

Program Review Committee Report for PhD – Counselling Psychology

Review Committee:

John Curtin, Professor, Psychology

Kristin Eschenfelder, Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, GFEC member

Constance Flanagan, Professor, Civil Society and Community Studies/Associate Dean, School of Human Ecology, Chair

A summary of the activities of the review committee and materials reviewed

The committee would like to thank the Counselling Psychology department for the warm welcome it provided to the review team and for the work it did in organizing and hosting an efficient review visit. Bill Hoyt and Alberta Gloria went out of their way to make sure the review team had everything we needed.

The committee met with the Associate Dean, Department Chair, several CP faculty, the director of the CP Training Clinic (CPTC), PhD students from different years and with different roles (TA, PA) in the program. The committee also had a tour of the facilities in the CPTC and in the SoE.

Prior to the one-day meeting, a comprehensive set of materials was provided for the committee's review. These included: Program Materials (Handbook, Admissions Criteria and Student Evaluation Forms); Accreditation Materials; Website; Overview of CPTC data (students' ratings of clinic training, services); Comparisons of CP doctoral program with Rehab Psych and Ed. Psych; Faculty Data (CVs, scholarly productivity, course syllabi and evaluation); Student Data (overviews of internship placements, proximal and distal student outcomes, involvement in professional activities, retention and years to graduation, and employment).

An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the program and recommendations for future directions

Strengths

- Faculty's scholarly excellence recognized with an impressive list of internal and external awards.
- Faculty publish in the top tier journals of their fields
- The national reputations of the faculty, particularly in the areas of social justice and cultural diversity, are major reasons that PhD students apply to the program.
- Strong employment record for graduates (roughly 30% go into academia and 70% work as licensed counseling psychologists either in health facilities (VA) or
- High number of student applicants each year with about a 10% admit rate yearly. Higher than average percent of students of color (and AOF eligible)
- APA accredited with thoughtful research-practice model of student training. APA awarded the program the longest reaccreditation period, 7 years, based on their assessment of the high caliber of the program across all metrics assessed by APA.

Challenges

- Small size of faculty and few (especially senior) faculty who are licensed clinicians. Whereas the CP department used to have 9 faculty members, it currently has 8 tenure track faculty and 1.5 clinical professors

- Balancing service, teaching, and clinical training responsibilities with research – especially for pre-tenure faculty
- Department size does not reflect capacities. Two of the eight tenure track faculty transferred into the CP department from other departments on campus. Since they are neither trained in psychology nor licensed, they cannot cover some of the basic training needs of PhD students in the program.
- Uneven distribution of graduate student advising, research and clinical supervision across the faculty
- Concerns by some faculty about the department's commitment to faculty research needs.
- Challenge of advising a mix of research oriented and clinically oriented PhD students toward degree completion
- Challenge of mounting substantial, highly sequenced series of graduate courses as required by APA. This challenge has been met by offering required courses during the summer semester, which presents a different set of financial challenges for the department.

Comments on maintaining a strong training and learning community while implementing the new APA accreditation standards

High course work burden from national accreditor, APA, requires the department to offer many classes that may have low enrollment. This conflicts with current university mandates for minimum size graduate classes and metrics that reward departments with higher class sizes.

APA is implementing substantial change to its accreditation standards to be first implemented in 2017. These changes will require substantive changes to curriculum and assessment measures in multiple domains. Although challenging, the Director of Clinical Training and Department Chair appear well informed about these pending changes and prepared to meet the new requirements. These changes may also present an opportunity to consider program changes that may positively impact some of the unique training challenges presented by accreditation requirements such as the coursework burden and cohort sizes. As noted earlier, the CP department has recently been very effective at responding to accreditation requirements from the APA, emerging from its last site visit from APA with strong praise about the strength of its program.

New masters – 60 credits for accreditation. A good deal of the practical training happens at the PhD level. There is some redundancy in PhD program course work since the APA will not allow the program to count core coursework that students may have taken in their Masters program prior to applying for the PhD.

The APA coursework burden limits the department's ability to field higher enrollment undergraduate courses that could provide TA opportunities.

N.B. Counseling psychology programs across the country have closed down or moved to education out of psychology because of challenges of the research-practitioner model.

