



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

January 2, 2018

Patrick Gallagher, Ph.D.  
Chancellor  
University of Pittsburgh  
Office of the Chancellor  
4200 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

**Due to the pandemic, the APA has been behind in processing re-accreditation applications. The self-study would have been due May 1, 2021 but was postponed until Sept 2021. Original site visit would have been in Fall 2021 but will now be scheduled in Winter 2023. As a result of these delays, the accreditation status has not been impacted but has been extended until 2023 after the site visit and APA decision. We are also currently accredited by the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System. The next self-study report is due Feb 2023 with a site visit to follow. No areas of non-compliance.**

Dear Dr. Gallagher:

I am writing to inform you that the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) during its October 19-22, 2017 meeting reviewed the narrative report dated June 9, 2017 provided by the doctoral Ph.D. program in Clinical psychology at the University of Pittsburgh.

Drs. Stephen McCutcheon and Paula Shear recused and therefore did not participate in the discussion and vote on this program.

The program has responded effectively to the Commission's request to demonstrate how its coverage in issues of cultural and individual diversity includes the current evidence base and meets the *Standards of Accreditation* (SoA).

For your information, the next site visit for this program will be in **2021**.

Please note that the 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 would like to express genuine 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 our office may be of service at any time on administrative matters of accreditation, please call upon us.

Sincerely,

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

750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242  
(202) 336-5500

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RECEIVED  
01/04/2017  
Patricia E Beeson  
Provost

December 27, 2016

Patricia Beeson, Ph.D.  
Provost  
University of Pittsburgh  
801 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Dear Provost Beeson:

I am writing to inform you that the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) during its October 20-23, 2016 meeting reviewed the narrative report dated August 31, 2016 provided by the Clinical Ph.D. psychology program at the University of Pittsburgh.

Drs. Stephen McCutcheon and Paula Shear recused and therefore did not participate in the discussion and vote on this program.

The program has responded effectively to the Commission's request to: 1) describe how the program evaluates the quality of student presentations and publications; 2) explain which specific teaching competencies are taught and evaluated through course PSY2970 – Teaching of Psychology; 3) submit a syllabus for PSY2210 - Clinical Research Seminar; 4) describe how competencies 1.D, 1.E, and 1.F are systematically evaluated; 5) clarify the minimal levels of achievement for practicum-related competencies and how these ensure readiness for internship; and 6) correct the contact information for the CoA in its public documents.

The program was also requested to clarify how it assesses and evaluates competencies related to issues of cultural and individual diversity and explain how students demonstrate achievement of these competencies. In response, the program consolidated its didactic trainings on topics pertaining to diversity into PSY 2281: Diversity and Professional Issues. Four weeks of the course are devoted to the coverage of diversity issues and student knowledge is assessed via an essay examination with a minimum level of achievement (MLA) of 80%. However, review of the provided syllabus indicated that required readings in this course may not represent the current body of knowledge in this area. Given the transition to the *Standards of Accreditation* (SoA), by **September 1, 2017** the program must demonstrate how its coverage in issues of cultural and individual diversity includes the current evidence base and meets the SoA (Section II.B.1.a). The program is reminded that beginning January 1, 2017 coverage in this curriculum area must be consistent with the SoA and the new Implementing Regulations.

Narrative response(s) to the item listed above should be identified as 'Narrative Response – Program Review' and mailed or faxed to the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation by the designated due date.

For your information, the next site visit for this program will be in **2021**.

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Please note that your responses to the issues identified in this letter will be reviewed under the new *Standards of Accreditation* (SoA). Please visit the accreditation website for additional information on the transition to the SoA, and contact the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation if you have questions.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I would like to express genuine 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 our office may be of service at any time on administrative matters of accreditation, please call upon us.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Remondet Wall, Ph.D.

Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

Cc: Michael Pogue-Geile, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Psychology Training  
Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Psychology  
N. John Cooper, Ph.D., Dean



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

August 12, 2015

Patricia E. Beeson  
Provost  
University of Pittsburgh  
801 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Dear Provost Beeson,

At its meeting on July 16-19, 2015 the Commission on Accreditation conducted a review of the doctoral Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review of October 9, 2013 and the program's response to the preliminary review on April 7, 2014, the report of the team that visited the program on May 15-16, 2014 and the program's response to the site visit report on September 25, 2014, the deferral for information letter dated November 25, 2014 and the program's response to deferral on May 29, 2015.

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 **2021**. During the interim, the program will be listed annually among accredited programs of professional psychology in the *American Psychologist* and 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. Deborah Bell, Stephen McCutcheon, and James Mulick 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.

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**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 doctoral program in clinical psychology at the University of Pittsburgh is a well-established program that has been accredited by APA since 1948. The program is appropriately represented in the institution's operating budget and plans, and the student enrollment and facilities are

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sufficient to ensure meaningful peer interaction, support and socialization. The program requires at least 3 full-time years of graduate study, at least 1 year of which must be in residence, and requires a year-long APA-accredited internship. The operation of the program supports respect and understanding of individual diversity, and there is no evidence that the program restricts access on the basis of personal or demographic characteristics.

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 adheres to a clinical science training model with a strong integration of science and practice. The program emphasizes the provision of empirically supported treatments to clients and drawing on the research literature in clinical care provision. The students have commendable records of research productivity in areas of clinical relevance, often collaborating across divisions within the department, and the 100% internship match rate over 7 years suggests that clinical training is seen as appropriate by other institutions. Training is largely sequential and graded in complexity, with students progressing from classroom work to supervised and more independent research and clinical experiences.

The program was asked to how it assesses competency 1.G listed in Table B.2, which references the quality of the students' presentations and publications. The articulated minimal levels of achievement (MLAs) involve activities, that is, presentation at a national conference and submission of a manuscript for publication, rather than objective achievement of competency (deferral for information [DFI], p 2). In response, the program argued that "the widely endorsed principles of peer review" would be sufficient to gauge competency (deferral for information response [DFI-R], p. 2). This response is inadequate as MLAs must reflect a specific level of skill, knowledge, or attitude required of all students for program completion and be assessed by program faculty. National conferences have widely varied standards in accepting submitted abstracts that do not necessarily align with the program's training requirements. Further, submission of a manuscript for publication is an activity that does not reflect any specific level of competency. By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to describe how it evaluates competency 1.G as assessed by skills, knowledge, or attitudes.

The program is commended for its efforts to revise its curriculum related to pedagogical training, and the new teaching rating scale is a clear improvement. However, a few areas of concern remain. The course PSY2970 – Teaching of Psychology does not appear in the most recent handbook that is currently published on the program website as a required course. If performance in this course is used to assess accomplishment of the MLAs as the revised Table B.2 suggests, it is unclear how *all* students gain exposure to course material. Further, the grading rubric for this course lists a series of activities: attending and participating in class, completing assigned readings, and bringing work to class to be reviewed. However, it does not include any

measurable competencies that indicate that students have demonstrated specific skills, knowledge, or attitudes in the area of teaching. Particularly, it is concerning that despite extensive feedback from the CoA about the requirement for course grades to be based on demonstrations of student achievement, the program has submitted a new syllabus that does not conform to these standards. By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to explain which specific teaching *competencies* are taught and evaluated through PSY2970, and what grading rubric is applied to ensure that a grade of B represents achievement of these competencies. In describing Goal 3 Competency A, the program is reminded that teaching a course is not a competency, but an activity, and is asked to submit a revised Table B.2 consistent with the requirements of Domain B.2 and as outlined below.

The program has not submitted a syllabus for PSY2210 – Clinical Research Seminar Series, a course which forms the basis for evaluation of competency 1.C, according to the revised Table B.2. By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to submit a syllabus for PSY2210, to include this course in a revised Table B.2 that outlines clear assessment measures for competency 1.C, and to submit all evaluation rubrics that are required in assessing competencies.

