



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

August 7, 2008

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

Dear President Bradley,

At its meeting on July 17-20, 2008 the Commission on Accreditation (formerly the Committee on Accreditation) conducted a review of the doctoral Ph.D. program in school psychology at Indiana State University. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review of May 22, 2007 and the program's response to the preliminary review on October 8, 2007, the report of the team that visited the program on February 13-14, 2008, and the program's response to the site visit report on March 20, 2008.

I am pleased to inform you that, 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 2013. 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.

Drs. Nancy Elman, David McIntosh, and Rick Short recused and therefore did not participate in the discussion and vote on your program.

The Commission would like to provide the program with a summary of its perceived relative strengths and weaknesses. This will be provided below according to each of the accreditation domains. At the end of the letter, the program will be provided with an itemized list of any actions that the program needs to take prior to the next accreditation review. A summary of the Commission's review of this program is provided below.

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 Ph.D. program in School psychology at Indiana State University is a well-established program that produces professional psychologists. The program's mission and goals are very

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well-matched to those of the Department, College, and University in which the program is embedded. The University is regionally accredited by the North Central Association and the College of Education is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. The program strongly fosters an environment that respects individual and cultural 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 has recently changed from a scientist-practitioner model to a scholar-practitioner model.

The program has indicated that most students take *Biological Bases of Behavior* (EPSY 628), the only course in the biological aspects of behavior area that is listed in the program's formal documentation, but that "a few" students have taken *Clinical Psychopharmacology* (PSY 658). It appears that PSY 658 does not provide broad and general coverage of biological aspects of behavior, whereas EPSY 628 does provide appropriate coverage. The program is asked to describe, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, how it ensures that all students receive appropriate broad and general training biological aspects of behavior, consistent with Domain B.3.a of the *Guidelines and Principles of Accreditation* (G&P) and Implementing Regulation C-16.

The program has stated that *Learning and Cognition* (PSY 603) will be required for all students, pending approval by the University. This course provides broad and general coverage in the area of cognitive aspects of behavior. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, the program is asked to update the Commission on this pending approval. Additionally, although PSY 603 clearly provides broad and general coverage of cognitive aspects of behavior, it is not clear how students in the program are provided with broad and general exposure to affective aspects of behavior. The program is asked to explain how it provides broad and general exposure to the current body of knowledge in affective aspects of behavior consistent with IR C-16.

The program lists *Proseminar: Social Bases of Individual Behavior* (PSY 607) as addressing the social aspects of behavior requirement. However, the current Student Handbook and the program's self study indicate that PSY 607 "may" be used as a substitute for *Seminar in Educational Thought* (ELAF 806). Further, on p. 9 of the self-study, the program indicated that there may be changes to the requirements "where programs may have the opportunity to offer these courses as related to their specialty area." The program is asked to provide an update in the form of a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, detailing what the status of these requirements are and any other requirement changes that have been made. Additionally the

program is asked to clarify the title of PSY 607. In the narrative self-study, the program refers to the course as the title listed above. However, in the syllabus in Appendix D, the course is titled Advanced Social Psychology. The program is asked to clarify that these are the same course and which title is correct.

The program's self-study and the site visitors indicate that the program's practicum requirements are sufficient with reference to the program's goals and objectives and cite students' ability to obtain full-time appropriate internships as an indication that this is the case. However, information on students' internship attainment is inconsistent and difficult to interpret. In the program's 2007 self study, Table 4 lists 25 students, 100% of whom obtained paid internships, and 68% of whom received "accredited" internships. Table 8 indicates that 29 students did not receive funded internship placements, even though 11 (38%) of these internship sites are listed as being APA-accredited. However, on the program's website the program's publicly stated Internship Statistics indicate that between 2000 and 2006, 25 program students applied for and obtained full-time internships, all were paid, and all were APA-accredited. Although these tables appropriately reference slightly different groups of students, the numbers seem to indicate discrepancies related to the internship data reported. The program is asked, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, to provide: (a) accurate data on internship placements that will resolve these discrepancies, and (b) a description of how the program determines that its practicum experiences are sufficient for internship preparation.

Domain C: Program Resources

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

Core faculty are engaged strongly in the program and serve as role models for students. Additional faculty from the Department add substantially to program resources. Students are well-qualified for graduate work and evidence interests and career trajectories consistent with the program's goals and objectives. Training resources in addition to faculty appear to be quite substantial.

The program's core, associated, and other contributing faculty have worked diligently to maintain a quality program throughout a very difficult transition in the program's faculty. Nonetheless, similar to the concerns expressed by the site visit team, the Commission noted stability concerns given that the core faculty are all relatively new, untenured assistant professors (albeit well-supported by the Department), and only one core faculty member is licensed as a professional psychologist in Indiana. The program recently went through transitions that involved the loss of several faculty members, leading to major programmatic changes. Given this substantial transition, the Commission is concerned about how the program is working to maintain faculty stability. Further, given that the majority of the faculty are new and are still in the process of demonstrating expertise in the field, the program is asked to provide an update on the experiences and recognized credentials of program faculty that are in line with the program's goals and objectives. In this context, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009** and in *subsequent annual reports* until the submission of the program's next self-study, the program is

asked to provide updates on the program's core faculty and how it is working to maintain a stable and appropriately credentialed faculty.

Additionally, the Commission is concerned about the high student attrition rate. The program provided a revised Table 6 with the response to the preliminary review. From reading this table, it appears that close to 25% of the students represented in the table leave the program for personal or academic reasons. The program is asked, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, to report to the on their efforts to reduce student attrition rates.

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.

Since the program's site visit, the program has made significant successful efforts in recruitment, support, and retention of diverse students. These efforts are reflected in the impressive respect for diversity and participatory leadership evidenced amongst students. In terms of faculty, apparently purposeful and systematic attempts have been made to expand the national search and pool of applicants to faculty positions within the program. The program and the Department exhibit a strong commitment to individual and cultural diversity, both through content in required courses, workshop trainings and special events, and an articulated mission statement that strongly embraces diversity broadly defined.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

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

Relationships among students and faculty are characterized by courtesy, respect, collaboration and collegiality, and ethical sensitivity. Students are familiar with due processes for the resolution of concerns, complaints, and grievances; these procedures are clearly presented in student handbook materials. Students expressed that there is an open-door availability by all faculty and faculty provide strong support toward program completion. Indeed, the current core faculty have gone out of their way to assist ABD students, from the years when the program was experiencing a number of difficulties, in completing their doctoral requirements. The program is commended for these efforts.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

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.

The program's goals and objectives are consistent with local, state, regional, and national needs for psychological services; data are particularly compelling regarding the preparation of school psychologists locally as well as in the state. The program follows the national standards of professional practice in school psychology. The school psychology committee meets to discuss areas for program improvement and plans for programmatic changes.

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);

Outcome data linked to the program's stated goals and objectives indicates that the program, broadly, is achieving its goals.

The program has specified minimum achievement levels for its measures of student performance in practicum. However, it is not clear for other measures specified in the program's self-study, provided in Appendix J, the minimum level of expected achievement. For example, concerning a "passing" course grade, it is unclear what passing is defined as (e.g. a "B" or a "C", etc.). The program is asked to provide, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, information on the minimum expected levels of achievement for all of the outcome measures listed in Appendix J.

Additionally, the program provided aggregated outcome data for the supervisors' ratings and the alumni survey, but did not provide aggregated data for the other outcome measures listed in Table J (e.g. students achieving passing course grades, passage of preliminary exams, etc.). The program is also asked to provide this data by **September 1, 2009**.

The program has made substantial progress in linking proximal and distal outcome data specifically to its articulated goals, objectives and competencies. However, many of the current measures, for example practicum and internship supervisor ratings, do not provide clear data that is specific to the competencies listed by the program. The program is asked in its next self study, to more clearly align its outcome measures with its articulated competencies.