Recommendations for continuing to build on current diversity, social justice, and research training

Counseling Psychology faculty have national reputations as scholars in cultural, racial/ethnic, class, gender, and transgender identities; multicultural competence; and inter-group relations. They publish in top tier journals and, in recent years, the work of several faculty members has been recognized with

prestigious APA and other national awards. This scholarly reputation attracts students of color to the program. The department's expertise also figures in clinical training of students and provision of counseling services. Consequently, the CPTC is responsive to the needs of undergraduate students and community members from ethnic minority backgrounds who may not be well served in other facilities.

The CP department also is proactive in nurturing the next generation of scholar-practitioner leaders in social justice, social identity, and multiculturalism. The department provides funding for graduate students to attend conferences with a multicultural focus so that those students can serve as ambassadors for the program and recruit more students of color to the program. These recruiting efforts pay off since roughly 50% of the CP students are students of color with about one-third eligible for AOFs.

The culture of the program also reflects the principles of social justice and inclusion. PhD students noted that the scholarship of faculty was a major reason for applying to the department but the supportive experience (from faculty and senior graduate students) during their interview visits clinched the deal. And they have not been disappointed: Students described the culture of the department as one that encourages a sense of community with intentional practices (e.g., research teams, peer mentoring and supervision with advanced doctoral students coaching masters level and first year doctoral students) that emphasize a collaborative learning model.

Students described the research team and 2nd year practicum course (where advanced graduate students present their work) as opportunities that helped them to clarify their own research questions. In addition, students appreciated the scholar-practitioner training model, the fact that many faculty worked with community groups, and that their clinical training was not only with students of color but also with communities and groups who were often marginalized in mainstream society. Students felt that the particular model of scholar-practitioner training emphasizing social justice and diversity set the CP department apart from others in the country and prepared them well for a range of professional and academic positions.

Departmental expertise in diversity and social justice is seen across campus as filling a need for creating an inclusive campus climate and faculty and graduate students are frequently called upon to respond to this need. CP graduate students facilitate the Diversity Dialogue Initiatives across campus and serve as TAs for the Center for First Year Experience and Academic Enhancement Seminars. Students serve on campus committees (e.g., suicide prevention) and have been leaders in creating new student organizations (e.g., for undocumented students). Both faculty and graduate students serve as mentors to undergraduate students from underserved populations and have excellent relationships with groups such as POSSE, PEOPLE, CeO.

Funding from the DDEEA and CAE supports some CP graduate students but the demands exceed the funding. For example, last year the CPTC served 38 out of the 60 First Wave students on the Madison campus. This year, with DDEEA funding the CPTC is supposed to provide the mental health resources for the 1600 students in programs such as POSSE, First Wave, Trio, etc. Not only is the potential student client load high, the funds from campus support only graduate students, not the supervision of those students. In other words, there are no funds through these initiatives for the supervision (by licensed psychologists or faculty or are licensed) of graduate student's clinical work. Thus, the resources are inadequate for providing counselling services to increasing numbers of undergraduate students seeking CPTC services.

Some ideas for building on the CP department's expertise in this area include:

- Encouraging graduate students to develop their own courses, especially those that fulfill undergraduate requirements, have potential for summer and/or on-line courses. One example

provided to the committee was a new course on suicide prevention developed by a CP graduate student.

- The possibility of the Center for Academic Enhancement providing additional funding was raised in discussions with the committee.
- Hiring a bilingual supervisor or a licensed faculty member who is bilingual could be a way to build on the strengths of the faculty and the CPTC, on graduate students' backgrounds, and on the community client base at the CPTC.

Comments on creating enrollment balance within coursework with current resources while maintaining the current quality of clinical training

The CP department has a research-practice model of graduate training. Clinical training requires that some classes are smaller than may be typical in other graduate programs. Efforts towards greater efficiency have been made but there are some concerns about the potential of shortchanging students' clinical training. For example, supervision of students in the clinic – has moved from a 1-1 model – to a triadic supervision model due to limited resources. Students seem to understand the reason for this change but note that they would prefer more one on one supervision than the current model allows.

