

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 2017**

The Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) and the Accrediting Commission of Career Colleges and Schools (ACCSC) are pleased to announce that the two organizations have entered into a management agreement for the purpose of strengthening COMTA organizational resources and exploring opportunities to develop a joint institutional and programmatic accreditation process.

The Agreement between COMTA and ACCSC:

- Maintains both organizations' corporate structures, Commission autonomy, and recognition with the U.S. Department of Education as separate accrediting agencies.
- Outlines management functions that COMTA will contract through ACCSC to reduce expenses previously outsourced to other businesses, such as accounting, administrative staff, travel, and human resources.
- Allows both organizations to work closely together to develop a singular accreditation process that will yield both institutional and programmatic accreditation status for schools with massage therapy and esthetics programs; and
- Allows COMTA to streamline its operational processes with ACCSC's strong infrastructure, thereby allowing the COMTA Commission to better serve its member schools and advocate as the massage therapy and esthetics professions' sole specialized accrediting agency.

Together, both COMTA and ACCSC hope that this innovative approach to accreditation will encourage more institutions to participate in specialized accreditation for their massage therapy and esthetics programs as a means to further enhance the student educational experience through quality assurance, and to ultimately improve the quality of practitioners who enter the field after graduation.

Institutions that offer a massage therapy or esthetics program are encouraged to send an email to [info@comta.org](mailto:info@comta.org) to learn more about the benefits of the joint accreditation process.

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**About the Agencies**

**ACCSC**

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) is recognized by the United States Department of Education as the designated institutional accrediting body for over 650 post-secondary, trade and technical schools that provide education to over 150,000 students in a wide variety of vocational programs each year. 2017 marks 50 years of continuous recognition for ACCSC, including earning, in 2011 & 2016, consecutive five-year recognition grants from the U.S. Department of Education. Today, ACCSC remains committed to helping enhance the student educational experience through quality assurance, supporting workforce development, and bridging the growing skills gap in the United States.

**COMTA**

COMTA is the only accrediting agency recognized as specializing in massage therapy and esthetics education. Having initially operated under the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) since the late 1980s, COMTA became recognized as an accrediting agency in 2002, and became an independent not-for-profit corporation in 2004. The Commission has been headquartered in Washington, D.C. since 2008. COMTA offers institutional or programmatic accreditation for schools that provide entry-level training programs in massage therapy, bodywork, esthetics, and skin care, upon demonstration that the program of training meets certain curriculum competencies designed to ensure better consistency of training for practitioners nationwide.

Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation  
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