

DATE: July 24, 2008

SUBJECT: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Ph.D. in School Psychology

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: A doctoral program in School Psychology has been very productive as a concentration under the Ph.D. in Education. The purpose of the proposal to establish an independent Ph.D. in School Psychology is to bring program major status to the existing offering and thereby enhance the applicant pool, facilitate both licensing and employment of graduates, and attract and retain excellent faculty. Current American Psychological Association (APA) and National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation as well as National Association of School Psychologists recognition will continue with the changed status. The Tennessee State Department of Education approved status will not be altered.

PROPOSED START-UP DATE: Fall 2008

Commission staff reviewed this program proposal according to the academic standards adopted by the Commission on January 29, 1997. Each relevant standard is referenced below.

1.1.20A MISSION: The mission of the program is to prepare leaders and scholars in the field. Graduates will be trained to identify, prevent, and remedy learning, behavioral, and social/emotional problems of Pre K-12 students.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: The program is based on a data-based problem-solving model and offers advanced training in psychological, educational, and professional foundations including training in assessment, research, consultation, and intervention. The student must complete a 125-semester hour curriculum which includes course work, practica, research, and dissertation. New courses were not created.

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

Projected Program Productivity: The program currently receives between 25-40 applications per year and admits six. The enrollment projected is conservative and based on current program enrollments, accreditation ratios, and size of faculty. The graduation progression is based on the history of students finishing the program within five years. For the last six years, the program averaged five graduates per year.

Year	Fall Full-time Headcount	Fall Part-time Headcount	Fall FTE	Graduates
1	25	0	25	4
2	25	0	25	5
3	25	0	25	5
4	25	0	25	5
5	25	0	25	5

Students must be admitted by the graduate school and to the program. Admission, retention, and graduation requirements are reviewed on a regular basis by external agencies and internally by the UT Graduate School and program faculty. All students undergo an annual progress review. Preparation for the required comprehensive exam includes a faculty portfolio review of student accomplishments, successful PRAXIS scores, and completion of the practice test for the licensed psychologist examination. In their final year, students must apply for competitive APA-accredited internships. Their performance in this application process is evaluated.

1.1.20D FACULTY: Three FTE faculty are available for the program. The consultant's opinion is that, with graduates averaging five per year, the existing faculty is sufficient to support the program. Additionally, students receive training from their clinical and internship placement from professionals in the field.

1.1.20 E LIBRARY REOURCES: Library resources are appropriate.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: The program will be administered by the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling within the College of Education, Health, and Human Services. The program is coordinated by a full-time faculty member with quarter- to half-time administrative load.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: The consultant judged all necessary resources to be in place.

1.1.20H STUDENT/EMPLOYER DEMANDS: The proposal cites supply/demand studies identifying School Psychology as a high demand profession. A history of successful employment of UTK graduates in this field is evidence of employer demand. Faculty positions in this field continue to be opportunities for graduates. The proposal notes that APA-accredited internship and practica partners frequently seek to hire the students they helped train.

1.1.20I COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS: N/A

1.1.2J EVALUATION: The APA conducts a thorough program evaluation at least every seven years. Additionally, the program will be evaluated through NCATE, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the Tennessee Department of Education.

1.1.2K EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES: Existing facilities are adequate.

1.1.2L DUPLICATION: The only other APA-accredited doctoral-level school psychology program is offered by the University of Memphis. Regional universities offering APA-accredited Ph.D. programs in School Psychology are the University of South Carolina, North Carolina State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mississippi State, Louisiana State University, Universities of Florida, Kentucky, Georgia, and Central Arkansas.

1.1.20M EXTERNAL JUDGMENT: Dr. Tom Burnham, Dean, School of Education, The University of Mississippi, conducted a site visit and proposal evaluation. Dr. Burnham's review strongly affirmed the UTK case for establishing a free-standing Ph.D. in School Psychology.

1.1.20N COST/BENEFIT/SOURCE: The University has prepared a budget analysis documenting expenditures for program personnel and operating and anticipated revenues from tuition, fees, and external resources. Converting the concentration to an independent degree program will not create new recurring costs and revenue is expected to be sufficient for continued program operation. The only one-time expenditure associated with the proposed action is the nominal cost for consultant evaluation of the proposal and site visit.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved program proposal. At the end of this period, campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation, library acquisitions, student performance, and others set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. As a result of this evaluation, if benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. The Commission may choose to extend the period, if additional time is needed and requested by the governing board.