Commission on Accreditation Update
May 2014

Carl E. Paternite, PhD
Chair

Debora J. Bell, PhD
Associate Chair, Program Review

Kathleen J. Bieschke, PhD
Associate Chair, Quality Assurance

CoA Spring 2014 Meeting

The Commission on Accreditation (CoA) held its first program review meeting of the year April 3-6, 2014 in Washington, DC. A total of 96 doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral residency programs were reviewed for either initial or continued accreditation, as well as six requests for changes to programs' accredited status (e.g., "Accredited, inactive" status for a training year). Decisions made at the meeting are available on the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation (OPCA) website. Complete listings of accredited and applicant programs were updated on May 7, 2014 to reflect actions taken at the April meeting.

Revision of the Accreditation Operating Procedures (AoP)

The existing Accreditation Operating Procedures (AoP) align with the Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation (G&P) and have been updated and revised in response to requested changes by CoA's recognition bodies (e.g., US Department of Education and Council for Higher Education Accreditation), requests by CoA's consituent groups, and also to improve the internal operations of the CoA. All changes to the AoP undergo a period of public comment and review as well as review by the APA Board of Educational Affairs, and approval by the APA Board of Directors.

During 2014 thus far the CoA dedicated time to draft new operating procedures to complement the proposed Standards of Accrediation (SoA) in Health Service Psychology currently available for public review and comment (see page 2).

In moving forward with drafting the new AoP, the CoA is examining policy changes that will meet some of the flexibility requested by its publics as well as to provide the greatest functionality that reflects the different needs for each level of training. Most notably, CoA is

AOP Revisions (*continued from Page 1, Column 1*)

looking into creating an earlier entry to accreditation for doctoral programs similar to the current "accredited, on contingency" status for internship and postdoctoral programs.

Also under consideration is changing the time periods between periodic review. Currently, CoA grants periodic accreditation review periods between 3-7 years from the date of the last site visit.

At the postdoctoral level, the CoA is evaluating both the composition of site visit teams and the review process to better reflect the specialized education and training occurring at this level of training.

The CoA tentatively plans to vote on a draft of the new AoP at its July meeting, with the draft AoP then made available for a period of public comment. Stay tuned for further information from the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation.

2015 CoA Self-Study and Site Visits

Programs scheduled for periodic review in 2015 have been assigned to review cycles. As a reminder, programs with site visits in 2015 are required to use the 2015 CoA self-study instructions and tables. The Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation (OPCA) strongly encourages program directors to attend one of CoA's self-study workshops (as early in the self-study process as possible). There is no cost to participants for attending. Also, the Accreditation webpage contains a helpful self-study FAQ. Programs are welcome to contact OPCA at (202) 336-5979 for consultation on completing the self-study.

Important Accreditation Dates 2014

July 7	Deadline for public comment on the proposed SoA and IR D.4-7(b)Time to Completion Threshold
July 17-20	Summer Program Review Meeting
September 1	Winter Cycle 2015 Self-Study Due Date
September 8	Third-party Comment for Winter Cycle 2015 Self-Studies Due
October 23-26	Fall Program Review Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT

Two items are out for public comment through July 7, 2014: The proposed Standards of Accreditation (SoA) in Health Service Psychology and a revision to the time to completion threshold of Implementing Regulation (IR) D.4-7(b) for accredited doctoral programs.

Standards of Accreditation (SoA)

The proposed Standards of Accreditation (SoA) in Health Service Psychology remains open for public comment through **July 7, 2014.**

The proposed SoA represents a culmination of the two prior phases of public comment occurring during 2012 and 2013, conversations with training councils, and other discussions with stakeholders on the future of the discipline and profession. The proposed SoA signifies the next step forward and a continued opportunity to further build upon the dialogue between the CoA and constituents.

The SoA consists of three parts representing each level of training: Doctoral; Doctoral Internship; and Postdoctoral Residency. Comments on any or all sections across each training level are welcome. For your convenience, documents highlighting the changes from the Guidelines and Principles (G&P) and the SoA are included at the end of this CoA Update.

Prior to viewing the standards and offering comments, you will be asked to review important details pertaining to the SoA and affirm that you have read this material. *Please take the time to review this introduction.*

Comments received from the prior two phases of comment continue to be available on the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation webpage. You will also be able to access the current public comment system from the OPCA page.

Implementing Regulation (IR) D.4-7(b): Time to Program Completion Threshold

As part of its responsibilities to ensure program quality between scheduled periodic reviews (self-study and site visit), the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) evaluates appropriate thresholds obtained through aggregate data collected by the Annual Report Online (ARO). In evaluating student performance required of accredited programs, CoA expects most students will complete their doctoral programs in not less than 3 years, nor more than 7 full calendar years.

