**Section 1375.45 Required Education for Professional Counselor License**

a) The educational requirements for licensure as a licensed professional counselor are as follows:

1) Certification of completion of a master's degree program or a doctoral degree program in counseling, psychology, or rehabilitation counseling from a college, university or school that is a regionally accredited institution of higher education and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, or certification of education and an official transcript from a similar master's degree program or doctoral degree program in accordance with this Section;

2) The programs, wherever they may be administratively housed, must be clearly identified and labeled as offering counseling, rehabilitation counseling, psychology programs, or similar degree programs. Such a program must specify in institutional catalogues and brochures its intent to educate and train counselors;

3) The program is an organizational entity within the institution;

4) The program has an integrated, organized sequence of study;

5) The program must be at least 2 academic years in length and require an individual to graduate from a program with a minimum of 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours with a minimum of one course ("course" is defined as 3 semester hours or 4.5 quarter hours equivalent) in each of the areas listed in this subsection (a)(5). The definition of a minimum of one course means that the objectives and content of one course cannot be used to meet the objectives and content of another course. (See Appendix A (Course Descriptions) for a definition of the subject content for each core area with examples of course titles that relate to each of the core content areas.)

A) Human Growth and Development

B) Counseling Theory

C) Counseling Techniques

D) Group Dynamics, Processing and Counseling

E) Appraisal of Individuals

F) Research and Evaluation

G) Professional, Legal and Ethical Responsibilities Relating to Professional Counseling

H) Social and Cultural Foundations

I) Lifestyle and Career Development

J) Practicum/Internship

K) Psychopathology and Maladaptive Behavior

L) Addictions

M) Family Dynamics;

6) Through June 30, 2026, individuals that graduated from a program that requires at least 39 semester hours but less than 48 semester hours may take additional classes post-degree in a regionally accredited counseling program that issues degrees acceptable for licensure under this Part, or as approved by the Board. Programs that require less than 39 semester hours of education to receive a degree will not be accepted for the purpose of licensure.

7) Beginning July 1, 2026, individuals applying for licensure shall graduate from a program with a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours with a minimum of one course ("course" is defined as a minimum of 3 semester hours or 4.5 quarter hours equivalent) in each of the core areas listed in subsection (a)(5). Individuals graduating from a program that requires at least 39 semester hours but less than 60 semester hours may take additional classes post-degree in a regionally accredited counseling program that issues degrees acceptable for licensure under this Part, or as approved by the Board. Programs that require less than 39 semester hours of education to receive a degree shall not be acceptable for the purpose of licensure. Programs with evidence of fewer than 7 of the 13 required core areas listed in subsection (a)(5) will not be accepted for the purposes of licensure.

8) The program has faculty responsible for the program and has a sufficient number of full-time instructors to make certain that the educational obligations to the student are fulfilled;

9) The program has an identifiable body of students who are matriculated in that program for a degree;

10) The program has a one-year residence. Residence requires completion of courses at a single institution's program. One year's residence is defined as 24 semester hours taken on a full-time or part-time basis at the institution accumulated within the time frame and course of study of the program. Beginning July 1, 2026, one year's residence semester hour requirement is 30 semester hours.

b) For the purpose of this Section, course shall be defined as an integrated, organized course of study that encompasses a minimum of one school semester or equivalent hours. No student designed courses, self-study courses, independent study courses, workshops, or continuing education courses may be used to satisfy the core courses.

c) Upon recommendation of the Board, the Division determined that all master's degree and doctoral programs in professional counseling or rehabilitation counseling that are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and doctoral programs in psychology approved by the American Psychological Association and the Council for the National Registry of Health Service Providers are approved programs.

d) Individual Program Requirements:

1) Individuals applying for licensure as a professional counselor who have not graduated from a program listed in subsection (c) shall submit their official transcripts and program materials to the Division for evaluation by the Board to determine if they meet the requirements of this Section.

2) Individuals applying for licensure who are deficient in any of the content areas set forth in subsection (a)(5) may complete any content area deficiencies in a graduate counseling, rehabilitation counseling, psychology, or similar degree program. No student designed courses, self-study courses, independent study courses, workshops, or continuing education courses may be used to satisfy the core courses. The applicant will be required to submit proof to the Division that the applicant has passed such courses. The proof shall include syllabi, course descriptions and official transcript.

e) The Board may, as a means of assisting it in the review of foreign country training or licensure, require an applicant to submit educational training credentials and transcripts and/or evidence of licensure to an approved education credentialing service or similar service approved by the Board for evaluation at the cost to the applicant.

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 8776, effective June 4, 2024)