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Matching State License Laws with

The Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) was developed to provide the profession of audiology with standards of accreditation by which all accredited academic programs should be measured. The standards define the expectations of the ACAE with regard to an accredited professional audiology (AuD) degree program and provide a framework for a program's self-study process. The mission of the ACAE is to serve the public by establishing, maintaining and applying standards to ensure the academic quality and continuous improvement of audiology education that reflect the evolving practice of audiology. While the ACAE defines the standards for academic training programs, the legal right to practice audiology is defined by state license laws. It is these laws that often look to the accreditation standards to assure that license holders are properly trained. The laws offer consumer protection by granting audiologists the legal right to practice and defining the qualifications to practice.

A recent review of audiology state license laws reveals that graduates of accredited programs may not be eligible for a license in several states. Universities that are accredited by the ACAE must now be assured that their graduates will be eligible to be licensed to practice across the nation. The purpose of this project was to review the State License Laws and

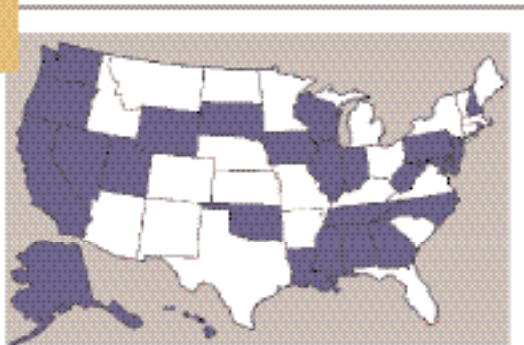
assure that the language will recognize programs accredited by the ACAE.

A review of the State Laws places statutes into three general categories:

1. States that require applicants to graduate from a university with regional accreditation (Figure One)
2. Statutes that require applicants for the state license to graduate from a university program that is accredited by a body (Figure Two):
 - Approved by the Board or Department
 - Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and/or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
 - Approved by the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association
3. States that have no specific statement of accreditation or the license board requires completion of coursework approved by the license board or another organization (Figure Three).

Figure 1

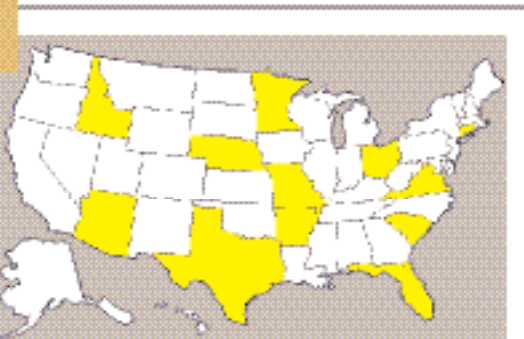
States that require applicants to graduate from a University/ Institution with regional accreditation:



Alabama	Illinois	Nevada	Pennsylvania	West Virginia
Alaska	Indiana	New Hampshire	Rhode Island	Wisconsin
California	Iowa	New Jersey	South Dakota	Wyoming
Delaware	Louisiana	North Carolina	Tennessee	
Georgia	Maryland	Oklahoma	Utah	
Hawaii	Mississippi	Oregon	Washington	

Figure 2

States that require applicants to graduate from an accredited program:



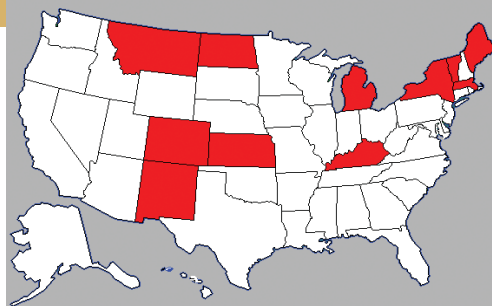
Arizona	Missouri
Arkansas	Nebraska
Connecticut	Ohio
Florida	South Carolina
Idaho	Texas
Minnesota	Virginia

University Audiology Accreditation

Figure 3

States that have no statement of accreditation:

Colorado	Montana
Kansas	New Mexico
Kentucky	New York
Maine	North Dakota
Massachusetts	Vermont
Michigan	



REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

Figure One is a map of states requiring applicants for the state license to graduate from a university with regional accreditation. There are seven regional accreditation bodies in the United States. These organizations affirm that established standards and processes of the accredited degree-granting institution are being met. These bodies provide accreditation to schools and colleges but not to individual academic programs. More than one-half of the state laws require that applicants for the audiology license must graduate from an “accredited educational institution” or similar wording. In these states, graduates do not have to graduate from a program with audiology accreditation, but from an institution that is regionally accredited. These states would permit license applicants to graduate from any degree granting institution without regard to the specific accreditation of the academic program. The License Board in these states should be contacted and informed about the ACAE and encouraged to recognize that graduates of ACAE accredited programs will have met the academic and clinical standards necessary to practice the profession.

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

Twelve states require license applicants to graduate from an academic

program that has met accreditation standards specific to the profession of audiology. Figure Two provides a list of those states. Many states such as Florida and Arkansas require applicants for the audiology license to graduate from an academic program that is accredited “by a body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.” Other states such as California and Indiana permit the License Board to decide if an audiology academic program meets the state standard for licensure.

There also are five states that delegate the responsibility of program recognition to the membership organization, ASHA. Kansas and Missouri, for example, require that license applicants must graduate from an academic program that is “accredited by the American Speech Language Hearing Association.” Similarly, the license laws in Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts require that license applicants graduate from an academic program approved by ASHA with Vermont and Massachusetts also recognizing the American Board of Audiology. These are not accrediting bodies but professional organizations or voluntary certification programs offered by the professional association. Changes in the laws of these states are required to permit the license board to recognize the ACAE as an approved accrediting body for audiology education.

NO STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION

Figure Three is a map of the states that do not have a specific statement of accreditation. States laws in Colorado, New York, and Montana require applicants to have earned a degree with a curriculum approved by the license board or its administrator. These state boards and administrators should be petitioned to recognize the ACAE as an approved accreditation body for audiology.

The ACAE will provide a standard of accreditation by which all Doctor of Audiology programs can be measured. States that require applicants to graduate from an accredited program must recognize the ACAE as a credible accrediting body. Since the ACAE is seeking recognition by the U.S. Department of Education, then recognition will be automatic in states like Florida and Arkansas which require license applicants to graduate from an audiology program that is accredited by a body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Other states license boards that require applicants to graduate from “an accredited program” can be informed of the ACAE standards and asked to recognize the ACAE as a standard setting body for audiology education. In States like Kansas and Missouri, the laws will need to be changed to permit the license board to recognize a body other than ASHA.

NOW WHAT?

As a resource tool to use when approaching your state Board, the Academy has written a letter that is co-signed by Ian Windmill, Chair of ACAE, and Paul Pessis, President of the Academy, that is available to Academy members on the Academy's Web site at www.audiology.org/govtrelations/state/stateleaders/. ●