Based on analysis of ARO data collected over the most recent three year period from 2011-2013, at its April 2014 meeting the CoA proposed a revision to the time to completion threshold for students successfully completing a doctoral program across a 3 year time period. The current mean and median year thresholds in IR D.4-7(b) are both set to greater than 7.5 years. The proposed change would continue the existing threshold at a mean of greater than 7.5 years but alter the median to be greater than 7.0 years for time to completion. The CoA will look at programs when either the mean or median values on time to completion exceed these values.

This is the only change under consideration by the CoA at this time; all other thresholds specified in IR D.4-7(b) remain unchanged and comments received on these items will **not** be reviewed by the CoA at this time.

The CoA Public Comment System is accessible from the following URL:

http://apps.apa.org/accredcomment/default.aspx

In accordance with the APA "Policies for Accreditation Governance" and Department of Education regulations for notice and comment, the CoA has made the proposed standards of accreditation and revision to IR D.4-7(b) available for a period of public review and comment. The

public comment periods for both items **continue through July 7, 2014**. In an effort to promote thoughtful discussion, the CoA is providing an electronic-based comment form for public comment submission. Comments and other information, including users' identity, will be public. Email addresses used for registration will be kept confidential. The CoA will consider all comments received in moving forward with revisions to its standards of accreditation.

REMINDERS FOR ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

2014 Annual Report Online (ARO)

The 2014 Annual Report Online (ARO) opened on May 1, 2014 and will close on September 15, 2014. Data preparation forms, tip sheets, and other resources for the 2014 ARO are now available. All program directors should have received email notifications about an upcoming series of ARO webinars along with a reminder to update ARO permissions for user accounts. As a reminder, the OPCA research office provides annual summary reports about accredited programs and their students and faculty; ARO statistics and data tables from 2004-2012 along with responses to external research requests are publicly available online. Please contact the OPCA Research office between 9 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday at (202) 336-6016 (or email aro@apa.org) with any questions.

The OPCA Research Office will be conducting webinars throughout this spring and summer. To register for a webinar, please visit the Annual Report Online webpage or click on the hyperlinks below.

2014 ARO Webinars

- **New Doctoral Program Users** May 5, 2014
  Aug. 22, 2014
- **Returning Doctoral Program Users**
  May 14, 2014
  Aug. 26, 2014
- **Internship/Postdoctoral Programs**
  June 12, 2014

Payment of Accreditation Fees by VA programs

Please note that the Veterans Affairs finance/payment system requires a purchase order (PO) be included on the accreditation fee invoice (site visit and annual fees) in order for the invoice to be paid.

Please provide the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation with a contract/solicitation that includes a VA generated PO number **30 days prior** to the accreditation site visit. Please include the following identifying information

- PO Number
- Program Name
- Training Director's Name
- Site Visit Date

Please contact the Office of Program Consulation and Accreditation Office at 202.336.5979 with any questions.

Site Visitor Nominations

Nominate members of your faculty to serve as a CoA site visitor. A cardinal strength of specialized accreditation is that it is indeed a peer review process requiring the professional knowledge of experts in the profession and discipline. Given the diversity of training models and program goals, it is vital that CoA has a robust cadre of site visitors to provide effective and appropriate observations. Recruitment is ongoing for new site visitors and training workshops for doctoral, internship and postdoctoral site visitors will be offered on Wednesday August, 6, 2014 at 2014 APA Convention in Washington, DC. Also, current site visitors who have not attended a workshop within the past 3 years are urged to attend a workshop to learn about recent policy and procedural changes to the review process. Please review the FAQ on Becoming an APA Site Visitor on the OPCA website or email OPCA for more information.

Notify the CoA of Program Director Changes

Please remember to notify the OPCA in writing (by e-mail is fine) when there is a change in the program's training director, and provide the contact information (including the e-mail address) for that individual. If the new director was not previously involved with the program, his/her CV must also be provided for Office records. This is consistent with IR C-19, which requires programs to notify CoA in advance of any substantive changes. This will also ensure that the correct individual(s) for the program is listed in our database and receives all of CoA's correspondence.

