

2025 ACES National Conference Table Talk Summary

At the 2025 ACES National Conference, CACREP hosted a Table Talk session. This session provided an opportunity for counselor educators to interact with CACREP representatives on matters of import to accreditation and counselor education. CACEP Board members and staff provided updates on accreditation matters. Members of the counselor education community then asked questions and shared information about what was occurring at the institution, local, and/or state levels influencing counselor preparation and practice. The following is a summary of the session:

Announcements

1. New Board members: As of July 1, 2025 new members are counselor educators: Dr. Natasha Barnes-Gwynn, Dr. Selin Philip, and Dr. Mark Gillen.
2. Board Openings: In February 2026, CACREP will select new Board members for five-year terms beginning July 1, 2026. Two Counselor Educators and one Public Member positions are to be filled. The deadline for [application](#) is November 21, 2025.
3. Research support: CACREP has refocused its [research support](#) efforts and has changed its process for review. This support provides opportunities for counselor educators interested in the conduct of research to conduct studies or partner with CACREP's Research Council on accreditation-related research. Stay tuned for the RFP which will be posted behind the Resource Wall.
4. Site Visitors:
 - The CACREP accreditation review process is primarily a peer review process, with counselor educators and practitioners serving as reviewers at all levels of review: as academic review specialists, site visitors, and board members.
 - CACREP is actively recruiting counselor educators and practitioners with expertise in any of the counseling specialized practice areas and/or in doctoral counselor education and supervision doctoral programs to [apply](#) to serve as site visitors. The highest need areas are School Counseling and Addictions Counseling but applications from individuals with expertise in any of the specialized practice areas and/or doctoral programs are welcomed.
 - Once your application is reviewed and approved, you will be sent a link to an online Site Team Member training module.
 - Benefits of serving as a site visitor include providing national service to the profession, contributing to quality assurance in counselor preparation, gaining exposure to innovative ideas, and engaging in individual professional development.
 - CACREP challenges every accredited program to have one person from their faculty to complete training as a site team member and participate in one site visit per year.

Updates - Operations

1. 2024 CACREP Standards & Guidance Document: All programs since July 1, 2024 have been submitting Self-Study Reports (SSR) under the 2024 Standards. There are 7 site visits scheduled this Fall under the 2024 standards. The Guidance Document is designed to serve as a reference for reviewers at all levels of the accreditation review process and for program reports throughout an accreditation cycle. There is no expectation that every question or bullet point in the guide must be addressed. The Guidance Document helps programs understand the spirit and the letter of the standards, and identifies **required documentation** and acceptable evidences to demonstrate compliance with the Standards.
2. Report Submissions: Effective 10/1/25 all SSRs must be submitted in the AMS and **NOT** through the portal. If programs are submitting Progress reports, substantive change reports and follow-up reports for the February 2026 Board meeting, the deadline is November 15, 2025 and programs may submit those reports through the portal.

3. Accreditation Review Process:

- The Application Fee must be received with the Application and SSR in order for the accreditation review process to begin.
- The site visit fee must be received before the site visit commences.
- CACREP now conducts a preliminary review of the SSR when it is submitted to ensure required documentation has been included before it enters the desk review queue. If anything is missing, programs will be asked to submit missing documentation before being entered into the desk review queue.
- Reminder - Effective June 15, 2025, programs that receive notification that they are required to submit an Addendum will have up to 60 days to complete and return the Addendum. Programs can utilize the Follow-up Report template in the AMS to develop the Addendum.

4. Accreditation decision letters:

- Accreditation decision letters go out in two batches to accommodate CHEA requirements for notification on accreditation status and to handle the volume of letters that must be written post-Board meeting.
- All accreditation status-related decisions from a Board meeting will be communicated only via formal written correspondence. CACREP will send these letters within 30 calendar days of the conclusion of the Board meeting. Programs that fall in this category are those to which initial accredited status is granted or denied; and for currently accredited programs seeking reaffirmation of accreditation for which there is a change in accredited status due to an action to either deny or revoke accreditation or to pause the review process and impose a monitoring sanction.
- Programs for which there is no change in accreditation status, as a result of Board actions, will be notified in writing within 60 calendar days of the end of the Board meeting. Programs that fall in this category are those for which continued accreditation is reaffirmed, and those for which approval of the following reports has occurred: Progress Reports, Interim Reports, Substantive Change reports, monitoring reports, extension requests, and teach-out plans.

