

May 15, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Allan Landon
Chairperson, University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

VIA: David McClain
President, University of Hawai'i

FROM: Rose Tseng
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

SUBJECT: CHANGE OF STATUS FROM PROVISIONAL TO ESTABLISHED FOR
THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO

SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTED:

It is requested that the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents approve the change of status from provisional to established for the Master of Arts program in Counseling Psychology at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. In addition to the summary of the program below, please find attached a self-study of the program for your review.

RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE DATE:

Upon approval

BACKGROUND

The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology program is administered by the Department of Psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. The program was established in 2005 with the full support of the Hawai'i State Legislature and the UH System. It is a 60 semester hour program and meets the curricular requirements for licensure as Mental Health Counselor in Hawai'i. The program is the only one in the University of Hawai'i system that trains mental health counselors at the master's degree level. The program admitted its first cohort of students in the Fall semester of 2005 and produced its first graduates (8 students) in May of 2007.

The mission of the Master of Arts program in Counseling Psychology is to provide multicultural, student-centered, graduate training in counseling psychology. The program is designed to train students to become knowledgeable, skillful, ethical counselors who will be able to help people in need of professional counseling services.

For students who may wish to pursue a doctoral degree in psychology, the program provides training in advanced statistics and research methodology. It also offers opportunities for students to gain research experience by participating in ongoing projects and/or by initiating their own research projects or by completing a master's thesis project. The program assigns a high priority to meeting the educational and personal needs of its students and is based on a scientist-practitioner model, with an emphasis on empirical research and evidence-based practices.

Counseling psychology as a psychological specialty aims at facilitating personal and interpersonal functioning across the life span with a focus on emotional, social, vocational, educational, health-related, developmental, and organizational concerns. Through the integration of theory, research, and practice, and with sensitivity to multicultural issues, this specialty encompasses a broad range of practices that help people improve their well-being, alleviate distress and maladjustment, resolve crises, and increase their ability to live more highly functioning lives. Counseling psychology is unique in its attention both to normal developmental issues and to problems associated with physical, emotional, and mental disorders. (Society of Counseling Psychology, Division 17 of the American Psychological Association, <http://www.div17.org/>)

FACULTY

When the program began in 2005, the department hired an interim director and a tenure-track assistant professor. In 2006, a permanent director was hired at the rank of a full professor in addition to another faculty member at the rank of an associate professor. Currently, the program has three core faculty members (2 full professors and 1 assistant professor) whose main responsibilities are with the program but who also contribute to the undergraduate psychology program in the department*. In terms of their professional backgrounds, two of them identify as counseling psychologists and one identifies as a clinical psychologist. Two of the faculty members are licensed psychologists and one is a licensed a mental health counselor.

The program is in the process of hiring two tenure-track assistant professors whose core instructional responsibilities will be with the program while also contributing to the undergraduate psychology program. To meet the teaching needs of the program during the last three years, other department faculty members and outside lecturers have participated in delivering the program's curriculum.

* It is important to mention that the undergraduate psychology program in the Department of Psychology has the largest number of majors at UHH (339 students as of Spring 2009) and is still growing. Hence, there has been a strong need for the faculty members in the graduate program to contribute to the undergraduate program.

STUDENTS

In the first year of the program in Fall of 2005, ten applicants were admitted into the program. Eight of these students graduated in May of 2007 and one student will be graduating in May of 2009. In Fall of 2006, ten applicants were admitted into the program. Six of these students graduated in 2008 and two more will be graduating in May of 2009. In Fall of 2007, 11 applicants were admitted into the program. Ten of these students are currently on track to graduate in May of 2009 and the remaining student should finish in May of 2010. In Fall 2008, eight students entered the program, and they are on track to finish in May of 2010. (This drop in number of admitted students for 2008 was necessitated by the fact one of the core faculty members took a leave of absence. This faculty member has since returned to UHH). For Fall 2009, the program has admitted 15 students with the plan of reaching a total student complement of 30 students in the next two years. It is hoped that the total student body will eventually increase to 40 (20 per cohort). However, one limiting factor continues to be the lack of quality practicum/intern training placements in the community for all of the projected numbers of students.

