



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

May 2, 2008

Lloyd Benjamin, Ph.D.
President
Indiana State University
Office of the President
Condit House
Terre Haute, IN 47809

Dear President Benjamin:

At its meeting on April 3-6, 2008, the Commission on Accreditation (formerly the Committee on Accreditation) conducted a review of the doctoral Ph.D. program in Counseling psychology at Indiana State University. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review of June 4, 2007 and the program's response to the preliminary review on September 11, 2007, the report of the team that visited the program on October 25-26, 2007, and the program's response to the site visit report on January 15, 2008.

On the basis of this review, the Commission voted to award accreditation to this program. In so doing, the Commission scheduled the next accreditation site visit to be held in **2010**. During the interim, the program will be listed annually among accredited programs of professional psychology in the *American Psychologist* and on the Accreditation web pages. The Commission also encourages you to share information about your program's accredited status with agencies and others of the public as appropriate.

Dr. Nancy Elman recused and therefore did not participate in the discussion and vote on your program.

The program received a three-year term of accreditation (calculated from the date of the last site visit) based on concerns that remain on several domain-related issues. The Commission would like to provide the program with a summary of both its perceived relative strengths and weaknesses which led to the decision to accredit for three years. This will be provided below according to each of the accreditation domains. While concerns remain, the Commission believes the issues cited in this letter can be corrected in the near future. A summary of the Commission's review of this program is provided below.

750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
(202) 336-5500
(202) 336-6123 TDD

Web: www.apa.org



Recycle

Domain A: Eligibility

As a prerequisite for accreditation, the program's purpose must be within the scope of the accrediting body and must be pursued in an institutional setting appropriate for the doctoral education and training of professional psychologists.

The Indiana State University Counseling psychology Ph.D. program offers doctoral education and training to prepare students for the practice of professional psychology. It is an integral part of the Psychology department, and fits in well with those initiatives that contribute to the advancement of the University. The program engages in actions that indicate respect for and understanding of cultural and individual diversity.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

Domain B: Program Philosophy, Objectives and Curriculum Plan

The program has a clearly specified philosophy of education and training, compatible with the mission of its sponsor institution and appropriate to the science and practice of psychology. The program's education and training model and its curriculum plan are consistent with this philosophy.

The program espouses a scientist-professional model of training which contains a range of scholarly activities, and an array of methodologies with a strong focus on professional training. In an attempt to supplement the scholarly activities aspect of this model, research teams have been instituted which are designed to promote more scholarly productivity (e.g. publications, and professional presentations). These teams have been valued by both students and program faculty.

All students enter with a master's degree in counseling so they have as much as 1,000 hours of practical training upon entering the program.

The Commission noted that students can transfer credit for Master's level courses obtained from other institutions. Specifically, the program's web page stated that students can use previous graduate course work in order to fill specific requirement areas. The web page further stated that the Dean of the Graduate School provides the final approval of schedules of study and the Director of Training or Committee Chair can usually provide some guidance on whether a course will be eligible for transfer. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to describe in detail how transfer credits are evaluated and thus applied to the degree, how frequently this is done, and whether it is done for the courses that provide broad and general coverage of the core foundational areas outlined in Domain B.3 of the G&P. If core areas are covered via transferred coursework, the program must clarify how it ensures students receive broad and general coverage at the graduate level in these foundation areas.

The Commission had some concerns about how the doctoral program ensures that coursework provides broad and general coverage in the following core foundation areas: 1) biological bases of behavior, 2) affective aspects of behavior, 3) social aspects of behavior 4) history and systems of psychology 5) psychological measurement, 6)

research methodology, and 7) techniques of data analysis. By **September 1, 2008**, please submit a complete set of syllabi (with a list of all required textbooks and/or readings) for all courses that fulfill the core areas outlined in Domain B.3(a) and address how each course provides broad and general coverage at the graduate level, consistent with Implementing Regulation C-16 (attached). It is also unclear how students receive training in empirically supported interventions consistent with Domain B.3(c) of the *G&P*. In a narrative response by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to clearly describe the methods in which students receive training in empirically supported procedures, and provide all relevant syllabi.

The site visitors noted that the dissertations they reviewed exhibited considerable “variability in both conceptual and methodological sophistication and this variability has continued to the present”. Although it appears that the statistics and research courses provide considerable breadth and depth, student dissertations do not appear to reflect this, and do not match the program’s self-described training model. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to report on its methods employed to circumvent this disconnect and ensure that their students dissertations are aligned with the self-identified scientist-professional training model.

