

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF REGULATION & LICENSING



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STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY, PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING, AND SOCIAL WORK  
EXAMINING BOARD, PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR SECTION

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In the Matter of the Application for a  
Credential as Professional Counselor of

ANGELA DELLISE,

Applicant.

FINAL DECISION  
AND ORDER ON APPLICATION  
(Class I Proceeding)  
LS 0908182CPC4

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**PARTIES**

The parties in this matter under sec. 227.44, Stats. and ch. RL 1.04, Wis. Admin. Code, and for purposes of review under sec. 227.53, Stats., are:

Angela Delisse  
1317 Arthur Avenue  
Racine, WI 53405

Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional  
Counseling, and Social Work Examining Board

Department of Regulation and Licensing 1400  
East Washington Ave.  
Madison, WI 53702

**APPLICABLE LAW**

**457.13 Professional counselor training license.**

(1) The professional counselor section shall grant a professional counselor training license to any individual who does all of the following:

- (a) Submits an application for the license to the department on a form provided by the department.
- (b) Pays the fee specified in s. 440.05 (6).
- (c) Satisfies the requirements in s. 457.12 (2).
- (d) Submits evidence satisfactory to the professional counselor section that he or she is in a position, or has an offer for a position, as a professional counselor in a supervised clinical professional counseling practice or is in a position, or has an offer for a position, in which the applicant will, in the opinion of the professional counselor section, receive training and supervision equivalent to the training and supervision received in a supervised clinical professional counseling practice.

(2) A professional counselor training license is valid for 48 months and may be renewed at the discretion of the professional counselor section. Notwithstanding s. 457.04 (6), a professional counselor training license authorizes the holder to use any title specified in s. 457.04 (6) and to practice professional counseling within the scope of his or her training or supervision during the period in which the license is valid.

**MPSW 14.01 Academic program equivalent to a master's degree in professional counseling.** An academic program is the equivalent of a master's degree in professional counseling from an approved institution if the completed program meets the following criteria:

(1) The course work was completed at an institution which was accredited by its regional accrediting association at the time the applicant graduated from the program, and was part of a program of studies leading to a master's degree or doctoral degree in a field closely related to professional counseling.

(2) The course work included successful completion of at least 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours academic credit in a supervised counseling practicum; at least 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours academic credit in a single counseling theory course; and at least 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours academic credit in at least 6 of the following 8 topic areas; and the course work included a total of at least 42 semester hours or 63 quarter hours of academic credit in counseling related courses distributed among at least 6 of the following 8 topic areas:

(a) **Human growth and development** — studies that provide a broad understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, normal and abnormal human behavior, personality theory, and learning theory within appropriate cultural contexts.

(b) **Social and cultural foundations** — studies that provide a broad understanding of societal changes and trends, human roles, societal subgroups, social mores and interaction patterns, and differing lifestyles.

(c) **The helping relationship** — studies that provide a broad understanding of philosophic bases of helping processes, counseling theories and their applications, basic and advanced helping skills, consultation theories and their applications, client and helper self-understanding and self-development, and facilitation of client or consultee changes.

(d) **Group dynamics processing and counseling** — studies that provide a broad understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling theories, group leadership styles, basic and advanced group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches.

(e) **Lifestyle and career development** — studies that provide a broad understanding of career development theories; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision making; career development program planning and resources; and effectiveness evaluation.

(f) **Appraisal of individuals** — studies that provide a broad understanding of group and individual educational and psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal, data and information gathering methods, validity and reliability, psychometric statistics, factors influencing appraisals, and use of appraisals results in

helping processes.

(g) **Research and evaluation** — studies that provide a broad understanding of types of research, basic statistics, research report development, research implementation, program evaluation, needs assessment, publication of research information, and ethical and legal considerations.

(h) **Professional counseling orientation** — studies that provide a broad understanding of professional roles and functions, professional goals and objectives, professional organizations and associations, professional history and trends, ethical and legal standards, professional preparation standards, and professional credentialing.

(3) For purposes of this section, one academic quarter credit is equivalent to two-thirds of one academic semester credit.

(4) To reach course equivalency, an applicant may take up to 12 credit hours of courses, which may include a supervised counseling practicum outside of his or her master's program.

### **PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

The applicant, Angela Delisse, submitted an application for a Professional Counselor license on February 3, 2009. The application was reviewed by the Professional Counselor Section which concluded that the applicant had not completed at least 42 hour semester hours of academic credit equivalent to six of the eight required courses to qualify for licensure. A Notice of Intent to Deny was issued by the Professional Counselors Section on February 26, 2009, indicating that the applicant would be given an opportunity to submit information to show that she met the requirements for a credential; specifically that her education and coursework was equivalent to a graduate degree in professional counseling. In support of her contentions, the applicant submitted a narrative description of the course syllabus. Upon review, the section rendered a final decision on May 6, 2009, denying the application on the basis that the applicant had not demonstrated that she met the qualifications for licensure. The applicant requested a Class 1 hearing to challenge the decision denying her application for licensure. The hearing was held on July 29, 2009.

