

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**ACCREDITATION REPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

**Action Requested:** Receive the accreditation report from the College of Education's Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program at the University of Iowa.

**Executive Summary:** The Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program, which has been accredited since 1980, (1) underwent a preliminary review required by the accrediting body; (2) underwent a self-study that addressed the criteria (domains) defined by the accrediting body; and (3) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The Program was accredited for the maximum period of seven years allowed by the accrediting body. This report addresses the Board's Strategic Plan objective to "offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students" (1.1.).

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description.** Counseling psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty in professional psychology which focuses on personal and interpersonal functioning across the life span on emotional, social, vocational, education, health-related, development, and organizational concerns. SUI's Counseling Psychology Program is a doctoral program whose primary goal is to train students to achieve competency in providing a wide range of psychological services and in conducting research on a variety of psychological problems.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Committee on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association (APA).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program contained the responses to the appropriate 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; public disclosure; and relationship with accrediting body.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In May 2005, the visiting team determined that the Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program was in compliance with the APA Committee on Accreditation's accreditation domains.
- ◇ **Sample Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.**
  - ☑ "The program is commended for its seamless integration of training excellence and its commitment to diversity."
  - ☑ "The program has a very strong set of practicum sites that appear to be committed to training and provide adequate supervision."
  - ☑ "The faculty members are very distinguished, demonstrate a strong commitment to the program, and serve as excellent role models to the students."

- ☑ “The outcome data obtained from students and program graduates indicate that the program is meeting its goals and objectives.”
- ☑ “The Program benefits significantly from the close proximity of and historic connections with The Iowa Testing Program.”

◆ Sample Concerns Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “There appears to be some weakness in preparation to work effectively with groups or families rather than individuals. There are no required courses in these areas, nor do other required courses appear to cover such modalities. Some students reported feeling concerned that they might not be receiving the training necessary to provide group or family therapy when they reached an internship site.” *Group and family psychotherapy is one of many modalities/areas of practice. Students who desire experience in specialty areas receive additional didactic instruction and clinical supervision prior to approval by faculty to engage in such activities. Students are not placed in clinical situations for which they are not prepared.*
- ☑ “Some practicum advisers indicated that some students’ assessment skills were inadequate.” *Using feedback from students, Counseling Psychology faculty now teach one assessment course formerly taught by a faculty member outside of Counseling Psychology; and the assessment experiences were reformulated to fit into a two-course series.*
- ☑ “There is some concern among the students about not knowing when some advanced seminars may be offered.” *The number of seminar offerings has been increased considerably in the last few years. The department will continue to pursue opportunities for additional seminar offerings in these areas, group therapy in particular.*

◆ Accreditation Status. In August 2005, the Committee on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association awarded accreditation to the Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program for the maximum period of seven years.

Details about the accreditation report are available in the Board Office.