



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

May 1, 2017

Jimmy G. Cheek
Chancellor
University of Tennessee – Knoxville
Office of the President
831 Andy Holt Tower
Knoxville, TN 37996-0180

Dear Chancellor Cheek,

At its meeting on March 30 – April 2, 2017 the Commission on Accreditation conducted a review of the doctoral **Ph.D. program in Clinical psychology at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville**. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review ("admin review"), the program's response to preliminary review, the report of the team that visited the program on November 10-11, 2016, and the program's response to the site visit report.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of this review, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) voted to award accreditation to this program. In so doing, the Commission scheduled the **next accreditation site visit to be held in 2023**. During the interim, the program will be listed annually among accredited programs 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. Emil Rodolfa and Doug Behrend 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. Please note that you will also receive this feedback online via the CoA Portal.

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 Clinical psychology at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville seeks to train clinical psychologists to pursue research and applied careers. The program is an integral part of the mission of its sponsoring institution and is represented in the institution's budget. **The**

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university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The program has residency requirements and other policies and procedures consistent with Domain A.6 of the *Guidelines and Principles of Accreditation*.

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 operates under a variation on the scientist-practitioner training model, known as the Tennessee Model, which is based on both the science of psychology and professional practice. The curriculum is appropriately sequential, cumulative, and graded in complexity. Practica are thoughtfully sequenced as well, with initial training in a departmental in-house clinic, followed by an array of external practicum options in the community that are well-connected to the program.

Table B.3 indicates coverage in theories and methods of effective intervention occurs in the following courses: *PSYC 670: Psychotherapy I*, *PSYC 671: Psychotherapy II*, and *PSYC 673, 695, & 696: Clinic and External Placement Labs in Psychotherapy* (self-study [SS], Standard B.3). Upon review of the syllabi provided, it appears that these courses do not expose students to sufficient current, primary source readings. Specifically, review of the PSYC 671 syllabus indicates very few contemporary readings are required. The syllabus for PSYC 670 does not contain any readings since 2007 and is based on a text published originally in 1979.

Additionally, the syllabi for PSYC 673, 695, and 696 do not provide lists of required readings. It is therefore unclear how the program is providing students with adequate exposure to the current body of knowledge in effective interventions. Given the transition to the *Standards of Accreditation (SoA)*, by **September 1, 2017** the program must demonstrate how its coverage in this curriculum area meets the SoA (Section II.B.1). (Standard B.3 in the CoA Portal)

The program indicates that it provides training in theories and methods of consultation through *PSYC 645: Advanced Professional Issues in Clinical Psychology: Supervision and Career Development* (SS, Standard B.3, Table B.3). However, upon review of the syllabus provided, it appears that only one class section is on forensic consultation. In the professional judgement of the Commission, this course does not provide sufficient coverage in theories and methods of consultation. Although the program lists other activities and courses as providing some coverage in this area (SS, Standard B.3, Table B.3), it does not appear that these contain sufficient means of gaining exposure to the current body of knowledge in consultation. Given the transition to the *Standards of Accreditation (SoA)*, by **September 1, 2017** the program must demonstrate how its coverage in consultation meets the SoA (Section II.B.1). (Standard B.3 in the CoA Portal)

The program is reminded that as of January 1, 2017 coverage in intervention and consultation is expected to be consistent with the SoA and Implementing Regulation (IR) C- 8 D (attached). The

program is asked to provide copies of any relevant syllabi with its response to the above requests.

For many of the program's competencies, one of the expected minimum levels of achievement is described as "Performance ratings on Competency Evaluation Form and Practicum Evaluation Form, which directly inform grades received in practicum courses for years 2-5 (PSYC 673-Lab in Psychotherapy; PSYC 695-Field Placement in Clinical Psychology; and PSYC 696-Psychology Clinic)" (SS, Standard B.2, Table B.2). The minimum level of achievement for course grades is "a grade of A, B or S (Satisfactory)" (SS, Standard B.2, Table B.2). However, it is unclear how students' performance ratings on the cited forms are tied to the minimum level of achievement in practicum courses. In addition, neither the Practicum Evaluation Form nor the Competency Evaluation Form identify clear operationalized definitions for the expected minimum level of achievement. For instance, the Competency Evaluation Form's rating scale uses "Meets expectations for end of [1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year]" (SS, Standard E.4, Appendix E.4.2.1), but does not provide behavioral anchors for those expectations. Likewise, the Practicum Evaluation Form allows for ratings of Superior, Satisfactory, Needs improvement, or Not satisfactory (SS, Standard B.2, Appendix B.2.1.3), but none of those ratings are operationally defined. It is therefore unclear what the program's minimum levels of achievement are as they relate to practicum. By **September 1, 2017**, the program is asked to clarify its minimum levels of achievement related to practicum. The program is asked to provide copies of any relevant evaluation forms with its response. (Standard B.4[MLA] in the CoA Portal)

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 a sufficiently sized and qualified faculty to meet its training goals and objectives. The program has a sufficient number of students at various levels of matriculation to support peer socialization and support. Students have interests and aptitudes appropriate for the training goals of the program. The program also appears to have adequate additional resources, including clerical and technical support, stipends and tuition waivers, student support services, and physical facilities.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

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 acknowledges the importance of cultural and individual diversity for the training of competent clinical psychologists. Relevant knowledge and experiences in diversity are built into the curriculum through both a specific course and through infusion across the curriculum, including both didactic and practicum training. The program engages in systematic and long-term efforts to recruit and retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds.

