

Professional Preparation of Counselors in the United States

Carol L. Bobby, PhD, LPC, NCC
Executive Director

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and
Related Educational Programs (CACREP)

Entry into the Profession

- Minimum of a master's degree
- Components of the degree program
 - Defined core curriculum
 - Defined clinical instruction requirements
 - Defined institutional support and faculty qualifications requirements
 - Systematic and continuous evaluation of program and students

Eight Core Curricular Areas

- Professional Identity and Ethical Practice
- Social and Cultural Diversity
- Human Growth and Development
- Career Development
- Helping Relationships
- Group Work
- Assessment
- Research and Program Evaluation

Clinical Instruction Requirements

- Supervised practice experiences
 - Faculty and clinical supervisors must have relevant degrees and experience in supervision
- Total of 700 clock hours minimum includes practicum and internship
- Practicum- basic skill development, a prep-internship experience.
- Internship – capstone experience to enhance and integrate knowledge with application of theories and skills appropriate to student's initial postgraduate professional placement

Clinical Instruction: Practicum

- 100 clock hours of supervised practicum
 - 40 hours of direct service
 - 1 hour/week on average of individual or triadic supervision
 - 1 ½ hours/week on average of group supervision
 - Taping opportunities for use in supervision
 - Performance evaluation of student skill development

Clinical Instruction: Internship

- 600 clock hours of internship
 - 240 hours of direct service, including group work
 - 1 hour/week on average of individual supervision with site supervisor
 - 1 ½ hours/week on average of group supervision by program faculty
 - Multiple professional work opportunities in addition to counseling service
 - Taping opportunities for use in supervision
 - Performance evaluation

Institutional Support

- **Program Information**
 - Up-to-date and accurate information for students on the web, publications, catalogs
- **Access to learning and other important resources**
 - textbooks, journals, electronic media
- **Counselor training facility**
 - Settings for individual and group counseling
 - Used for modeling and demonstration
 - Observational capabilities



Institutional Support of Faculty

- Support for faculty to engage in professional activities (e.g., leadership, research, travel)
- Maintain appropriate student to faculty ratios
- Teaching loads recognize the intensive supervision requirements within counseling programs
- Adequate clerical support



Faculty Qualifications

- Counselor education doctoral degrees
- Relevant preparation and experience in assigned areas of teaching
- Professional identity (memberships, certification, licenses)
- Active in the profession through service, research, scholarly activity and advocacy)
- Knowledgeable of supervision theory and techniques
- Effort made to represent the diversity of the community

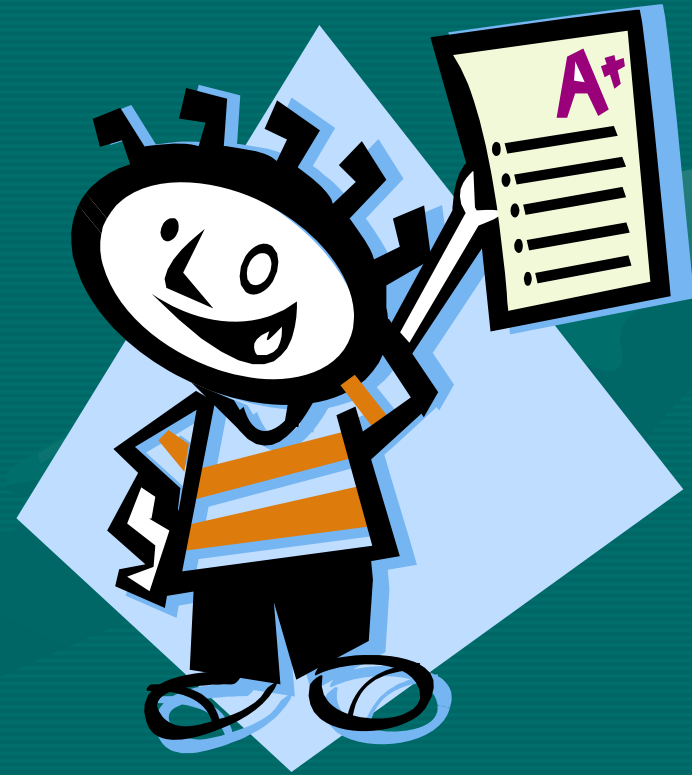
Institutional Support of Students



- Personal counseling services available outside of program
- Orientation and handbook covering important policies & procedures
- Advising
- Opportunities for graduate assistantships

Student Evaluations

- Developmental assessment of each student's progress throughout the program
- Defined student learning outcomes in knowledge and skill areas for program and in each specialty area



Program Evaluations

Faculty review of curricular offerings	Faculty review of applicants (characteristics, demographics)	Follow-up surveys of graduates (assess graduates' perceptions of program)	Review of relevant statistics (pass rates on licensing or certification exams, placement rates)
Formal feedback from site supervisors	Formal review of employers' (of graduates) perceptions of program	Assessment of student learning and performance (curriculum, practice, identity and disposition)	Student evaluations of faculty, site supervisors, courses.

Program Evaluations



Self-study leads to...

- Program development
- Program improvement
- Clearer objectives and goals
- Beneficial community connections
- Continued relevancy of the training
- Self-directed change

Accreditation as Program Evaluation Tool

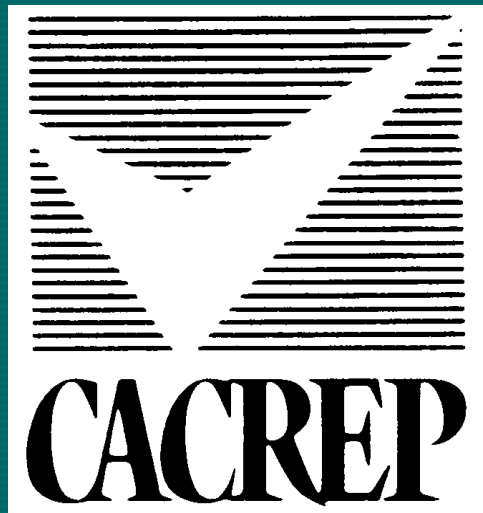
- Accreditation standards provide a baseline from which programs can self-assess.
- Accreditation also involves peer review and consultative feedback.
- Accreditation promotes systematic self-assessment and continuous program development and improvement.
- Accreditation can provide an assurance of quality education to the public

Components of Accreditation

- Self-study
- Preparation of documentation
- On-site peer evaluation
- Report
- Accreditation decision
- Periodic review and reporting



Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)



- CACREP's Mission & Vision
 - Promoting the use of preparation standards for developing excellence in counseling programs
 - Preparing counselors to provide services consistent with the ideal of optimal human development
 - Maintaining accreditation standards that encourage excellence and continuous improvement in counselor education

CACREP's Scope of Accreditation

- Master's degree programs designed to prepare individuals for careers in
 - Career counseling
 - College counseling
 - Community counseling
 - Gerontological counseling
 - Marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy
 - Mental health counseling
 - School counseling
 - Student affairs, and
- Doctoral degree programs in
 - Counselor education and supervision

Who enrolls in CACREP programs?

- CACREP programs accommodate many different types of students.... traditional and nontraditional.
- Many already have work experience.
- Many are changing careers.



Benefits of Accreditation

- Use of our preparation standards by state licensing boards
- Recognition of CACREP by the National Board for Certified Counselors
- Implementation of a regular and systematic standards revision process that insures relevancy of training

Research Supported Benefits

- Research has shown that CACREP program graduates perform significantly better on the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification
- Research indicates that accredited programs get higher quality applicants for enrollment
- Research indicates that CACREP graduates have higher level counseling skills

CACREP International

- July 2005 – CACREP declared its commitment to fostering counseling as a global profession.
- January 2008 – CACREP approved the establishment of an international registry of counseling programs



Contact Information



- Email me:
cbobby@cacrep.org
- WEB Information
located at:
www.cacrep.org