



4915 S. Howell Avenue
Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53207-5939
Telephone: 414.483.4898
Fax: 414.483.6712

www.nacc.org

August 6, 2021
Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

Bishop Gerald Kicanas
Chair
USCCB Subcommittee on
Certification of Ecclesial Ministry and Service

Dear Bishop Kicanas and members of the USCCB Subcommittee on Certification of Ecclesial Ministry and Service:

The National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) appreciates this opportunity to present this seven-year report to the USCCB Subcommittee on Certification of Ecclesial Ministry and Service (SCEMS) and our request for:

- Review and re-approval of its Qualifications, Competencies and Procedures for Board Certification of Chaplains (BCC).
- Review and approval of its Qualifications, Competencies and Procedures for Board Certification of Chaplains for Veterans Affairs (BCC-VA).
- Review and approval of its Qualifications, Competencies, and Procedures for Certified Associate Chaplains (CAC).
- Review and approval the Pastoral Care Competencies for Criminal Justice and the Qualifications and Procedures for Certified Catholic Correctional Chaplains.
- Review and approval of the Diocesan Pastoral Care Competencies for the Sick, the Homebound and Older Adults.
- Review and approval of the Code of Professional Ethics and the Ethics Procedure Manual.
- Review and knowledge of the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC) for Board Certified Chaplains who are qualified for this advanced certification that was developed in collaboration with the Association of Professional Chaplains. Since our Board Certified Chaplains have already evidenced their abilities to minister in the name of the Church, the advanced certification competencies do not include any Catholic specific competencies. These Catholic chaplains are already versed and competent in the Ethical and Religious Directives of Catholic Health Care Services (ERD's). These PCHAC competencies can be found in the [Appendices 7.1](#).

These past seven years have been very full and fruitful years for the NACC and its diverse partnerships that have resulted in the development of these documents. While this is a seven-year review, NACC acknowledges that many of these efforts remain ongoing in their development and implementation, and we are excited to share these initiatives with the SCEMS and look forward to your feedback and endorsement.

How NACC Has Addressed SCEMS Recommendations over the Past Seven Years

NACC appreciated both the SCEMS 2014 approvals and its commendations and recommendations over the past seven years. Here are summaries of steps NACC has taken regarding those recommendations.

2014 Recommendations

1. More Complete Demographics: As noted above the material on demographics is well done; it is hoped therefore that the new data base will allow you to provide diversity information in your first annual report. a. There is a report on generational diversity but not cultural or ethnic diversity. b. Are there Diversity figures on the board?

Part One of this 2021 report will evidence that we have been able to collect much more demographic data on our members. While it is an optional choice to provide this data, now more than half of our members have done so.

2. Code or Codes of Ethics? There is one code of ethics for all members of the profession but not a separate one for those involved in the process. Instead of a separate code you have a signature form for agreeing to a code of confidentiality and professional responsibility. It may be helpful to have that code of confidentiality and best practices more clearly outlined in your documentation and included in a separate handbook for those involved in the process of certification (see #7 below).

This recommendation had our NACC members look at partner associations to learn how they required codes of confidentiality and professional responsibilities. This helped our Commissions to develop Covenant agreements that have been very effective in educating members involved in certification, and on Board and Commissions. Copies of the Covenant agreements can be found in [Appendices 1.1-1.2](#).

3. Lack of description of diversity of those involved in the process: Only a list of names was given for each group.

You will find in Part One of this report information on the diversity of the members of NACC Board, Commissions, and Committee. This information has been important for NACC as well, as it continues its efforts for broader representation of its membership in the NACC leadership.

4. Explanation of Numbering of Standards for Candidates: The introduction for the Subcommittee explained the unique numbering system used in the standards. Because of accepting common core standards with other national chaplaincy organizations there was a need to use the wider community's standard. The walk through explains how all major areas are covered. Since the Standards are in a similar numbered format even though not identical to the four areas of Co-Workers and *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (I Shall Give You Shepherds) perhaps a simple chart of the correlations might help candidates to understand this relationship to lay ecclesial ministry and where appropriate ministry of the ordained so carefully reviewed by the board.