However, site visitors did note past reports of “numerous serious incidents... involving faculty behavior that constituted both micro- and macro-aggressions related to race, gender, sexual orientation and religion” (SVR, Standard D.1). The program has since taken steps to ensure a supportive and encouraging learning environment appropriate for the training of diverse individuals, which will be further discussed in Domain E.

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.

Students are provided with annual written feedback on the extent to which they are meeting the program's requirements and expectations. The program has policies in place that govern due process and grievance procedures, and students are made aware of such policies.

As noted above, serious concerns regarding the past treatment of diverse individuals were raised by site visitors. Site visitors noted that “[t]he climate in the program over the last 7 years... has not been conducive to respecting cultural and individual diversity” (SVR, Standard E.3). In addition, a faculty member was reported to have entered into inappropriate relationships with graduate students (SVR, Standard D.1). The program reported that “[m]any of the negative incidents centered on the behaviors of particular faculty who have now left the department” (response to site visit report [SVR-R], Standard A.5). Nonetheless, these past events have had an effect on the program's environment and surveys of current students and graduates “indicated concerns with strained faculty-student relations” (SVR, Standard E.1). The program described significant steps that it has taken to address concerns relating to diversity and the overall climate of the program in its response to the site visit report (Standards D.1, D.2, E.1, & E.3). Although the program is taking appropriate steps to ensure all students and faculty are treated with courtesy and respect, there does not appear to be a plan in place to monitor the effectiveness of these efforts. By **September 1, 2017**, the program is asked to demonstrate the effectiveness of its efforts to ensure an environment in which all students and faculty are treated with courtesy and respect, consistent with Standard III.B of the SoA. (Standard E.3 in the CoA Portal)

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 is committed to program evaluation and improvement and engages in ongoing self-assessment. The program has developed systems by which students have input into the program and has used the feedback received from its students to make programmatic changes. The program stays current with local and national professional trends that might alter its goals and approach to training.

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 provided data on students as they progress through and complete the program (proximal data) tied to its goals, objectives, and competencies. The program also provided data on alumni (distal data) that demonstrate the program's success in achieving 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 describes itself accurately and completely in its public materials, including descriptions of program competencies, training model, selection procedures, staff, and facilities. The program also accurately cites its accreditation status and the contact information for the Commission.

The program's website accurately presents student outcome data, consistent with Implementing Regulation C-26 D. Please note that the program's public information will be reviewed on or after October 1 of each year to ensure that the disclosure data has been updated and is in compliance with the IR (attached).

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 paid all fees necessary to maintain its accredited status.

Although the program has experienced a number of challenges pertaining to diversity sensitivity and sexual harassment since the last periodic review, there does not appear to have been any notification or consultation with CoA regarding the impact of these challenges on program quality. The program is reminded of the need to notify CoA of any changes that may affect program quality, including the removal of faculty and other program events that have the potential of compromising training or student-faculty relationships, consistent with IR C-27 D (attached). In its next self-study, the program is asked to demonstrate that it has informed the Commission of any such changes that have occurred since its last periodic review.

The program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by **September 1, 2017** for formal review by the Commission:

- Demonstrate how its coverage in intervention meets the SoA;
- Demonstrate how its coverage in consultation meets the SoA;
- Clarify its minimum levels of achievement related to practicum;
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of its efforts to ensure an environment in which all students and faculty are treated with courtesy and respect.

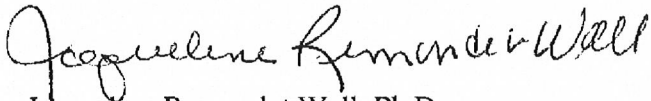
The program's response to the items listed above should be submitted in the online CoA Portal. The program should navigate to the "Follow-Up" tab to respond to the bullet points listed above by the designated due date.

The accreditation website (www.apa.org/ed/accreditation) provides important updates and policy changes related to the accreditation process. 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-27 D (Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs) is attached for your information. Such updates should be submitted via the CoA Portal under the "Substantive Change" tab.

Please note that the new Standards of Accreditation (SoA) are now in effect. Additional information on the SoA and the 2017 implementation and transition to the new standards can be found on the accreditation website at <http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/accreditation-roadmap.aspx>. Please contact the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation with any questions related to the SoA.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I extend congratulations to the faculty and students of the 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline Remondet Wall". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jacqueline Remondet Wall, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

cc: Susan Martin, Provost & Vice Chancellor
Theresa Lee, Ph.D., Dean
Deborah Welsh, Ph.D., Department Head
Kristina Coop Gordon, Ph.D., Training Director