May 6, 2024

Ronnie Green, PhD
Chancellor
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
201 ADMS
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, NE, 68588

Dear Dr. Green,

At its meeting on April 3-6, 2024 the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) conducted a review of the doctoral PhD program in Counseling psychology at University of Nebraska, Lincoln. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review ("admin review"), the program's response to preliminary review, the report of the team that visited the program on October 23-24, 2023, and the program's response to the site visit report.

I am pleased to inform you that the CoA voted to reaffirm accreditation of the program, with its next site visit scheduled to be held in **2033**. This decision is based on the CoA's professional judgement that the program has demonstrated that it adheres to the *Standards of Accreditation for Health Service Psychology* (SoA). The current record indicates that a full review of the program is warranted within 10 years of the last site visit, including interim reporting (see Implementing Regulation (IR) D.4-8a: Doctoral Interim Reporting), to ensure continued adherence to the Standards. The program will be listed among accredited programs in health service psychology on the accreditation web pages. The Commission encourages you to share information about your program's accredited status with agencies and others of the public as appropriate.

There were no recusals from the discussion and vote on this program.

The Commission recognizes the quality of training provided by the program and deems it in substantial compliance with the *Standards of Accreditation*. The Counseling Psychology Program at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln follows the scientist-practitioner model of training, focusing on community-based practice and evidence-based interventions. The program appears to have sufficient resources to carry out its training aims, including a shared in-house clinic. Practicum sites are sufficient in number with appropriately credentialed supervisors. The program uses proximal data to guide program improvements. Students are well qualified to enter the program, and the program reports systematic efforts to retain diverse students. The core and associated faculty are well-qualified for their respective roles. The website is sufficiently detailed for prospective students to make an informed decision.

Accreditation is a process that encourages improvement through continuous self-study and review. The CoA has identified items that represent areas that require additional attention. Please navigate to the "Follow-Up" tab in the CoA Portal to respond to this feedback.

Standard I: Institutional and Program Context

I.D.1:
The section in Table 1 (Appendix I.D.1.1.1) related to academic recruitment and admissions includes links to a number of statements related to the institution's commitment to diversity; however, little information related to recruitment and admissions policies is actually provided. Specifically, Table 1 indicates that information about recruitment and admissions is provided in the Counseling Psychology Handbook (pp. 14 & 15); however, no information related to recruitment and admissions could be found. The first link (Graduate Studies) and fifth link (UNL Student Affairs Diversity Statement) are broken, and the fourth link in Table 1 is specific to undergraduate admissions. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to provide accurate locations to policies related to academic recruitment and admissions for the doctoral program.

Standard II: Aims, Competencies, Curriculum, and Outcomes

II.B.1a:
The program indicates that EDPS 985 Couple and Family Counseling, EDPS 997G Advanced Practicum in Counseling, EDPS 953 Psychological Assessment II, EDPS 964 Counseling Theories and Intervention Techniques, and EDPS 968 Gender and Counseling Psychology or EDPS 986 (formerly EDPS 991) Sex-Positivity, Diverse Sexualities, and Professional Psychology are used to provide coverage in affective aspects of behavior. These courses cover a range of topics (primarily focused on counseling theories and techniques) making it difficult to discern how the program discretely assesses the extent to which students have met competency specific to affective aspects of behavior. Further, minimal primary source readings related to the affective aspects of behavior were noted in any of these courses. Implementing Regulation (IR) C-7 D: Discipline-Specific Knowledge requires that coverage of the DSK areas include original source material. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to clarify how it provides 1) graduate level coverage, including exposure to current primary source readings in affective aspects of behavior, and 2) discrete assessment of competence in affective aspects of behavior, consistent with Implementing Regulation (IR) C-7 D: Discipline-Specific Knowledge. The program is asked to provide revised syllabi for these courses as appropriate for the Commission's review.

The program uses EDPS 960 Advanced Cognitive Psychology in Education, EDPS 961 Cognitive Development, or EDPS 966 Psychology of Learning to ensure coverage of the cognitive aspects of behavior. While EDPS 960 appears to cover and evaluate the cognitive aspects of behavior consistent with IR C-7 D, the other two course options do not appear to do so. EDPS 961 primarily focuses on development making it unclear how EDPS 961 provides adequate coverage and assessment of cognitive aspects of behavior. The syllabus for EDPS 966 Psychology of Learning notes that there is one required text for this course, but does not include any primary source readings on the syllabus for review. Additionally, the syllabus did not include a schedule of topics covered and it thus it is not clear if the cognitive aspects of behavior are adequately covered and assessed in EDPS 966. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to clarify how EDPS 961 Cognitive Development and EDPS 966 Psychology of Learning provide sufficient coverage and discrete evaluation of the cognitive aspects of behavior, consistent with IR C-7 D.