The counseling assessment and intervention courses appear to lay the foundation for practicum experiences. The program has established relationships with the on-campus ADHD clinic and the on-campus training clinic operated jointly by the School Psychology and Counseling Psychology programs. The practicum experiences are sequential, and graded in complexity.

Domain C: Program Resources

The program demonstrates that it has resources of appropriate quality and sufficiency to achieve its education and training goals.

The program has an identifiable core faculty of four appropriately credentialed psychologists. The program admits between 6 and 9 students each year. Entering classes of this size provide the necessary critical mass of students to ensure meaningful peer interactions, support, and socialization. However, it appears challenging for the 4 core faculty members to be available and accessible to this growing cadre of students. The site visitors noted that faculty sufficiency did not seem adequate as one of the four core faculty members is currently serving as Chair of the department and is unable to allot a substantive amount of time to the program. Further, it appears that the program unexpectedly experienced the resignation of a core faculty member and the college did not authorize a replacement search for the 2007-2008 academic year. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to clearly delineate its timeline to replace the open faculty position. Further, the program is asked to provide an update on its newly devised strategic initiatives that address the pressing need for additional core faculty resources.

The Commission also noted that the ‘Program Prioritization’ process has eliminated 60 programs university-wide and that the university will decide this year what further

programs to eliminate. Consistent with Implementing Regulation C-19 (attached), the program is asked to provide the Commission with an update if any program related changes occur based on this process.

Domain D: Cultural and Individual Differences and Diversity

The program recognizes the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of psychologists.

The program has made systematic efforts to attract and retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds and is a noted strength of the program. The program offers a supportive learning environment for training diverse individuals and avoids actions that would restrict program access on grounds irrelevant to success in graduate training.

The program has a clear plan to provide students with relevant knowledge and experience related to the role of individual and cultural diversity in psychological science and practice. However, it was not clear from the syllabus for COUN 666: *Multicultural Counseling*, how students are provided with relevant knowledge about the role of cultural and individual diversity. In a narrative response for **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to revise and resubmit the syllabus for the Multicultural Counseling (with a list of all required textbooks and/or readings).

Domain E: Student-Faculty Relations

The program demonstrates that its education, training, and socialization experiences are characterized by mutual respect and courtesy between students and faculty and that it operates in a manner that facilitates students' educational experiences

Students and faculty are highly collegial and professional and it appears that there is a very positive atmosphere in the program. Faculty members are accessible and serve as appropriate role models for students in a manner that is consistent with the program model.

In the previous CoA decision letter, the program had been asked how it ensures that students receive timely written feedback, and that this feedback is placed in the student files. However, the site visitors noted that this remained a problem. In reviewing student files site visitors observed a lack of formal documentation of annual student progress. Additionally, a number of files contained evaluations of clinical performance filled out by on-site supervisors that were not cosigned by student supervisees. In the response to the site visit report, the program stated it has developed a new form for comprehensive student file tracking. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to provide an update on this new student file tracking system.

Domain F: Program Self-Assessment and Quality Enhancement

The program demonstrates a commitment to excellence through self-study, which assures that its goals and objectives are met, enhances the quality of professional education and training obtained by its students, and contributes to the fulfillment of its sponsor institution's mission.

With the involvement of its students, the program systematically reviews its goals and objectives. The program has made efforts since the last site visit to engage in ongoing self-study, and has made programmatic changes in training as a result.

1) The program, with appropriate involvement from its students, engages in regular, ongoing self-studies that address:

- (a) Its effectiveness in achieving program goals and objectives in terms of outcome data (i.e., while students are in the program and after completion);*

The program's goals, objectives, and competencies are clearly linked to assessment measures and the program appears to be meeting its goals according to the distal outcome data provided. However, the program has provided limited proximal data beyond student satisfaction surveys. While the program appears to collect such data, it has not been aggregated and provided to the Commission for review. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2008**, the program is asked to provide aggregated proximal (current students) outcome data that more aptly demonstrates the program's effectiveness at meeting its stated goals and objectives.

Domain G: Public Disclosure

The program demonstrates its commitment to public disclosure by providing written materials and other communications that appropriately represent it to the relevant publics.

