



NCTRC News

A publication of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification

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A Message from the Chair

Betsy S. Kennedy, EdM, CTRS
*Chair of the NCTRC
Board of Directors*

It is hard to believe that it has been 25 years since the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) was established by the National Recreation and Park Association Board of Trustees. Drifting back to 1981, Ronald Reagan was President, MTV debuted with "Video Killed the Radio Star", *Hill Street Blues* and *Captain Kangaroo* were still on television, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* was in the movie theaters. That all seems like so long ago!

NCTRC was established in 1981 but the journey toward establishing the CTRS credential actually began as early as 1953 when the Council for the Advancement of Hospital Recreation (CAHR) was established. A total of 68 individuals were granted registration by CAHR during their first review. Memory benchmarks for 1953 are that General Dwight D. Eisenhower was President, *I Love Lucy* was still on television, and a first class stamp cost \$0.03. Now that really seems like a long time ago!

The TR profession has been working hard for a very long time to establish the credential that we are so proud of today. We have increased from 68

individuals first registered in hospital recreation to over 15,000 Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists today. That is a level of growth we should all be proud of!

So much has been accomplished to develop and promote the CTRS credential during this 25-year time span. In the 1980s, NCTRC hired its first full-time Executive Director, Dr. Peg Connolly. The initial Job Analysis Study was conducted, and NCTRC contracted with the Educational Testing Service to develop the first national certification exam. In 1987 there were 9,000 CTRSs.

In the 1990s NCTRC grew to about 13,000 CTRSs. In 1990 the first NCTRC exam was

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Celebrating
25 years
1981-2006

Looking Back with an Eye Toward the Future

Bob Riley, Ph.D., CTRS
Executive Director of NCTRC

This is a significant year for NCTRC. It marks 25 years of continued progress toward promoting the field of therapeutic recreation and its professional credential, the CTRS.

As we review these past years there are many significant events that stand in testimony to the outstanding leadership and commitment that past Boards of

Directors possessed in developing the NCTRC certification program. Establishing organizational independence, developing a national exam, and securing accreditation by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA) are among the many outstanding achievements that are part of NCTRC's legacy. However, accomplishing such monumental tasks didn't come without a great deal of hard work, dedication, and a measured degree of risk taking. As tempting as it may be, now is not the time to rest. Although we may be permitted to indulge for a spell in

the congratulatory mood that a 25th anniversary creates, there is still much that needs to be accomplished in order for NCTRC to succeed during its next 25 years.

NCTRC remains mindful that the world is an ever-changing place.

NCTRC remains mindful that the world is an ever-changing place. The social-political

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A Message from the Chair

administered and a recertification plan was adopted shortly thereafter. The CTRS credential program was accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA) in 1993, and NCTRC purchased its own building in New City, New York in 1997.

In 2001 NCTRC entered into the computer age! Online verification was offered through the NCTRC website and the first computer-based exam was administered. Today, the web page offers on-line processing of applications and the acceptance of credit card payment for all transactions. Recertification has become a more streamlined process, and NCTRC has grown to include 15,000 CTRSs.

As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of NCTRC we must think ahead to what the next 25 years will hold for the profession and for the CTRS credential. What will the health and human service industry look like in 2031? One wonders what illnesses and disabilities will no longer exist because cures have been found. Imagine how hospitals and nursing homes will change. Will individuals with disabilities be more fully integrated into their communities?

The profession and NCTRC will face many challenges in the next 25 years. We must continue to promote and develop the CTRS credential. Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists must increase their efforts in promoting the CTRS credential to employers, state and national officials, and to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

By 2031, hopefully every nursing home will be required to hire a CTRS. Likewise, accreditation agencies should require a CTRS in inpatient and outpatient hospital settings. The CTRS must also be the required credential to provide therapeutic recreation services in community based agencies.

NCTRC and the CTRS credential have come a long way and have gained prominence during the past 25 years, but our work is not done! There is still so much more to do to promote the credential and the profession. This will only happen with the hard work and dedication of all Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists. The year 2031 is right around the corner – we must remain proactive and dedicated to the vision!