The program uses EDPS 978 Advanced Counseling Psychology II: Research in Counseling (prior to Fall 2024) or EDPS 800: Foundations of Educational Research (after Fall 2024); as well as EDPS 995 Doctoral Seminar and EDPS 999 Doctoral Dissertation to ensure coverage in research methods. However, the syllabus for EDPS 800 does not include primary source readings and syllabi for EDPS 995 and EDPS 999 could not be located. IR C-7 D requires that coverage of research methods include original source material, and it is unclear if primary source readings are required in any of the courses required after 2024. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to provide an updated syllabus with a list of required primary source reading for EDPS 800 and provide the syllabi for EDPS 995 and EDPS 999 (as applicable) with complete reading lists for the Commission's review.

The program indicates psychometrics coverage is provided by EDPS 953 Psychological Assessment II and EDPS 950 Intellectual Assessment. The program states the MLA is a final course grade of B or higher. However, it is unclear how there is adequate coverage of psychometrics and how students' knowledge of psychometrics is discretely assessed, given these courses appear to primarily focus on test administration, scoring and interpretation. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to clarify the MLA for psychometrics and to explain how it provides broad coverage and discrete evaluation of psychometrics to fulfill the requirements for this DSK, consistent with IR C-7 D. Please provide revised syllabi for EDPS 953 and EDPS 950, if applicable.

II.B.3:
The program indicates that practicum sites are required to provide direct observation for students according to the Field Placement Contract (Appendix II.B.3.1.1). However, there does not appear to be a system in place to confirm that direct observation is occurring on practicum evaluation (Please see Benchmark Competencies Evaluation Tool.) (Appendix II.B.1.b.2.2). IR C-14 D: Direct Observation requires programs to confirm that direct observation is occurring at its various sites on each practicum evaluation. The program is asked by **September 1, 2024** to provide clarification on how it confirms that direct observation is occurring for students, and to provide a revised evaluation form, as needed.

II.D.1.b:
The distal data collection tool (Appendix II.D.1.b.1.1) assesses alumni's level of satisfaction with their training in each of the profession-wide competencies (as well as other areas). However, alumni satisfaction is not considered sufficient outcome data according to IR C-18 D: Outcome Data for Doctoral Programs since it does not address the program's success in promoting expected competencies. By **September 1, 2024,** the program is asked to provide an updated distal data tool that assesses the program's effectiveness in fostering the attainment of required competencies, consistent with IR C-18.

Standard III: Students

III.A.1:
The program described a few strategies related to diversity recruitment (e.g., applicants can have their applications reviewed by the department's Diversity and Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee [DEMAC] and contact DEMAC members to learn about program climate). However, it is not clear that these strategies constitute a systematic, multi-year, and multiple effort plan, implemented and sustained over time, to attract students from a range of diverse identities that include specific program-level activities, approaches, and initiatives it implements to increase diversity among its students. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to describe its program-level diversity recruitment plan consistent with IR C-21 D: Diversity Recruitment and Retention.

Additionally, the program has not demonstrated that it examines the effectiveness of its efforts consistent with Standard III.A.1.b.ii of the SoA. The program is asked to clarify how it evaluates the effectiveness of its efforts to attract diverse students and takes steps to revise/enhance its strategies as needed, consistent with IR C-21 D, by **September 1, 2024**.

Standard IV: Faculty

IV.B.5.a:
While the program indicated that the recent faculty position announcement was sent to several organizations that are affiliated with diverse groups (e.g., APA Divisions 35 and 45), the program does not appear to have a systematic, multi-year, and multiple effort plan to attract faculty from a range of diverse backgrounds consistent with IR C-21 D. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to describe its systematic, coherent, and long-term efforts to attract recruit diverse faculty into the program.