In terms of student quality, after having had two cohorts of students who graduated in either May of 2007 or May of 2008, the consensus among the faculty members is that the program is meeting its learning objectives. The faculty members believe that the graduates have been trained to be effective mental health counselors who fully possess the requisite skills and abilities for entry-level positions. In particular, the faculty members believe that the students have gained the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills to effectively meet the mental health needs of the diversity population in Hawai'i. In support of this assessment, below is some of the evaluative feedback taken verbatim from the comments section of trainee evaluations that were completed by each student's clinical supervisor at the end of their training.

“[The student] has been an outstanding intern. She quickly developed a good working relationship with staff in order to be more effective in working with students. She allowed time to build a good relationship with students and then implemented appropriate interventions. She has been appropriately engaging with parents. [The student] has also gone the extra mile to understand Department of Education's policies and paperwork needed to do her job as an intern.”

“[The student] has been a joy to work with. She has created her niche in the team with persistence & a positive attitude. She has good skills to bring to any setting she may choose. Her future is bright.”

"[The student] has been exceptional as a students and demonstrated skills and abilities that are rare and surpass what would be expected of someone beginning in the field."

"As a therapist, she has been able to develop therapeutic relationships with her genuineness and ability to generate trust. She has demonstrated excellent skills in teaching her clients new ways of thinking by generating alternatives."

"[The student] is a professional beyond her years and she stands heads above other interns we have employed at the [agency]. Her ability to work in an integrated setting collaborating with medical professionals: M.D.s, nurses, social workers, outreach, community professionals and staff has been professional and energetic."

Furthermore, 13 of the 14 graduates in a survey provided the names of their current employers; the remaining graduate did not provide this information. As can be seen below, the results revealed that the graduates are employed with mental health or closely related agencies. The results also suggest that the graduates of the program are readily able to find positions that match well with their training and indicate that the program outcomes are compatible with its objectives.

Child and Family Services (Hilo) – Two graduates were hired as Sexual Abuse Treatment Services Therapists.

Child and Family Service (Waimea) – One graduate was hired as a Sexual Abuse Treatment Services Therapist.

The Institute for Family Enrichment (Hilo) - Two graduates were hired as Functional Family Therapists.

CARE Hawaii (Hilo) – Two graduates were hired as Case Managers for Severely Mentally Ill Clients.

Hawai'i Department of Education: Lanakila Learning Center - One graduate was hired as a therapist.

Hawai'i Department of Education – One graduate was hired as a School-based Behavioral Health Specialist/ Educational Aid.

Kanu o ka `Aina New Century Public Charter School – One graduate was hired as a School-based Behavioral Health Specialist.

Kua O Ka La Public Charter School – One graduate was hired as a School Counselor.

Kamehameha Schools - One graduate was hired as a Community Based Early Childhood Education Specialist.

Kamehameha Schools Extension Education Services Division - One graduate was hired as a East Hawai'i Program Coordinator/Counselor for Kamehameha Scholars

Allan Landon, Chair, Board of Regents
May 15, 2009
Page 5

One of the students who will be graduating in May 2009 (Aimee Deliramich) was recently accepted in to the Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology at the University of South Dakota

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

As mentioned above, the program is currently in the process of hiring two more faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor. These positions that originally appropriated by the Hawai'i State Legislature and the UH System when the program was approved. In addition, the program hopes to fill the Program Coordinator position at the Junior Specialist rank next year. This position also was appropriated by the Hawai'i State legislature and the UH System at the start of the program. Once the program is fully staffed, it will be able position to increase the number of students admitted to the program. It is expected that no additional resources will be required.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

It is recommended that the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents approve the change of status from provisional to established for the Master of Arts program in Counseling Psychology at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Attachment Master of Arts Program in Counseling Psychology, Self-study to Move from Provisional to Established Status

C: Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board Presley Pang