



NATIONAL BOARD FOR
CERTIFIED COUNSELORS[®]
AND AFFILIATES

Continuing Education:

Frequently Asked Questions



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Table of Contents

Continuing Education: FAQs

General FAQs for ACEPs and Single Programs.....	3
Frequently Asked Questions Specific to ACEPs.....	6
Frequently Asked Questions About Cosponsorship.....	9
Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Single Programs.....	10



General FAQs for ACEPs and Single Programs

What does “qualifying program” mean?

A qualifying program is a continuing education program that complies with all [NBCC Continuing Education Provider Policy](#) terms and therefore qualifies for NBCC credit.

How do I determine if a program qualifies for NBCC credit?

Refer to Policy Sections D, E, F and G.

The subject matter must be directly and primarily related to an NBCC Content Area, and the presenter/author (presenter) must qualify as a presenter for the subject matter presented. The following process may help determine if a presenter is qualified.

1. Look at the content being taught by the presenter and determine which content area(s) it fits into. You will find the content areas listed in Policy Section G. Reviewing the program content description and learning objectives will help you identify the content area(s).
2. Look at the presenter requirements for that content area and make sure your presenter is qualified under Policy Sections F and G. You must be certain that the presenter meets the education and/or experience requirements set forth in Policy Section F. You may require each presenter to provide a resume or CV to assist with this process.
3. Regardless of the presenter’s primary focus, if the presenter covers content concerning counseling theory, counseling practice, counseling relationships, and the evaluation and/or treatment of clients, the presenter must have an advanced degree in a mental health field such as counseling, marriage and family therapy, social work, psychology or psychiatry.

If a program has more than one presenter, how do I determine and document presenter qualifications for the specific content presented by each person?

Typically, this is best done through a detailed agenda or outline specifying which presenter and/or author will be responsible for specific content.

If I submit an application, can I indicate that our approval from NBCC is “pending”?

No, stating program “approval is pending” implies that it will be approved. Submitting an application to NBCC does not guarantee approval. Therefore, you cannot make any representation regarding NBCC on your brochure. You can, however, state that you have applied to various professional regulatory boards and encourage potential participants to check for any updates regarding these approvals.

Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

For the “Program Information Publication Requirements” in Policy Section C.15, what specifically do I need to publish, and how do I do this?

For all programs offering NBCC credit, the below information must be made available to potential participants. This can be done on the organization’s website, in the program brochure or in another published document. Pertaining to membership organizations, access to program information and the opportunity to register may not be limited to members. For programs offered solely as in-service trainings, this information must be available to the employees who may attend the program.

- (a). Program registration requirements
- (b). Program content description and learning objectives
- (c). The name and qualifications of each program presenter or author
- (d). The number of NBCC hours offered for completion of the program
- (e). The provider contact information, including mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address and website address

What is “in-service training directly related to employment” (Section C.14 and 15)?

Qualifying programs only open to employees are referred to as in-service training directly related to employment. If the program is made available to participants outside of the employees, it is no longer considered in-service.

Does NBCC have guidelines for registration fees?

NBCC does not regulate this.

In addition to the registration fee, can we charge a fee for CE credits or certificates of completion?

NBCC does not regulate this. However, most professionals who attend professional continuing education programs expect to receive a certificate of completion at no additional charge.

Why does NBCC prohibit the use of the term “CEU” when referring to NBCC credit?

NBCC has found that the confusion regarding the term “CEU” has been extreme and widespread in the world of continuing education. The term “CEU” was coined by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training and has been standardized for many years as equivalent to 10 clock hours. However, many people think it is the same as only one hour.

Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

(For more information on the term CEU, please refer to this page on the IACET website: <http://www.iacet.org/ceus/about-the-ceu>.) When referring to NBCC credit, only the following terms are permitted: NBCC hours; clock hours; credit hours; CE hours; or contact hours.

Who can receive and use NBCC credit?

