

SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR DEFINED

A person who is ordained, commissioned or credentialed according to the practices of an organized religious group and has completed, or will complete by August 1, 2003, one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE); or has a minimum of a bachelor's degree with emphasis in counseling or related subjects and has, within ninety days of hire, completed specific training to include: common spiritual issues in death and dying; belief systems of comparative religions related to death and dying; spiritual assessment skills; individualizing care to patient beliefs; and varied spiritual practices/rituals.

ALL PERSONS FUNCTIONING AS SPIRITUAL COUNSELORS MUST BE:

- Ordained, commissioned or credentialed according to the practices of an organized religious group.

Verification of ordination, commissioning or credentials may be demonstrated by a certificate or a letter from an appropriate religious authority representing the individual's religious group. The verifying document needs to represent that the individual has recognized credentials in the religious group and is in good standing with the religious group.

IN ADDITION, THE SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR MUST EITHER:

- have completed, or will complete by August 1, 2003, one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

“Clinical Pastoral Education is interfaith professional education for ministry. It brings theological students and ministers into supervised encounter with persons in crises. Out of an intensive involvement with persons in need, and the feedback from peers and teachers, students develop new awareness of themselves as persons and of the needs of those to whom they minister. From theological reflection on specific human situations, they gain a new understanding of ministry. Within the interdisciplinary team process of helping persons, they develop skills in interpersonal and interprofessional relationships.” (The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education definition). Clinical Pastoral Education programs are a structured system of components including case reviews, theoretical presentations, and individual and group supervision. A CPE unit is a minimum of 400 hours of study. A CPE unit is supervised by a professional that has been certified as a supervisor. The CPE occurs within an accredited center. There are currently three organizations that offer CPE. Each has it's own accrediting and credentialing processes. Those organizations include the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) and the College of Pastoral Care and Psychotherapy (CPSP). Each organization has a web site that includes a directory of centers. There are currently no CPSP centers in Missouri.

OR

- Have a minimum of a bachelor's degree with emphasis in counseling or related subjects and
- Within ninety days of hire, have completed specific training to include:
 - Common spiritual issues in death and dying;
 - Belief systems of comparative religions related to death and dying;
 - Spiritual assessment skills;
 - Individualizing care to patient beliefs;
 - And varied spiritual practices/rituals.

Persons who carry out assigned spiritual care tasks under the supervision of the spiritual counselor and/or volunteer coordinator (e.g., visiting the patient to read scripture, offer prayer, etc.) are not considered spiritual counselors, and do not have to meet the requirements of this definition. Such individuals would, if volunteers, meet the training requirements for direct care volunteers.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., is a professional association committed to advancing experience-based theological education for seminarians, clergy and laypersons of diverse cultures, ethnic groups and faith traditions. We establish standards, certify supervisors and accredit programs and centers in varied settings. ACPE programs promote the integration of personal history, faith tradition and the behavioral sciences in the practice of spiritual care.

VISION STATEMENT

As the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., we will be distinguished as the premier provider of clinical pastoral education and recognized by the United States Department of Education:

- Encouraging creative response to the changing context of spiritual care in the communities we serve;
- Modeling professional competence, integrity and high ethical standards;
- Sustaining a welcoming organizational culture in which members are encouraged to learn and grow;
- Embracing diversity, collaboration and accountability on a national and international level;
- Prophetically advocating for excellence in pastoral education and the practice of the spiritual care.

PUBLIC COMMENT INVITED

This directory of accredited centers and programs includes, after the name of each center, the date when the center is scheduled for its next accreditation review. Comments on the program or institution's qualifications and/or compliance with ACPE standards are invited. These comments may be sent either to the chair of the national Accreditation Commission, the Executive Director, or to the accreditation chair for the region in which the center is located. Written comments are especially welcome early in the year the center is scheduled for review.

RECOGNITION AS AN ACCREDITING AGENCY

The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., is nationally recognized as an accrediting agency in the field of clinical pastoral education by the U.S. Secretary of Education through the U.S. Department of Education.

Contact: United States Department of Education
Accreditation and State Liaison Division
Office of Postsecondary Education
1900 K Street, Room #7105
Washington, DC 20006-8509

Fax: 202/219-7005

WHAT IS CPE?

Clinical Pastoral Education is interfaith professional education for ministry. It brings theological students and ministers into supervised encounter with persons in crises. Out of an intensive involvement with persons in need, and the feedback from peers and teachers, students develop new awareness of themselves as persons and the needs of those to whom they minister. From the theological reflection on specific human situations, they gain a new understanding of ministry. Within the interdisciplinary team process of helping persons, they develop skills in interpersonal and interprofessional relationships.

