EXAMPLE OF A REVIEW for APCS MEMBERSHIP

Review of the XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Date

Overview

The XXXXXXXXXXX is based on principles that are entirely consistent with the mission and goals of APCS. The program’s philosophical statement begins with the assumption that clinical practice should be based on knowledge derived from basic areas of psychological inquiry and that practice should be empirically-based. The activities of the program’s faculty and graduate students indicate clearly that these principles are being followed. Issues related to more specific topics are addressed below.

1. Principles and Philosophy

The XXXXXXX follows a strong version of the scientist-practitioner model. Its primary goals are related to the training of well-rounded scholar-clinicians. The materials submitted with the application provide ample evidence that the program has been successful in the pursuit of its overall goals. Documentation in the XXXXX Guide is quite thorough. The program’s philosophy is consistent with the types of training advertised and offered.

The XXXXX has clear procedures for the evaluation of the degree to which its training goals are attained. These include curriculum evaluations, rate of attrition, rates of publications by students, monitoring scholarly activities of the faculty, and employment histories of students graduating from the XXXXX.

2. Faculty

The committee that reviewed this application is favorably impressed by this excellent group of faculty members and the program that they direct. The core staff of XX faculty members represents an extremely productive group, as evidenced by the number and types of publications in peer reviewed journals, books and book chapters, and research grants awarded. They are also on a number of peer review committees and editorial boards. They are actively involved in clinical research that is concerned with a number of important topics. The clinical affiliates present good backgrounds in clinical and research activities. The program provides solid training in both research and clinical skills.

Faculty members provide salient role models with regard to the integration of science and practice. For example, Drs. XXXXX have developed specialty clinics (XXXX) in the XXXXXXX. Dr. XXXXX operates a XXXXX practicum specializing in XXX, XXXX, and other childhood disorders. These are only a few of the practicum sites available to graduate students. They demonstrate active involvement of core faculty members in science-based clinical training.
The review committee was concerned about the relatively small number of core faculty members (compared to a relatively large number of graduate students in the program). Due to the relatively limited number of core staff, students may need to narrow their areas of specialization for research to those mentors available in the XXXX. However, the affiliate faculty provide additional diversity of specialization.

3. Students

Students entering the XXXX have varied educational backgrounds with a relatively wide range of GRE scores. Their GPA’s are considered good. The quality of student appears to be reflected by the rate of acceptance of 5%-10% of students applying. The quality of dissertations listed seems to be consistent with the areas of faculty specialty. The students go to accredited internships, although XX of the XX internships were unfunded.

One difficulty recognized by the XXXX faculty is the length of time to completion of the program. Many students have gotten bogged down as they progressed through the program. There are XX students (of XX in the program) beyond their 7th year of training, many of whom are listed as not having completed their dissertation or internship. The faculty does present a plan in the application that addresses this issue so that a more timely progression through the program will be fostered.

4. Curriculum

The curriculum is consistent with the goals of the Academy. Courses provide training in research methodology and statistics as well as assessment, theory, and clinical practice. There are adequate contributions of faculty from diverse areas of interest and specialization. Course syllabi are thorough and timely, providing a strong academic background to lay the groundwork for and to complement practicum experiences.

The amount of time for research available to students was a source of concern for the review committee. Courses, practicum activities, and formal requirements may consume the vast majority of some students’ time. Given the number of students who are delayed in completing the program, the faculty should monitor this element of the program. Recent increases in the level of financial support for students and in the number of research grants to individual faculty members may help to relieve this difficulty.

5. Resources

The student to core faculty ratio of XX:XX is quite high with an average of XX students to each faculty. The faculty members recognize that this ratio is a problem and have taken steps to improve the ratio by requesting additional faculty members with joint positions (X this year and X more next year, each at 20 percent time in the program). The faculty members have also reduced the number of students being admitted to the program (at least temporarily).

The XXXXX has also had some difficulty with providing financial support for graduate
students, but the situation has improved considerably in recent months. The program has received contracts from XXXX which provide research assistantships, practicum stipends, and tuition waivers. New research grants have also been awarded to program faculty. All students in their first five years in the program now receive a tuition waiver. Among students in years X to X, XX percent receive some funding.

While these changes are all encouraging, they do not provide a permanent solution to the problem. We recommend that the XXXX and the Psychology Department establish a review committee to evaluate the level of financial support the program obtains from the University and whether this level of support is consistent with other Clinical Psychology Programs of equal size and productivity. The focus of this assessment should be on the adequate number of core faculty positions needed and the amount of financial support required for graduate students.

Access to diverse populations and sites for clinical training are adequate to the goals of the program.

6. Future Directions

There are many positive features of the XXXX, which has a very good training record. Their faculty members and students represent excellent examples for an integration of science and practice. The faculty members do recognize several issues that must be addressed, including: 1) reducing the student to faculty ratio, 2) increasing the financial support options for students, and 3) increasing the rate of publications for students.

Summary and Recommendation

The XXXX is an excellent training program. The committee reviewing this application had some initial reservations about the relatively large number of students relative to core faculty members, the amount of financial support available to those students, and the rate at which they have advanced through the program. Questions about these issues have been answered to our satisfaction, and we recommend XXXXXXXXXXX.

Membership Review Committee: X, Y, Z