Clinic director provides supervision and oversight for all students at the clinic and is a licensed psychologist. She is an academic staff member on a one-year contract with little job security. Yet she is fulfilling a critical need in the PhD program. Over the past eight years, there has been turnover every two years in this position. Some measure of stability to the program could be insured if the director could be offered a three-year contract.

The department has been effective in partnering with other programs/departments on campus to reduce the teaching burden associated with the high number of graduate courses required to maintain accreditation from the APA. Additional opportunities may remain to become even more efficient. Breadth courses might not have to be sequenced and thus not offered every year. If some could be offered at any time during years 1 – 3 of student's training, there would be a potential for cost savings in the summer. Course enrollments may be allowed to increase for courses that are less fundamental to the training mission of the department but still required by APA (e.g., History and Systems). Alternatively, the CP department may have plans to offer History and Systems as online and invite graduate students from other departments to enroll. The department may consider additional collaborations with another APA accredited program on campus, i.e., Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychology. This may build on the attractive collaborative model that the Counseling Department has already established.

The CP department may consider offering other online courses that meeting undergraduate requirements, can sustain high enrollment, and potentially be offered in the summer semester, when undergraduate students may be particularly motivated to seek out online offerings when they are not in residence in Madison.

More students are completing their dissertation proposals before internship, which has resulted in their graduating sooner. This benefit has resulted, in part, from contingencies that CP has negotiated with the university such that their students can enroll in a 0 credit course while on internship if they have already defended their dissertation. This serves as an example of how the department is pursuing creative and effective strategies to simultaneously improve its outcomes and its efficiency. Fast tracking of new multidisciplinary undergraduate degree that could increase enrollment counts and provide TA opportunities.

Thoughts on supporting and enhancing faculty and scholarly productivity

In general, the committee was impressed with the level of faculty scholarly productivity in light of the competing obligations of teaching, overseeing students' clinical supervision, and the service obligations borne by a small department and one whose expertise is called upon to serve broader needs across the campus.

Graduate students are frequently co-authors on publications.

The expectations for tenure and promotion and the obligations of students' clinical training and faculty service obligations are at odds. Faculty are stretched thin by service and training obligations and some faculty are concerned about the degree to which research is valued. For example, the department has no dedicated space for research or labs. These issues are particularly problematic for pre-tenure faculty. To retain junior faculty, a more reasonable workload, protected time and other research issues (space for labs, time, number of students) should be dealt with administratively. The service obligations for a small department may be helped by the CoE plans to move to a cluster model for committee work in the school. Faculty who are licensed and those whose research areas or labs attract more students carry heavier workloads and advising responsibilities. The CP department may consider how to more equitably document these teaching and service contributions within the department's workload policy to achieve improved balance across faculty.

Six faculty take on doctoral advisees. There were some concerns from faculty about whether students are getting adequate research training. Likewise, concerns were voiced about whether standards for dissertations varied across faculty. Maintaining high standards with a high advisee load is not a sustainable model for advising.

Reducing the size of future PhD cohorts could relieve some faculty mentoring burdens. In the past the department felt pressures to maintain cohort size to insure classes were filled. Some faculty think there are too many PhD students and that reducing the size of cohorts should be considered. As the CP department continues to share teaching responsibility for graduate courses across programs/departments, there should be less pressure to meet minimum enrollment requirements, which can allow for smaller cohort sizes.

Recommendations regarding how the courses required to meet the doctoral training program can be sustainable in the new summer budget model

For many reasons the CP training model is not a good fit for the new summer budget model. First, since most graduate students are not paying tuition, they are not a particularly good market for generating new revenues. Second, the current APA course requirements necessitate students taking courses in the summer in order to finish in a timely fashion and CP has long offered lower enrollment, but required summer courses. According to graduate students, in order to complete their degree in 5 years they need to take classes in the summer; extra methods requirements; foundational courses offered over summer; if courses weren't offered in summer could not complete APA requirements on time to degree.

Third, the School of Education model for summer courses is purely enrollment driven and does not provide an allowance for historical summer course offerings that would allow CP to continue with its traditional summer offerings (lower enrollment) - CP will lose money if it offers its traditional summer slate of classes necessary for students to finish in a timely fashion. Finally, since students are fully scheduled during the academic year with classes and faculty are fully scheduled with courses, CP faculty seemed to feel that if the summer courses were not offered, students' time to degree would increase.