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 publicly available information is comprehensive, informative, and easily accessible. Current students noted how helpful the program's online material was in informing their graduate education decision.

Although the program has easily accessible information on its website regarding the publicly available information about the program as required by CoA's Implementing Regulation C-20 (attached), some of the information is unclear or may be inaccurate. Specifically: (a) the statistics on students obtaining paid internships and on obtaining APA-accredited internships appear to be inconsistent with information in the program's self study Tables 4 and 8; (b) the attrition data is not in the now-required tabular format. Further, the table on time to completion (attached to this letter), specifically the information on students entering the program with a Masters degree is confusing. The table has zeros, indicating 0%, which is open to interpretation as to whether there were no students with Masters degrees, or whether there were students with Masters, but there were none that fit that category. Please clarify if there were *no* Masters students, or if zero students apply to the category. The program is asked to document, in a narrative response due by **September 1, 2009**, that this publicly available information has been made more clear, accurate and consistent with IR C-20.

The program is further reminded that the contact information for the Commission on Accreditation, including the address and telephone number, is to be provided anywhere the program references their accreditation status. The information was on the program website, but it was difficult to find.

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 clearly endeavors to be in line with the Commission's published policies and procedures and is generally successful at doing so. The Commission appreciates the program's clear communication with the CoA regarding the recent changes that occurred within the program.

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 a narrative response due **September 1, 2009**:

- Describe how the program ensures that all students receive appropriate training biological aspects of behavior, consistent with Domain B.3.a of the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation* (G&P).
- Update the Commission on the pending approval of making PSY 603 a required course for students. Additionally, explain how it provides broad and general exposure to the current body of knowledge in affective aspects of behavior.

- Detail the status of changes to course requirements, specifically the use of PSY 607 to substitute for ELAF 608 and any other requirement changes that have been made. Additionally the program is asked to clarify the title of the course, given the contradiction between the narrative self-study and the syllabus.
- Provide accurate and consistent data on internship placements given the inconsistencies in the data reported (i.e. self-study versus public information), and a description of how the program determines that its practicum experiences are sufficient for internship preparation.
- Report on program efforts to reduce student attrition rates.
- Provide information on the minimum expected levels of achievement for all of the outcome measures listed in Appendix J.
- Provide aggregated outcome data for the outcome measures listed in Appendix J. The program provided aggregated outcome data for the supervisors' ratings and the alumni survey, but not aggregated data for the other outcome measures (e.g. students achieving passing course grades, passage of preliminary exams, etc.).
- Provide documentation that the program has provided all public disclosure information consistent with IR C-20. This should include providing the attrition table, ensuring all information regarding internship is clear, accurate, and consistent, and clarifying the information in the time to completion table regarding students entering the program with Masters degrees.

The program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response due **September 1, 2009** for formal review by the Commission:

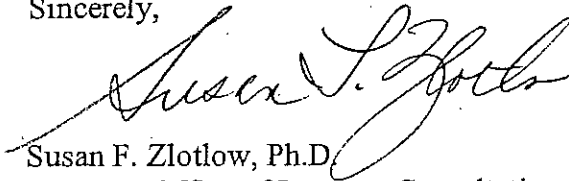
- Given that the majority of the faculty are new and the program has recently undergone substantial programmatic changes which involved loss of faculty, provide updated information on the program's core faculty and how the program is working to maintain a stable and appropriately credentialed faculty.

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 date(s).

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 Vice President, Academic Affairs
Bradley Balch, Ph.D., Dean
Michele Boyer, Ph.D., Department Chair
Bridget Roberts-Pittman, Ph.D., Training Director
Barbara Mowder, Chair of Site Visit Team
Giselle Esquivel, Member of Site Visit Team
Sharon Telleen, Member of Site Visit Team