

# COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS *of School Psychology Programs*

August 31, 2003

To: Dr. Paul Nelson

From: William Strein, Chair

Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP)

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

The following are the formal comments from CDSPP in response to the Request for Comments from the *BEA Advisory Council on Accreditation*. In addition to submitting these comments, we are requesting an opportunity to make public comment during the “town hall” forum to be held by the Advisory Council on September 7<sup>th</sup> at the Education Leadership Conference. Dr. Gary Stoner will be the CDSPP representative at the ELC. As you will see, our written comments are brief. We request the privilege for Dr. Stoner to extend modestly CDSPP’s remarks, at his discretion, during the town hall meeting. Thank you for your assistance in handling our submission.

**1. What concerns, if any, do you have about the present structure or composition of the accrediting body in psychology, *i.e.*, the Committee on Accreditation (CoA)?**

CDSPP is concerned that the present structure and composition of the CoA may not be broad enough to serve all current stakeholders and those who are likely to become stakeholders in the near future. Although CDSPP is not making a specific recommendation for re-structuring, we believe that BEA needs to be open to expanding the current structure as may be needed, for example, to include representation of combined training programs.

**2. What changes do you believe would enhance the functioning of psychology’s accrediting body in: (a) the formulation of accreditation policies, procedures, standards and guidelines; and, (b) the accreditation review of programs in professional psychology?**

CDSPP strongly believes 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 maintain 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.

Second, CDSPP believes that it is important for CoA to continue to recognize and support both scientist-practitioner and professional model programs.

Third, 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

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would provide needed guidance for program directors and CoA reviewers in considering or reviewing such activities.