Upon approval by the SCEMS of our Standards, our members were provided in the January-February 2015 *Vision* issue, and overview of the newly adopted Catholic competencies approved by the SCEMS in 2014, and how they relate to the USCCB National Catholic Standard (<https://www.nacc.org/vision/2015-Jan-Feb/Questions-and-answers-about-the->

[revised-NACC-Standards-By-David-A-Lichter/](#)). It was a very helpful article to educate our members.

We also made available to our members and certification applicants an important background on our Catholic competencies on a dedicated webpage (<https://www.nacc.org/certification/nacc-certification-competencies-and-procedures/important-background-nacc-certification-competencies-procedures/>) that included explanations of both the Common Qualifications and Competencies, as well as the added specific Catholic Competencies.

One document shows how the NACC Competencies align with the USCCB National Certification Standards. (<https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NACC-2016-Revised-CQCompetencies-Crosswalk-with-USCCB-Competenciesr.pdf>)

The other shows the Catholic additions to the Common Competencies. (<https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NACC-Competencies-2015-2021-Chaplain-Certification-and-Renewal-with-highlighted-USCCB.pdf>).

5. National Certification Standards (NCS): Consider using the reference to the National Certification Standards (NCS) for Lay Ecclesial Ministers somewhere in the text to make the relationship to Lay Ecclesial Ministry clearer. This could also be a possible appendix.

On this background webpage noted above we included an explanation of the National Certification Standards, as well as link to the NCS Certification Handbook (<https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/USCCB-Certification-Handbook-2017.pdf>). A webinar was given in September 2020 on chaplaincy as a ministry of the Church that provided additional background on this. You will find that PowerPoint used for this webinar in the **Appendices 7.2**. It was well received and recorded for future use for applicants.

6. General: All required materials all appear to be here but in many separate places and also in multiples. A possible way to address this is to have two Handbooks (similar to what we have done for the Subcommittee and initially attempted in the attachment with a possible outline for doing so): a. One for those who support the certification process including staff and all of the others involved in commissions or committees and b. One for candidates for certification or renewal.

The NACC Certification Commission reviewed this recommendation and determined with those involved in NACC certification have received and continue to review for improvement the procedures and learning methods for introducing and growing in their roles in certification. Thus, a separate handbook was not needed.

Part Three provided our attempt to present all the elements of a handbook to introduce prospective applicants to NACC certification that the SCEMS requests. All of these materials are provided on the NACC website. You will find under the Certification heading the following drop-down menus: <https://www.nacc.org/certification>

- Initial Board Certification
- Renewal of Certification
- Certification Competencies and Procedures

- Certification Leadership
- Mentors
- Recognition of Strategic Partners Board Certification
- Verifying Certification
- Graduate Theological Schools

Under each of these heading, the reader will find further dropdowns to help him/her find the materials and navigate the processes for certification. The website ordering of these materials has proved to be quite effective in introducing members to board certification.

7. The Ethics Procedures Manual is excellent but really ought to be integrated into the other handbooks (as noted above) as either a chapter or key appendix since both the Ethics Review Team and the Ethics Commission are essential elements in the process

We appreciated this recommendation. The Code of Ethics is integrated into the Certification handbooks through the Certification website menu, under the Certification Competencies and Procedures, where the applicant will find the Professional Code of Ethics and the Procedures Manual, along with the important Ethics Accountability Statement one must sign to become Board Certified and every five years for their renewal of certification process. This virtual access to this Code and Procedure Manual is: <https://www.nacc.org/certification/nacc-certification-competencies-and-procedures/professional-code-of-ethics/>

- a. Child Protection and Safe Environment: We also recommend reviewing this manual (or these manuals as recommended) with an eye to “child protection” including items such as “safe environment” training and background checks.

The NACC took two steps to address this. Since the NACC cannot on its own offer a Safe Environment training that would satisfy every diocese, we included in our request for endorsement letter, a clear statement that notes the endorsement received from the ordinary or his representative, is an acknowledgement that the (arch) diocese has taken the steps to ensure our certified members have satisfied the (arch)diocesan expectations for this training and background check. A copy of this letter can be found in **Appendices 2.11**. Also you will find a listing of NACC Policies regarding harassment and the protection of the vulnerable in **Appendices 7.17**.

Secondly, the NACC has added to its Code of Ethics in its Preamble the following statement.

- P.5 Spiritual Care Professionals maintain the highest possible standards of trust in relationship to one another in the interest of the public whom they serve.
P.5.1 Are in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

The NACC Code of Ethics, approved by the USCCBCCA in 2007, now includes this revision is included in Part II of this report. The Ethics Procedures Manual has undergone revision in the past five years. It also is included in Part II for review and approval.