Who May Enroll in CPE Programs?

ACPE centers establish admissions policies determining who may enroll in their CPE programs. In general, CPE centers accept theological students, ordained clergy and members of religious orders. Some centers accept qualified lay people.

CPE is an experience in process education, which has been shaped by history and yet remains responsive to the present-day cultural developments, which affect pastoral formation. The heart of CPE is ministry with people and learning from that ministry through reflection, discussion, and evaluation with other students and a certified ACPE supervisor. In a CPE experience, verbatim, case studies and other ministry descriptions are used to present ministry encounters for supervision. The focus in some seminars is on what is happening to the people receiving your ministry. There are discussions to assist in understanding theological issues arising from experience. There are opportunities to learn from behavioral sciences while also reflecting theologically, so both can be utilized in understanding the human condition. CPE students are challenged to think about groups and social structures as well as individuals in defining ministry. The dynamic learning group, with other students and a certified ACPE supervisor, provides opportunities for mutual supervision, care giving, challenge and appreciation.

Where is CPE Offered?

CPE is offered in a number of different kinds of settings. In many of the settings, such as general hospital, mental health facilities, correctional institutions, children's hospital and nursing homes, ministry is provided to individuals, families, and small groups of people as a chaplain. CPE may, however, be done in any setting where ministry happens. There are a growing number of centers with innovative approaches to ministry. As a part of the application process, students are encouraged to clarify with a center the types of ministries that occur in that setting.

A Typical Day in CPE

CPE units may be either full time or part time; either schedule will include an equivalent number of ministry and education hours. Some extended CPE units meet one day per week for structured educational sessions, and ministry is performed at other times. A more common day, however, is one in which time is provided for ministry and for several education events. Since the heart of CPE is ministering and learning from the experience, a day's schedule frequently includes a clinical seminar in which a student presents a pastoral encounter to other students and the supervisor for discussion and feedback. Other typical sessions are: didactic seminars in which discussion follows a lecture; discussion of a book or article; exploration of theological concerns; peer group meetings or interpersonal group sessions for mutual sharing, caring, support and challenge; individual conferences with the supervisor where professional, person, and relationship concerns are explored; and worship or sharing occasions which provide opportunity for spiritual nurture. Field trips, workshops, and clinical observations may be periodically included. Evaluation experiences with the other students and a certified ACPE supervisor are also a part of a CPE program and may be scheduled at the end of a unit to sum up the experience, midway to assess your learning objectives, and at other times, such as with the other care providers in your ministry area. A CPE schedule asks for active investment but also provides time for sharing, reflection, preparation, and relaxation.

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Beginning The Application Process

Applications for clinical pastoral education may be obtained from any of the centers listed in this directory, from many seminaries, on the ACPE webpage, and from the ACPE office in Decatur (see address on directory cover). The application form requests information about your name, address, education, and references. You will also be asked to describe yourself, your history, your religious development, a helping incident, etc. Your completed application will probably be several pages in length.

The Admission Interview

The next step after completing your application is an admission interview. The admission interview provides opportunity for you to ask questions and to discuss whether centers are suited to your educational goals. It also provides time for the interviewer to discuss your application, engage you as a person and learner, and to assess your readiness for CPE. The interview may be held with any ACPE certified supervisor. Seminaries frequently schedule a day when a number of supervisors are available to conduct such interviews. There may be a fee for this interview, and you should inquire about that when making arrangements for it. The admission interview report, prepared by the interviewer, becomes a part of your CPE application and should be submitted along with your application to any center to which you apply.

You might be requested or prefer to schedule the admission interview with the supervisor of the center to which you are applying, or you may wish to arrange for a separate, informal personal interview there other than the formal admission interview. Such a personal interview enables you to discuss first hand the particular center, its program, and the style of the supervisor. An admission interview report will not necessarily be prepared when you interview at the same center to which you are applying. If you desire one, you should discuss that with the supervisor.

Applying To A Particular CPE Center

Some CPE programs have established educational and experience requirements, which have been found to be prerequisites for a successful CPE experience in that setting. Each center has an admissions policy, which describes such requirements. The Standards also require supervisors to respond promptly to applications and to indicate a date by which you will be notified of acceptance or rejection. Some centers require an application fee and others require a deposit to confirm your acceptance. The deposit to confirm your acceptance is usually applied to the tuition for the CPE unit. You should inquire about application fees, tuition and deposits when making application.

We wish for you a challenging and enriching experience in clinical pastoral education!