The program's written and web-based informational materials are comprehensive and clear and provide prospective applicants with all the material necessary to make an informed decision about the program. The program has added or modified information as needed.

The Commission would like to thank the program for providing information to the public regarding education and training outcomes as outlined in Implementing Regulation C-20 (Disclosure of Education/Training Outcomes and Information Allowing for Informed Decision-Making to Prospective Doctoral Students).

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

Domain H: Relationship with Accrediting Body

The program demonstrates its commitment to the accreditation process by fulfilling its responsibilities to the accrediting body from which its accredited status is granted.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

In order to keep the Commission informed of the program's commitment to the ongoing self-study process, the program is asked to address the following issues in narrative by **September 1, 2008**:

- Provide the syllabus for EPSY 628: *Biological Bases of Behavior* (with a list of all required textbooks and/or readings) to demonstrate broad and general coverage in this core foundation area.
- Describe in detail how transfer credits are evaluated and thus applied to the degree, how frequently this is done, and whether it is done for the courses that provide broad and general coverage of the core foundational areas outlined in Domain B.3 of the G&P. If core areas are covered via transferred coursework, the program must clarify how it ensures students receive broad and general coverage at the graduate level in these foundation areas.
- Report on methods employed to circumvent the disconnect between student dissertations and the scientist-professional training model.
- Provide an update on the new student file tracking system as a means to ensure file accuracy.
- Provide aggregate proximal (current student) outcome data beyond student satisfaction surveys in an effort to more aptly demonstrate its effectiveness in achieving its stated goals and objectives.

The program is asked to address the following issues in narrative by **September 1, 2008** for formal review by the Commission:

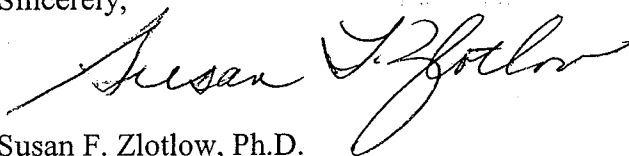
- Resubmit a complete set of syllabi (with a list of all required textbooks and/or readings) that fulfill the core areas outlined in Domain B.3(a) and address how each course provides broad and general coverage at the graduate level, consistent with IR C-16.
- Clearly describe the methods in which students receive training in empirically supported procedures, providing all relevant syllabi.
- Clearly delineate the program's timeline to replace the open faculty position and, given the current workload of faculty, the program is asked to discuss strategic initiatives that address the pressing need for additional core faculty resources.
- Revise and resubmit the syllabus for the Multicultural Counseling (with a list of all required textbooks and/or readings).

Please note that while these narrative report items are considered an addendum to the data provided in the Annual Report Online (ARO), they are not to be submitted online. Narrative responses to the items listed above should be identified as 'Narrative Response

– Program Review’ and mailed or faxed to the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation by the designated due dates.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I extend congratulations to faculty and students of the professional psychology program for their achievements. The Commission also expresses its appreciation for your personal commitment, and the corresponding support of your administration, to develop and maintain the best possible quality of graduate education and training in psychology. If the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation may be of service at any time on administrative matters of accreditation, please call upon us.

Sincerely,



Susan F. Zlotlow, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

cc: Jack Maynard, Ph.D., Provost and VP, Academic Affairs
Bradley Balch, Ph.D., Academic Dean
Michele Boyer, Ph.D., Chair
James Campbell, Ph.D., Director of Training
E. Thomas Dowd, Ph.D., Chair of Site Visit Team
Paul Gore, Ph.D., Member of Site Visit Team
Melvin Davis, Ph.D., Member of Site Visit Team

C-16. Evaluating Program Adherence to the Principle of “Broad and General Preparation” for Doctoral Programs
(Commission on Accreditation, November 2001)

The *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology* (G&P) stipulate, in section II, B., 1., that preparation at the doctoral level should be broad and general. According to the G&P, “this preparation should be based on the existing and evolving body of knowledge, skills, and competencies that define the declared substantive practice area(s) and should be well integrated with the broad theoretical and scientific foundations of the discipline and field of psychology in general.”

The Commission on Accreditation evaluates a program’s adherence to this provision in the context of the G&P Domain B, Section 3 (reprinted, in part, below), using the following guidelines.

