



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

April 21, 2011

R. Loftin, Ph.D.
President
Texas A&M University
Office of the President
1246 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-1246

Dear President Loftin,

At its meeting on March 31 – April 3, 2011 the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) conducted a review of the doctoral Ph.D. program in School Psychology at Texas A&M University. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review of June 4, 2010 and the program's response to the preliminary review on August 5, 2010, the report of the team that visited the program on November 4-5, 2010, and the program's response to the site visit report on December 21, 2010.

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 **2017**. 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. McIntosh 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 review. This is 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.

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 Texas A&M University School Psychology doctoral program is well established in preparing students for careers in professional psychology. Texas A&M University is a public institution accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of College and

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Schools. Located in the Department of Educational Psychology, within the College of Education and Human Development, the program is highly regarded within the university at the departmental and upper administrative levels, and is clearly represented within institutional budgets. The program clearly has a sufficient number of students to ensure meaningful interaction, support and socialization.

Policies and practices of the university, college, department, and program reflect high standards of respect for and understanding of cultural and individual diversity. In addition, clearly detailed written policies are readily available addressing graduate student admission and degree requirements, financial and administrative support for students, student performance evaluation processes and minimal thresholds for acceptable achievement, and due process and grievance procedures for both students and faculty.

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 follows a scientist-practitioner model, focusing on an integration of clinical and research training. The overarching goal of the program is to educate competent professionals in School Psychology who are prepared for diverse professional roles in clinical and educational practice, research, academic and community settings, with emphasis on schools and development perspectives.

The program's philosophy and model are implemented through a curriculum plan that is sequential, cumulative, and graded in complexity. Program objectives and associated competencies expected of graduates are clearly described. The breadth of scientific psychology is thoroughly addressed in a thoughtful and coherent manner, and core clinical courses provide a strong foundation for carefully developed and closely monitored field assignments and practicum experiences.

For the biological aspects of behavior curriculum area, students primarily enroll in EPSY 621: *Clinical Neuropsychology* (site visit report [SVR], Domain B.3). However, the self-study references PSYC 609: *Physiological Psychology* as an alternate course; yet no syllabus was provided for this course. The program is asked to provide a copy of the most recent version of the PSYC 609: *Physiological Psychology* syllabus for review by the CoA by **September 1, 2011** consistent with Domain B.3(a) of the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation (G&P)* and Implementing Regulation (IR) C-16 (attached).

Based on careful review of syllabi submitted by the program for courses SPSY 612: *Individual Assessment of Children's Intelligence* and SPSY 642: *Behavioral Assessment and Interventions* and consideration of the program's response to the site visit report, the CoA concurs with the site

visitors that the program has not clearly documented how it ensures exposure to the current body of knowledge in cognitive aspects of behavior (SVR, Domain B.3); more specifically, applied courses in testing, assessment, and intervention do not by themselves fulfill this requirement. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2011**, the program is asked to clearly and fully document how it ensures broad and general coverage for all students in cognitive aspects of behavior and provide copies of the most recent syllabi for any courses utilized for this purpose consistent with Domain B.3(a) of the G&P and IR C-16.

The documentation provided by the program for exposure to the human development curriculum area suggests exposure focused exclusively on childhood and adolescence and applied training in testing, assessment, and intervention. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2011**, the program is asked to clearly and fully document how it ensures broad and general coverage for all students to the current body of knowledge in human development, and provide copies of the most recent syllabi for any course utilized for this purpose consistent with Domain B.3(b) of the G&P and IR C-16.

The program and site visit team both identified a need to enhance student exposure to the current body of knowledge in supervision. In response to the site visit report, the program noted that it is "in the process of establishing a means (and course) to provide advanced students experience and mentorship in providing supervision", with the new course to be offered beginning in 2011-2012. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2011** the program is asked to provide an update on its progress with this effort to more clearly ensure broad and general coverage in supervision as well as a copy of the new syllabus consistent with Domain B.3(c) of the G&P and IR C-16.

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 benefits from a committed, highly qualified faculty who are integral to the department and college, and who function effectively as role models and mentors for students, consistent with the scientist-practitioner model. The program is successful in recruiting a sufficient number of highly qualified students with interests that match the training model. It also seems that the program has adequate resources to successfully accomplish its training goals and objectives.

The Commission noted that the program did not provide information regarding clerical support in the self-study. Additionally, the current site visitors reported information directed more towards the technical support available to the program rather than clerical support. In a narrative response due by **September 1, 2011**, the program is asked to clarify sufficiency of clerical support available.