Additionally, although the program notes that they examined their efforts to recruit diverse faculty, the program did not describe how this evaluation was conducted. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to describe how it examines its efforts to recruit faculty from diverse backgrounds and any steps needed to revise/enhance its strategies, consistent with IR C-21 D.

IV.B.5.b:
The program described several strategies implemented to retain all faculty. However, the program does not appear to have a systematic and coherent plan to retain faculty from diverse backgrounds consistent with IR C-21 D. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to describe systematic, coherent, and long-term efforts to retain faculty from differing backgrounds.

Additionally, the program did not provide information about how it examines the effectiveness of its efforts to retain faculty who are diverse. By **September 1, 2024**, the program is asked to describe how it examines its efforts to retain faculty from diverse backgrounds and any steps needed to revise/enhance its strategies, consistent with IR C-21 D.

Standard V: Communication Practices

V.A.1:
On the program website (https://cehs.unl.edu/edpsych/counseling-psychology/), the program states at one point: "Our doctoral degree is an APA approved program." Programs should not use the term "APA-approved," since at APA this term is used to denote approved sponsors of continuing education rather than accreditation of academic/training programs. The program is reminded to ensure their accreditation status on the program website is correctly identified as "APA accredited", consistent with IR C-25 D: Accreditation Status and CoA Contact Information, and to provide an update on this in the next self-study.

The program is reminded that consistent with IR C-26 D (Disclosure of Education/Training Outcomes and Information Allowing for Informed Decision-Making to Prospective Doctoral Students), the program must provide information in its public materials regarding trainee admissions, support, and outcome data. Please note that the program's public information will be reviewed on or after October 1 of each year to ensure that the disclosure data has been updated and is in compliance with the IR.

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The program's response to all Reporting Requirements must be submitted in the online CoA Portal. Please navigate to the "Follow-Up" tab to respond by the designated due date.

All Implementing Regulations are available on the accreditation website (www.accreditation.apa.org). The website also 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 (see Implementing Regulation C-27 D: Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs). Such updates should be submitted via the CoA Portal under the "Substantive Change" tab.

Please note that all accredited programs are required to complete the Annual Report Online (ARO). The Training Director will receive an email when it is time to complete the ARO. As such, it is extremely important that the program inform the CoA of any staff/faculty changes in a timely manner. Since the program is now accredited, it is reminded that an annual fee will be billed in order for the program to maintain its accredited status.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I extend congratulations to the faculty and students of the 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, PhD
Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

Aaron Joyce, PhD, ABPP
Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

cc: *Neeta Kantamneni, PhD, Program Director*

C-27 D. Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs

(formerly C-19; Commission on Accreditation, February 2005; revised October 2006, November 2015, July 2021)

In accordance with Standard V.B.2 of the Standards of Accreditation (SoA) and Section 8.7 D of the Accreditation Operating Procedures (AOP), all accredited programs, whether under a single administrative entity or in a consortium, must inform the accrediting body in a timely manner of changes that could alter the program's quality.

The Commission on Accreditation (CoA) must be informed in advance of major program changes such as changes in degree offered, policies/procedures, administrative structure, faculty resources, supervision resources, area of emphases, or tracks/rotations. In the case of doctoral programs, this includes changes in the areas of emphasis.

Programs must submit to the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation a detailed written description of the proposed change(s) and the potential impact upon the relevant accreditation standards. The CoA will review the program change(s) and may request additional information or a new self-study. As noted in Section 1.1 of the AOP, if the report is not complete or raises questions about the program's continued consistency with the SoA, the CoA may, at any time, request additional information or request an invitation for a site visit. Such action may take one of the following forms:

- Defer reaffirmation pending receipt of additional information from the program
- Reaffirm but ask the program to provide information in its next annual report
- Defer reaffirmation pending a special site visit
- Defer reaffirmation and request that the program invite the CoA to conduct the program's regular site visit earlier than originally scheduled
- Defer reaffirmation and ask the program to show cause why it should not be placed on probation

The only exception to the policy of informing the Commission in advance is the occurrence of an unavoidable event beyond the reasonable control and anticipation of the program (e.g., educational/training site unexpectedly withdrawing from a consortium because of financial crisis; resources affected by a natural disaster). In such circumstances, it is incumbent upon the program to immediately inform the CoA in writing of the change and to include in its notification a proposed plan for maintaining program consistency with the SoA. The CoA will then proceed as above. Consultation on program changes is available from the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation.