

BOARD OF CHAPLAINCY CERTIFICATION, INC.
affiliate of **ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL CHAPLAINS**
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CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION AS A PROVIDER OF CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

The BCCI certification program is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance and designate professional chaplains who demonstrate the knowledge essential to the practice of chaplaincy care. The BCCI certification process is comprehensive and rigorous to adhere to the highest standards for the profession. BCCI recognizes the value and impact that quality Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) has in preparing aspiring professional chaplains, that is why BCCI has set the following standards of criteria for evaluating and accepting CPE units towards the BCCI certification requirements.

The following are the ten (10) criteria BCCI uses to evaluate Clinical Pastoral Education programs (CPE) to be recognized by the Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc., (BCCI) as a provider of CPE units, whose units can count toward an applicant's BCCI certification.

To be considered an approved provider of CPE, an organization, whether an individual program or a collective association/accreditor of individual programs—must address through the online application process each of the following required components of the program. After submitting the required materials, BCCI staff and a panel of certified chaplains will review the materials.

If approved, an organization may state that their CPE program is an approved provider of CPE units towards BCCI certification. Being an approved provider does not guarantee an applicant for certification will be granted/approved for certification with BCCI.

BCCI Criteria Checklist for Clinical Pastoral Education Programs:

(This is not an application; applications must be submitted online.)

- Be a legally incorporated entity:** every CPE provider acknowledged by BCCI must be able to prove it upholds essential standards of professionalism, organizational integrity, regulatory adherence, and record-keeping practices.

Please provide evidence of your current valid legal incorporation (including certified articles of incorporation, bylaws, standards, similarly fundamental operating documents such as manuals of certification and/or manuals of accreditation.).

- Name a liaison to BCCI, authorized by the CPE provider's governing body (e.g., its board of directors):** BCCI will only recognize CPE providers whose highest internal authorities support its involvement in the certification process. BCCI needs to have a dedicated liaison/representative contact.

Please provide the name, title, and contact information of your representative/liaison to BCCI (above). Please also provide documentation that the contact person is authorized by the CPE provider's governing body (e.g., a resolution by its board) and attest that should the CPE provider change its BCCI representative/liaison and/or their contact information, BCCI will be informed of that change.

- Have systems to protect its students from abuse, harassment, and other forms of exploitation:** each BCCI-recognized CPE provider must take seriously the historical mistreatment of students in CPE and recognize the need to have a culture of safety that minimizes the risk of harm to current and future participants in CPE.

Please describe your process to honor each student and protect their welfare. Share with us your system of policies, ethics processes, grievance escalations, safeguards, redundancies, oversight, transparency, feedback from stakeholders, medical and disability accommodations, etc.

- Prepare its students to demonstrate each of [the current competencies of a Board Certified Chaplain](#):** BCCI will only recognizes CPE providers whose curricula intentionally address each of the aspects of spiritual care determined to be essential to the BCCI certification process.

Please specify (and provide evidence of) how you prepare students to demonstrate each of the twenty-nine competencies defined in the above-linked rubric.

- Affirm [the Common Code of Ethics for Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors, and Pastoral Educators and Students](#) as required for their participants:** all BCCI-recognized CPE providers must affirm that their students, educators, chaplains, etc. are accountable to the above-linked code of ethics. BCCI-recognized CPE providers may also have their own codes of ethics.

Please provide a written attestation that the Common Code of Ethics for Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors, Pastoral Educators and Students would be binding on your CPE participants.

- Affirm that APC/BCCI will be notified of any Violations of Ethics for employees, educators, supervisors or chaplains employed as part of the CPE program:** all BCCI-recognized CPE providers must affirm that their students, educators, chaplains, etc. are accountable to the above-linked code of ethics. BCCI-recognized CPE providers may also have their own codes of ethics.

Please provide a written attestation that you will inform APC/BCCI of any employees working as part of the CPE education program if they are found in violation of the ethical conduct guidelines outlined above.

- Explicitly and openly define its objectives/outcomes for students at different levels/stages:** each BCCI-recognized CPE provider must help its students' progress toward its defined outcomes (and acknowledges when a student is not making progress). The CPE must tailor its programming to spiritual-care providers at various levels (e.g., novice, intermediate, and advanced). Students must have access to the programs' evaluative criteria.

Please name the outcomes of your CPE process and provide a rubric of the various levels/stages/milestones your educators and students use to evaluate progress (or stagnation, or regression) toward your objectives.

- Ensure the quality of its educators as spiritual-care educators:** BCCI will only recognize CPE providers whose educators have demonstrable expertise as spiritual-care educators. Each student requires a fully certified educator to supervise them during their CPE.

Please describe how your program evaluates, certifies, and ensures the quality of your educators as spiritual-care educators: their minimum qualifications, how you prepare, select, monitor, and review them over time, and how you support their own continuing

professional education (for continued/increasing proficiency over time). If an educator is not yet fully certified as an educator, that educator in training must be supervised by a fully certified educator. In addition, guest speakers/facilitators, assigned preceptors/mentors, and any other faculty who assist in a CPE program have demonstrated expertise in their given subject areas.

- Require at least 400 total hours per unit of credit:** each BCCI-recognized CPE provider must provide ample and balanced educational hours that prepare students for professional chaplaincy including $\geq 50\%$ clinical hours, $\geq 25\%$ classroom hours, and other educational experience.

Please delineate what your unit of credit comprises of in these terms: the minimum total hours, minimum clinical hours, minimum classroom hours, and other designated educational experience(s) (e.g., didactics, individual supervision, peer-group meetings, verbatims, and other education).

- Specify the last major change/update to any of the required criteria (1-9) of this application:** each BCCI-recognized CPE provider is expected to have a standardized and stable curriculum in place for students and educators to use as a guide during their education process.

In order to aid in our evaluation of the CPE program, please indicate and explain any significant updates or changes your program has gone through since January 1, 2024.

[End of Criteria]



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Upon compilation of the required criteria, please submit documents through the online application for review at: <https://www.apchaplains.org/bcci-site/resources/applying-for-cpe-recognition/>. Review of the documentation may take up to 60 days. For the fastest response please compile and submit all required criteria and documentation together. Once completed BCCI staff and a panel of certified chaplains will review all submitted materials.

After submitting a completed application with all required documentation, a CPE provider can expect a response from the APC/BCCI within 60 days. If approved, the CPE provider will need to agree to the following stipulations:

- BCCI will honor units of CPE from approved providers that began after January 1, 2024.
- Units earned from approved providers prior to January 1, 2024, must still be evaluated through the [CPE Equivalency Procedure](#).
- The BCCI office will submit feedback to the CPE provider based off the success/failure rate of BCCI applicants who complete a certification application and interview.
- The provider will consider alterations to their education program based off trends recognized in candidate applications.
- The provider will be subject to a re-approval process every three years to affirm that the program has not gone through significant changes.
- The provider will inform that APC/BCCI office if any of the educational personnel have been found in violation of their ethical conduct.
- The provider will inform that APC/BCCI office if any of substantive changes to their program, staff, and policies that would impact their educational program.
- BCCI can withdraw their approval of a program with a 60-day notice, should a program alter its stated curriculum or alter/eliminate/be found in deficit of any of the other stated criteria listed in their application.

If approved, a provider may make the following statement public on their website and marketing materials:

“[Provider’s name] has been approved as a provider of Clinical Pastoral Education for units required towards the application to be a BCCI certified chaplain.

Enrolling in a CPE education from [provider’s name] does not guarantee an applicant will be certified with BCCI.”