(Continued from page 1)

Looking Back with an Eye Toward the Future

environment that existed when NCTRC was first founded in 1981 is no longer evident in 2006. Today, success as a health related profession demands an acute sense of business savvy, coupled with the ability to identify windows of opportunity. One such opportunity that NCTRC is exploring is international expansion.

As recreation therapy practice takes hold in other countries around the world, so too does the need to become professionally credentialed. At the present time there are approximately 150 individuals who maintain the CTRS credential and who reside in any one of 10 different countries. The therapeutic recreation process can be found in many different cultures but most likely it is called by a different name and perhaps without direct professional oversight. The expansion of the CTRS certification beyond U.S. borders however, comes with identified caveats and potential obstacles. Recent discussions with Canadian recreation therapists revealed the following list of concerns:

- *Nationalism:* RTs in other countries may want their own certification program.
- *Language Barriers:* All certification materials must be printed in official languages.
- *Educational Curriculum:* Certification requirements must be adapted to different educational systems.
- *Job Analysis:* The practice of TR may differ significantly from country to country.

In an effort to resolve these issues, NCTRC continues to have on-going dialogue with several groups regarding the adoption of the CTRS credential as the recognized international mark of competence for TR practice.

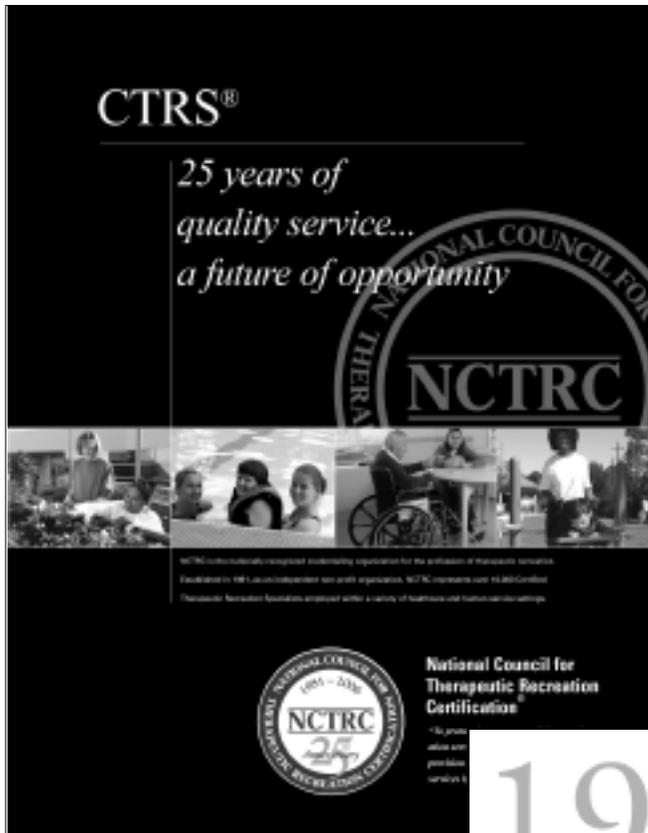
On another front, NCTRC is currently exploring opportunities to develop additional certification and sub-certification programs related to the broad range of practice that exists within TR. Since its inception, the CTRS mark has been promoted as the all-encompassing professional credential representing the many aspects of practice within therapeutic recreation. NCTRC has recently established an ad hoc committee to study the feasibility of developing a series of sub-specialty certifications that could exist as components of the CTRS credential or as separate stand-alone credentialing programs.

Additionally, the NCTRC Board of Directors has conducted preliminary discussions to address the potential of NCTRC expansion beyond the CTRS credential to include other credentialing programs related to areas such as long term care, adaptive sports, transitional services, and/or community based inclusion services. Further discussions to determine the feasibility of developing additional credentialing programs are planned for the coming year and will include feedback from established focus groups and concerned practitioners.