You may award NBCC credit to anyone who attends a qualifying program as long as you can verify that the participant was in attendance for the amount of time specified on the certificate of completion.

NBCC credit is automatically accepted for National Certified Counselors' (NCCs) recertification; therefore, NCCs seek programs that offer NBCC credit. In addition, most state Professional Counselor Licensure Boards readily accept NBCC credit for licensure renewal. Other professions, such as social work, marriage and family therapy, psychology and nursing, have their own approval processes. Even though they may accept NBCC credit, you will have to contact those boards directly for information on their continuing education requirements.

What is the maximum file size for an e-mail attachment if I want to e-mail an application submission or any other information to NBCC?

The maximum file size per e-mail is 20 MB. If you know that submitting your information will take multiple e-mails, please contact the department ahead of time and let us know so that we will be alerted and can watch for it. Applications should be forwarded to the departmental e-mail address at: continuinged@nbcc.org.

Our conference will include poster sessions. Can we count time at poster sessions for NBCC credit?

Typically, NBCC does not recognize poster sessions as qualifying for continuing education hours. In most cases, these are "walkabout-type" sessions, where participants can wander from one poster to another depending on their level of interest. In addition, poster sessions are generally presented by students who may not meet the requirements for presenters.

However, if the program has specifically designated poster session topics with learning objectives presented by NBCC qualifying presenters and attendance will be verified, you may contact us to discuss the potential for NBCC credit.

Can I award NBCC credit hours to presenters for their presentation time?

No, presenters cannot receive NBCC continuing education credit for presenting. NBCC credit is intended for the learner.

Can I award NBCC credit hours for actual therapy, time in clinical supervision or personal growth activities?

No. NBCC values these activities; however, they do not qualify for NBCC credit.

Frequently Asked Questions Specific to ACEPs

What is the correct presentation for our approval number?

It is ACEP Number _____, ACEP No. _____ or ACEP # _____.

Where should I post the NBCC Approval Statement and ACEP logo?

All printed and electronic catalogues, brochures, flyers, websites, etc. that advertise programs offered for NBCC credit must display the NBCC Approval Statement and ACEP logo.

As an ACEP, you must post the NBCC approval statement and ACEP logo on your website, even if you have no upcoming qualifying programs, unless you only offer in-service programs. Specifically, we recommend maintaining a page for “Continuing Education Approvals” that includes the statement and logo even if you have no current offerings. If you offer a program that does not qualify, clearly specify that no NBCC credit is available or offered for that particular program.

How do I get the ACEP logo?

Send a request to continuinged@nbcc.org. Be sure to include your ACEP number in the e-mail.

What approval statement is required for the certificate of completion?

Certificates of completion do not require the NBCC approval statement unless they are for an authorized cosponsored program. However, if you choose to use an approval statement on your certificates of completion, you must use the correct statement seen in Policy Section J.4.

Certificates of completion for cosponsored programs must use the cosponsorship approval statement in Section J.7(e)(3).

What information needs to be on the certificate of completion?

The certificate of completion must include the following required items identified in the [NBCC Continuing Education Provider Policy](#) (Policy) Section I.3 and I.5:

- (a). The name and contact information of the Provider;
- (b). The title and date of the live program or date of completion for home study program;
- (c). The name of the participant to whom the NBCC hours are awarded;
- (d). The number of NBCC hours awarded to the named participant;
- (e). The name and signature of an authorized representative of the Provider; and
- (f). The NBCC ACEP number.

Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

Would you provide a sample of an appropriate statement that meets the “review and resolution of program participant complaints and disputes” (page 3, Section C.12)?

A wide variety of statements can be used to meet this requirement; however, the basic concept is to provide an avenue for a complaint to be heard and responded to in a timely manner. Here is one example:

If a participant or potential participant would like to express a concern about his/her experience with [ACEP name], he/she may call or e-mail [name and contact information]. Although we do not guarantee a particular outcome, the individual can expect us to consider the complaint, make any necessary decisions and respond within [a reasonable amount of time].