Updates – Standards and Policies

1. Temporary suspension of Standards:

- Since February 2025 CACREP has been monitoring the Executive Orders (EO) relevant to accreditation and higher education. EOs are not laws but rather the administration's interpretation of existing laws.
- CACREP has also been monitoring the guidance coming from the US Department of Education (ED). This information affects CACREP indirectly as CACREP requires applicant and accredited programs to be housed at institutions that hold institutional accreditation. Institutional accreditors are ED-recognized.
- Institutions have been making anticipatory and required changes due to directives from institutional accreditors, due to impact on grant/research funding, and/or due to newly proposed or passed state laws. CACREP has both responded to program inquiries and provided guidance to all accredited programs, as events have unfolded.
- The 9-page July 29, 2025 [Memo from the Department of Justice](#) emphasized “the significant legal risks of initiatives that involve discrimination based on protected characteristics and provides non-binding best practices to help entities avoid the risk of violations”. Given the legal ramifications for CACREP **and** its accredited programs, it was prudent to suspend reporting requirements on three standards. CACREP's memo to programs regarding the suspension of the Standards and four position statements on related considerations are posted on the [website](#).

2. Policy A.2.e. Program Training Requirement: Beginning July 1, 2026, programs, regardless of program delivery method, will be required to deliver an in-person, synchronous experience to observe and assess counseling skills and professional dispositions for all students. These observations and assessments must occur at minimum at two points throughout the student's program of study, one of which must occur prior to the practicum. Please see [Guiding Statement on Policy A.2.e.](#)
3. Policy A.3.m Use of New Standards: Reminder that all programs regardless of which set of standards they were accredited under must **be in compliance with the 2024 Standards by July 1, 2026**. There is no additional reporting required. On and after this date all reports submitted will be reviewed through the lens of the 2024 Standards.
4. Revised Policy Document: Some editorial revisions were made to sections of the [Policy Document](#). These will go into effect January 1, 2026. A redlined version of the revised document is available in the Resource Wall.

Updates – Program Support

1. Accreditation Management System (AMS): This is a value-added for programs.
 - All accredited programs have access to the AMS. All Program Liaisons and Department Chairs can initiate changes to contact information by submitting update forms. All Deans and university Presidents have viewing access to the program dashboard.
 - It is extremely important that CACREP always knows who the Program Liaison is. This is the person to whom all communications are sent for dissemination to faculty, students, and administrators. To update contact information, please complete the People - Confirm or Update Designated Roles and People - Confirm or Update Contact Information forms in the AMS.
 - CACREP continues to add to the functionality of the AMS. Please see the [AMS Resource Page](#) for information and updates. Additionally, Program Liaisons can now directly login to the AMS from the website homepage via a button on the top left-hand side of the page.
 - On the AMS Resource Page is a listing of all the templates that are now available in the AMS.
 - Programs need to pay attention to the titling of documents in the AMS and the file naming conventions that must be used – see direction in the SSR templates in the AMS and in the Guidance Document. This is to ensure that files can be uploaded and for reviewers to readily find documentation.
2. Resource Wall: The CACREP Resource Wall provides accredited programs with access to resources to facilitate their success in their teaching and in strengthening the Counseling profession. Program faculty can directly login to the Resource Wall from the website homepage via a login button on the top right-hand side of the page. The Program Liaison has been provided the login credentials that can be freely shared with program faculty so that they can access the information/resources available: Resource categories are:
 - *Accreditation Resources* – Includes a crosswalk of the 2016-2024 standards to assist you in transitioning to compliance with the 2024 standards and with preparing reports for the 2024 Standards. A copy of the redlined policy revisions document is also available in this section.
 - *Advocacy letters* – CACREP routinely writes letters in support of or against bills that are introduced at the federal and state levels. Copies of those letters are available.
 - *Program Liaison Support* – This section includes a 4-part orientation series for new liaisons as well as an AMS orientation.
 - *Instructional Resources* – In development.
3. Centralized Staff Support: CACREP has moved away from a single staff member assigned to a program to a centralized approach to program support. Programs that have program-specific questions can submit their query to staffsupport@cacrep.org and those inquiries will be delegated

to the appropriate staff member for response. The general cacrepbox is still available for non-program specific questions.