2016 Recommendations

1. Work on Code of Ethics and Supporting Procedures for those involved in the process: We hope that the difficulty faced in addressing the three diverse ethical complaints against NACC members will yield blessings through the lessons learned. We look forward to updates from the Ethics Commission in next year's report.

The Ethics Commission has done good work in revising the Ethical Complaint Procedures to ensure that if a member does not fully cooperate in the process that they understand that these Standards are binding on members. Members are obligated to cooperate with an ethics investigation. Refusal or failure to do so at any point shall be considered grounds for dismissal from NACC. The revised section includes the following:

V. Accountability to the Code of Ethics Standards and Compliance with the Ethics Complaint Process

The NACC Code of Ethics Standard 101.3 states that the Code of Ethics “provides a mechanism for professional accountability” specifically by the following Standards:

- A. The NACC Code of Ethics Standard 102.2 states that Spiritual Care Professionals “are called to nurture their personal health of body, mind and spirit, and be responsible for their personal and professional conduct as they grow in their respect for all living being and the natural environment.” Ethics Procedures Manual, September 2019, Page 4
- B. The NACC Code of Ethics Standard 102.43 of the NACC Code of Ethics states that Spiritual Care Professionals “advocate for professional accountability that protects the public and advances the profession.”
- C. The NACC Code of Ethics Standard 106 states that Spiritual Care Professionals “are accountable to the public, faith communities, employers, and professionals in all professional relationships.” These Standards are binding on members. They are expected of non-members who engage the process.

Members are obligated to cooperate with an ethics investigation. Refusal or failure to do so at any point shall be considered grounds for dismissal from NACC. <https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NACC-Ethics-Procedures-Manual-September-2019.pdf>

2. Background checks and child protection training: We understand the comments made about the fact that most Dioceses also do child protection differently. It is important, however, to understand that beyond criminal checks, child protection training like the online program “Virtus” or one similar it will help members to be pro-active in creating safe environments where they work and knowing what signs of potential abuse to “look for.” We are grateful that the board is looking further into this. We want to affirm that participation in whatever the local dioceses provide may also help to reinforce awareness of the presence of NACC members in the dioceses where they are working.

As mentioned above, under 7a, emphasizing in the Endorsement request letter, that the ordinary's endorsement letter includes the understanding that the chaplain has complied with the (arch)diocesan safe environment and background check policy is working well right now.

3. NACC Strategic Plan: Please advise your board and your certification committee that we are looking forward to learning from you about how you will use the input from your members as you develop a strategic plan for NACC's future.

The NACC Board of Directors created and implemented a dynamic 2018-2020 Plan that included a priority to *Strengthen the Catholic Pastoral Care Ministry*. Each board meeting reviewed progress on the plan.

<https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Composite-of-Strategic-Plan-07.2018.pdf>

In 2020, the NACC Board of Directors created and implemented a 2021-2023 Plan that added a priority, *NACC will promote racial justice among its members and assess/remedy inequities within the association*. <https://www.nacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-23-NACC-Strategic-Plan.2.pdf>

2017 Recommendations

1. We look forward to hearing more in annual reports over the next several years about how the NACC Competency and Certification Commissions work together with the partner organizations to develop the adjusted Associate level certification requirements; CPE Certified Educator information and other reduced competencies for the new specialties for Hospice and Palliative Care.

The NACC has worked with the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) to develop a Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC). Over the past two plus years, NACC and APC have collaborated on this advanced certification process. As noted above, we are including in the [Appendices 7.1](#) a copy of these common competencies. The certification procedures for this PCHAC are already in Part II of this Report in the Procedures Manual (Part Three and Part Fifteen). Since there are not Catholic specific competencies for this advanced certification, the NACC is not asking the SCEMS to review and approve them.

2. It is hoped that the Raskob Funded Collaboration with the Partners in Pastoral Care Ministries and NACC's refinements to the strategic plan will help to ensure that other forms of preparation beyond the board-certified chaplain are achievable and will provide new pathways to pastoral care ministry well into the future.

