



April 18, 2016

Bellevue University is pleased to have you as a current student in our Master of Science in Clinical Counseling (MSCC) program. Faculty and administration alike are impressed with your commitment to your education and are certain that, after completion of your degree, you will be of great help to many clients in your career as a clinical mental health counselor.

The Master's in Clinical Counseling program at Bellevue University is scheduled to make application for CACREP accreditation in June 2016.

Additional information on accreditation

There are two different types of accreditation for higher education institutions – “institutional” and “specialized” or “programmatic.”

Bellevue University maintains institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. Institutional accreditation applies to the entire institution and is important because accreditation by the Commission and by other nationally recognized agencies provides assurance to you and the public, that an organization has met the agency's clearly stated requirements and criteria, and that there are reasonable grounds for believing that it will continue to meet them.

Specialized or programmatic accreditation normally applies to specific programs or departments within an institution to recognize particular aspects and quality of a specific academic field or program. Specialized accreditation is not a requirement for the MSCC program to operate or award degrees. Bellevue University's MSCC program does not currently have specialized accreditation, but it is being pursued as explained above.

How does this affect you, as a current MSCC student?

It is an unwavering CACREP requirement that ONLY students who have completed all aspects of the CACREP –aligned clinical mental health program can be included in the bid for accreditation. Therefore, only those students who begin the MSCC program in summer 2016 or later are eligible for inclusion.

We realize that a large programmatic change like this can be confusing and frustrating. We want you to know that your hard work *will* pay off.

Your degree from Bellevue University has consistently been found by state licensing agencies to be equivalent to a CACREP accredited Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree for counseling licensure purposes. This means that, when you apply for your state's counseling licensure, if your licensure law requires a CACREP CMHC degree or equivalent it is likely based on past determinations that you will meet that requirement. To prove equivalency, generally state licensure boards ask for copies of your course syllabi.

Counselor licensure differs state by state, as we have discussed throughout your program, starting in your first class, MSCC 501. This may be a good time to review your state's licensure requirements again. You can locate them on the American Counseling Association webpage: <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements>

Please direct questions to Dr. James Smith, Dean of Students, JAS@Bellevue.edu, 402-557-7744 or Dr. Barb Daubenspeck, Program Director, Master of Science in Clinical Counseling, bdaubenspeck@bellevue.edu, 402-557-7520.

Sincerely,



Dr. Barb Daubenspeck, Ph.D.

Program Director and Associate Professor of Clinical Counseling