

A needs assessment to determine the content and format of a national certification examination for financial counselors

Abstract

This study was designed to determine (1) the level of priority that employees of nonprofit counseling agencies affiliated with the National Foundation for Consumer Credit (NFCC) feel the topics of credit, personal finance, investments, counseling, and consumer education should be given on a national certification examination for financial counselors, and (2) to determine the viewpoints of NFCC counselors concerning the format of a national certification examination.

Data were collected with a 162-item questionnaire from 281 individuals employed by nonprofit counseling agencies affiliated with the NFCC; this represented an 83% response rate. Respondents were asked to prioritize 138-items on a scale of 1 for low priority to 5 for high priority. The items were distributed unevenly among the five topic areas.

The overall mean priority score of all five topic areas was 3.6. Credit and counseling both received the highest individual topic mean priority score of 4.1.

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