(From the G&P: Domain B, 3. for DOCTORAL programs):

In achieving its objectives, the program has and implements a clear and coherent curriculum plan that provides the means whereby all students can acquire and demonstrate substantial understanding of and competence in the following areas:

(a) *The breadth of scientific psychology, its history of thought and development, its research methods, and its applications. To achieve this end, the students shall be exposed to the current body of knowledge in at least the following areas: biological aspects of behavior; cognitive and affective aspects of behavior; social aspects of behavior; history and systems of psychology; psychological measurement; research methodology; and techniques of data analysis;*

Accredited programs ensure the competence in these content areas including the history of thought and development in those fields, the research methods, and the applications of the research. Demonstrating that the program is consistent with the G&P in this regard would preclude coverage only of ...

... a narrow segment of the aspect of the content area (such as biological basis of gerontology, race relations, preschool learning)

... the application of these aspects of the content area to practice problems or settings (such as cognitive therapy; group therapy, multicultural counseling)

Further, it is expected that the program will ensure understanding and competence in these content areas at the graduate level.

It is recognized that there are a variety of ways in which programs achieve this component of their program requirements, and that there are multiple points in the curriculum sequence at which these experiences may be placed.

If the program chooses to supply courses directed to these areas within its own curricular offerings, then it must ensure that they are taught at the graduate level, by individuals who, by education, training and/or experience, are qualified to teach in the given area at the graduate level.

(Continuing from the G&P: Domain B, 3. for DOCTORAL programs):

(b) The scientific, methodological, and theoretical foundations of practice in the substantive area(s) of professional psychology in which the program has its training emphasis. To achieve this end, the students shall be exposed to the current body of knowledge in at least the following areas: individual differences in behavior; human development; dysfunctional behavior or psychopathology; and professional standards and ethics;

(c) Diagnosing or defining problems through psychological assessment and measurement and formulating and implementing intervention strategies (including training in empirically supported procedures). To achieve this end, the students shall be exposed to the current body of knowledge in at least the following areas: theories and methods of assessment and diagnosis; effective intervention; consultation and supervision; and evaluating the efficacy of interventions;

With regard to the scientific, methodological, and theoretical foundations of practice in the substantive area of psychology in which the program has its training emphasis, and to the coverage of assessment and intervention, the question of breadth of exposure has been interpreted by the Commission in the context of (a) the particular substantive area in question and (b) the particular model and goals of the program. That is, a program is considered not only as based on its own particular training model and goals, but also in the context of the broader domain of doctoral training in the substantive area(s) (e.g., clinical, counseling, or school psychology, or combinations thereof). Thus, the Commission would look for reasonable coverage in the breadth of the substantive area(s), as well as the breadth needed to provide quality training toward the program's specific goals. It is expected that the program will ensure that understanding of and competence in these areas is demonstrated at the graduate level.

C-19. Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs
(Commission on Accreditation, February 2005; revised October 2006)

In accordance with Domain H.2 of the *Guidelines and Principles* and Section 4.7(b) of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, all accredited programs (doctoral, internship and postdoctoral residencies) whether under a single administrative entity or in a consortium, must inform the accrediting body in a timely manner of changes that could alter the program's quality.

The Commission on Accreditation must be informed in advance of major program changes such as changes in model, degree offered, policies/procedures, administrative structure, faculty resources, supervision resources, area of emphases, or tracks/rotations. In the case of doctoral programs, this includes changes in the areas of emphasis. For internship/postdoctoral programs, this includes new, additional, or eliminated rotation or training sites. For example, consortium programs must inform the CoA of any substantial changes in structure, design or training sites.

Programs must submit a detailed description of the proposed change(s) and the potential impact upon the relevant accreditation domains. The CoA will review the program change(s) and may request additional information or a new self-study. In the case of a substantive change (such as a change in consortium membership), the Commission may also determine that a site visit is needed to assess whether the revised program is consistent with the G&P. Upon completion of this review, the Commission will note the proposed change and include the information in the next scheduled review or inform the program of any needed immediate additional actions.

The only exception to the policy of informing the Commission *in advance* is the occurrence of an unavoidable event beyond the reasonable control and anticipation of the program (e.g., educational/training site unexpectedly withdrawing from a consortium because of financial crisis). In such circumstances, it is incumbent upon the program to immediately inform the CoA in writing of the change and to include in its notification a proposed plan for maintaining program consistency with the G&P. The Commission will then proceed as above.

Consultation on program changes is available from the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation.