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ECU is one of two higher learning institutions nationally to receive unique dual accreditation

ADA – East Central University has become one of only two institutions of higher learning in the country to receive dual accreditation under the recent affiliation agreement between the Council for Accreditation and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Council of Rehabilitation Education (CORE).

College students now have the opportunity to achieve national certification through ECU's Clinical Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program (M.S. degree).

"The joint accreditation is a significant accomplishment that greatly enhances our graduates. This program, with dual accreditation, is unique in Oklahoma and one of only a few nationwide," said Dr. Jim Burke, professor and chair of ECU's Human Resources Department. "Not only will the students, completing this program, qualify for certification and a license, they will be eligible to provide clinical services to military veterans and employees of the Department of Defense."

The program, under the direction of Dr. Linda Massey, has been converted to one that holds joint accreditation by CACREP and CORE, under the respective Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling standards.

"I'm excited this program has been recognized. The marketability of our students will be enhanced with this dual accreditation," said Massey. "Our students have the opportunity to receive national certification through the CRCC (Commission on Certified Rehabilitation Counseling) as well as be a licensed professional counselor in the state of Oklahoma.

This CACREP accreditation assures portability of program curriculum from state to state."

Through holding dual accreditation, program graduates, including those who graduated within the academic year prior to the decision date and who completed the curricular and clinical requirement included in the review, will be eligible for hiring in key federal programs, including the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and TRICARE, which have stipulated graduation from an accredited CACREP program as an employment criterion.

"Through this, highly-qualified students are knowledgeable in both mental health issues and knowledgeable about helping veterans and other individuals adjust to their acquired disabilities," Massey said. "We started as a small cohort group and it has grown close to 70 (students). Our chair, Dr. Burke, Dr. Anderson and Dr. Adrianna Lancaster have all been supportive and helpful through this process. Without the help of the CRCMHC faculty and the technical support of Meredith Jones and Angela Price, this accomplishment would not have been achieved."

Burke is a professor and a Col. Tom A. Thomas endowed chair of human resources. Anderson is provost and vice president for academic affairs and Lancaster is dean of the school of graduate studies, distance education and Linscheid Library.

"The counseling faculty with the leadership of Dr. Linda Massey and Angela Price are to be commended for their tireless efforts under stringent timelines. We are fortunate to have dedicated faculty in our department," Burke said.