



June 12, 2013

Michael F. Pogue-Geile, Ph.D.
Director, Clinical Psychology Program
Department of Psychology
University of Pittsburgh
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Dear Dr. Pogue-Geile:

It is my pleasure to inform you that on May 21, 2013, the PCSAS Review Committee formally reviewed and recommended **approval** of the application for PCSAS accreditation submitted by the Clinical Science Doctoral Program in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh. On May 22nd, the PCSAS Board of Directors ratified the Committee's decision, making it official. Thus, your program now is **accredited** by PCSAS, and is listed as such on the PCSAS Website. Please add this distinction prominently to your own Website and other program materials. We expect your program to wear this badge of distinction with pride, to continue to uphold the standards of PCSAS, and to promote PCSAS's mission of advancing public health through science-centered education.

We congratulate Pittsburgh for being among the first 21 pioneering programs to seek and receive PCSAS accreditation. Your program's PCSAS accreditation is valid for up to ten years, predicated on your continuing to maintain the high quality of training that you documented in your application. To retain your accreditation for the full ten years, you must pay the annual dues of \$2,000 and submit an annual report, both of which will start in September of 2014. You also must respond satisfactorily to all PCSAS queries regarding program developments that might raise questions about the appropriateness of continued accreditation. Your accreditation will expire May 31, 2023. To continue the accreditation without interruption you must submit a renewal application no later than February 1, 2024, for review that May.

As you know, PCSAS was created to recognize and promote superior clinical science programs that embody the highest standards of education and training, and that produce integrative and trans-disciplinary psychological clinical scientists who, in their research and application, employ scientific methods and knowledge from a broad range of scientific perspectives to help advance our understanding and management of important public health problems. To be eligible to apply for PCSAS accreditation, a program must grant the Ph.D., must be in a non-profit research-intensive university, and must demonstrate that its chief mission is to prepare graduates for careers as *clinical scientists*—i.e., careers in which they make significant contributions to advancing, disseminating, and applying scientific knowledge regarding the nature, origins, prediction, assessment, prevention, and amelioration of psychopathology and health-compromising behaviors.

To earn PCSAS accreditation, applicants must demonstrate a strong commitment to high-quality, science-centered education and training in clinical psychology, with an emphasis on integrative

research and application. This commitment must be articulated explicitly in the program's documents, public disclosures, and Website; must be operationalized through a coherent educational plan, curriculum, and allocation of resources; and must be demonstrated in the activities and accomplishments of the program's faculty, students, and graduates.

In addition, applicant programs must provide clear evidence of a consistent record of graduating clinical scientists—i.e., individuals who have made meaningful contributions to basic and applied research relevant to mental and behavioral health problems, or who have used their scientific knowledge and skills to design, develop, select, evaluate, deliver, supervise, and disseminate empirically supported assessments, interventions, and prevention strategies. Additional evaluation criteria include strong mentoring in research and application, and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Overview of Pittsburgh's Review: The PCSAS Review Committee's evaluation of the Pittsburgh application involved two independent reviews of the program's detailed self-study; a site visit report by two visitors; and a formal discussion by Review Committee members at the May 21st meeting. Attached is a detailed summary of the Review Committee's evaluation of your program. This evaluation not only highlights the program's many impressive strengths, but because continuous quality improvement is a point of emphasis at PCSAS, it also notes areas your faculty might consider with an eye to enhancing the program's current excellence. These suggestions are offered respectfully as food for thought. The outside reviewers looked closely, but only briefly, at your program, and do not know your local situation as well as you do. Their suggestions are not instructions to do anything in particular, and in no way are intended to diminish the Review Committee's high esteem for the Pittsburgh program.

Indeed, as you will see from the three detailed reviews, Pittsburgh's doctoral program in psychological clinical science is regarded as a model that has proven its elite status by compiling an impressive record over many years of training students who have gone on to prominent careers in which they have made significant contributions to advancing psychological clinical science—through research, teaching, service, and professional leadership.

As I've noted, the *sine qua non* of gaining PCSAS accreditation is the documentation of a strong record of consistently graduating productive clinical scientists. Pittsburgh's program has built such a record. The Review Committee focused on the achievements of your program's graduates over the past ten years and found that a significant majority of these graduates had pursued careers as research scientists that reflect, incorporate, and implement your program's high-quality scientific training. Most of the remaining graduates had pursued applied careers in which they based their clinical practice on the best scientific evidence. The program clearly has developed a formula for inculcating strong scientific, ethical, and professional values in its students; for arming the students with cutting edge knowledge, skills, and methods; and for supporting and mentoring graduates once they've left the program to pursue their careers.