Over the past two years and two summers – the availability (or lack thereof) of classes has made it harder to sequence the necessary classes and make progress. This reflects a change in the availability of classes compared to three years ago.

Communication within the department - even about uncertainty - seems to be good. However, there was a general perception that uncertainty also existed outside of the department and that there might be less control over decisions outside of the department.

Currently, the CPTC director teaches 1 course in each of the fall, spring, and summer terms and the committee wondered whether she could teach more in the summer and less in other terms – but the CP faculty and department chair did not see this as viable and current university rules do not yet allow for shifting of regular load teaching to summer term.

The committee recommended:

- that the department review the question of summer courses in the context of the bigger picture of the PhD training sequence – deciding whether some courses that might not have to follow a particular sequence should be offered on an every other or even every third year basis.
- that the department reduce redundancies in the curriculum and increase class sizes by working with other departments on campus that are offering the same (APA required or research methods) courses and find a way for departments to coordinate core course offerings. This may require some scheduling discussions to accommodate CP students' time in the CPTC.

Another consideration is whether the summer course model could be used to generate revenues from undergraduate course offerings. Some new summer revenues might be generated by graduate students' offering (on-line or in-person) undergraduate courses that fulfill ethnic studies requirements. In order to generate enrollments, these would have to fulfill requirements. For example, one faculty member with expertise in LGBTQ studies organized a course in response to student interest but, because it was not fulfilling a requirement, the class did not fill.

Although the CP department does not have an undergraduate major, both faculty and grad students are currently teaching undergraduate classes that fulfill requirements in other departments and that generate revenue (e.g., an interviewing class required by criminal justice and rehab departments; ethnic studies course that is at capacity).

School of Education might consider funding model changes for summer term given the high required course burden imposed by APA and time to degree issues.

Health promotion and equity major – is being developed with other departments. Other courses that could attract students and increase enrollments include: race and the developing child; immigrant health; mindfulness; psychology of suicide; a course on clinical communication skills.

The department also is considering the possibility of 7-week rather than 15-week courses.

The CP department maintains an “in house” training clinic to provide practicum opportunities that are tailored to the training needs of its students. This clinic is a very important part of the success of the department's training of graduate students. The department has already sought out and achieved some efficiencies by sharing space/time with another program on campus that also requires such a clinic. It appears that the clinic space/resources are now utilized at full capacity across these two graduate programs. The CP department may consider if there are any additional financial or other efficiencies

possible from further sharing responsibilities regarding administration of this clinic across programs. However, it must be acknowledged that this may not be possible. Such costs to the department are clearly warranted to maintain quality of clinical training for graduate students. The students reported a high degree of satisfaction with the training opportunities available in the clinic and the supervision provided by the director.

A particular point of tension raised by pre-tenure faculty concerned balancing service, clinical training, and research obligations. More junior faculty are licensed and so have clinical training duties but also have to balance that with research and tenure expectations.

The responsibilities of supervising clinic students do not count for the faculty doing the supervising as part of the teaching load. Nor does it count toward promotion and tenure, despite the fact that students are in a course. Faculty raised questions about how to count these supervisory responsibilities as part of their teaching.

The large undergraduate ethnic studies classes generate revenues. However, some course offerings that are attractive topics for students in other departments, if they are not required, students will often not enroll, especially during the summer term.

PhD Program Enrollments

The chair explained that historically the CP department was largely PhD oriented (both research and clinical (e.g. VA Hospitals, private practice). The PhD program is accredited by the APA. As described in its self-study “The doctoral degree, consistent with the APA’s scientist-practitioner model of training, emphasizes the integration of counseling and psychological theory and practice along with development of research skills in the domains encompassed by counseling psychology”.

From 2006 to 2013 enrollment in the PhD program slowly contracted, but it leveled off in 2014 and 2015. The program has a very competitive accept rate (10% 10 year average) and enrolls 60% of those admitted (10 year average). CP explained that 6-8 students per year is a current typical cohort but 2015-2016 was low. Review suggests that the decline in enrollments has been a purposeful strategy to ensure adequate faculty oversight rather than the result of declining market interest in the program. In its self-study, CP reports that “faculty time to train students in clinical and research skills has increased.”