As we forge ahead to the next developmental milestone, NCTRC will build upon its legacy of success from its first 25 years. The issues of international expansion and specialty certification are among several opportunities that will be addressed by NCTRC. In the coming year, NCTRC will engage in a formal strategic planning process to determine the feasibility of implementing many of these ventures. In the meantime, NCTRC welcomes your thoughts on the subject. Please contact me directly if you care to share your input (briley@nctrc.org).

Here's to the next 25 years of NCTRC progress!

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary



This year marks the 25th Anniversary of NCTRC and the inception of the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS) Certification Program. The success of NCTRC throughout this quarter century life span is a credit to the thousands of recreation therapists who have held the CTRS credential at one time or another during their TR careers.

During this time of congratulatory acknowledgements, we must also pay tribute to the hundreds of professionals who have served within the governance structure of NCTRC throughout the years as board members, standing committee members, ad hoc committee members, and/or as staff members. In total, NCTRC has emerged to be a mosaic organization that truly represents and unifies the many facets that exist within the practice of therapeutic recreation.

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, NCTRC has created a new logo, designed a commemorative CTRS pin, created a celebratory poster, and produced a legacy booklet that depicts the significant milestones of NCTRC development. Perhaps our most significant anniversary event is the celebration we are planning at the NCTRC

Annual Certificants Meeting on September 15th in Orlando, Florida.

The Annual Meeting will feature a short business meeting followed by a festive reception program involving hundreds of CTRSs. Preliminary plans call for a cash bar and light hors d' oeuvres. We plan to have an anniversary cake and an array of displays and speakers. We wish to encourage all who have contributed to

the growth of NCTRC to attend the Annual Meeting and the 25th Anniversary celebration in Orlando.



1981
a Legacy of Achievement
2006

2006 Annual Certificants Meeting

Each year, NCTRC conducts its Annual Meeting for CTRSs at the professional conferences of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) and the National Therapeutic Recreation Society (NTRS). The official meeting this year will be held in Orlando, Florida at the 2006 ATRA Annual Conference. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Omni Orlando Resort on Friday, September 15, 2006 at 5:30pm. NCTRC will also sponsor a meeting for CTRSs at the NTRS/NRPA Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington. The meeting will be held at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Thursday, October 12, 2006.

The NCTRC Annual Meeting of Certificants is a valuable opportunity for NCTRC to share information regarding current activities and introduce the Board of Directors, Committees, and Staff. NCTRC has several exciting projects underway that we look forward to sharing with you. We especially want to share our 25th Anniversary celebration with you. We hope that you will attend the meeting at either conference site. If you are unable to attend, please contact NCTRC with any concerns or suggestions you may have about the CTRS credentialing program.

NCTRC Sponsors Job Analysis Study

NCTRC is currently in the process of conducting its third National Job Analysis Study. The Council has completed two previous studies, the first was completed in 1988 and a follow-up study was completed in 1996. The Job Analysis Study is a critical component in the effort to maintain a valid and reliable exam program.