The NACC is presenting for review and approval in this 2021 Report the Catholic Prison Ministries (CPMC) and NACC three pathways for pastoral care ministry to those affected by incarceration, including the Leadership/Specialization Pathway for Certification. The NACC has worked closely with the CPMC to develop and implement through pilot projects the Foundational and Intensive Pathways. <https://www.nacc.org/cpmc/cpmc-formation/>

The NACC is also presenting for review and approval of the Diocesan Pastoral Care Competencies for the Sick, the Homebound and Older Adults. The NACC has been able to develop national resources on Pastoral Care that are accessible on the NACC website. Most

of these are available in both English and Spanish. <https://www.nacc.org/about-nacc/partners-in-pastoral-care/>

2020 Recommendations

1. Recognizing the crucial work of Catholic chaplains and other health care ministers, what does NACC see as the best ways it can foster and promote spiritual accompaniment among chaplains and others involved in this pastoral work? Also, in what specific ways does NACC seek to enhance skills related to pastoral accompaniment, as articulated by Pope Francis, for its members, and for certified chaplains and leaders? The office notes with appreciation that NACC has regularly been engaged with its members during the current pandemic via regular virtual calls with members, which certainly is one avenue of engagement on these issues. Understanding the effectiveness of these virtual engagements or other resourcing around pastoral accompaniment would be valuable for the subcommittee to receive in a future report.

We appreciate the SCEMS acknowledgement of what NACC has done to support its members during the COVID pandemic. We held several listening sessions per week in the early months of the pandemic, then continued a weekly listening session through the remainder of 2020 and into 2021. We also provided a myriad of guidelines, resources, and other networking opportunities on our COVID Resources webpage (<https://www.nacc.org/resources/coronavirus-resources/>).

Pastoral accompaniment is a core competency for our chaplain members. The 304 Professional Practice Skills Competencies (PPS) include the ability to:

- PPS1: Establish, deepen and conclude professional spiritual care relationships with sensitivity, openness, and respect.
- PPS2: Provide effective spiritual support that contributes to well-being of the care recipients, their families, and staff.

However, the NACC is also focusing two of its 2021 webinars on the theme of pastoral accompaniment. One devoted to the Vatican document, MEMBERS OF ONE BODY, LOVED BY ONE LOVE: Accompanying people in psychological distress in the context of the COVID-19

pandemic (<https://www.humandevelopment.va/en/risorse/documenti/accompagnare-le-persone-in-sofferenza-psicologica-nel-contesto-d.html>). The other on accompanying individuals in a way to assist them to tell their life stories through deep listening. These and our other 2021 webinars can be view on the NACC website at <https://www.nacc.org/education-resources/nacc-webinars-and-audio-conferences/2021-webinar-series-overview-and-registration/>.

2. Furthermore, what are some ways NACC might engage its members – particularly in the health care context – on issues related to restorative justice? While this is an already essential aspect of prison ministries work, considerations of standards or competencies related to restorative justice from a health care ministry perspective may prove beneficial to certification processes in these areas as well. It would be good to get the perspective of NACC on such an approach in its re-approval process or in a future report.

As noted further down in this letter, we added a Catholic Competency, ITP1.3: Recognize both the reality of personal and social sin and demonstrate the power of justice, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation to heal persons and relationships.

This was an important addition, not only because of personal and social sin but also the power of justice, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation, while rooted in our Catholic tradition, pertain to critical issues most care seekers in the midst of victimization, suffering, loss, and end of life experience. We are planning in 2022, as we introduce this new competency to take the opportunity to provide more background and resources on restorative justice, as our members frequently encounter both victims and perpetrators who have been injured in altercations. Knowledge of restorative justice can help provide perspective to our chaplains.

The Significant Changes to NACC's Certification Materials and Procedures Since 2014

1. Revisions to the Common Certification Qualifications and Competencies

In 2015-2016, the NACC collaborated with the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), ACPE The Standard for Spiritual Care and Education (ACPE), the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC/ACSS) and Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains (NAJC) to review and revise the Common Standards. The document was renamed the Common Qualifications and Competencies for Spiritual Care. Our September-October 2017 *Vision* issue was dedicated to educating our members on the revisions. (<https://www.nacc.org/vision/september-october-2017/>) In that issue I wrote an article highlighting the revisions (<https://www.nacc.org/vision/september-october-2017/revise-competencies-took-lot-work-collaboration/>). These revisions did not affect our NACC specific competencies, approved by the SCEMS in 2014. In fact, these Common Competencies added two of the NACC specific competencies on research and facilitation.

