

For immediate release

On July 20, 2015, the counseling profession's two major accrediting organizations – the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) – signed a Plan of Merger Agreement. The Plan, approved by both the CORE Board and CACREP Board at their respective summer meetings, represents several years of discussions on strengthening the counseling profession through the establishment of a single unified accreditation process for counselor preparation programs. CORE and CACREP had entered into an historic affiliation agreement in 2013 to accomplish this on behalf of all future counselors and their clients. The two organizations believe their vision for a unified counseling profession is better realized through a merger of both organizations.

CORE and CACREP will immediately begin taking steps toward implementing the terms of the merger agreement, which will be concluded effective June 30, 2017. Beginning July 1, 2017, CACREP will carry on the mission of both organizations. In the interim, CORE will continue to conduct the business of accreditation on behalf of its programs and will complete its current standards revision process for rehabilitation counseling programs. CACREP and CORE will jointly appoint a committee to examine the reformatting of CORE Standards to fit into the CACREP review structure, as well as to recommend how disability concepts can be more fully and clearly infused into the CACREP Standards to strengthen the future preparation of *all* counselors.

The benefits to the profession and the public have been of paramount importance as CACREP and CORE entered into merger discussion. Recognizing the prevalence of disability in our society, both organizations have agreed that counselors will be better prepared to meet the needs of *all* clients if there is a unified set of standards that can be supported by the counseling profession. According to the US Census Report “Americans with disabilities: 2010”, approximately 20% of our country's citizens are living with some form of disability. This prevalence increases exponentially with age and reaches a frequency of seven in ten individuals age 80 and older. These data indicate that all counselors need knowledge of disability regardless of setting in which they practice.

CORE and CACREP will be providing additional information regarding the details of the merger agreement on their respective websites. Please visit the websites periodically at www.core-rehab.org (see *What's New?*) and www.cacrep.org (see *CACREP/CORE Updates*) to obtain the most updated information. The two organizations will ask to make presentations at ACA, ACES, NCRE, and AASCB and other counseling conferences. Every effort will be made to keep our constituents informed as the merger progresses.

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