Based on preliminary review of the program's self-study report, updated and corrected abbreviated curriculum vitae were requested for six faculty members (PR letter, pp.2-3). The program subsequently submitted four of those corrected vitae, but updated and corrected vitae for two associated program faculty (Dr. Kwok and Dr. Bowman-Perrott) have yet to be

submitted. The program is asked to provide revised curriculum vitae for Drs. Kwok and Bowman-Perrott by **September 1, 2011**.

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 documented systematic, long-term, and effective efforts to attract and retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds. In addition, the program has demonstrated a strong commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. The program has also demonstrated a commitment to training in cultural and individual diversity, reflected by formal coursework, infusion throughout the curriculum, role modeling by faculty, and practicum training opportunities afforded to students.

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

The program recognizes the rights of students and faculty to be treated with courtesy, respect, and ethical sensitivity, including a strong commitment to respect for cultural and individual diversity. Faculty are collegial with each other and with students, are accessible to students for guidance and supervision, and they serve as effective role models. Program requirements, performance expectations and remediation, continuance, and termination procedures are made available to students through clear and accessible written policies and procedures. In addition, students are provided with thorough and regular written feedback on their progress, along with guidance for remediation as needed.

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 has documented an excellent commitment to program self-assessment and quality enhancement, using a strategy that is systematic and thorough; linking program goals, objectives, and targeted competencies with specific outcome data. In addition, the program is demonstrating a commitment to review of its training model, goals and objectives in relation to appraisal of the institutional mission, evolving scientific and professional knowledge, and national, regional, and local standards and needs.

Domain F.1(a): Outcome Data

The program, with appropriate involvement from its students, engages in regular, ongoing self-studies that address 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 continuously collects outcome data for its current students and alumni that are based on program goals and objectives. Outcome data collected by the program ascertain that the program has been successful in attaining its goals and objectives.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

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 web page is appropriately accessible, lists its accreditation status, and includes all required information about the program and the CoA.

Please note that as of September 15, 2010, IR C-20 was updated with new reporting requirements. Most notably, the required information must be titled "*Student Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data*", and if the program has a website, the information must be located no more than "one click" away from the main/home doctoral program web page. The most current version of IR C-20 is attached for your information.

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 has demonstrated good communication with CoA, maintains a website that provides evidence of policies and procedures that attend to CoA policies, and is timely in its communications.

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 by **September 1, 2011**:

- Clarify sufficiency of clerical support available.
- Provide revised curriculum vitae for Drs. Kwok and Bowman-Perrott.

The program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by **September 1, 2011** for formal review by the Commission:

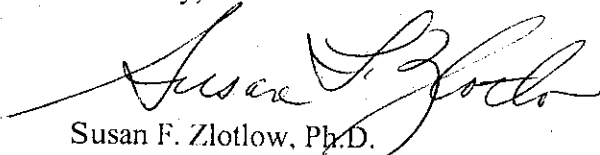
- Provide a copy of the most recent version of the PSYC 609: *Physiological Psychology* syllabus.
- Clearly and fully document how broad and general coverage for all students in cognitive aspects of behavior is ensured and provide copies of the most recent syllabi for any courses utilized for this purpose.
- Clearly and fully document how broad and general coverage for all students in human development is ensured and provide copies of the most recent syllabi for any course utilized for this purpose.
- Provide an update on the progress of efforts to more clearly ensure broad and general coverage of supervision and provide a copy of the syllabus for the new course being established for this purpose.

Please note that while these items are considered an addendum to the data provided in the Annual Report Online (ARO), they are not to be submitted online. The program's response 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.

The accreditation website (www.apa.org/ed/accreditation) provides important updates and policy changes related to the accreditation process. Recently, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) approved several new Implementing Regulations. As an accredited program, we encourage you to periodically visit the website to remain current on all new accreditation policies. The Commission on Accreditation would also like to remind you that all accredited programs must inform the accrediting body in a timely manner of changes that could alter the program's quality. A copy of Implementing Regulation C-19 (Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs) is attached for your information.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I extend congratulations to the training staff and interns 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: Douglas Palmer, Ph.D., College of Education and Human Development
Victor Willson, Ph.D., Professor and Head
Cynthia Riccio, Ph.D., Director of Training
Chandra Mehrotra, Ph.D., Combined Site Visit Chair (Generalist)
Thomas Huberty, Ph.D., ABPP, School Visit Chair
James Mazza, 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-20. Disclosure of Education/Training Outcomes and Information Allowing for Informed Decision-Making to Prospective Doctoral Students

(Commission on Accreditation, May 2006; revised November 2006; July 2007; July 2010)

Domain G of the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology* (G&P) requires that doctoral graduate programs provide potential students, current students, and the public with accurate information on the program and on program expectations. This information is meant to describe the program accurately and completely, using the most up-to-date data on education and training outcomes, and be presented in a manner that allows applicants to make informed decisions about entering the program.

The program is responsible for updating all public information by October 1 of each year. Failure to update the information is as much of a concern as failure to provide the necessary information in the required format. After October 1, the Commission will review programs' compliance with the below requirements *and* that the data provided are consistent with the program's data from the Annual Report Online (ARO).

Presentation of Required Information

To ensure that the required information for each program is available to the public in a consistent fashion, the following two provisions are effective **September 15, 2010**:

- The information must all be located in a single place and be titled "Student Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data"; and
- If the program has a website, the information must be located no more than one-click away from the main/home doctoral landing page.

Because the information required should include those education and training outcomes that will allow applicants to make informed and comparative decisions, the Commission requires that all doctoral programs minimally provide the following to prospective students in its public materials, **including its website, if it has one**: 1) time to program completion; 2) program costs (tuition and fees) and fellowships and other funding available; 3) internship acceptance rates; 4) student attrition rates; and 5) licensure outcomes. These are defined as follows:

1. Time to Completion

Time to completion must be presented in two ways:

- First, programs must provide the **mean** and the **median** number of years that students have taken to complete the program from the time of first matriculation. These data should be provided for all graduates in the past seven (7) years.
- Second, the program should provide the percentage of students completing the program in fewer than five years, five years, six years, seven years, and more than seven years.

Where applicable, these measures should be provided separately for students who began the program as bachelor-level graduates and those who began with advanced standing (e.g., after having completed a separate master's program in psychology).

2. Program Costs

Programs are expected to make available the total costs per student for the current first year cohort. This information should include full-time student tuition, tuition per credit hour for part-time students, and any fees or costs required of students beyond tuition costs. For example, if a program requires students to travel to attend a mandatory component of the program, the estimated costs of this travel should be included as well. Programs may also provide information regarding current adjustments to tuition including, but not limited to: financial aid, grants, loans, tuition remission, assistantships, and fellowships. Even if program cost information is provided elsewhere on another university or other site, it must be provided in the doctoral program's materials as well.

3. Internships

Programs are expected to provide data on students' success in obtaining internships. The program is required to report for **each** of the past seven (7) years:

- The total number of students who sought or applied for internships
- The number and percent of total who obtained internships
- The number and percent of total who obtained paid internships
- The number and percent of total who obtained APA/CPA-accredited internships
- The number and percent of total who obtained non-accredited, APPIC member internships
- The number and percent of total who obtained non-accredited, other membership organization internships (e.g., CAPIC) *(if applicable)*
- The number and percent of total who obtained non-accredited internships conforming to CDSPP guidelines (school psychology programs only) *(if applicable)*
- The number and percent of total who obtained two-year, half-time internships *(if applicable)*

NOTE: In calculating the above percentages, the program must base these on the **total number of students** who sought or who applied for internship in each year.

4. Attrition

Programs must report the number and percentage of students who have failed to complete the program once enrolled. These data should be calculated for each entering cohort by dividing the number of students in that cohort who have left the program for any reason by the total number of students initially enrolled in that same cohort. These data should be provided by cohort for all students who have left the program in the last seven (7) years or for all students who have left since the program became initially accredited, whichever time period is shorter. Programs are required to present this information in the following format:

Year of first enrollment	Number of students enrolled	Number and percentage who graduated with doctorate	Number and percentage of students still enrolled in program	Number and percentage of students no longer enrolled for any reason other than graduation
2004 (or the 7 th year for which data are available)				
2005				
2006				
2007				
2008				
2009				
2010 (or most recent year for which data are available)				

5. Licensure

Reporting of program licensure data is an expectation of the US Secretary of Education's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity for program accreditors, including the APA Commission on Accreditation. As such, programs must report the number and percentage of program graduates who have become licensed psychologists within the preceding decade. In calculating the licensure percentage:

- The denominator number is the total number of program graduates in the past 10 years, minus the number who graduated in the past 2 years (i.e., the total number of graduates between 2 and 10 years ago).
- The numerator is the number of graduates who became licensed psychologists in that same 8 year period (i.e. between 2 and 10 years ago).
- The licensure percentage, then, is calculated by dividing the number of graduates who became licensed psychologists in the 8 year span from 2 to 10 years ago by the number of doctoral degrees awarded by the program over that same period. For example, the figures reported by a program for 2010 would be number of graduates from the program between 2000 and 2008 who have achieved licensure divided by the total number of students graduating from the program during that same 8-year period.

Program licensure rates MUST be updated at least every three years. Programs may clarify their licensure rate for the public in light of their training model and program goals and objectives.