MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents

From: Board Office

Subject: Accreditation Report of the School Psychology Program (Ph.D.),
College of Education, University of Iowa

Date: March 4, 2002

Recommended Action:

Receive the report.

Executive Summary:

Reaccreditation notification

On May 15, 2001, the American Psychological Association (APA) informed the University of Iowa that its doctoral program in school psychology had been awarded reaccreditation. The next accreditation site visit will occur in 2005.

2002 annual report

The site visit team, which conducted its visit in December 2000, raised a number of concerns. The Director of Training and Program Coordinator and Internship Coordinator provided comprehensive responses to the concerns in a February 2001 letter. In light of the additional data and explanations provided in the letter, the APA granted full reaccreditation. Nevertheless, APA has asked SUI to provide more information regarding some concerns in its *Annual Report for 2002*. The items to be addressed are listed on the following page.

Strategic Plan:

Accreditation reviews are consistent with the Board of Regents' strategic plan, KRA 1.0.0.0, Quality. More specifically, the accreditation process relates to Objective 1.1.0.0., "to improve the quality of existing and newly created educational programs."

Background:

Profile of program

The School Psychology Program at the University of Iowa has been accredited by the American Psychology Association (APA) since 1992. This is the first full reaccrediation of the program.

The program has 2.5 FTE tenure-track faculty members and a half-time clinical faculty position.

Typically four to six students are admitted per year. At the time of the site visit, there were 35 students in the program. The students are required to complete three years of full-time graduate study in residence, complete an 1,800 clock hour internship, and write a dissertation. Of the 35 students, 50% (18) are identified as being from a racial/ethnic minority.

Program goal

The program goal is to train professional psychologists who are knowledgeable about and have experiences in schools as service settings and who possess special expertise in addressing children/adolescents' affective and cognitive needs. The program is structured to prepare a scientist-practitioner.

Program strengths

The site visitation team reported the following strengths of the program:

- The Provost and Dean of the College of Education view the School Psychology Program as integral to the public education mission of the College and the institution.

- Students' knowledge of ethical standards and commitment to ethical principles and practices.

- Graduate students exhibited the knowledge and skills to do student assessment.

- The program has a clearly described curriculum plan that is sequential, cumulative, graded in complexity, and designed to prepare students for internship placements.

- The program integrates issues of individual and cultural diversity throughout the curriculum, especially in assessment and intervention courses.

- Outstanding record in recruitment of students from diverse backgrounds.

- Strong sense of community among students and close relationship with faculty.

- Program faculty members are highly accessible to students.

Concerns and institutional responses

Domain B: Program Philosophy, Objectives, and Curriculum Plan:

- A common body of knowledge and competencies is not clearly delineated.
  Response: The core curriculum is more extensive than the site committee realized. Some variations exist because students come from varied backgrounds and need to take different courses. The schedule of courses offered by the Psychology Department has some impact upon what can be taken.

- There is a lack of research by all faculty and lack of involvement of students on research teams.
  Response: Additional information documented research projects and publications by faculty.

- The need to integrate didactic coursework and practicum experiences.
  Response: Examples were provided of the coordination between program and field supervisors.

- Research mentoring with students seems uneven.
  Response: Examples were provided of mentoring.

- Courses in biological, cognitive, social, affective aspects of behavior, and individual and developmental differences are not covered on a regular basis.
  Response: Scheduling depends upon what other departments may offer. The program disputes this concern.

Domain C: Program Resources

- Loss of one faculty member.
  Response: The program lowered the number of students admitted.

- Inadequate support is provided for materials to support clinical training.
  Response: Faculty provide some support through grants; additional resources are being sought.

- Program could make better use of resources within and outside the College.
  Response: Examples were provided of cross-disciplinary collaboration; agreement that there was need for more clerical and technical support.

Domain F: Program Self-Assessment and Quality Enhancement

- The program uses an informal process to evaluate students and program.
  Response: Improvements will be made, but the site team did have inaccurate information about the periodic surveys of alumni.

Relationship between Domain B and F: Assessment of Desired Outcomes

- Data on students do not appear to be compiled, aggregated, and reported in a manner that permits the systematic evaluation of the attainment of program goals and objectives.
  Response: The program uses a variety of evaluation procedures to link program goals and objectives with student performance.

Analysis:

Annual Report
for 2002

The program is in the process of preparing its report that will address the areas that APA has listed. They include:

- A plan to ensure that the breadth of courses in biological, cognitive, social and affective aspects of behavior, and individual and developmental differences are offered from year to year on a consistent basis. Submit the syllabi for these courses.

- Efforts to replace the full-time faculty line that was recently lost.

- How does the program plan to secure more financial support from the University to provide for materials to support clinical training in order to achieve its educational and training goals?

- How does the program plan to increase its clerical and technical support?

- A plan to secure more financial support from the University in order to facilitate the administrative tasks of the program coordinator.

- A plan as to how it intends to make systematic, coherent, and long-term efforts to attract and retain a diverse faculty.

- The linkage of assessment data and goals and objectives outlined in Domain B to F and revise Table 10 accordingly.

_____   Approved:_____
Charles R. Kniker   Gregory S. Nichols