

Policy Document

Extending CACREP accreditation to Doctoral Rehabilitation Counselor Education programs under the CACREP 2016 accreditation standards for doctoral programs.

This policy expires June 30, 2017

Rationale

Currently there are Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) programs that prepare doctoral-level faculty to teach in CORE- and CACREP-accredited Master's programs. Accreditation for these doctoral-level RCE programs is not currently available. CORE accredits Master's-level "traditional" Rehabilitation Counseling and, under license from CACREP, accredits Master's-level Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling programs. Under the 2013 CORE-CACREP Affiliation Agreement, all current RCE faculty, in CORE-accredited Master's programs, are grandfathered in as core faculty in *all* CACREP-accredited programs, and this grandfathering is extended to new PhD RCE graduates until January 1, 2018.

CORE and CACREP have a signed merger agreement that will go into effect July 1, 2017. One of the terms of the merger is:

Conduct and Obligations of the Parties between Adoption of this Agreement and the Initiation Date.

- c. On or before the Initiation Date, CACREP will extend CACREP accreditation to all Ph.D. RCE programs for a period of two years, if the programs can demonstrate substantial compliance with specified criteria from CACREP's 2016 accreditation standards for doctoral programs. The specified criteria will be jointly agreed upon by both CORE and CACREP, as will a process for joint review/decision-making by CORE and CACREP. If programs show evidence of meeting the agreed upon threshold standards, they will be granted CACREP- accredited status (with conditions, if they exist), but must agree to host a site visit within 6 months to verify accuracy of information provided;

It is, therefore, in the best interest of both CACREP's and CORE's constituents, as well as the public served by graduates of these organizations' accredited programs, if doctoral-level RCE programs be accredited. As part of the process, CACREP and CORE identified eligibility criteria for seeking accreditation as a doctoral-level program under CACREP's Counselor Education and Supervision standards.

Procedures for Applying and the Review Process

Overview

Programs must document that the eligibility conditions are met, pay an application fee, and submit an abbreviated self-study against the specified criteria. Timelines and process until an accreditation decision is rendered is outlined in the CACREP Policy Document, *Policies Governing Timelines #2*. As per

the Merger Agreement, a site-visit will be scheduled no more than 6 months after receipt of the Initial Review Letter.

Eligibility Conditions

Doctoral-level RCE Programs are eligible to seek CACREP accreditation under the following conditions:

1. The academic unit has a CORE-accredited Master's program in good standing,
2. The doctoral program has a minimum of 48 hours or 72 quarter hours beyond the entry-level, and
3. The program must use a program title that clearly reflects its identity as a Rehabilitation Counseling or Rehabilitation Counselor Education program (see CACREP Policy Document, Accreditation Process Policy #1.c -*Use of Program and Degree Titles*,).

Letter of Intent

On or before 5:00 PM Central time, December 1, 2015, a letter of intent to submit an application for accreditation of the doctoral program must be submitted to CORE. The letter of intent must include evidence that the doctoral program meets the three eligibility criteria above. A list of programs meeting the eligibility criteria will be forwarded to CACREP.

Application and Site-Visit Fees

The application fee for the initial accreditation is \$2,500. The fee is due at the time of application.

On-site visit fees are based on a flat rate charge of \$2000 per visitor. Under this policy, when adding a doctoral program in a department where there is already a CORE-accredited master's degree program, a minimum of two site team members will be assigned. When additional visitors or alternative visit structures are required in order to review distance learning programs or programs offered at multiple sites (CACREP Policy Document, *Programs offered at multiple sites policy #1.o*), additional fees will be assessed at a rate set by CACREP. Institutions will be billed for all site visit fees at the time the visit is scheduled. These fees must be paid prior to the team's arrival on campus. For budget planning purposes, institutions should contact the CACREP office for current information about the number of team members that will be required and the fees that will be charged for the visit.

Abbreviated Self-Study

An abbreviated self-study along with an application to CACREP by February 28, 2016 must be submitted in accordance with CACREP's policy guidelines for "Electronic Submission of Accreditation Documents." The abbreviated self-study will include an application form with signatures of key decision-making administrators at the institution and documentation of compliance with the Eligibility Conditions cited above.

In addition, the program must address with both narrative and supporting documents how it meets the following 2016 CACREP Standards:

- Section 1 Standards B, S, W-BB
- Section 2 Standard D, F.1.c, F.1.l, F.3.d, F.3.g, F.3.h, F.5.l, F.5.m, F.6.h, F.7.a, F.8.a
- Section 3 Standards F-M, O, P, R
- Section 4 F-H
- Section 6 Doctoral Standards Counselor Education and Supervision

Review Process and Decisions

Once the application fee and abbreviated self-study documents are received in the CACREP office, an Initial Review of the self-study and supporting documentation will be conducted to determine if the program is in compliance with the requisite abbreviated standards. If necessary an Addendum may be required prior to scheduling the on-site visit which must be scheduled no more than 6 months after receipt of the Initial Review Letter.

Following the on-site visit, the program will receive a copy of the Team Report. The program will then have 30 days to submit an Institutional Response responding to the relative accuracy of the team's findings. Once this process is completed, all materials will be sent to the CACREP Board for a final review and decision-making at its next scheduled board meeting.

The following decisions may be made by CACREP:

Decision 1 - Accredited

This status is granted to counseling programs that, in the professional judgment of the CACREP Board of Directors, meet all applicable standards in a satisfactory manner. Accredited status is conferred for the remainder of the current CORE or CACREP-accreditation cycle.

Decision 2 - Accredited for a Two-Year Period

This status is granted to counseling programs that, in the professional judgment of the CACREP Board of Directors, substantially meet the requirements for accredited status, but for which the Board requests an Interim Report addressing identified standards-related issues where a slight modification or change in practice will strengthen the program. The CACREP Board of Directors confers this accreditation status when there is a belief that the counseling program can address the identified issues within the two-year period. (CACREP Policy #3c entitled *Doctoral Program Accreditation* may apply.)

Decision 3 - Denial of Accreditation

Accreditation is denied when, in the professional judgment of the CACREP Board of Directors, the counseling program has been unable to establish clear evidence that it is in substantial compliance with the standards.

NOTE: All CORE-accredited Master's degree programs will be adopted as CACREP-accredited programs effective July 1, 2017.