4. CACREP Bulletin: Since November 2021 CACREP has been sending program liaisons a monthly CACREP Bulletin that identifies additions to the website and reminders of upcoming deadlines. Program liaisons are asked to forward the Bulletin to all faculty. This is CACREP's method for keeping programs always up-to-date

Q&A for questions raised at the Table Talk session and immediately following the ACES conference:

Temporarily suspended standards

1. Our program has a Progress Report due. One of the standards on which we were cited is 2016 Standard 4.B. What part(s) of 4.B are suspended?
2016 Substandard 4.B.2 is the element of Standard 4.B that is suspended. All other parts of Standard B necessitate responses.
2. Our program only has one standard, 2016 Standard 4.B.2, cited. Do we still need to submit a Progress report since that standard is suspended?
Yes, a Progress Report is still required to procedurally close the loop on the Board action to cite the standard. To submit your Progress report, complete the 2016 Standards Progress/Interim Report. Select the cited standard in the template and enter "No longer applicable" or "Standard is currently suspended." No further substantive response or documentation is required. This response is also applicable to programs that have additional standards cited. The program should do the above for any suspended cited standards and provide substantive responses and documentation for all other cited standards.
3. If the suspension on the identified standards is lifted before our Progress Report is due and we were cited on one or more of the standards before the suspension went into effect, will we need to respond to the citations?
If and when the suspension is lifted, an effective date will be identified, and programs will be given ample time to make any necessary adjustments.
4. Our program was cited on standards other than the three suspended standards. The standards on which we were cited also pertain to diversity-, equity-, and/or inclusion-related considerations. Do we need to provide responses for these standards.
The only three CACREP 2024 Standards that currently are suspended are Standards 1.H, 1.S, and 2.E.3. The only three CACREP 2016 Standards that currently are suspended are Standards 1.K, 1.Q, and the corresponding elements in 4.B (4.B.2). All other 2016 and 2024 Standards remain in effect and necessitate responses. Please see the Memorandum to Accredited Programs on Temporary Suspension of Standards and the CACREP Board of Directors' Position Statements for further information.
5. We recently received the news of the suspension of identified standards. Our program does not currently have any reports due to CACREP. What are our next steps?
Other than annual vital statistics reporting, the only reporting that would be necessary at this time is if you need to report on a genuine conflict with a CACREP standard or policy, associated with a federal, state, or institution/system prohibition. Additional information on reporting conflicts is available in the Board's memorandum to programs.

6. Our program will be having its reaffirmation of accreditation site visit soon. How will the team address the suspended standards?
The teams will neither substantively review or cite any of the suspended standards at this time.

Policy A.2.e Program Training Requirement

1. Can we request a policy waiver for Policy A.2.e requiring a minimum of two in-person, synchronous experiences to observe and assess counseling skills and professional dispositions for all students?
CACREP [Policy C.12. Policy Waiver](#) is a mechanism available to programs to request a temporary reprieve from being in full compliance with one or more accreditation policies. In order to receive a waiver, a program must demonstrate that there are exigent circumstances that prevent the program from being in full compliance.
2. Why is an in-person, synchronous experience to observe and assess Counseling skills and professional dispositions for all students required?
The Guiding Statement on Policy A.2.e provides the rationale for the policy and clarifies the requirements.
3. The Guiding Statement on Policy A.2.e states the person conducting the evaluation has to be a faculty member or someone from the university. Is this true? Can it be a designee of the faculty?
Under the Foundational Principles, #5 states University Staff. Programs may designate the conduct of the group learning experience, to assess skills and dispositions, to someone like a site supervisor to meet the goals set forth in #6 of the Foundational Principles. Individual or triadic supervision does not meet the requirement of Policy A.2.e.
4. Does Policy A.2.e require that the second assessment point for counseling skills and professional dispositions occur after practicum?
The overall intent of the policy is developmental in nature, in order to observe and assess counseling skills and professional dispositions for all students in an in-person group setting. It is really up to the program to determine when and how this is best accomplished, within these parameters.

Other

1. What kinds of things warrant a Substantive Change Report?
The new substantive change report template in the AMS provides response options for the following substantive change categories:
Change in business ownership, Change in core faculty, Change in degree/degree title, Change in geographical setting/cohort, Curricular modifications, Digital delivery, Institutional merger, Intra-institutional reorganization, Sanction on the institution, Teach Out, Other