



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
STATE COUNSELING BOARDS

# AASCB and CACREP: Partners in Professionalism and Protection

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# Historical Highlights

- AASCB and CACREP have a long history of protecting the public
- December issue of *Counseling Today*
  - President Lynn Linde’s article on *Protecting the Public*
    - Celebrates licensure in California
    - Reminds us that legislators who pass licensure are interested in “ensuring that the persons providing these services are qualified to do so.”

# From Virginia to California

- We celebrate counselor licensure in California
- First counselor licensure law passed in Virginia in 1976
- Counselor licensure almost 40 years in the making

# Early efforts

- Prior to licensure in Virginia, counselors at VACES spoke out vehemently *against* licensure, believing it would:
  - disenfranchise practitioners
  - make services too expensive for public
  - ossify the profession
- Of course licensure was passed through the efforts of Bob Pate, Carl Swanson, Bill VanHoose and many others and we have not looked back since

# The Rest of the Story: After the Law Passes

- Rules must be written to interpret and implement the new law
- Rules must simultaneously set standards high enough to protect the public while not disenfranchising competent practitioners
- Grandparenting

# The Rest of the Story:

## After the Law Passes

- Periodically the law gets opened for revisions and amendments that typically involve strengthening the rules and raising the standards
  - This illustrates an essential characteristic of licensure—to adapt and evolve to ensure the highest standards consistent with the education and training available
  - Some applicants are disappointed if they are unable to meet your standards. But enforcing high standards and protecting the public is more important than credentialing everyone who seeks a license
- Accreditation shares many of these characteristics

# Accreditation: A Brief History

- In 1978, ACES adopted uniform training standards for the preparation of counselors
- This effort led by Robert Stripling, Harold Cottingham, Tom Sweeney, and others led to the formation of CACREP in 1981
- The initial standards were designed so that many existing programs, but not *any* program, could meet them
- Accreditation was voluntary and proof of adherence was necessarily less rigorous than it is today

# Standards Revision

- The CACREP Standards have been revised approximately every 8 years
- Revisions process uses extensive public feedback so that the profession creates the new Standards
- With each revision, the Board has to find a balance between improving training and creating standards that are too high for programs to meet
- Inevitably some programs are disappointed when they are unable to meet the standards, AND...
- Enforcing high standards and protecting the public is more important than accrediting every program.

# AASCB and CACREP as Partners

- Historically licensure and accreditation have acted as partners in ensuring the qualifications of counselors and protecting the public
- In a perfect world licensure requirements and accreditation standards would be in perfect harmony, but there are times when the standards and some of the laws are not perfectly aligned
- When this happens, we can work together to align expectations and continue to ensure that we are producing the most highly qualified counselors offering the public the protection they deserve

# 2009 CACREP Standards

- I.M – For any calendar year, the number of credit hours delivered by noncore faculty must not exceed the number of credit hours delivered by core faculty

# 2009 CACREP Standards

- I.W.2 – Core faculty must “have earned doctoral degrees in counselor education and supervision, preferably from a CACREP-accredited program, or have been employed as full-time faculty members in a counselor education program for a minimum of one full academic year before July 1, 2013”

# 2009 CACREP Standards

- I.Y – Noncore faculty must “hold graduate degrees, preferably in counselor education from a CACREP-accredited program”
- I.AA – “Engage in continuous systematic program evaluation...”
- II.G – 8 core areas maintained
- III.G – *all* internships are minimum of 600 hours

# Specialty Standards

- *Addition of Addictions Counseling*
- *Deletion of Gerontological Counseling*
- *Integration of Community Counseling and Mental Health Counseling into Clinical Mental Health Counseling*
- *Integration of College Counseling and Students Affairs into Student Affairs and College Counseling*

# Fallacy of “Equivalency”

- November 2009 *Counseling Today*
- There are students in non-accredited programs who think they are attending an accredited program!
- Programs do not explicitly say they are accredited but say:
  - ...program is CACREP equivalent...
  - ...program follows requirements set by CACREP...
  - ...program reflects the CACREP Standards...
  - ...program is aligned with CACREP Standards...
- Also, may list CACREP standards in syllabi

# Fallacy of Equivalency

- Such programs are generally referring to curricular requirements only
  - 57 core curricular standards
  - 156 total standards + program area standards
- “Equivalency” determined without independent external review
- “Buying professional identity”

# Fallacy of Equivalency

- Problem is compounded by licensing boards who may state within their regulations language that supports “equivalency” .
- January 2009 motion that “CACREP asserts that there is no appropriate use of the term *CACREP equivalent*” passed unanimously

# Prompt Questions

- 1. What differences do you notice between licensure applicants from CACREP accredited programs vs. non-CACREP accredited programs?
- 2. What assistance can CACREP provide that would be useful for you in your work with your state legislation?
- 3. What suggestions do you have for CACREP to aid in strengthening and helping the CACREP standards address current and upcoming areas of need for the counseling profession?