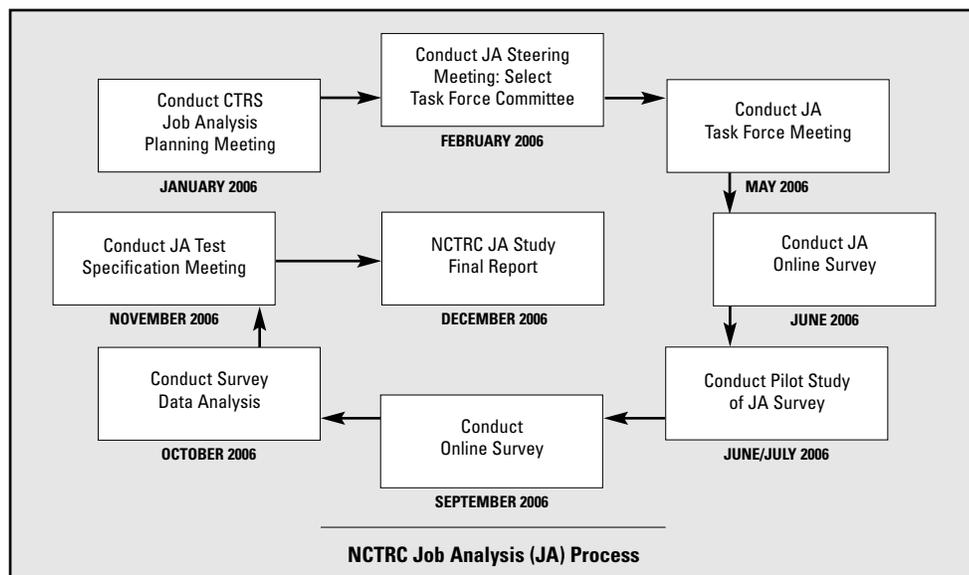
A **Job Analysis (JA)** refers to procedures designed to obtain descriptive information about the tasks performed within a given profession and the important knowledge needed to competently perform such tasks. The JA study is of critical importance to the establishment and maintenance of a standardized national certification exam. The knowledge and skills identified via the JA study become the content basis of the certification exam. When the NCTRC exam is linked directly to professional practice, there is greater assurance of its relevance to the process of therapeutic recreation.

In addition, a well-designed job analysis should reflect the diversity that exists within the profession. Diversity refers to regional or job context factors (e.g., geographic region, practice setting) and to subject matter expert factors (e.g., professional experience in the profession, gender and/or ethnicity). By asking people of diverse backgrounds to rate the importance of tasks and knowledge, fairness is built into the certification process from the start. If diverse people perceive the job in similar ways, then that perception can be applied in support of including that content in the credentialing examination.

The verification component plays a critical part in ensuring that the content area is judged to be relevant to the professional work being evaluated. The verified list of important tasks and knowledge can be used in the development of test specifications for certification examinations. The major aim of conducting a job analysis is to develop a concise and logical compilation of what professionals do in specific terms that can be readily communicated and understood.

What are the steps to completing a JA Study?

NCTRC has contracted with Thomson Prometric (formerly called the Chauncey Group International) of Princeton, New Jersey to complete the 2006 JA study. Thomson Prometric and NCTRC have a long and productive working relationship. In fact, Thomson Prometric completed the first two JA studies and currently administers the NCTRC certification exam.



In order to complete the job analysis study three distinct committees were formulated. The committees include: 1) Task Force Committee, 2) Pilot Survey Committee and 3) Test Specification Committee.

The **Task Force Committee** will review and revise the current list of tasks and knowledge areas for competent practice in therapeutic recreation. This committee will also participate in the review of the job analysis survey instrument.

The **Pilot Survey Committee** will review the job analysis survey. A copy of the survey is reviewed by each committee member for the purpose of ensuring that the instrument is clear, easy to follow, and reflective of therapeutic recreation practice.

The **Test Specification Committee** will review the results of the survey and convert the findings into the test specification for the NCTRC exam.

NCTRC solicited nominations for these committees by advertising at national therapeutic recreation conferences and posting a flyer on the NCTRC website and newsletter. In the request for nominations it was emphasized that NCTRC was seeking nominees representing the diversity of practice settings in therapeutic recreation, various levels of practice, as well as geographic and ethnic diversity. A total of 55 individuals were nominated and 34 individuals were appointed to the three JA committees.

Response to the JA Survey

Study participants will be asked to rate the importance of the knowledge and tasks delineated on the job analysis inventory. For each item listed on the survey, respondents will be asked to rate it according to the following question:

“Regardless of the amount of time spent, how important is competence in this activity for a newly-certified therapeutic recreation specialist if they are to adequately serve and protect the consumer?”

- 0 of no importance
- 1 of little importance
- 2 moderately important
- 3 important
- 4 very important

All currently active CTRSs will be requested to participate in the job analysis survey which will be administered in September, 2006.