The CP PhD minor has had 31 students since 2006.

The CP PhD program is very diverse with domestic targeted minorities (DTM) making up 30-40% of the total student population. The enrollment ratio and degree ratio of DTM in the CP PhD program is higher than that of campus peers (enrollment ratio: 32% vs 19% and 11%; degree ratio: 30% vs. 8% and 13%). The department has a strong recruiting system to help build a diverse student cohort. Its 10 year admit rate for DTM is 20% and its enroll rate is 64%. Of note, campus peers have higher admit rates (e.g., 40%). However, looking at raw application numbers, one can see that CP receives more applications from DTM than campus peers. CP had 181 applications from DTM over 10 years while Ed Psych had 82 and Rehab Psych had 27.

Placement:

The UW-Madison doctoral exit survey reports that 82% of CP grads found employment or returned to prior employment. The CP department reported that 30% of graduates take research jobs and 70% take

clinical jobs. In the survey, 14% of respondents with a job reported that their position was tenure track, but 86% reported their position was in the CP field of study.

In interviews, students reported that the CP PhD is a very flexible degree that affords a lot of possibilities. Clinically oriented students reported high confidence in their ability to get good jobs. Those students aiming for faculty positions were more anxious because there are fewer jobs and concerns about whether they can teach in MA only programs due to very strict new accreditation requirements. But they reported that faculty do acknowledge the anxiety and support them. Students reported that they get a good overview of potential career paths and salary possibilities. The department organizes alumni, community professionals to talk to them about careers.

In PhD exit survey data from 2012-2015 (N=17) 70% of grads report receiving help from their advisor on academic jobs and 65% report receiving help about non-academic jobs. 85% of respondents reported receiving help from another mentor (most often within CP) on academic jobs while 71% reported receiving advice about non-academic jobs.

In its self-study CP notes that 64% of 2005-2015 grads have obtained licensure. The remainder are either in process as it takes 2-3 years to get licensed, or are in jobs that do not require licensure.

Course availability/time to degree:

Time to degree statistics for CP are strong. Their average time to PhD degree (6.2 years) is equivalent to AAU peers. Their 10-year completion rate is higher than AAU peers and they compare favorably with campus peers. The CP time to degree is higher than campus peers, but that likely stems from CP's adherence to the onerous APA accreditation coursework requirements to which at least Rehab Psychology (4.9 years time to degree) no longer adheres because Rehab Psych broke away from APA accreditation.

As described in the self-study "the doctoral program involves a minimum of three years of coursework and one year of dissertation prior to internship for post-MA students (one-plus years of additional coursework (counseling theory and practice) for those students who enter the program as post-BA students." In interviews, CP explained that students must take summer courses in order to finish in a timely fashion due to the heavy coursework requirements of the degree. Students report that lastsummer (2016) had fewer courses and that created problems. CP has experimented with sequencing and partnerships with other psychology departments on campus to make course availability for predictable and decrease lower enrollment classes. Some experiments have worked, but others have not as there are some courses that are unique to CP. Their self-study reports that these collaborations have become even "more complicated" with the new summer budget model given disincentives for smaller summer doctoral courses. Problems with sequencing create the need to re sequence courses which inconveniences students.

CP reports making several adjustments in recent years to reduce time to degree. 1. They monitor student progress more systematically via annual reports. 2. They control access to internships based on good progress. 3. To encourage dissertation completion, students can avoid paying for the credits for their final internship if they have finished but not deposited, thus encouraging dissertation defense prior to the internship. This has lowered the number of ABD students.

Advising:

CP does not do direct admit. Students are given a temporary advisor and can then switch. Students report there is no stigma in switching advisors. Sometimes some faculty are too full to take new advisees, but

you can still work with them on their research teams and switch to them later if a spot opens up. Advising involves coaching to help a student figure out what mix of clinical and research s/he may want and then to identify experiences that the student needs to get to achieve that goal. Students do a lot of work on research teams with faculty who are not their advisor and also on teams with other PhD students. In short, as students decide if they want to emphasize clinical work or research, there is scaffolding via advising to help students figure out what they want to do.

