

The [International Accreditation of Counseling Services](#) (IACS) sets “the benchmark for counseling services on college and university campuses”. Accredited universities are meeting the highest standards in providing mental health services on their academic campuses. You can view the list of accredited higher education counseling centers [here](#). Among them are local universities including Emerson College, Bentley College, and UMass Dartmouth.

The IACS first created its accreditation guidelines in 1970 and they have evolved in the years since to reflect the needs of students on higher education campuses. You can reach the full document of guidelines [here](#). Among the most important components of this accreditation are:

- (1) Maintenance of a ratio of one professional staff member for every 1,000-1,5000 students
- (2) Assurance of individual, group, and couples counseling
- (3) Crisis intervention and emergency coverage services
- (4) Hiring procedures reflect a commitment to hiring diverse staff who have competencies to work with students from diverse backgrounds
- (5) Salaries and benefits for clinicians and staff must be on par with other institutions in the area

Institutions can get accredited by completing a 3-part application process.

- (1) First Board Review
- (2) Site Visit
- (3) Final board Review

Once accredited, counseling centers must submit annual reports to the IACS to maintain accreditation status. Initial applications for accreditation cost \$750 along with a site visit fee of \$750. Upon evaluation and approval, centers are re-evaluated on an 8-year cycle for a fee of \$150 along with a site visit cost of \$2,250. Annual dues for accredited centers are \$1,600 per year.

Achieving this accreditation is **essential for Northeastern**. Northeastern counseling services will be externally peer-reviewed and a nationally recognized organization will instruct UHCS on how to meet their standards. This is a win for the entire community. Students will be able to access better mental health services, UHCS clinicians will get a more manageable caseload, and the University will be able to advertise that its counseling centers are IACS accredited.

Site visitors from IACS are trained to educate university administrators on these standards and advocate for increased funding to meet them. Northeastern students deserve better mental health services, and this will help us to achieve that.