

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents
From: Board Office
Subject: Accreditation Report for the Doctoral Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy, Iowa State University
Date: February 12, 2001

Recommended Action:

Receive the report on accreditation for the Doctoral Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy, Iowa State University.

Executive Summary:

At its July 2000 meeting, the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) voted to grant re-accreditation to the doctoral specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program within the College of Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS) at Iowa State University. Accreditation is granted by the Commission for a period of six years. This accreditation expires in July 2006. In addition to identifying program strengths, COAMFTE noted several program weaknesses regarding faculty diversity and curriculum and mandated stipulations which must be met by July 31, 2001.

The program strengths included: (1) the clinic, which was about to be moved to a new building with state-of-the-art equipment; (2) exposure of students to a variety of family development and family relations courses in the department; and (3) efforts and successes in providing internships in the region that are paid opportunities for students.

The program was found to be in compliance with all standards. However, the Commission specified that some areas of concern regarding faculty diversity, clinical experiences, and curriculum be addressed. The changes required by these "stipulations" are to be in place by July 31, 2001. The Department has indicated that all stipulations will be met. Responses to specific stipulations are found in the Background and Analysis section of this memorandum.

MFT will begin a Master's degree program in Fall 2001. That program is not included in the accreditation.

Accreditation reviews are consistent with the Board of Regents' Strategic Plan, Key Result Area 1.0.0.0, Quality. The accreditation process relates to Objective 1.1.0.0, "to improve the quality of existing and newly created educational programs."

Background and Analysis:

The doctoral program in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) was first accredited by COAMFTE in 1990, although the program was begun in 1982. The program is housed in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS), in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences.

There are three full-time faculty members (nine-month appointments). As noted elsewhere, other faculty in HDFS teach courses that students in this program take. HDFS faculty members also serve on Program of Study committees.

Since 1990, the program has graduated nine classes of students. Six doctoral students are admitted annually. The doctorate program is clearly designed to train academicians. Approximately 75 percent of the program's graduates are now faculty at other universities. In light of MFT's beginning of a Master's degree program during the coming year, it is probable that only three or four doctoral students will be admitted in Fall 2001.

Stipulations and Standards of COAMFTE

The Commission requires the Program Coordinator to submit annual reports. By June 31, 2001, the submission date of the next annual report, the Program Coordinator will respond to the stipulations (each stipulation is based upon a standard) as follows:

- The program will have a faculty diverse in age, culture, ethnicity, gender and race. Compliance will be judged in the context of program size and location. (Standard 130.08)
- Either during the program or prior to entering it, students will complete a minimum of 4 Standard Didactic Units (SDUs) in Area II (Standard 320.01) [One SDU equates to three semester hours.]
- Area II material will address marriage and family therapy practice and be related conceptually to theory. (Standard 320.02)
- Area II material will provide a comprehensive survey and a substantive understanding of the major models of marriage and family therapy. (Standard 320.03)
- There will be Area II teaching on assessment, including marriage and family therapy methods and major mental health assessment methods and instruments. (Standard 320.04)

- Area II material will address a wide variety of clinical problems. (Standard 320.05)
- In Area II, students will learn about appropriate collaboration and related disciplines. (Standard 320.06)

Responses by Marriage and Family Therapy Program

Faculty Diversity (Standard 130.08)

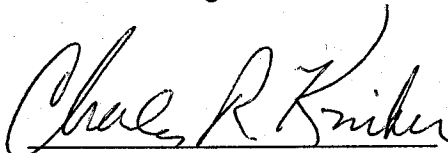
A revised listing of faculty involved with the program will be submitted. In the original self-study, only faculty teaching courses routinely taken by MFT students were listed. The Commission takes into consideration faculty who teach other courses, as well as those who serve on dissertation committees. Under the broader criterion, the program meets this standard.

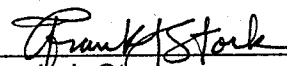
Curriculum (Standards 320.01, 320.02, 320.03, 320.04, 320.05, and 320.06)

Syllabi have been prepared that meet accreditation standards for the doctoral program. The University response states that new doctoral students over the past two years have been graduates of MFT Master's programs who did not need the Standard Curriculum. In the opinion of the MFT faculty, the Standard Curriculum is geared for the more prevalent Master's degree programs in the country. ISU's program exceeds this base for its doctoral program.

Nationally, the pool of potential doctoral students has declined. There is more interest in Master's degree programs. ISU's program will encourage the strongest Master's students to continue to the doctorate. The Master's degree is essentially a clinical degree, similar in status to a Master of Social Work. The new MFT Master's program beginning in Fall 2001 will meet current COAMFTE standards. The Master's program will be modeled after programs at Purdue, Kansas State, Connecticut, BYU, and Florida State. The response by the Coordinator stated that the syllabus for Psych 561 has been revised to indicate clearly that a variety of treatment modalities are covered.

A copy of the self-study, the Commission for Accreditation Site Visit Report, the letter from COAMFTE confirming accreditation, and January 12, 2001 memo from the Program Coordinator are on file in the Board Office.


Charles R. Kniker

Approved: 
Frank J. Stork