

MSTC's QuickTrac Supervisory Management Program Overview

The classroom delivery of the Supervisory Management Associate Degree program is called a QuickTrac program. The number of classroom hours of attendance in a QuickTrac program is considerably less than the classroom hours of attendance in a traditionally delivered program. Below is information on the QuickTrac program.

Program Intent

The intent of the QuickTrac program is to provide students with a competency-based program curriculum that requires students to meet all program competencies while reducing the student-instructor contact hours. The number of QuickTrac in class course hours per credit is 8. The number of traditional in class course hours per credit is 18. The reduction in class hours is a result of the use of active learning instructional techniques and increased student effort within the shorter time frame.

Required Student Effort

Student effort in a QuickTrac course is expected to be equivalent to a traditional course - a total of 162 hours. This effort includes attending class (24 hours), working with a study group, performing individual study, applying relevant concepts on the job, etc. Thus, through the duration of the course, students will attend class for four hours each week and may expect to spend up to 23 hours outside the class **each week** for **each** QuickTrac class meeting. The commitment to a QuickTrac course is a big step. Self-motivation is a must for anyone desiring to successfully complete QuickTrac courses.

The QuickTrac program uses accelerated learning, a format in which much of the learning is accomplished through individual study and efforts. Students must complete all assigned reading, activities, research, projects, etc., **before** class sessions, including (many times) **before** the first class session, as instructors design the class meetings to reinforce and clarify the concepts and skills learned through the self-study.

The instructors strongly encourage study groups. Use of study groups is fundamental to the effectiveness of the QuickTrac programming and may be a required part of most courses.

The demands on QuickTrac students are quite high given the volume of material that must be mastered in a short period of time. The demands that this type of learning format places on students and their personal support systems need to be considered seriously.

Accelerated Learning

Accelerated learning unlocks much of our potential for learning that has been left largely untapped by most conventional learning methods. It does this by actively involving the whole person, using physical activity, creativity, music, images, color, and other methods designed to get people deeply involved in their own learning.

According to accelerated learning, here's what people need for an optimal learning environment:

A Positive Learning Environment. People learn best in a positive physical, emotional, and social environment, one that is both relaxed and stimulating. A sense of wholeness, safety, interest, and enjoyment is essential for optimizing human learning.

Total Learner Involvement. People learn best when they are totally and actively involved and take full responsibility for their own learning. Learning is not a spectator sport but a participatory one. Knowledge is not something a learner passively absorbs, but something a learner actively creates. Thus A.L. tends to be more activity-based rather than materials-based or presentations-based.

Collaboration Among Learners. People generally learn best in an environment of collaboration. All good learning tends to be social. Whereas traditional learning emphasizes competition between isolated individuals, A.L. emphasizes collaboration between learners in a learning community.

Variety That Appeals To All Learning Styles. People learn best when they have a rich variety of learning options that allows them to use all their senses and exercise their preferred learning style. Rather than thinking of a learning program as a one-dish meal, A.L. thinks of it as a results-driven, learner-centered smorgasbord.

Contextual Learning. People learn best in context. Facts and skills learned in isolation are hard to absorb and quick to evaporate. The best learning comes from doing the work itself in a continual process of "real-world" immersion, feedback, reflection, and evaluation.

Below are the guiding principles upon which accelerated learning strategies are based:

1. Learning Involves the Whole Mind and Body. Learning is not all merely "head" learning (conscious, rational, "left-brained," and verbal) but involves the whole body/mind with all its emotions, senses, and receptors.

2. Learning is Creation, Not Consumption. Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs, but something a learner creates. Learning happens when a learner integrates new knowledge and skill into his or her existing structure of self

3. Collaboration Aids Learning. All good learning has a social base. We often learn more by interacting with peers than we learn by any other means. Competition between learners slows learning. Cooperation among learners speeds it. A genuine learning community is always better for learning than a collection of isolated individuals.

4. Learning Takes Place on Many Levels Simultaneously. Learning is not a matter of absorbing one little thing at a time in linear fashion, but absorbing many things at once. Good learning engages people on many levels simultaneously (conscious and paraconscious, mental and physical).

5. Learning Comes From Doing the Work Itself (With Feedback). People learn best in context. Things learned in isolation are hard to remember and quick to evaporate. We learn how to swim by swimming, how to manage by managing, how to sing by singing, how to sell by selling, and how to care for customers by caring for customers. The real and the concrete are far better teachers than the hypothetical and the abstract - provided there is time for total immersion, feedback, and reflection.

6. Positive Emotions Greatly Improve Learning. Feelings determine both the quality and quantity of one's learning. Negative feelings inhibit learning. Positive feelings accelerate it. Learning that is stressful, painful, and dreary can't hold a candle to learning that is joyful, relaxed, and engaging.

7. The Image Brain Absorbs Information Instantly and Automatically. The human nervous system is more of an image processor than a word processor. Concrete images are much easier to grasp and retain than are verbal abstractions. Translating verbal abstractions into concrete images of all kinds will make those verbal abstractions faster to learn and easier to remember.

Below are a few commonly asked questions about the learning in a QuickTrac Program Group:

Q. Will I learn the same things in an accelerated class as is learned in a traditional or online class?

A. The competencies learned in accelerated classes are exactly the same as those learned in traditional and online classes.

Q. Are assignments for accelerated class different?

A. Accelerated classes will require reading and an assignment to be completed before the first class and for each class thereafter. Students will be EXPECTED to come prepared to actively participate in the learning and demonstration of learning that occurs at each class session. In order to do so, students should plan on a minimum of 10 hours of weekly outside work.

Q. What are some examples of accelerated instruction?

A. In a traditional class, students might learn how to prepare a nutritious menu for young children by listening to a lecture on the subject, and then taking a quiz about it. In an accelerated class, students might divide into planning groups, survey information provided, and actually write appropriate menus. Research tells us that the second method will produce students who are much more likely to retain the new information and skills.

Q. What type of student is best suited to accelerated classes?

A. Accelerated classes require that students are:

- √ highly motivated
- √ able to dedicate sufficient time to completion of assignments
- √ able to write and communicate orally effectively
- √ able to work within a team
- √ able to apply learning to their work environment and be supported by peers and/or supervisors.
- √ Able to accept responsibility for their own learning.