The program has not submitted an evaluation mechanism to assess competence for competencies 1.D, 1.E, and 1.F. In the second revised edition of Table B.2, the program lists “N/A” under evaluation tools, and the MLA listed in Table B.2 for the relevant competencies refers to syllabi, (DFI p. 13). By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to describe how competencies 1.D, 1.E, and 1.F are evaluated and to include all related outcome and evaluation measures in order to ensure that they are systematically evaluated by the program.

It is unclear how graduate-level competence is assessed in issues of cultural and individual diversity. The CoA is appreciative of the program’s efforts to conceptualize this area in both knowledge of research and clinical practicum. However, the implementation of these new efforts is cursory in both the program’s standards for assessment, and the CoA is concerned about the increased workload for the students without clearly outlined curricular exposure. The program states that “assessment of knowledge of diversity research on clinical topics is now assessed via a required paper in [...] PSY2282,” (DFI-R p. 4). Inspection of the corresponding syllabus reveals that the changes are limited to: the addition of the word “diversity” in one sentence about course content, the phrase “there will be one paper” that does not include a grading rubric or further description of the paper, the addition of “diversity case presentation” for 10/1/2013, and the inclusion of three new readings on the provision of services to LGBT clients. Further, the revised syllabus for PSY 2225 – Externship Practicum states “Prior to finishing the last externship placement, each student is required to write an essay of approximately 250 words reflecting the student’s philosophy and approach to clients with diversity indicators,” and that “Grading in the course will depend largely on the formal evaluation completed at the end of each semester by the on-site supervisor but will also take into account [...] completion of the diversity essay,” (DFI-R p. 60). By **September 1, 2015**, the program is asked to clarify how it assesses issues of cultural and individual diversity, specify how the competencies are evaluated, and clarify the method by which students demonstrate achievement of those competencies.

In response to the CoA's concern about evaluating competencies in practicum based solely on a summary measure, the program has provided a revised version of Table B.2 and narrative information explaining that MLAs are met when all competencies for all students are rated "intermediate" in years 3 and 4, and at or above "moderately skilled" in years 5 and higher of training. Students appear to leave for internship in different years (i.e., some in year 4 and some in year 5), which would make it difficult for this measure to be used as assurance of students' preparedness for internship. By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to clarify its MLAs for practicum-related competencies and how these MLAs ensure readiness for internship. The program is encouraged to seek consultation from the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation in responding to this issue.

### **Domain C: Program Resources**

*The program demonstrates that it has resources of appropriate quality and sufficiency to achieve its education and training goals.*

This program has an appropriately qualified faculty who serve as exemplary role models and provide the students with research guidance, clinical experience, and mentoring in professional development. Faculty are sufficient in number and expertise to carry out the program's goals, objectives, and training philosophy. Students are a substantial strength of this program as they are highly qualified and progress well through the program. The recruitment rate overall has been sufficient for appropriate peer interaction, support, and socialization. The program has appropriate facilities and local resources, including appropriate financial support, adequate space allocation, staff support, and access to practicum opportunities.

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 has made systematic, program-level, long-term efforts to recruit and retain both students and faculty from diverse backgrounds. It ensures a supporting learning environment for training diverse individuals and avoids actions that restrict program access on grounds irrelevant to success. The program has a thoughtful and coherent plan to provide students with relevant knowledge and experiences about the role of individual and cultural diversity in psychological phenomenon as they relate to the science and practice of professional psychology.

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 and faculty are treated with courtesy and respect, and they foster strong and positive mentoring relationships. Faculty are available to students and provide them with feedback and assistance in meeting program goals. Annual student feedback is helpful and thorough, and student records are comprehensive and well-maintained. Students are informed about program requirements and processes for grievances and formal complaints through information in the student handbook and on the website. When concerns arise about student performance, students are given timely, written feedback about expectations, and are provided appropriate opportunities to remediate their deficiencies.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

#### **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 regularly assesses its training model and curriculum relative to the sponsoring institution's mission and goals, changing national standards of professional practice, local and state needs for psychological services, the evolving body of scientific and professional knowledge, and graduates' job placements and career paths.