CURRENT PROGRAM COUNTS (As of May 7, 2014)

Programs (Level and Area)		Accredited Programs		Applicant Programs Under Review	
		PhD	PsyD	PhD	PsyD
Doctoral Programs	*Clinical*	174	64	2	2
	Counseling	65	5	1	1
	School	57	5	2	1
	Combined	7	3	0	0
	Total Doctoral	**380**		**9**	
Internship Programs	Total Internship	**482**		**40**	
Postdoctoral Residency Programs	*Traditional – Clinical*	55		8	
	Specialty—Clinical Child Psychology	7		1	
	Specialty—Clinical Health Psychology	9		1	
	Specialty--Clinical Neuropsychology	22		2	
	Specialty—Forensic Psychology	1		0	
	Specialty—Rehabilitation Psychology	6		0	
	Total Postdoctoral	**100**		**12**	
TOTAL		**962**		**61**	

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation (OPCA)
American Psychological Association
750 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 336-5979 Fax: (202) 336-5978
E-mail (General): APAAccred@apa.org E-mail (ARO): ARO@apa.org

Web: http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation

WORKING DEFINITIONS OF PROFESSION-WIDE COMPETENCIES
Commission on Accreditation
April 24, 2014

The proposed SoA currently out for public comment includes a list of proposed profession-wide competency categories that would be required of all accredited programs (10 competency areas specified for doctoral programs and internships; 3 advanced competency areas specified for post-doctoral programs). Several constituent groups and individuals have asked CoA for clarification regarding what may be encompassed in each of these competency categories. As noted in the SoA document, fuller articulation of the specific requirements in each competency category, for each level of training, will appear in *Implementing Regulations*. In the meantime, the CoA is providing the *current working definitions* of the profession-wide competency areas. These working definitions should not be considered final policy, but instead are intended to inform public comment on the proposed SoA. Based on public comment on the SoA, the proposed competency areas and their definitions may be altered. In addition, public comment on the SoA will inform *Implementing Regulations* that further describe requirements within each competency category for each level of training. Drafts of these *Implementing Regulations* will be circulated for public comment prior to finalization and adoption.

Brief Definitions for Glossary (* = *see notes below)*

1. Evidence-based Intervention: Demonstrates *appropriate** *knowledge**, *skills**, and attitudes* in the selection, implementation, and evaluation of interventions that are based on the best scientific research evidence; respectful of clients' values/preferences; and relevant expert guidance.

2. Evidence-based Assessment: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the selection, administration, and interpretation of assessments consistent with the best scientific research evidence and relevant expert guidance.

3. Ethical and Legal Standards: Demonstrates appropriate ethical and legal knowledge, skills, and attitudes in all *professional roles**.

4. Individual and Cultural Diversity: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes about cultural and individual differences in all professional roles.

5. Research: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to produce and disseminate scientific research and to make appropriate use of scientific methods and findings in all professional roles.

6. Professional Values and Attitudes: Demonstrates dispositions and engages in behaviors that reflect the values and attitudes of the psychology profession, in all professional roles.

7. Communication and Interpersonal Skills: Demonstrates ability to communicate effectively, to interact appropriately, and to develop meaningful and helpful relationships in all professional roles.

8. Consultation / Inter-professional / Interdisciplinary: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding inter-professional and interdisciplinary collaboration in relevant professional roles.

9. Supervision: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding the instruction and oversight of trainees and other professionals.

10. Reflective Practice: Demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in reflecting on, critically evaluating, and improving one's own professional performance.

***Notes for IR(s).**
☐***"Appropriate"*** is to permit programs to define the competency relative to their own training aims as well as to accommodate levels of training variations in what constitutes minimum levels of achievement.
☐***"Knowledge"***, ***"Skills", and "Attitudes."*** Knowledge roughly encompasses coursework and other didactic training experiences, whereas skills encompass practicum and other experiential training experiences. Attitudes encompass the individual's beliefs and values.
☐***"All (or Relevant) professional roles"*** is to encompass assessment, intervention, research, teaching, consultation, program evaluation, prevention, etc

DOCTORAL

APA Commission on Accreditation
Proposed Doctoral Standards of Accreditation (SoA)
Highlights: What Is Changed and Unchanged

What Has Not Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Doctoral Programs:

- General practice areas within the scope of accreditation at the doctoral level (**Standard I.A.2**);

- Requirement that the program is in a regionally-accredited institution (**Standard I.B.1.a**);

- Standards for education and training of health service psychologists are the same for programs in secular and faith based settings (formerly Footnote 4 - **Standard I.B.2**);

- Importance of ongoing direct face-to-face interaction with students over their developmental sequence (**Standard I.C.1.c**);

- Flexibility in regard to how competencies are achieved by students and assessed by faculty (**Standard II.B., C. and D**);