The Task Force Committee

The Task Force Committee consists of nine CTRSs. The committee participated in a two day meeting at the end of May. The purpose of the meeting was to delineate the work performed by professionals who possess the CTRS credential. During the meeting, the committee examined the major topic areas along with the major tasks performed by CTRSs and the knowledge necessary for competent performance. The role of the committee members was to provide expertise about the work performed by CTRSs. The material produced by the Task Force Committee will be incorporated into an online survey that will be distributed to all CTRSs for their review.

NCTRC is proud to announce the individuals who participated as members of the 2006 JA Task Force Committee:

Doug Boleyn, CTRS, IA
Julie Bradwell, CTRS, NC
Sarah Burnett-Wolle, CTRS, NY
Linda Elias, CTRS, NY
Denise Graham, CTRS, IL
Kathryn Jones, CTRS, LA
Shelly Oda, CTRS, UT
Nancy Vander Molen, CTRS, NY
Nannette Vliet, CTRS, PA

The Pilot Survey Committee

The survey instrument containing the knowledge and task items was subjected to a pilot study to determine its effectiveness for data collection. A total of 18 individuals agreed to participate in this phase of the study.

NCTRC is proud to announce the individuals who participated as members of the 2006 JA Pilot Survey Committee:

Mildred Bryan, CTRS, SC
Beth Dietrich, CTRS, AZ
William Dunn, CTRS, MD
Holly Eichner, CTRS, OH
Laura Galka, CTRS, NY
Karen Gray, CTRS, OK
Karen Grote, CTRS, OH
April Kosior, CTRS, OH
Don Magnuson, CTRS, MN
Suzanne Melcher, CTRS, NC
Sondra Otukoya, CTRS, MD
Heather Porter, CTRS, PA
Heather Sedletzeck, CTRS, IN
Marcia Smith, CTRS, MD
Diane Wagner-Heffner, CTRS, MI
Fran Wehlage, CTRS, IN
Jeff Witman, CTRS, PA
Melissa Zahl, CTRS, UT

Results of the Job Analysis Survey

After the results of the survey are analyzed, Thomson Prometric will present a final report of the Job Analysis Study to the NCTRC JA Steering Committee. Based upon the findings of the study, the Steering Committee will offer recommendations for further test development and revision of the NCTRC Certification Exam to the NCTRC Board of Directors.

NCTRC will notify all active CTRSs via email and/or postcard when the Job Analysis Survey becomes available for completion.

**Please complete the survey...
 your input is extremely
 important!**

The Test Specification Committee

In November 2006, the Test Specification Committee will participate in a two-day meeting to review the results of the survey and convert the findings into the test specifications for the NCTRC exam.

NCTRC is proud to announce the individuals who will participate as members of the 2006 JA Test Specification Committee:

Denise Graham, CTRS, IL
Elizabeth Hall, CTRS, MD
Maureen Meador, CTRS, GA
Wayne Pollock, CTRS, VA
Chris Richard, CTRS, ON, Canada
Deborah Robinson, CTRS, NH
Heather Sedletzeck, CTRS, IN
Leland Slaughter, CTRS, UT
Nannette Vliet, CTRS, PA

NCTRC would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee members. Their hard work and dedication to the field of therapeutic recreation is truly appreciated.



The Job Analysis Task Force Committee

Back row L-R: Sarah Burnett-Wolle, Anne Porter, Heewon Yang, Doug Boleyn, Bob Riley, Kathy Coyle, Kathryn Jones
Front row L-R: Nancy Vander Molen, Jeanne Douglass, Denise Graham, Noelle Molloy, Shelly Oda, Julie Bradwell, Nannette Vliet, Nancy Thomas

NCTRC Welcomes New Board Members

NCTRC is proud to recognize four new members to its Board of Directors.

