



from the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc.

## Retaking the Exam

*I did not pass (or did not take) the NCE.*

*How can I retake the exam? How long are applications held open?*

We hold applications open for a two-year time period from the original exam date for which you applied or 3 unsuccessful attempts to pass the NCE, whichever comes first. Note: "not taking" the NCE does not count as one of your three attempts to pass. Only failing scores count as one of the three attempts.

The NCE is given every April and every October.

*What if I don't want to re-register immediately?*

If you are not interested in re-registering immediately, just ignore the re-registration form you received. Every six months, NBCC will automatically mail you a re-registration form. You can expect to receive re-registration forms during October and April. The re-registration form is simple to complete. It's important to pay attention to the deadlines, however.

Note: To make sure you receive a re-registration form in the mail, please keep us updated on any changes to your mailing address. Changes of address should be sent in writing via mail, e-mail, or fax.

*What does it cost to re-register?*

There is a \$120 re-registration fee. The fee is the same amount whether you did not take or did not pass the exam. Note: If a personal or family medical emergency prevented you from testing, you may request a waiver of the re-registration fee. Requests for fee waivers must be submitted in writing. They are considered on a case-by-case basis and not always approved.

*What paperwork is required for me to retake? Where can I take the exam?*

The answer to both those questions depends entirely on your graduation status: have you completed your degree? Or are you still in school?

Let's say you want to re-take the exam on the next date it is offered, which is October 21, 2006. The deadline to re-register for that exam is July 15, 2006. Please read the options below, and find the one that applies to your situation.

### If you've graduated before the re-registration deadline

You'll need to submit all the documentation requested on the re-registration form you receive. There are two potential pieces of documentation: 1) a sealed, official transcript showing your master's degree awarded and 2) a Counseling Supervisor's Endorsement Form. If we've already received one of these items from you, then it won't be requested again.

To ensure a seat for the exam, follow the re-registration form's instructions for choosing an examination site. You may subsequently ask your school for permission to test on-campus; the school must inform NBCC of its approval.

## Study Tips

One key to a successful examination score is the quality of the study environment you construct in the weeks and months prior to the examination. Here are some concrete suggestions:

- ✓ Designate a consistent place for study which is quiet and relatively free of distractions, a place you automatically associate with studying.
- ✓ Whenever possible, study at a consistent time of the day or the week.
- ✓ Divide the material you need to study into small units. Set realistic time goals for completing each unit.
- ✓ If your mind wanders, stand up and face away from your books. The physical act of standing up helps bring your thinking back to the job.
- ✓ Make a list of key words most useful in explaining the idea or content of the lesson.
- ✓ Test yourself or have someone test you on the material to find out what your weak and strong areas are. You can use the review questions or practice tests.
- ✓ Don't study later than the time you usually go to sleep; you may fall asleep or be tempted to go to sleep. Instead try studying in the afternoon or early evening.

See *Study* on page 3

## What's the Big Deal?

*Passing the NCE and completing the additional steps for national certification are all well and good, but is it important? What's the value of the NCC credential?*

We're glad you asked since this is one of our favorite topics. The issue can get confusing because there are two distinctly different counseling "badges" you can earn that are referred to similarly: national credential and state credential (often called state license).

There are several benefits of the national credential:

- National recognition of basic standards of practice
- Enforceable professional Code of Ethics
- Powerful career development tool
- Advocacy and public education services through NBCC

The NCC (National Certified Counselor) credential is the counseling field's only

general practice credential on the national level. It is a completely voluntary credentialing process, developed within the profession itself to set necessary and sufficient basic standards for counselor preparation.

State credentialing earns you the right to call yourself state-licensed or state-certified (licensed professional counselor is the most common term) and makes it legal for you to practice independently in your state. With the exception of California and Nevada, all states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico regulate the practice of counseling.

*If my state requires licensure in order to practice, why follow through and become an NCC?* To start, being an NCC makes you part of a large professional group which is self-regulating. The profession itself sets and maintains its own standards and has its own adjudication system for those who violate the Code of Ethics. In essence, it

prefers self-regulation over government regulation, though it supports and promotes the latter in our complex society.

From an individual perspective, you can use the NCC designation to promote your career and your practice. Some employers require the NCC credential. Unlike state credentials, national certification is not affected by individual laws in each state. This is your portable counselor credential. If you are seeking state licensure or state certification, odds are good that your state licensing board will allow you to transfer your NCE score for use in the licensure process. In fact, most states use NBCC as their "testing company" for credentialing purposes. For most counseling professionals today, it makes sense to hold both the national and state credential.

## Your NCE Results and State Credentialing

When you applied for NBCC's National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential, you set into motion an important credentialing process. Passing the NCE is one step in this process. If you follow the instructions provided by NBCC, once you pass the NCE, the remaining steps in your NCC credentialing process will be quite simple. You will be very proud of your hard-earned counselor credential; there is no doubt that it will open professional doors throughout your career.

