

U.S. Department of Education Staff Report

to the

Senior Department Official on Recognition Compliance Issues

Recommendation Page

1. **Agency:** Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (1969 / 2017)
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The provisional accreditation and accreditation of both clinical pastoral education (CPE) centers and Certified Educator CPE programs within the United States, including those that offer those programs via distance education.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** 06/20/2017
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for a period of five years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None

Executive Summary

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The Accreditation Commission (Commission) is the accrediting body within the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE). ACPE is a multicultural, multi-faith organization devoted to providing education and improving the quality of ministry and pastoral care offered by spiritual caregivers in clinical settings where ministry is practiced. The ACPE includes the accredited CPE centers, the certified faculty members (called CPE Supervisors), theological schools, chaplains and others who partner with ACPE in seeking to provide excellence in theological education. The accrediting activities include the preaccreditation and accreditation of clinical pastoral education (CPE) centers (Levels I and II) and supervisory CPE programs.

The Commission accredits 267 centers, 5 candidate centers, 23 accredited systems with 78 components, and 30 satellites sponsored by accredited centers or systems across the nation, and 70 unlisted programs referred to collectively as "CPE centers." The ACPE Accreditation Commission has a voluntary membership, and its principal purpose is accrediting higher education programs, or higher education programs and institutions of higher education. Accreditation does not enable the CPE centers or programs to establish eligibility to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs. However, recognition by the Secretary enables the agency's accredited centers and programs and/or students of these programs to participate in non-HEA programs such as the International Exchange Visitors Program administered by the Department of State and the Veterans Educational Benefits (GI Bill) program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. As such, ACPE is not required to meet the separate and independent requirements.

Recognition History

The U. S. Office of Education first recognized the Accreditation Commission of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. in 1969. The Secretary of Education has continued to recognize the agency since then; last granting a five-year recognition to the agency in 2007. The Secretary requested the agency to submit an interim report addressing four compliance issues involving the its standard on record of student complaints, its review of complaints made against a center or itself, and notifications.

After the Secretary issued her decision on the agency's recognition, the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) was passed, which contained a number of provisions related to accrediting agency recognition that were effective upon enactment. The changes included, among others, a reconstitution of the NACIQI. The agency's interim report was accepted by the reconstituted NACIQI at its June 2008 meeting.

The last full review of the agency was conducted at the June 2012 National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI or the Committee) meeting. Department staff and the Committee both recommended, and the Secretary concurred, that the agency's recognition be continued and that it submit a compliance report addressing the issues identified in the staff analysis. The agency completed a compliance report in 2013.

This 2017 review of the agency is determine if ACPE should be re-recognized as an agency by the Department of Education.

There has been no complaints submitted during this recognition period. Department staff observed a site visit with the agency in January 2017 and an observation of the agency's conference in May 2017.

PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS

The Department did not receive any written third - party comments regarding this agency.