Mary Ann Devine, Ed.D., CTRS is an Associate Professor at Kent State University in Ohio. She possesses a BS degree in Recreation and Parks/Therapeutic Recreation from University of Northern Colorado and a MS degree from Nova University in Human Service Administration. Her doctorate is from the University of Georgia in Recreation and Leisure Studies. Mary Ann will serve on the Board from 2006 to 2009.

Andrew Ritcey, MA, CTRS is employed as a Health Services Manager with the Capital District Health Authority in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. He manages the Recreation Therapy Department at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre and the Dartmouth General Hospital. Andrew possesses a BPE degree and a MA degree in Leisure Studies with a Therapeutic Recreation focus from Dalhousie University. Andrew will serve on the Board from 2006 to 2008.

James Shea, MS, CTRS is a Recreational Therapy Supervisor at the Ahlbin Rehabilitation Center at Bridgeport

Hospital in Bridgeport, CT. Jim has a BS degree in Recreation Administration with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation from Green Mountain College. He earned his MS degree in Recreation Administration with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Jim had previously served NCTRC for seven years as a member of the NCTRC Exam Management Committee. Jim will serve on the Board from 2006 to 2009.

William Sturges serves as the consumer representative to the NCTRC Board of Directors. Bill has received RT services at the Northport, NY Veterans Administration Medical Center on an outpatient basis since 2000. Bill is very active, participating in several programs at the VAMC and as a para-athlete on the national level. Bill will serve on the Board from 2006 to 2009.

If you or someone you know is interested in being considered for the NCTRC Board or a committee nomination please contact the NCTRC Elections Committee via Janet Connolly, Chair at (860) 693-8544, or JConnolly54@aol.com; or Bob Riley, at (845) 639-1439, briley@nctrc.org.

Application Review and Exam Statistics

NCTRC Exam: A review of the October 2005, January 2006, and the May 2006 exams indicates that a total of 1160 individuals participated in the NCTRC exam program. Provided below is a summary table that contains the number of candidates per exam administration and the corresponding pass rate.

Exam Date	Number Tested	Pass Rate
October 2005	439	76%
January 2006	322	70%
May 2006	399	73%

New Applications for Professional

Eligibility: For the period July 1, 2005 to March 20, 2006, 639 new applications were

reviewed for professional eligibility. The number of candidates that met the NCTRC Professional Eligibility Standards and thus were eligible to sit for the NCTRC exam was 582 (91%).

CTRS Annual Renewal: For the period November 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006, 9688 (89%) CTRSs renewed their certification.

Recertification Application: For the period November 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006, 1779 applications for recertification were received by NCTRC. A total of 95% of the applications were approved for recertification. Approximately 3% of the individuals who applied for recertification used the exam option while the majority (97%) used the professional experience and continuing education option.

NCTRC Website is Now Interactive

NCTRC has made several changes to its website during the past year. One of the most exciting developments is the "My NCTRC Login" option. NCTRC has redesigned its website to make it easier to navigate and to find the specific information that you need to apply on-line. Recently, NCTRC introduced the option to renew and recertify online! This has been a huge success and a major convenience for those CTRSs looking to streamline the application process. Individuals are now able to complete the appropriate forms and submit fees right on the website. It is a very simple process to complete:

1. Visit www.NCTRC.org
2. Click on MY NCTRC LOGIN on the left hand side of the screen
3. Use your first and last name for your login credentials and your 5 digit certification ID as your password (new users: click on Sign Up and follow the instructions)

With the introduction of the interactive website, individuals who wish to apply for Professional Eligibility with NCTRC to take the exam are able to access the application with the touch of the button. Please spread the news about the ease of applying on the NCTRC website to interns and employees who are planning to apply for NCTRC certification!

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions regarding the NCTRC website or the CTRS certification process, please email us at nctrc@nctrc.org. Thank you for your continued support of NCTRC.

NCTRC Certification Standards: Changes, Updates and Effective Dates

The NCTRC Certification Standards serve as the official guidelines for test eligibility status and govern all requirements pertaining to certification and recertification. It is the policy of the NCTRC Board of Directors to post notice of all standard changes well in advance to effective dates. The NCTRC Board of Directors has approved the following changes to the Certification Standards.