- Importance of diversity in:
  - policies and procedures to ensure nondiscrimination (**Standard I.D.1**); as a competency (**Standard II.B.1.b**);
  - recruitment and retention of students (**Standard III.A.1.b.ii**) and faculty (**Standard IV.B.5**);
  - creating an environment that nurtures all students for success (**Standard III.B**);

- Internship as part of the doctoral sequence of training (**Standard II.C.2**);

- Demonstration by the program that outcomes have been achieved as appropriate for the area, degree, and aims – including those that are part of:
  - SoA competencies,
  - program specific competencies, and
  - broader areas (e.g., licensure - consistent with federal recognition requirements) - (**Standard II.D.3**);

- Required core faculty (**Standard IV.B**);

- Requirements for clear and accurate public information (**Standard V.A**).

DOCTORAL

What Has Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Doctoral Programs:

- Move from "professional psychology" to Health Service Psychology (**Standard I.A.1** - defined further in Glossary)

- Move from program models to practice area and degree type (**Standard I.A.2** and **Standard I.A.3**);

- Integrate the concepts currently found in Footnote 4 of the G&P into the SoA (**Standard I.B.2**);

- Additional requirements for documentation of student records and their retention (**Standard I.D.4**);

- Place competencies and their assessment together in the SoA (**Standard II**);

- Require discipline specific knowledge and set of profession-wide competencies (**Standard II.B.1.b**);

  - Set of profession-wide competencies derived through a multi-step process that identified points of consensus across the various sets of competencies in the literature;

  - Required profession-wide competency areas included in SoA:
    - ✓ Evidence-based practice in intervention
    - ✓ Evidence-based practice in assessment
    - ✓ Ethical and legal standards
    - ✓ Individual and cultural diversity
    - ✓ Research
    - ✓ Professional values and attitudes
    - ✓ Communication and interpersonal skills
    - ✓ Consultation/interprofessional/interdisciplinary
    - ✓ Supervision
    - ✓ Reflective practice

  - Specific requirements for each competency area defined within Implementing Regulations to allow for CoA modification/adjustment in response to changes in the field and to differentiate specific competencies by level of training, as appropriate.

- More specifics re: expected practicum (**Standard II.C.1**) and internship training (**Standard II.C.2**) - including expectations if students do not attend accredited internships (**Standard II.C.2.b**);

- Require demonstration that program has met its own outcomes and those defined for Health Service Psychology (**Standard II.D.3**);

- Describe how demonstrated prior knowledge in psychology can serve as a foundation for advanced "broad and general" education in curriculum (**Standard II.B.1.a.i** and **Standard III.A.2.c.i**);

- Require programs to engage in review of effectiveness of their diversity practices for students (**Standard III.1.b**) and faculty (**Standard IV.B.5**);

- Clarify required communication between doctoral program and internship (**Standard V.A.3**).

INTERNSHIP

APA Commission on Accreditation
Proposed Internship Standards of Accreditation (SoA)
Highlights: What Is Changed and Unchanged

What Has Not Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Doctoral Internships:

- Internships can be full-time or part-time (**Standard I.A.2.c**);

- Programs can be locate in one institution, they can be affiliated with a specific doctoral program, or they can be in consortia (**Standard I.A.2.c**);

- Internship must be one year full-time or two years part-time (**Standard I.A.2.d**);

- Standards for education and training of health service psychologists are the same for programs in secular and faith based settings (formerly Footnote 4 - **Standard I.B.2**);

- Interns must be funded (**Standard I.C.3.a**);

- Interns receive at least four (4) hours of supervision per week - at least two (2) in individual supervision by a doctoral-level licensed psychologist and at least two (2) additional hours supervised by appropriately credentialed health care professionals (**Standard II.C.3.b-c**);

- Flexibility in regard to how competencies are achieved by interns and assessed by faculty/supervisors (**Standards II.B-D**);

- Demonstration by the program that outcomes have been achieved as appropriate for the program aims (**Standard II.D.)–** including those that are part of:
  - SoA competencies, and
  - Program specific competencies

- Importance of diversity:
  - In policies and procedures to ensure nondiscrimination (**Standard I.E**);
  - As a competency (**Standard II.A.2.d);**
  - In recruitment of interns (**Standard III.A.2**) and staff recruitment and retention (**Standard IV.B.1**);
  - In creating an environment that nurtures all interns for success (**Standard IV.B.2**);

- Minimum of two interns in an accredited program (**Standard III.A.3);** and

- Requirements for clear and accurate public information (**Standard V.A**).

