



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Cc: Vivian Gonzalez, Professor
Eric Murphy, Professor; Director, Department of Psychology

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Clinical-Community Psychology Ph.D.

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): None

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Members of the program review committee:

Vivian Gonzalez, Professor
Eric Murphy, Professor and Department Director

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role

UAA's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities and its diverse peoples. It is also committed to instruction at multiple academic levels, success of all students regardless of their higher education goals, and service to the diverse peoples and communities of the state. UAA's core themes are (1) Teaching and Learning, (2) Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, (3) Student Success, (4) UAA Community, and (5) Public Square. UAA values international and intercultural education, diversity of experiences and perspectives, and the diversity of our unique location in Southcentral Alaska that comes from the Alaska Native peoples of this area.

The College of Arts and Sciences CAS contributes to UAA's mission with a suite of programs that provide, among other things,

1. general education courses for undergraduates in CAS and other Colleges,
2. opportunities for undergraduates to pursue majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and the arts, and

3. opportunities for faculty and students to pursue research and creative activities in CAS's academic disciplines,
4. graduate programs for advanced studies.

Given decreased enrollments across UAA and significant budget cuts to CAS, the challenge is to serve UAA's and CAS's missions with only 75% of the funds it had in 2018-2019. CAS's shrinking budget is especially challenging for programs that rely on state financial appropriations through CAS because the programs have a gap between (a) the total costs of everything the program does and needs, and (b) the tuition CAS receives to cover those costs. This describes most programs in CAS: most rely on state appropriates and CAS has 30% less than it had two years ago.

The PhD program in Clinical-Community Psychology serves CAS's and UAA's missions by providing the PhD program at UAA, and the only doctoral-level training in psychology in Alaska. This is more than a point of pride for CAS; it is an essential response to filling the mental/behavioral health gaps in the most under-served part of Alaska -- its rural communities and indigenous peoples. Its graduates are trained to provide not only mental-health services and administration in Anchorage, but also across Alaska. Originally, the program was taught and administered jointly with UAF, but in recent years UAF withdrew from the program, leaving it entirely in the hands of UAA's faculty.

Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity

Between 2013 and 2019, the program has a steady number of students in the program, ranging from 24 to 31. Student credit hours, seat counts, and class sizes also remained steady. As to efficiency, the program's tuition falls far short of the instructional costs by far more than the average among CAS's graduate programs. As to productivity, the program has been producing 2-3 new PhD graduates per year in the past three years.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success

When UAF separated from the joint program, the now-UAA-only program needed to reapply for accreditation with the American Psychological Association. After a thorough examination of the program curriculum, records, assessments, and graduates, APA granted full accreditation for 10 years. Every graduate of the program obtained a job in the field upon graduation and 83% are licensed psychologists.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness

Beyond being the only PhD program at UAA, the only doctoral program in psychology in Alaska, and the only APA-accredited program in Alaska, the program is distinctive in its focus on diversity: 51% of the students are ethnic minorities, 23% are Alaska Native, 66% of graduates work in rural communities, and 78% of graduates work with indigenous populations.

Commendations and Recommendations

Program faculty are commended for shouldering the entire program after UAF pulled out, for making sure it was in a position to prove its worth to APA, gaining APA accreditation after UAF withdrew, and staying true to the mission of the program to train mental health leaders to meet Alaska's most unmet needs. The faculty should also be commended for the hard work they put into their expedited program review submission.

Decision

Continuation. Clinical training requires a lot of one-on-one supervision of students in practica. A case can be made that more faculty are needed. However, budget constraints make that difficult to accomplish with new hiring. Reassigning departmental faculty from one program to the PhD program should be considered.