

May 3, 2004

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Dear Susan and Rick:

I wanted to respond further to the letter that your Executive Directors (Dr. Bobby and Dr. Clawson) sent to our Executive Director, Mr. Richard Yep, on February 20, 2004.

There appear to be some disagreement between some sectors of the profession of counseling about what role specialties play in our profession.

Let me try to clarify the position of the American Counseling Association as the representative body of our profession. We do not consider rehabilitation counseling, nor any other specialty of professional counseling, to be another profession. We consider them to be a specialty of professional counseling, just as are other specialties such as school counseling, career counseling, mental health counseling, gerontological counseling, multicultural counseling, and others.

ACA has been very clear in our support for specialties and specialty certification as represented by our Divisions. Even when the support of specialties has waived in some credentialing sectors of our profession, we have been clear.

Dr. Susan Seem  
Dr. Rick Gressard  
May 3, 2004  
Page Two

There is not a single certifying body for our profession. Historically, both the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) have consistently been recognized by ACA as credentialing bodies. Further, if NBCC had any claims to being the sole specialty credentialing body of professional counseling, it has abdicated any such claim by its sunsetting/retiring of both its career counseling specialty credential (NCCC) and its gerontological counseling specialty credential (NCGC) over the protests of our Divisions and our members.

ACA's clarity on this issue is expressed most recently by the following resolutions approved by the Governing Council, the highest body of our profession. I include them *in toto* for your information.

"ACA recognizes and affirms that preparation of students educated by both the Council on Rehabilitation (CORE) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited programs is functionally equivalent for purposes of licensure, and further, that ACA recognizes and affirms that National Certified Counselors (NCC's) and Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC's) have met equally rigorous standards of education and experience in achieving these credentials." Motion passed at the ACA Governing Council meetings from October 16-18, 1998.

"ACA reaffirms the position taken at the Governing Council meeting of October 16-18, 1998: That preparation of students educated by both the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited programs is functionally equivalent for purposes of licensure, and further, that National Certified Counselors (NCC's) and Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC's) have met equally rigorous standards of education and experience in achieving these credentials. Further, it is the policy of ACA that the alternate equivalency of CORE and CRCC to their counseling credentialing counterparts be given full and proper consideration and voice in all credentialing, professionalization, and advocacy actions and policy communications taken by ACA. This position is especially relevant within the context of ACA's positions of statutory and regulatory licensure issues such as recommended examinations, and education requirements involved in core course evaluations, as well as counselor licensure portability models and policies. Motion passed unanimously at the ACA Governing Council meetings from March 20-22, 2003.

We are very supportive of the National Board for Certified Counselors and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, but we will not allow the specialties of our profession, our Divisions, nor our members to be marginalized in either a licensing, certification, or accreditation process.

Dr. Susan Seem  
Dr. Rick Gressard  
May 3, 2004  
Page Three

Please note that I posted your letter to our Governing Council prior to our recent meeting in Kansas City on March 30-April 1, 2004. No Governing Council member chose to place any resolutions on our agenda that related to this issue.

Thank you for your letter.

Respectfully,

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Carol Bobby, CACREP Executive Director  
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ACA Branch Presidents