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**VISIONS**

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFIED COUNSELORS

## **NBCC Delays Start of New Standard to Obtain Certification**

NBCC's Board of Directors is delaying until Jan. 1, 2024, implementation of a new policy that all National Certified Counselor (NCC) applicants must earn their qualifying degree from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

NBCC's decision to delay the CACREP requirement was made in response to a recent announcement by CACREP that it was pushing back the start date for a rule to require all accredited counselor education programs to have a minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours of coursework.

CACREP had proposed the original increase in semester hours when it adopted its 2016 standards, suggesting the change would begin July 1, 2020. In February, however, CACREP announced it would delay implementation of the rule until July 1, 2023. CACREP said the additional time would give counselor education programs—in particular career counseling, college counseling and student affairs, rehabilitation counseling, and school counseling programs—the time needed to address barriers to meeting the new standard.

“Now more than ever, counselors need to have a clear, consistent professional identity, and that begins with a strong, uniform national education standard,” says Sherry Allen, NBCC's Chief Mission Officer. “We intend to stay with our planned requirement that NCCs earn their qualifying degree from a CACREP-accredited university. Our delay implementing that requirement is simply in keeping with CACREP's well-reasoned decision that allows universities more time to adapt their programs to the 60 semester credit hour standard.”

To help programs achieve initial CACREP accreditation in light of the 60 semester credit hour standard, since 2014, NBCC has [provided grants](#) that have assisted 29 programs. Twelve of those programs already have gained CACREP accreditation.