IITP6: Articulate how primary research and research literature inform the profession of chaplaincy and one's spiritual care practice.

PPS9: Facilitate group processes, such as family meetings, post trauma, staff debriefing, and support groups.

That work ended in December 2015, and by July 2016, the five associations had reviewed and affirmed the recommended revisions. The revised document included several features:

1. **It has a new title.** It is now called Certification for Professional Spiritual Care: Common Qualifications and Competencies (CQCs) to emphasize:
 1. The core elements of the document: qualification required to apply, and competencies needed to be evidenced, and
 2. Spiritual care versus chaplain, as the Canadian context uses different terminology.

Also, this title distinguishes this document from the Standards of Practice for Professional Chaplains.

<https://www.professionalchaplains.org/content.asp?pl=200&sl=198&contentid=514>

2. It reaffirms qualifications.

1. Endorsement of faith group: The Cognate Partners remain convinced of the essential link between spiritual care and being rooted in one's faith/spiritual

tradition, whatever it may be. The spiritual care provider respects and fosters respect for every faith expression, while his or her professional role is rooted in the authority or commissioning of one's own tradition.

2. Academic preparation from nationally accredited schools: In the highly professional peer environment within which these spiritual care providers work, possessing a graduate-level degree from nationally accredited academic institutions remains of paramount importance.
3. Four units of CPE from CASC or ACPE centers: In the United States, APC, NACC, and NAJC remain committed to the requirement that spiritual care professionals receive clinical pastoral education in professional clinical settings that are recognized and accredited by the U.S. Department of Education.

3. **It adds competencies.** It adds competencies based on the development and demands of the profession related to research literacy (ITP6), understanding organizational cultural and business principles and practices (OL3), a more expanded requirement to formulate and utilize, along with spiritual assessments, interventions, outcomes, and care plans that are all professional chaplain expectations for effective care (PPS10), greater self-examination (PIC1), and expanded group facilitation skills (PPS9).
4. **It provides greater content consistency and clarity of language.** Several adjustments were made to the document for greater consistency and clarity, including terms used so that competencies can be utilized in diverse settings, with diverse care recipients and diverse faith groups.

<https://www.nacc.org/certification/nacc-certification-competencies-and-procedures/common-standards/>

2. Revisions/additions to the NACC Catholic Competencies

The NACC Competencies Commission reviewed the ACLEM standards and created a crosswalk that helped identify competencies that could be added to this revised version. This crosswalk can be found in the **Appendices 7.3**.

The revisions are the following:

1. We moved the theological competencies from under the Common competency:
ITP2: Incorporate a working knowledge of psychological and sociological disciplines and religious beliefs and practices in the provision of spiritual care.

To the Common competency:

ITP1: Articulate an approach to spiritual care, **rooted in one's faith/spiritual tradition** that is integrated with a theory of professional practice.

ITP1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Vatican II and Post Vatican II documents of the Church, Systematic/Foundational Theology, Scripture, Theology of the Trinity, Christology, Ecclesiology, Sacramental Theology, Catholic Social Teaching, Canon Law, Ecumenical and Interreligious Practice.

ITP1.2 Articulate an understanding of one's baptismal call and chaplaincy as a ministry of the church.

ITP1.3 Recognize both the reality of personal and social sin and demonstrate the power of justice, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation to heal persons and relationships.

As these Catholic competencies pertain to being rooted in one's faith/spiritual tradition, they seemed more appropriate here.

2. We added ITP1.3:

ITP1.3 Recognize both the reality of personal and social sin and demonstrate the power of justice, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation to heal persons and relationships.

This was an important addition, not only because of personal and social sin but also the power of justice, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation, while rooted in our Catholic tradition, pertain to critical issues most care seekers in the midst of victimization, suffering, loss, and end of life experience.

3. We also added to the Common competency PPS2: Provide effective spiritual support that contributes to well-being of the care recipients, their families, and staff.

PPS2.1 Possess an appropriate level of comfort and proficiency with contemporary communication technology and be able to employ it in spiritual care.

This was an important addition given the context of the past 18 months of virtual ministry during the pandemic, and the move to virtual interviewing of applicants for certification. Virtual forms of pastoral care ministry in some forms will remain part of future service.

4. Finally, we added to the Common competency PPS7: Develop, coordinate, and facilitate public worship/spiritual practices appropriate to diverse settings and needs.

PPS7.1 Demonstrate the ability to integrate sacred art, music, and space for liturgical celebrations and communal prayer.

While board certified chaplains need to be prepared to develop, coordinate and facilitate a variety of public worship/spiritual practices, such as memorials for those who died or bereavement services, the unique Catholic contribution include the ability to integrate sacred art, music, and space for liturgies. In hospital or long term care facilities it is often the Catholic chaplain who oversees those sacred spaces.

3. The integration of the National Conference of Veteran Affairs Catholic Chaplains (NCVACC) Certification (BCC-VA)

Over the past two years, we have integrated the NCVACC certification process with our NACC procedures. In Part Two, you will find that we included separately the specific NCVACC Competencies for your review. The NCVACC Competencies already include the Common Competencies and the NACC Catholic Competencies, thus the NCVACC specific competencies are included for your review. You will find on the NACC website a dedicated webpage for the NCVACC members who became NACC members for their certification (<https://www.nacc.org/certification/va-initial-board-certified/>) as well as a section for BCC-VA certified chaplains who now maintain certification through the NACC

(<https://www.nacc.org/certification/renewal-of-certification/>). You will see that it provides a very clear step-by-step process for an applicant to follow, along with specific requirements for the BCC-VA.

- **Narrative Statement III VA Specific Competencies Writing Guide.** This writing guide will assist you in writing your Narrative Statement II for VA-Specific Competencies. (Appendices 1.12)
- **Narrative Statement III VA Specific Competencies Template.** This template will assist you in formatting your Narrative II Statement for VA-Specific Competencies. (Appendices 1.13)

Also, NACC made sure there was immediate BCC-VA representation on both its Certification Commission and its Competencies Commission. In the case of the Ethics Commission, we will need to identify a BCC-VA chaplain to join that Commission.

4. The addition of a new Certified Associate Chaplain (CAC) certification

Much discussion and preparation went into creating this new CAC certification. Several NACC leaders who lead their Catholic health care spiritual care services noted that from a human resource vantage point there were not positions dedicated to this type of associate chaplain, and there might not be a market for such a certification. However, the Certification Commission did decide to move forward with this offering. So far, there has been only one applicant for this CAC offering. You will find a webpage dedicated to introducing an interested person to the CAC offering and all the necessary documentation.

<https://www.nacc.org/certification/initial-cac-certification-materials/>

The main differences between the CAC and the BCC are in the:

- **Qualifications** where a Master's Degree is not required but graduate-level theology hours are still required; where only two versus four units of CPE are required, and where 1,000 hours of ministry needs to be evidenced.
 - Have completed **at least thirty-two (32) graduate-level hours** of theological study from an accredited institution, pastoral formation program, diocesan ministerial training program, or professional ministry program. **Applicants must complete the Certified Associate Chaplaincy Education form with relevant documentation no later than nine (9) weeks before the application deadline. The form can be found [here](#).**
 - Have completed an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution.
 - Have completed a minimum of **two (2) units of CPE** from an accredited ACPE, USCCB/CCA, or CASC/ACSS CPE Center.
 - Have completed a minimum of **one thousand (1,000) ministry hours post-CPE** experience through employment and/or volunteer ministry hours.
- **Competencies** where an applicant must meet all the same BCC Common Competencies except for the Organizational Leadership (OL) Competencies. The applicant must also still meet all the NACC Specific Competencies. You can see the Narrative Writing Guide for further detail in [Appendices 1.14](#).

5. Development of the Partners of Pastoral Care Competencies

Since 2016, the NACC convened and collaborated with several Catholic ministry organizations to explore the need for and develop national pastoral care competencies to begin to develop pathways for formation and credentialing. In 2017, we completed four sets of pastoral care competencies:

- Criminal Justice Ministry Pastoral Care Competencies ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Diocesan Pastoral Care Competencies for the Sick, the Homebound and Older Adults ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Elder Pastoral Care Competencies ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Permanent Deacon Pastoral Care Competencies ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))

The SCEMS has graciously received updates on the Partners work, and initially reviewed in fall of 2017 a set of the Competencies. The 2019 NACC National Conference highlighted these developments, including workshops by NACC members who were piloting training programs for volunteers in pastoral care ministry. As noted, NACC has a webpage dedicated to these resources.