The Professional Counselor Section of the Examining Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists And Professional Counselors, having held a hearing on the application for licensure as a professional counselor of Angela Delisse, and having considered the entire record of the matter, makes the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

1) Angela Delisse, whose address is 1317 Arthur Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin 53405, submitted an application for a Professional Counselor license on February 3, 2009.

2) The applicant holds a Master's Degree in Education with an emphasis in Adult Education from University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

3) The applicant did not complete at least 42 academic credit hours in counseling related coursework, including at least six of the eight required topics, to be deemed equivalent to a master's degree in professional counseling.

4) The coursework offered by the applicant as equivalent to a master's degree in professional counseling consisted of courses in adult education, educational programming, the adult learner and a practicum in teaching.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

A) The Professional Counselors Section is the legal authority responsible for granting credentials for a professional counselor certification under ch. 457, Stats. The Professional Counselors Section has subject-matter jurisdiction

over an application for licensure as a professional counselor.

B) The applicant has not submitted evidence satisfactory to the Professional Counselor Section that she has completed least 42 hours in counseling related coursework equivalent to a graduate degree in professional counseling as required by sec. 457.12(2), Stats. and s. MPSW 14.01, Wis. Admin. Code.

### **ORDER**

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the application for certification as a professional counselor of Angela Delisse shall be, and hereby is DENIED.

### **OPINION**

In a Class 1 license denial hearing, the applicant bears the burden of proof to establish with credible evidence that the applicant meets the statutory requirements for licensure. Specifically, at issue is whether the applicant has at least 6 out of the 8 topic areas in professional counseling related courses for a total of at least 42 semester hours or 63 quarter hours. To be acceptable, the coursework must be completed at institution which is regionally accredited and part of a program of studies leading to a master's degree or doctoral degree in a field closely related to professional counseling.

The applicant submitted evidence of the coursework which she completed in a Masters of Education - Adult Services degree. The applicant contends that this coursework fulfills the academic hours required for equivalency to a master's degree in professional counseling. The applicant identified the courses for consideration as 1) Public Relations in School and Community, 2) Program Planning for Adults, 3) The Adult Learner, and 4) Teaching Practicum. She argues that these courses fit into, or are equivalent to, the core curriculum in the area of professional counseling orientation, social and cultural foundations, and human growth and development.

The additional information presented by the applicant did not convincingly demonstrate that the coursework was substantially equivalent to the core curriculum for licensure as a professional counselor. Rather, the written description of the courses suggests that the focus of the applicant's coursework was in the field of adult education, programming and public relations. Notably absent was the requisite theory content for professional counseling and other counseling-related topics. In comparison to the core curriculum in the rules, the content and focus of the applicants differed significantly from that of professional counseling. Educational development, learning activities and programming for an adult population is a worthwhile discipline but it is not equivalent to professional counseling. Nor is an academic program or degree in adult education substantially equivalent to the master's coursework in professional counseling or a field closely related to professional counseling.

The definition of professional counseling is "the combination of human development, rehabilitation and either psychosocial or psychotherapeutic principles, procedures or services that integrate a wellness, pathology and multicultural model of human behavior in order to assist an individual, couple, family, group of individuals, organization, institution or community to achieve mental, emotional, physical, social moral educational, spiritual, vocation or career development and adjustment through the life span of the individual, couple, family, group of individuals, organization, institution or community." s. 457.01(6), Stats. The statutory requirement that an applicant must complete core curriculum on specific topic areas related to professional counseling is to ensure that licenses will possess the requisite level of knowledge and skills to perform the duties and core functions of a professional counselor. This is particularly critical for those who seek licensure through an alternate pathway through an equivalent degree in closely related field.

The applicant bears the burden of proof to establish the equivalency of her education to meet the qualifications for licensure. The coursework presented to establish equivalency was not found to be persuasive. For these reasons, the decision to deny the applicant's request for licensure is affirmed. Until such time as the applicant completes additional coursework determined to satisfy the academic requirements for licensure as a professional counselor, ineligibility for the credential will remain as the final decision of the section.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2009.

Leslie Mirkin, Chair  
Professional Counselors Section of the

Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and  
Social Work Examining Board

The applicant's right to request rehearing and for judicial review is set forth in the enclosed "Notice of Appeal Information".

enc. Notice of Appeal Information