It is important to tailor this statement to meet the needs of your organization and participants.

What do we need to do to properly maintain our ACEP status?

- Make sure the ACEP Administrator understands his/her roles and responsibilities. You can refer to the [ACEP Administrator Orientation](#).
- Promptly update contact information as needed.
- Pay your annual ACEP maintenance fee by the due date on your invoice.
- Cooperate with the third-year audit process.
- Comply with [NBCC Policy](#).

What are the do's and don'ts for describing our approval as an ACEP?

Use the correct and appropriate approval statement provided in the policy. Do not shorten or paraphrase the statement. Do not add additional comments about NBCC.

It is incorrect to describe your approval or ACEP status as “certification” or “accreditation.” If you need a header for your various approvals, we recommend “Continuing Education” or “Continuing Education Approvals,” followed by a listing of all pertinent approval statements.

Your programs are not preapproved or approved by NBCC and you may not state that they are. As an ACEP, it is your responsibility to review proposed programs and make sure they qualify for NBCC credit before advertising credit. NBCC is not responsible for preapproving programs offered by ACEPs.

Remember that ACEP means Approved Continuing Education Provider, not Approved Continuing Education Program. We have authorized the ACEP to apply our policies and offer NBCC credit for qualifying programs.

Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

Can I offer a program that does not qualify for NBCC credit?

You may offer a program that does not qualify for NBCC credit, but you must clearly indicate on your website and promotional materials for that program that it is “not available for NBCC credit.”

How can I prepare for the three-year audit?

For all programs offered for NBCC credit:

- All program promotional materials, print and electronic, should be consistent with Policy Sections C. 15, J.4 and J.5.
- You should be keeping accurate and complete records consistent with Policy Section C.10.
- Do not offer NBCC credit for programs that do not qualify. If a program does not qualify, all promotional materials should clearly indicate this.

Is a webinar considered a live event or home study program?

As long as the webinar is being viewed in real-time and there is the option for the participant to interact with the presenter and ask questions, it is considered a live event. However, if the webinar is recorded or offered “on-demand,” it is then considered home study. Refer to Policy Section B.2 (a). If you wish to offer home study programs for NBCC credit, you can submit the [ACEP Additional Delivery Format Application](#).

How do I determine the amount of NBCC credit to offer for a home study program?

For text-based programs, one NBCC hour will be offered for each 6,000 words of text. You can round that calculation to the nearest quarter hour. References do not count towards the total word count.

For audio and visual home study programs, one NBCC hour will be offered for each 60 minutes of listening and/or viewing time.

You may not offer credit for time spent taking the test or completing an evaluation.

How do I determine the amount of NBCC credit to offer for a live event?

For a live program, credit is calculated based on the time that qualifying material is being presented. You may not offer credit for outside reading or other homework assignments, breaks or meal times.

Frequently Asked Questions About Cosponsorship

Can you define cosponsorship?

Cosponsorship describes a relationship between an ACEP and another continuing education provider in which the ACEP uses its ACEP number and/or NBCC approval information to offer NBCC credit for a qualifying program. An ACEP may not loan, lend, sell or transfer its NBCC ACEP number or otherwise permit any other organization, business or individual to use its ACEP number outside of an approved cosponsorship.

Why is the cosponsorship application due 90 days prior to the proposed program date?

NBCC needs time to review applications and ensure they meet all requirements set forth in the provider policy. NBCC will get back to the ACEP with plenty of time so that both organizations can advertise the program appropriately.

Is the cosponsorship fee per event?

Yes. If the event will be offered multiple times, some pricing options are available, as shown in the [cosponsorship application](#). You may apply for multiple presentations of the same cosponsored program with one application. If the program identified on the cosponsorship application changes in any way (e.g., length, presenters or learning objectives), it is not considered the same program, and a new application will be required.

