exam

Identification of next steps for use of the CPC

MOU signing

Concluding remarks

Training Evaluations
APPENDIX B
REQUIRED READINGS


*These two books do not need to be read prior to the training. All trainees, however, need a firm grounding in the psychology of criminal conduct as a theoretical paradigm and cognitive behavioral interventions. These books should be acquired, read, and kept as resource materials.
APPENDIX C
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Under this Agreement, ______________________ (PRINT NAME) will consent to the following:

(a) I will not contract out or allow the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) to be used by other individuals/providers/agencies for the purposes of conducting program evaluations except for those approved and trained by the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI).

(b) Individuals certified to use the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) are not permitted to use the instrument outside the scope of their employment with the contracting agency.

(c) Individuals certified to use the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) forfeit all rights to use the instrument upon termination of employment with the contracting agency unless the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) grants specific permission.

(d) Results of all assessments using the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) will be forwarded to the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI).

(e) I recognize that the University of Cincinnati holds ownership and copyright of the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) material, and as such I will abide by all copyright laws and restrictions as outlined in the training manual.

_________________________________  _______________
Trainee  Date

_________________________________  _______________
University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute Representative  Date