PCSAS' mission is to advance public health by promoting sweeping improvements in the quality and scientific foundations of graduate education and training in clinical psychology across the U.S. and Canada. To that end, PCSAS intends to feature the distinctive strengths of the programs it has accredited as models for other programs to emulate. The Review Committee took special note of your program's outstanding record, as highlighted here:

Pittsburgh has one of the most productive clinical science programs in the country, with a diverse, exceptional, and influential faculty. The program's core faculty also has a high level of collaborative relationships with a large number of prominent faculty members both within and outside of the department. Notably, these non-core faculty members have served as research mentors for the majority of the program's graduates and current students over the years, giving the program an unusual diversity and breadth of training, with strengths in multiple areas of specialization and with many of the students graduating with full qualifications in multiple program areas.

The program also is highly selective in its admissions, offering acceptance to an average of only 5% of the typical pool of 265 applicants; about half of the accepted applicants matriculate, yielding a median entering class of 7.5 students. The entering students uniformly have excellent credentials—high GREs and GPAs from high-quality undergraduate institutions, with extensive research experience and interests that fit well with the program's faculty and mission. The student body also is diverse in ethnicity and gender. The clinical science faculty seems committed to clinical science training, to diversity, and to quality improvement. As noted, a significant majority of the program's graduates pursue productive careers as clinical scientists.

The program is based on a mentorship model, with the clinical core and affiliated faculty members serving as excellent role models, and providing students with a nice range of clinically relevant research topics. These faculty members uniformly have strong publication records, strong grant funding, and high national visibility and recognition. Students are involved in research throughout their time in the program, compile a nice publication record while in the program, and most continue to publish after graduation. The level of applied training also seems appropriate. It begins within the department, where supervision in empirically supported interventions is provided by the faculty and selected affiliates, and only then does it move to selected external sites. The university's geographical location enables students to receive excellent applied training at a variety of external practicum sites throughout the Pittsburgh area, many of which include a research component, fostering an integration of science and application. The faculty's research interests in clinical problems and interventions also help foster such integration. The strength of the program's integrative applied training is reflected in the fact that the students routinely achieve good internship placements.

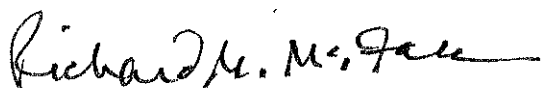
The Review Committee noted a few issues the faculty might examine as it seeks to enhance what already is a model program. Reviewers noted that more than half of the students took 8 or more years to complete the program, including the internship. The program might examine whether the time to graduation is reasonable. Course requirements seemed heavy compared to other clinical science programs; perhaps this is a factor that might be examined. The reviewers also noted that the program relies on faculty members from outside the clinical program to serve as research mentors; although this is one of the program's strengths, the reviewers wondered about the extent to which these affiliated faculty members actively participated in the program's decision-making and oversight functions, and how they perceived their integration into the program. The self-study did not address this issue. The program relies on externship placements for advanced practicum training, many of which are exceptional with nationally recognized intervention researchers. While reviewers thought the program does a reasonable job of ensuring the quality of the training at these placements, the details of the program's monitoring process were not clear from the self-study. It all seems to work well, but requires continuing attention. The program also might conduct more frequent surveys to monitor students' experiences in the program. The program seems to have fewer formal mechanisms than other programs for monitoring student

satisfaction, achievements, and concerns. The students did not seem particularly concerned about this, but such information could help with on-going quality improvement efforts.

In summary, the PCSAS Review Committee judged the University of Pittsburgh's Doctoral Program in Psychological Clinical Science to be an exemplary program that clearly meets PCSAS's high standards for accreditation. The program, department, and university have earned this special designation. PCSAS is proud to add the University of Pittsburgh to its distinguished roster of accredited programs.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about your review, the committee's decision, your accreditation status, or anything else related to PCSAS. I hope that your achievement of PCSAS accreditation is the beginning of a productive collaboration aimed at advancing clinical science.

Sincerely,



Richard M. McFall, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Attachment: Pittsburgh Accreditation Review Summary.docx

Cc:

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