Will NBCC review the relationship or the program when looking at my cosponsorship application?

While our review focuses on the roles and relationship of the ACEP and the other continuing education provider as they develop, plan and implement a specific program, program content and presenter information will also be reviewed.

Are cosponsorships allowed for live events and home study programs?

Cosponsored programs between an ACEP and another non-approved organization must be live programs. If two or more ACEPs wish to offer a cosponsored program, they may do so by submitting the [Cosponsorship Application for ACEPs Partnering With Another ACEP](#).

If my organization no longer wishes to offer cosponsored programs, what options are available for organizations that I formerly cosponsored?

They may apply for NBCC single program approval or apply to become an NBCC Approved Continuing Education Provider (ACEP).

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Single Programs

Can I submit an application if I am not a licensed mental health professional?

Yes.

How long does it take to review an application?

On average, it takes about 6 weeks, provided the application is complete and well organized. Applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received. The time can vary depending on how many applications are already in the queue to be reviewed.

How can I expedite my application?

Applications can be submitted with an additional Rush Fee. Please refer to the Single Program Application for details. Other ways to ensure the fastest review include: be sure that payment is correct, be thorough and clear, and make sure your application is organized and complete.

What is meant by “program size”?

A Single Program is defined as one single live training program. Program size is determined by the number of sessions you are offering and want to be considered for approval within that one program. Generally, this applies to conferences, where there are multiple sessions offered (think in terms of state and national conferences). If the program is a multi-session conference, where participants have the choice of attending more than one session or more than one session at any given time slot, you would count the number of total sessions offered to determine program size:

Small Program - 17 or fewer individual reviewable sessions or workshops.

Large Program - 18 or more individual reviewable sessions or workshops.

In order for NBCC to determine whether or not a conference session will qualify according to the [NBCC Continuing Education Provider Policy](#) (Policy), we must review the specific content as well as the education and training of the individual(s) presenting the information. This can be a lengthy process if there are a large number of sessions. Sending an organized application well ahead of time will ensure that the review is completed in time for the event.

Can I make any changes to the approved single program that I submitted?

You may not change the program content, learning objectives, agenda, length of program or presenter(s). However, you may offer the program multiple times for the duration of one (1) year following the approval date and you do not have to use the same location.

Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

The program I want to submit is a very large conference. Do I have to fill out a form for each presenter?

If you have the presenter information on a spreadsheet, you are welcome to submit it as long as ALL pertinent areas are addressed, including the presenter's educational degree(s) and field of study (e.g., Ph.D. in counselor education). If the form just says "Ph.D." or "M.A." and does not state field of study, it will not be considered. The title of each session the identified presenter will be presenting must be clearly identified. In addition, the presenter Category must be noted (Policy Section F) as well as the NBCC Content Area each session falls under (Policy Section G).

If there are only certain conference sessions or tracks you want NBCC to review for consideration, please indicate this in your application materials, as it will streamline the review process.

Can you pre-review my program before I send it in so I can be sure it will be approved?

No. We realize there is some concern as to whether or not your Single Program application will be approved. However, NBCC does not pre-review any programs. The Single Program covers the costs of the review time and administrative processes. It does not guarantee approval. The best thing to do is go over the [NBCC Continuing Education Provider Policy](#) prior to submitting any materials.

What information needs to be on the certificate of completion?

The certificate of completion must include the following required items identified in the [NBCC Continuing Education Provider Policy](#) (Policy) section I.3:

- (a). The name and contact information of the Provider;
- (b). The title and date of the live program;
- (c). The name of the participant to whom the NBCC hours are awarded;
- (d). The number of NBCC hours awarded to the named participant;
- (e). The name and signature of an authorized representative of the Provider; and
- (f). The NBCC Single Program approval number.

There is a sample certificate in the application you can refer to. You can also see a sample in the Continuing Education Toolbox.