

COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS *of School Psychology Programs*

October 14, 2003

To: Ronald H. Rozensky, Ph.D., Chair
APA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA)
Advisory Council on Accreditation
(via e-mail to: pnelson@apa.org)

From: William Strein, Chair
Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP)

Re: Response to Request for Additional Comments to the *BEA Advisory Council on Accreditation*

The following are the formal comments from CDSPP in response to your letter of September 10th, 2003 inviting additional comments to the *BEA Advisory Council on Accreditation*. First, we want to thank you and the Advisory Council for inviting additional comments. The openness of this process increases its credibility. We have five additional comments, described briefly below.

First, we would reiterate our concern that the present structure and composition of the CoA may not be broad enough to serve well all current stakeholders and those who are likely to become stakeholders in the near future. We believe that BEA needs to be open to expanding the current structure as may be needed, for example, to include representation of combined and integrated training programs.

Second, we endorse the idea of re-structuring CoA into separate panels for reviewing doctoral training programs, pre-doctoral internships, and post-doctoral training sites (although a postdoctoral panel separate from the internship panel might not be necessary until more post-doctoral sites are accredited). In essence, we endorse the position on this matter being taken by the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC), of which CDSPP is an organizational member. We are concerned that the crushing workload of the current one-panel structure could result in both decreased quality of CoA reviews and an increased reluctance of senior members of the discipline and profession of psychology to serve on the CoA.

Third, we reiterate our concern that increased support is necessary for the Office of Accreditation and Consultation such that this office can increase its efficiency and effectiveness with regard to all accreditation-related functions. We would particularly stress the need to increase the office's effectiveness in regard to communication with programs and site visitors, and maintenance of site visitor lists that are current with regard to site visitors' willingness to serve and that allows for active appraisal by the Office of site visitors' continued eligibility in light of feedback from visited sites.

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Fourth, again consistent with the position being endorsed by CCTC, CDSPP believes that it is important for CoA to continue to recognize and support both scientist-practitioner (Boulder) and professional model (Vail) programs.

Fifth, and finally, as members of a psychological specialty where the majority of APA-approved programs are in schools of education, increasingly we are aware of the pressures to provide training through less traditional structures, including outreach to field-based professionals. Accordingly, CDSPP advocates for greater clarity regarding the use of distance education/on-line offerings and outreach efforts undertaken by accredited training programs. Greater clarity for what constitutes quality and, therefore, acceptable practices by accredited training programs would provide needed guidance for program directors and CoA reviewers in considering or reviewing such activities.

Thank you for your consideration of CDSPP's views. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me as follows, e-mail: strein@umd.edu, telephone: (301) 405-2869, postal: 3228 Benjamin Bldg., College Park, MD 20742-1125. As the representative organization of training programs of one of the three currently recognized substantive areas (or combinations thereof) for doctoral training, CDSPP looks forward to working with the Advisory Council and CoA to strengthen the APA accreditation process.