INTERNSHIP

What Has Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Doctoral Internships:

- Move from "professional psychology" to Health Service Psychology (**Standard I.A.1** - defined further in Glossary);

- Integrate the concepts currently found in Footnote 4 of the G&P into the SoA (**Standard I.C.2**);

- Along with a stipend, wherever possible, basic support for health/medical insurance should be in place to protect the welfare of interns and their families (**Standard I.C.3.a**);

- Additional requirements for documentation of student records and their retention (**Standard I.D.4**);

- Place competencies and their assessment together in the SoA (**Standard II**);

  - Replace "model" with program aims and a set of profession-wide competencies (**Standard II.B**.) A set of profession-wide competencies was derived through a multi-step process that identified points of consensus across the various sets of competencies in the literature;

  - Required profession-wide competency areas included in SoA:
    - ✓ Evidence-based practice in intervention
    - ✓ Evidence-based practice in assessment
    - ✓ Ethical and legal standards
    - ✓ Individual and cultural diversity
    - ✓ Research
    - ✓ Professional values and attitudes
    - ✓ Communication and interpersonal skills
    - ✓ Consultation/interprofessional/interdisciplinary
    - ✓ Supervision
    - ✓ Reflective practice

  - Specific requirements for each competency area defined within Implementing Regulations to allow for CoA modification/adjustment in response to changes in the field and to differentiate specific competencies by level of training, as appropriate.

- Each intern evaluation must be based in part on direct observation (either live or video/electronic) of the intern (**Standard II.D.1.a.iv**);

- Require demonstration that program has met profession-wide competencies for Health Service Psychology and program-specified competencies (if applicable) (**Standard II.D.2**);

- Require programs to engage in review of effectiveness of their diversity practices for students (**Standard III.A.1.b**) and faculty (**Standard IV.B.2**);

- Clarify required communication between doctoral program and internship (**Standard V.A.3**).

POSTDOCTORAL

APA Commission on Accreditation
Proposed Postdoctoral Standards of Accreditation (SoA)
Highlights: What Is Changed and Unchanged

What Has Not Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Postdoctoral Residencies:

- Postdoctoral programs can be in traditional practice areas; proficiencies with those areas or in specialty practice areas (**Standard I.A);**

- Programs can be located in one institution, or in consortia (**Standard I.B.2**);

- Standards for education and training of health service psychologists are the same for programs in secular and faith based settings (formerly Footnote 4 - **Standard I.B.3**);

- Postdocs must be funded (**Standard I.B.4.b**);

- Postdocs receive at least 2 hours of individual supervision per week by a doctoral-level licensed psychologist (**Standard II.B.4.d**);

- Flexibility in regard to how competencies are achieved by postdocs and assessed by faculty/supervisors (**Standards II.B-C**);

- Demonstration by the program that outcomes have been achieved as appropriate for the program aims (**Standard II.C.)** and at all appropriate levels;

- Importance of diversity:
  - In policies and procedures to ensure nondiscrimination (**Standard I.D.1**);
  - In creating an environment that nurtures all postdocs for success (**Standard I.D.2**);
  - As a competency (**Standard II.B.1.b);**
  - In recruitment of postdocs (**Standard III.A.3**) and staff recruitment and retention (**Standard IV.B.2)**; and

- Requirement for clear and accurate public information (**Standard V.A**).

POSTDOCTORAL

What Has Changed from the G&P in the Proposed SoA for Postdoctoral Residencies:

- Move from "professional psychology" to Health Service Psychology (HSP) (**Standard I.A.1** - defined further in Glossary);

- Programs that require substantial research activities must demonstrate how these research activities are directly related to HSP competencies and how the program ensures all residents attain the required HSP competencies at an advanced level (**Standard I.A.3**);

- Integrate the concepts currently found in Footnote 4 of the G&P into the SoA (**Standard I.B.3**);

- Place competencies and their assessment together in the standards (**Standard II.B**);

  - Replace "model" with program aims and a set of profession-wide competencies (**Standard II.B.1-3)** -three levels of competencies:

  - Level 1—Advanced Profession-Wide Competencies Required of All Residents
    - Integration of Science and Practice (includes evidence-based practice)
    - Diversity (includes issues of cultural and individual diversity relevant to advanced practice, as appropriate to population served and specialty area).
    - Ethics (includes professional conduct, ethics and law, and other standards for providers of psychological services)

  - Level 2—Program-Specific, Area-of-Emphasis, or Proficiency Competencies

    - The program requires all its residents to demonstrate professional psychological competencies at an advanced level in those domains integral to achieving its aims

  - Level 3—Specialty Competencies