The “doctoral training committee” conducts yearly evaluations of each student’s progress in consultation with their advisor. Students complete a “Report on Progress” each year in which they report on their progress on program milestones, report progress on past stated personal goals, set personal goals for the upcoming year, and state their career plans. Students also “describe the support that they would like from the department to achieve these goals.” The student discusses the form with their advisor.

If students are admitted to the PhD with just a BA, they do not earn the accredited MA along the way. If they are not making good progress on the PhD, and wish to change to the MA, they would need to take additional accredited coursework to qualify.

Clinical advising: Done by clinic supervisor and advanced PhD students, not by academic advisor. Having live supervision is key, and is a unique selling point for the program. Follows “intentional practice” -- where one gets feedback from peers (group meeting before and after a student’s practice), supervisors, self-reflection from recordings – all of which is then used by the student to create intentions for the following week’s activities.

Prelims:

The CP prelim process has 3 phases. In spring of year 2 students present a clinical case conceptualization and oral exam. In year 3 they must complete a supervision practicum to demonstrate their ability train other practitioners and demonstrate supervision skills. The third phase requires that students present a dissertation proposal of 50-100 pages and orally defend it. In PhD exist surveys 100 % of CP students reported that CP provided “a formal assessment of your academic progress at least annually.”

Funding:

The CP department has ensured that 95% of the PhD students had funding in the first four years of their program. Overall, between 21 and 43% of students have low or no funding every year. CP has a slightly higher percent of students with low/no funding than campus peer programs (32% vs 28% and 22%). CP has a higher percent of DTM students with low/no funding than campus peer programs (11% vs 2% and 1%).

We found no evidence of status or funding divides between students based on specialization or research/clinical orientation. Students believed the allocation of funding was fair, although they noted frustrations with timing described below. Admission letters do not guarantee funding, but the department makes verbal commitments to all first year students.

In interviews CP explained that most PhD students are supported outside the department. In many cases, this is seen as a positive, as many external sources of funding are highly valued because they provide important work experience (e.g., VA Hospital, UW Counseling Services). CP encourages all senior students to look for funding outside the department. CP has fewer TA opportunities than other departments because it has a small number of undergraduate courses. CP has two TA lines that help with MA level classes. The department is experimenting with more undergraduate courses. CP has two clinic

TA appointments: one at 33% and one at 45% reserved for advanced PhD students. In fall 2016 46% of CP PhD students had TA positions but many of these could be in other departments.

TA pay policy – 33% in order to cover more students. Some students perceived that they were doing more work than compensated by the 33% wage. CP developed a task force – 3 students and 2 faculty - who are working on this concern.

Funding timing problem: Since CP and its programs usually do not know what funding will be available until late in the summer, students will often go outside of the department, get offers, and later learn there is a funding opportunity from the department. Uncertainties of financial support has grown more stressful over past three years.

Climate:

Overall, climate and morale among PhD students seemed good and interviewed students were happy with their educational experience. The PhD exit survey data (N=17) reports that 88% of graduates found the intellectual climate of the department positive, 65% found the social climate positive (29% reported ambivalence on this point). 94% reported being treated with respect by faculty and 94% reported that student relationships in the program were positive (1 respondent marked each of these answers with “ambivalent” instead of positive)

In interviews, PhD students brought up one climate concern related to experience with the climate in one faculty member’s class. The students had taken their concern to the department, but felt unsatisfied with feedback. The chair explained that as the matter was an HR matter, the department was limited in the amount of feedback it could provide.

Each PhD cohort has a representative and the chair meets regularly with cohort representatives.

Administrative Requirements:

- CP has dated annual well organized PDF student handbooks on its website dating back to 2008. The Handbook outlines PhD student milestones and describes how student performance is assessed. Of note, 100% of respondents in the PhD exit survey reported that CP provided “expectations about academic requirements and expected progress” showing that students are very aware of the program requirements.
- The program has state program level learning outcomes “program goals” in the PhD Handbook.
- Grievance and Petition procedures are in the Handbook.