The NACC in this review is submitting the Diocesan Pastoral Care Competencies for the Sick, the Homebound and Older Adults ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)) for your review and approval. We have not yet developed the Pathways for Formation and Certification for these competencies. However, that will be our next venture, once we have implemented the Criminal Justice Pastoral Care Competencies and the three Pathways.

6. Development and Implementation of the Criminal Justice Pastoral Care Competencies and Pathways, and the Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition (CPMC) Partnership

When the Criminal Justice Ministry Pastoral Care Competencies were developed in 2017, we did not foresee the major initiative of discernment held by the Catholic Mobilizing Network, the USCCB's Offices of Certification, Domestic Social Justice and Peace, and Governmental Relations, and the non-active American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association (ACCCA) regarding the need for support, resources, and certification to set standards for Catholics ministering to those affected by incarceration. In April 2018 representatives of National Catholic organizations that minister to the wide range of people affected by incarceration/detention gathered at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC to commit themselves to respond to the need for support, resources, and certification to set standards for Catholics ministering to those affected by incarceration. Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition (CPMC) was launched that April 2018, as the stakeholders quickly determined that they needed a national networking resource. In May 2020, the NACC became the Fiscal Sponsor of CPMC <https://www.nacc.org/cpmc/>.

The NACC headed the CPMC Formation Committee, and the Committee began working in June 2018 to create three Pathways for Formation and Credentialing:

- **Foundational Pathway:** a basic preparation for those volunteering in this ministry, resulting in a certificate.

- **Intensive Pathway:** a Pastoral Care Formation Program structured on the CPE model, resulting in a certificate, as a prerequisite for becoming certified at the Leadership/Specialization Pathway.
- **Leadership/Specialization Pathway:** a certification qualifications, competencies, and procedure toward becoming a Certified Catholic Correctional Chaplain.
<https://www.nacc.org/cpmc/cpmc-formation/#1611103980322-115f8bb3-7059>

NACC and CPMC piloted in spring 2020 the **Foundation Pathway** program with participants from the Archdioceses of Santa Fe and New Orleans; and have now completed the program with the Archdiocese of Seattle. We are now involved with the Archdiocese of Portland. Several other dioceses have expressed interest. The **Intensive Pathway** program is currently being piloted (May 2021-February 2022) with a nationally represented group.

The NACC is presenting to the SCEMS these two Pathways, along with the **Leadership/Specialization Pathway** certification qualifications and procedures for review and approval.

Final Introductory Remarks

In presenting this NACC report for the SCEMS review and approval, we approached the recommended SCEMS templates with appreciation. They helped us ensure we were covering all the expected elements of each part. The reviewers should be able to follow adequately the content.

In Part One, we followed the template closely, allowing the reader to follow well.

In Part Two, we provided a table of contents which shows us presenting each of the competencies with a brief introduction to each, then the Procedures Handbook toward the end that includes the procedures for all the Certification processes.

- BCC materials include the qualifications, competencies and procedures
- BCC-VA materials will only include its qualifications, and the VA special competencies along with its procedures
- CAC materials will include its qualifications, competencies, and procedures
- NAC/CPMC Criminal Justice Ministry Pastoral Care Competencies will include an overview of the Pathways, and the Qualifications and Procedures for the Certified Catholic Correctional Chaplain (CCCC)
- Diocesan Pastoral Care Competencies for the Sick, the Homebound and Older Adults will only be the English version
- The Professional Code of Ethics is included with the highlighted addition on Safe Environment in the Preamble
- The Ethics Procedures Manual as it has undergone significant changes to clarify processes needed due to the ethics cases encountered over recent years. The final revisions to this edition were added July 29, 2021.
- The entire Certification Procedures Manual for all certifications.

In Part Three, we followed as best we could the Certification Handbook template, and, where appropriate providing links to the NACC website or references to the Appendix. The NACC has utilized the website, webinars, and recordings to inform and update both those involved in the

interview process and prospective applicants.

In Part Four, we combined both PDFs of documents and links to the NACC website where appropriate.

We hope this introductory letter can serve as an executive summary for this report. We look forward to reviewing this with the SCEMS.

Blessings in the ministry,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Lichter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'D'.

David A. Lichter DMin
Executive Director