Passing the NCE has other benefits, too. Did you know that a passing NCE score is one requirement for state counselor licensure/ certification in 39 states and the District of Columbia? California and Nevada are the only two states that have not yet enacted counselor credentialing laws. State counselor credentialing laws and requirements vary, but the purpose of state laws is public protection through a mandated regulatory process. If you plan to work as a private practitioner, state law actually requires that you obtain the necessary state credential. We

recommend that you begin reviewing your state's credentialing process, so you will be familiar with all their requirements well in advance of applying.

If you work in a school setting or in an agency under the supervision of another mental health or medical professional, you may not be required to obtain your state's counselor credential. We still recommend becoming acquainted with your state's laws regarding general counseling practice, as your professional plans may change, laws may change, and your employing organization's policies may change and require licensure in the future.

State educational requirements vary, as do post-master's experience and supervision requirements. If you are planning on becoming state credentialed at some time in the future, it's a good idea to not only review the current state requirements, but to stay up-to-date on state credentialing issues. Your state's counseling association is a good source

for information about state credentialing. You may link to your state counselor credentialing board through NBCC's website. Simply go to [www.nbcc.org/stateboardmap](http://www.nbcc.org/stateboardmap), scroll down to the bottom, select your state, and click on the link to the state counselor credentialing board. Many websites provide detailed instructions for individuals planning to apply.

## STUDENTWORKS

a service of [nbcc](http://www.nbcc.org)

- Preparing students for the growing world of counseling
  - An internet resource created by NBCC and designed for students who are preparing for a career in counseling.

<http://studentworks.nbcc.org>

**If you will still be in school on the future date you wish to test**

Since you have not yet graduated, you will not have to submit a transcript or a Counseling Supervisor's Endorsement Form in order to re-register. We won't require these items until you've re-taken (or taken) the exam.

If we've mistakenly asked for a transcript or Counseling Supervisor's Form on your re-registration form, be sure to complete Section A on the reverse side of the form. Filling out Section A is your way of telling us that you're still a student.

Since you'll still be in school, the only place you can take the exam is on your university's campus. If your university decides not to offer the exam in October 2006, you simply cannot test on that date. You will have to wait.

If your university will be offering the exam on October 21, 2006 you may request to test on campus by contacting your GSA-NCC campus coordinator who in turn will notify NBCC.

You'll have to complete and return the re-registration form to NBCC by the deadline. Remember, you must turn in the form and fee in order to re-register.

**If you're still in school on the re-registration deadline, but you graduate before the actual exam date**

You will not have to submit a transcript in order to re-register. (We won't require a transcript until you take or re-take the exam.) If we've asked for a transcript on your re-registration form, be sure to complete Section A on the reverse side of the form. Filling out Section A is your way of telling us that you're still a student. As soon as possible, after your graduate, you should have your official, final

transcript sent to us.

You will need to submit a completed Counseling Supervisor's Endorsement Form. If you have extenuating circumstances and cannot submit the form, please contact NBCC for permission to re-register without submitting it. Please have a valid reason for your request.

To ensure a seat for the exam, follow the re-registration form's instructions for choosing an examination site. You may subsequently ask your school for permission to test on-campus; the school must inform NBCC of its approval.

You must complete and return the re-registration form to NBCC by the deadline. Don't forget that you must turn in the form and fee in order to re-register.

***I missed the cut score by just a few points. Can I have my exam re-scored?***

If an exam is within two points of the cut score, the Examinations Department automatically re-scores that exam by hand. However, if you'd like to have your exam re-scored, then please do the following:

- 1) Submit a written request to have your exam re-scored, including your name and identification number. This number is located above your name on the score report.
- 2) Include the fee \$25 made payable to NBCC.
- 3) Submit your request and fee to:  
NBCC Examinations Department /  
PO Box 7407/ Greensboro, NC  
27417-0407.

If you have questions about having your exam re-scored, you can send an e-mail to the Examinations Department:  
[examinations@nbcc.org](mailto:examinations@nbcc.org).

***Study continued***

If you are a morning person try studying in the morning.

- ✓ Sometimes working with others can help illustrate which material is understood and which isn't. If you can answer questions and explain concepts to others, odds are you know the information well. Otherwise you'll realize what you need to study some more.
- ✓ Cycle between working alone and working with others. Work alone to master concepts and information. Work with others to test your true understanding.
- ✓ Use a variety of study techniques.
- ✓ Use a reminder pad in your study area for jotting down extraneous things that occur to you which are unrelated to your studying. This technique will allow you to resume studying more quickly without the worry of forgetting something important.
- ✓ Study actively: ask yourself questions, review your notes regularly, and discuss key concepts with peers.

Adapted from Study Skills Self-help Information on Virginia Tech's Division of Student Affairs website ([www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/control.html](http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/control.html).)

***Looking for Study Aids?***

Find a list of vendors offering various study materials and programs at

<http://www.nbcc.org/study>

NBCC does not endorse or uphold any claims made by vendors of study materials listed nor does NBCC guarantee enhanced performance on any NBCC exam as a result of using study materials.