



Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

500 Montgomery Street, Suite 350 • Alexandria, VA 22314 • (703) 535-5990 • www.cacrep.org

August 12, 2024

Dr. Bashar W. Hanna
Office of the President
Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania
401 North Fairview Street
399 Ulmer Hall
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania 17745

Dear Dr. Hanna:

The Board of Directors (“Board”) of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) met July 11-13, 2024, for the purpose of making accreditation decisions. One counseling specialty area housed in the College of Education and Human Studies at Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania was reviewed under the 2016 CACREP Standards. The Board made the following decision:

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.S. degree)

Reaffirm accreditation with a Progress Report Required – Progress Report due by May 15, 2025

Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania offers the above specialty area in an online delivery format.

The Board based the above listed accreditation decision on an extensive review of the self-study documents, the site review team’s report, and the institution’s response to the site review team’s report.

The Board makes the decision to reaffirm accreditation with a progress report required when it determines that the program has demonstrated that a counseling specialty area degree program is in substantial compliance with the CACREP Standards and Policies. The Board believes the identified area of noncompliance with the standards can be remedied within the prescribed time frame.

The counseling program must submit a progress report on improvements in its policies and practices relative to compliance with the accreditation standard specified on page 3 of this letter. The report should be submitted via [CACREP’s online report submissions page](#), no later than May 15, 2025. The Board will review the progress report at its next regularly scheduled meeting and determine whether the identified areas of noncompliance have been adequately addressed. If the Board determines the areas of noncompliance with the standard have not been adequately addressed, the Board may initiate additional actions at that time, including possibly imposing a sanction.

The accreditation cycle for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling specialty area runs through October 31, 2032. Barring interruption of accredited status for the specialty area, resulting from voluntary withdrawal or the review of required reports during the accreditation cycle, the program's application and self-study report for reaffirmation of accreditation will be due approximately eighteen months prior to the cycle end date.

Please note Policy C.2 on "Publicizing Accreditation Status and Use of CACREP Certification Mark," in CACREP's new [Policy Document](#). Written requests for permission to use the CACREP Certification Mark should be sent to cacrep@cacrep.org.

On behalf of the CACREP Board, I would like to extend my thanks to you and your administration for the support provided to the counseling program throughout the accreditation process. Administrative support is considered vital to the process of continuous improvement of higher education programs. Thank you for the work done by all of those involved in this accreditation review process and for the forthcoming efforts to address and report on the standards cited here.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. Sylvia Fernandez, Ph.D.".

M. Sylvia Fernandez, Ph.D.
President and CEO

cc: Dr. Ann Elisabeth Larson, Dean, College of Education and Human Studies
Dr. Thomas Starmack, Chair, Counseling and Educational Leadership Department
Dr. Leandrea R. Romero-Lucero, CACREP Liaison

Standards to be Addressed in the Progress Report

Section 4 – Evaluation in the Program

Standard B.3

Provide evidence that program faculty use data from systematic follow-up studies of employers of program graduates to evaluate the program objectives. The Board noted the program's indication that, because of low response rates from employers, the program has pivoted to surveying site supervisors who plan to hire graduates. Site supervisors are specified in the standard as a different constituent group from which there must also be systematic follow-up studies. The Board indicated that the program should show evidence that they evaluate the program objectives using data gathered from employers who have employed actual graduates of the program (as opposed to using data from prospective future employers).