Commission on Accreditation Update
December 2014

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CoA Fall 2014 Meeting

Program Review

The Commission on Accreditation (CoA) held its third program review meeting of the year on October 23-26, 2014 in Washington, DC. A total of 54 doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral residency programs were reviewed for either initial or continued accreditation; one internship program was reviewed for eligibility status; and seven requests for changes to programs' accredited status were reviewed (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 November 25, 2014 to reflect actions taken at the October meeting.

The Standards of Accreditation (SoA) in Health Service Psychology

1. **Update:** CoA reviewed public comment collected on the proposed draft SoA prior to its October meeting and revised the SoA based on the feedback received. The updated version of the SoA was approved at the October meeting.

2. **Next Steps:** Consistent with the "Policies for Accreditation Governance," the SoA must be approved by APA Governance before the Standards are officially approved. CoA anticipates that this approval process will be complete by late February 2015.

3. **Impact on Programs:** With CoA approval, the SoA is one step closer to official approval. As a program director, site visitor, or student, you may be asking yourself, "What does this mean for me?"

   Immediate Impact: CoA approval of the SoA does not immediately impact programs. All accredited programs and those seeking accreditation at this time should adhere to the current *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation* and not the proposed SoA. This includes programs that:

   - Have a site visit scheduled for 2015 and 2016;
   - Applicant programs applying for accreditation;
   - Programs deferred for information; and
   - Programs listed as "accredited, on probation."

   Future Impact: If the SoA is approved by APA Governance early in 2015, the earliest it would take effect would be for programs assigned to the 2017 site visit cycle, including those with self-studies due September 1, 2016. Prior to implementation, CoA will:

   - Provide increased communication to education the public;
   - Revise and create new Implementing Regulations (IRs);
   - Release a series of IRs that will go out for public comment in 2015 and 2016;
   - Develop an online self-study module for the SoA;
   - Train site visitors in the new standards; and
   - Provide workshops on how to apply the SoA.

If you have questions about the anticipated transition to the SoA, please contact OPCA.

New Implementing Regulation: IR D.4-7(b)

As part of its responsibilities to ensure program quality between scheduled periodic reviews, CoA evaluated appropriate thresholds obtained through aggregate data collected by the Annual Report Online (ARO). At its April 2014 meeting, CoA proposed a revision to the time to completion threshold outlined in Implementing Regulation (IR) D.4-7(b): Thresholds for Student Achievement Outcomes in Doctoral Programs. This proposed revision went out for a period of public comment which closed in July. At the October 2014 meeting, CoA approved the proposed revisions to IR D. 4-7(b). The revised language is reflected in IRs: Section D on the Accreditation website.

Public Comment

In accordance with the APA "Policies for Accreditation Governance" and Department of Education regulations for notice and comment, CoA is requesting public comment on two items: 1) the proposed Accreditation Operating Procedures (AOP); and 2) the proposed Introduction to the SoA. The public comment period ends on **December 14, 2014**. To access the CoA Public Comment System, please click here.

Accreditation Operating Procedures (AOP)

In July 2014, CoA approved the draft Accreditation Operating Procedures (AOP). Key changes in the draft AOP include: 1) accreditation of programs for up to 10 years, rather than 7 years; 2) creation of "intent to apply" status and "accredited, on contingency" for doctoral programs; 3) random assignment of internships and postdoctoral programs to one of two review cycles, instead of one of three cycles; and 4) clearer indication that site visitor selection is the responsibility of CoA, with the details of the selection of site visitors moved to an Implementing Regulation [IR]).

Introduction to the SoA

At the October 2014 meeting, CoA approved a draft Introduction to the SoA. The Introduction to the SoA describes the Scope of Accreditation and the Guiding Principles of Accreditation. This draft Introduction largely mirrors the Introduction to the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation* with some updates and edits to align it more closely with the new Standards of Accreditation and the accompanying proposed Accreditation Operating Procedures. Of note, the "Scope of Accreditation" section of the draft Introduction includes a definition of health service psychology for the purposes of accreditation.

Site Visitors and Visits

Become a Generalist Site Visitor

In October 2013, CoA revised the qualifications for generalist site visitors. Generalist site visitors are no longer required to be involved with an accredited training program. To be a generalist site visitor one must:

- Have received a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution and have a minimum of seven years of professional experience;
- Have involvement as a faculty member in a department or school within a regionally accredited institution, with responsibility for delivering graduate psychology education that is not substantially online (or if retired, had such an association);
- Be considered to be concerned with, and knowledgeable about, educational, professional, and scientific issues in graduate psychology training; and
- Be active members of professional and/or research organizations within psychology.

A significant 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. All site visitors must attend a workshop. Please review the FAQ on Becoming an APA Site Visitor on the OPCA website or email (apaaccred@apa.org) OPCA for more information.

Site Visit Fee

Have you recently had an accreditation site visit or are you planning a site visit? The OPCA will send an invoice to the program at the end of the month in which the visit takes place. Please note that this invoice is due in 30 days of receipt.

New Travel Reimbursement Method

ACH reimbursement is now available for site visitors. To receive your travel expense reimbursement via direct deposit, please complete the "Authorization for ACH Deposit of Vendor Payment" form and submit it to OPCA.

Program Review

2015 Periodic Review Cycle

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. 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.

Self-study Workshops

CoA holds periodic self-study workshops throughout the year. These workshops are free and open to anyone who is interested in learning more about the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation* and how to complete a self-study. This is an excellent way for experienced program/training directors to brush up on recent changes to any Implementing Regulations or for new directors to be exposed to the self-study process. For a list of workshops, please click here. This list is updated periodically throughout the year.

Reminders for Accredited Programs

Annual Accreditation Fee

Consistent with the AOP, all accredited program must pay an annual accreditation fee. An invoice for the annual fee was sent to each program over the summer (June 1st or August 1st). This invoice is due on **December 31st**. To pay by credit card, call 1-800-374-2721. Please contact the OPCA if you have a question about fees.

Notify the CoA of Program Director Changes

Please remember to notify the OPCA 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.

Important Accreditation Dates 2014 - 2015

December 14	Deadline for public comment on AOP and Introduction to SoA
December 31	Annual fees due for all accredited programs
January 1	Spring/Summer Cycle 2015 Self-Study Due Date
January 8	Third-Party Comment for Spring/Summer Cycle 2015 Self-Studies Due
February 10	CoA New Member Orientation
February 11-15	Annual policy meeting
March 19-21	Spring program review meeting

CURRENT PROGRAM COUNTS (As of November 25, 2014)

Programs (Level and Area)		Accredited Programs		Applicant Programs Under Review	
		PhD	PsyD	PhD	PsyD
Doctoral Programs	*Clinical*	175	65	3	2
	Counseling	66	5	2	0
	School	59	5	0	3
	Combined	7	3	0	0
	Total Doctoral	**385**		**10**	
Internship Programs	Total Internship	**496**		**52**	
Postdoctoral Residency Programs	*Traditional – Clinical*	61		11	
	Specialty—Clinical Child Psychology	7		1	
	Specialty—Clinical Health Psychology	9		2	
	Specialty—Clinical Neuropsychology	22		1	
	Specialty—Forensic Psychology	1		0	
	Specialty-Geropsychology	1		0	
	Specialty—Rehabilitation Psychology	6		0	
	Total Postdoctoral	**107**		**15**	
TOTAL		**988**		**77**	

Note:

- ***Four internship programs and two of the postdoctoral programs in Clinical psychology are "accredited, on contingency" and are listed as an accredited program.***
- ***Three internship programs have met the requirements to be listed as "eligible" and are not listed among the accredited programs.***

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