#### **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 is effective in using the available proximal and distal outcome data to regularly assess how its goals and objectives are met through its educational and training processes. Evidence suggests that the program makes programmatic changes as necessary in an incorporation of both proximal outcome data as students progress through the program, as well as distal outcome data after students have graduated.

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 documentation available to current and prospective students and other interested parties. IR C-20 data appears to be in compliance with requirements. Information is presented in a manner that allows applicants to make informed decisions about the program.

The program has added the CoA contact information on its website. However, this listing needs

to be edited in order to adhere to the required wording that the program is “accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association” rather than only referring to “APA.” Further, the program is asked to attend to the requirement at the end of this IR that it clarify for what purpose the contact information is being provided. By **September 1, 2016**, the program is asked to correct the contact information for the CoA, consistent with IR C-6(b) (attached).

**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 abides by the CoA’s published policies and procedures. It maintains a communicative relationship with the CoA. All fees necessary to maintain accredited status have been paid.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

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In order to keep the Commission informed of the program’s commitment to the ongoing self-study process, the program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by **September 1, 2016**:

- Correct the contact information for the CoA.

The program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by **September 1, 2016** for formal review by the Commission:

- Describe how it evaluates competency 1.G as assessed by skills, knowledge, or attitudes.
- Explain which specific teaching *competencies* are taught and evaluated through PSY2970, and what grading rubric is applied to ensure that a grade of B represents achievement of these competencies. In describing Goal 3 Competency A, the program is reminded that teaching a course is not a competency, but an activity, and is asked to submit a revised Table B.2 consistent with the requirements of Domain B.2 and as outlined below.
- Submit a syllabus for PSY2210, to include this course in a revised Table B.2 that outlines clear assessment measures for competency 1.C, and to submit all evaluation rubrics that are required in assessing competencies.
- Describe how competencies 1.D, 1.E, and 1.F are evaluated and to include all related outcome and evaluation measures in order to ensure that they are systematically evaluated by the program.
- Clarify how it assesses issues of cultural and individual diversity, specify how the

competencies are evaluated, and clarify the method by which students demonstrate achievement of those competencies.

- Clarify its MLAs for practicum-related competencies and how these MLAs ensure readiness for internship. The program is encouraged to seek consultation from the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation in responding to this issue.

While these items are considered an addendum to the data provided in the Annual Report Online (ARO), they are not to be submitted online. The program's response to the items listed above should be identified as 'Narrative Response – Program Review' and mailed or faxed to the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation by the designated due date.

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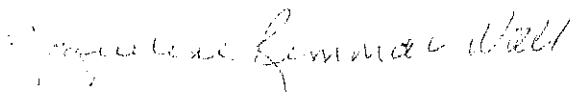
The accreditation website ([www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation)) provides important updates and policy changes related to the accreditation process. As an accredited program, we encourage you to periodically visit the website to remain current on all new accreditation policies. 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-19 (Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs) is attached for your information.

Please note that at the time of your next self-study submission, your program will be reviewed under the new Standards for Accreditation (SoA). The SoA are to be implemented on January 1, 2017 and all accredited programs are expected to begin to familiarize themselves with the standards by that time. Programs undergoing review in 2017, including all programs submitting self-studies using the September 1, 2016 self-study submission date, will be evaluated using the SoA.

Additional information on the 2017 implementation of the SoA will be provided in the coming months. Please visit the accreditation website for updates and contact the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation if you have questions.

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



Jacqueline Remondet Wall, Ph.D.

Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

cc: N. John Cooper, Ph.D., Dean  
Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Psychology  
Michael F. Pogue-Geile, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Psychology Training  
*Blaine Ditto, Ph.D., Chair of Site Visit Team*  
*Michael Telch, Ph.D., Member of Site Visit Team*  
*Steven Schwartz, Ph.D., Generalist of Site Visit Team*