

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY Ph.D. PROGRAM ACCREDITATION REPORT
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report for the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: The Ph.D. program in Counseling Psychology (1) submitted a preliminary review; (2) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards and criteria defined by the accrediting body; and (3) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The program was accredited for the maximum seven-year period through 2018. The program is required to submit additional information to the accrediting agency by September 1, 2012. This accreditation report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to provide “educational excellence and impact.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of Program.** The Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program is committed to a scientist-practitioner model that emphasizes both the acquisition of scientific knowledge and research skills as well as the development of professional competencies in counseling, assessment, and supervision. The commitment to science and practice is reflected in an integrated curriculum that involves students in research, classroom instruction, and applied activities. Courses, seminars, and practica are designed to increase awareness, tolerance, and respect for personal and individual differences and to promote sensitivity to the influence of culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation on persons and their behavior.
- ◇ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met state and national standards for its development and evaluation. To employers, graduate schools, and licensure, certification, and registration boards, graduation from an accredited program signifies adequate preparation for entry into the profession. In fact, many of these groups require graduation from an accredited program as a minimum qualification.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the American Psychological Association (APA).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program contained the responses to the standards (domains) required by the accrediting body – eligibility; program philosophy, objectives and curriculum plan; program resources; cultural and individual differences and diversity; student-faculty relations; program self-assessment and quality enhancement (with outcome data); public disclosure; and relationship with accrediting body.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In March 2011, the visiting team determined that the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program met the requirements for accredited status.

- ◇ Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team. The Visiting Team identified the following strengths:
 - ⇒ “The program provides excellent training in psychological science as well as the specialty in counseling psychology.
 - ⇒ The program is an integral part of the mission of the academic unit in which it resides.
 - ⇒ The program possesses a serious and sustained commitment to enhancing diversity in the curriculum, students, faculty, and educational environment. There has been remarkable progress in adding to cultural diversity in the program faculty.
 - ⇒ The program has an excellent faculty-student ratio.
 - ⇒ The program has a particularly collaborative relationship across the psychology department and offers a rich, current, and empirically supported curriculum that adequately addresses the broad and general science psychology.”

- ◇ Challenges Observed by the Visiting Team. The Visiting Team identified the following challenges:
 - ⇒ “It is unclear whether the program provides broad and general coverage in all the core functional areas outlined in the domain of the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation* and consistent with the Implementing Regulation.
 - ⇒ It was unclear how the program provides training in psychological measurement consistent with its goals and objectives and how it monitors achievement in this core area.
 - ⇒ There were concerns regarding the breadth and depth of three courses comprising the assessment sequence – *Psychological Assessment; Personality Assessment; and Psychoeducational Assessment.*
 - ⇒ It is unclear whether all students are consistently exposed to training experiences in consultation and are able to demonstrate competence in this area at the entry to practice level.
 - ⇒ While the program currently has sufficient students and necessary facilities to ensure meaningful interaction, support, and socialization, there has been a decrease in numbers of counseling psychology students enrolled during the past few years.
 - ⇒ The filing of remediation plans is inconsistent.
 - ⇒ Few courses describe concrete objectives, which makes it difficult to determine whether a student has met the minimum level of achievement.”

- ◇ Areas that Need to be Addressed. The program must submit a report by September 2, 2012, addressing the following areas:
 - ⇒ “The program must clarify how it ensures coverage in biological aspects of behavior for all students. Specifically, the program must address how Psych 517 provides broad and general coverage in the core curriculum area.
 - ⇒ The program must provide an update on efforts to revise the psychological measurement sequence and discuss how it ensures that students meet the standard of broad and general coverage in psychological measurement.

- ⇒ The program must provide evidence to demonstrate that it provides adequate exposure to theories and methods of assessment and to address how student input is factored into program self-assessment and subsequent program changes.
- ⇒ The program must provide evidence that all students achieve competence in theories and/or methods of consultation.
- ⇒ The program must provide an update on the implementation of the policy to ensure timely feedback regarding remediation plans for students and provide an update on maintaining student files consistent with its remediation policies and annual updates.
- ⇒ The program must provide an update on progress toward using behaviorally oriented outcome measurements for each stage of clinical training.

The program must provide actual data collected using the revised mechanisms by September 1, 2013.”

- ◇ Accreditation Status. In August 2011, the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association awarded accreditation to the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program at Iowa State University for the maximum period of seven years to 2018. A report must be submitted by September 1, 2012 to address the issues identified on pages 2-3.