1. Equivalency Path A & B Content Coursework – Elimination of Upper Division and Graduate Level Coursework:

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2005

The standard pertaining to the Equivalency Path A & B content coursework reads as follows:

“A minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter hours of therapeutic recreation and general recreation content coursework with no less than a minimum of 9 semester or 12 quarter hours in therapeutic recreation content. Each course must be a minimum of 3 hours; AND...”

[Note: A change in this standard will go into effect 12/31/07]

2. Field Placement Requirement – Supervisor must be full time at the agency and at least 50% of the job duties must be in therapeutic recreation services:

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2005

The standard pertaining to the Field Placement requirement reads as follows:

“NCTRC defines full-time employment as a minimum of 32 hours per week on site for the supervisor with at least 50% of the job duties within therapeutic recreation service within an established therapeutic recreation program at the agency.”

3. Field Placement Requirement – Field Placement must take place at one agency site:

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2005

The standard pertaining to the Field Placement requirement reads as follows:

“The experience must take place at one agency site: The total hours may not be split among different agencies or accumulated over multiple sites, unless the site is within the same agency and under the direct supervision of the CTRS. Student's attendance at professional conferences and workshops is permitted, if approved by the field placement supervisor.”

4. Field Placement Requirement – Primary Field Placement Supervisor:

EFFECTIVE DATE: ALL INTERNSHIPS CONDUCTED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2007

The standard pertaining to the Field Placement requirement will read as follows:

“An acceptable field placement must have one (1) identified primary supervisor. The primary supervisor works on a consistent basis with the student, coordinates all other secondary supervision and completes all evaluation materials and weekly reports pertaining to the field placement experience. Primary field placement supervisor responsibilities: The primary supervisor is responsible for the direct supervision of the internship student, ensuring that the student is exposed to all of the Job Analysis Task Areas. All official documentation including midterm and final evaluations must be signed by the primary supervisor who also serves as the liaison to the university. The NCTRC field placement verification form must also be signed by the primary supervisor.”

5. Field Placement Requirement – Supervisor must possess the CTRS Credential for one year prior to supervising interns:

EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 1, 2010

The standard pertaining to the Field Placement requirement will read as follows:

“The full-time, on-site agency supervisor must be currently NCTRC CTRS certified and must possess the CTRS credential for one year prior to supervising an internship student.”

6. Content Course Requirement – Increase in the Required Number of TR Content Coursework to Four Courses:

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 31, 2007

The standard pertaining to the required number of therapeutic recreation content courses will read as follows:

Academic Path

“A minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter credit hours of therapeutic recreation and general recreation content coursework with no less than a minimum of 12 semester or 18 quarter credit hours in therapeutic recreation content. A minimum of 4 courses in therapeutic recreation is required and each course must be a minimum of 3 credit hours; AND...”

Equivalency Path A & B

“A minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter credit hours of therapeutic recreation and general recreation content coursework with no less than a minimum of 12 semester or 18 quarter credit hours in therapeutic recreation content. A minimum of 4 courses in therapeutic recreation is required and each course must be a minimum of 3 credit hours; AND...”

7. Content Course Requirement – Increase in the Required Number of TR Content Coursework Completed Prior to Field Placement:

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 31, 2007

The standard requiring the majority of TR coursework to be completed prior to the field placement will read as follows:

“of required therapeutic recreation content courses that must be completed prior to the field placement is 9 semester or 12 quarter hours in therapeutic recreation.”



**National Council for
Therapeutic Recreation
Certification**

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NOTE: All terms of office, in parentheses after each name, begin and end in April of the given year.

All correspondence to any member of the NCTRC Board, Committees or Staff should be mailed to:

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nctrc@nctrc.org

Call NCTRC for all your therapeutic recreation certification information:

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Fax: (845) 639-1471

Email: NCTRC@NCTRC.org

Visit NCTRC on the Web at: www.NCTRC.org