August 13, 2014

Jimmy G. Cheek
Chancellor
University of Tennessee
Office of the Chancellor
527 Andy Holt Tower
Knoxville, TN 37996

Dear Chancellor Cheek,

At its meeting on July 17-20, 2014 the Commission on Accreditation conducted a review of the doctoral Ph.D. program in School Psychology at the University of Tennessee. This review included consideration of the program's most recent self-study report, the preliminary review of October 25, 2013 and the program's response to the preliminary review on December 4, 2013, the report of the team that visited the program on April 14-15, 2014, and the program's response to the site visit report on June 10, 2014.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of this review, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) voted to award accreditation to this program. In so doing, the Commission scheduled the next accreditation site visit to be held in 2021. During the interim, the program will be listed annually among accredited programs of professional psychology in the American Psychologist and on the Accreditation web pages. The Commission also encourages you to share information about your program's accredited status with agencies and others of the public as appropriate.

Drs. Mark H. Ashcraft and Carlen Henington recused and therefore did not participate in the discussion and vote on your program.

The Commission would like to provide the program with a summary of its review. This is provided below according to each of the accreditation domains. At the end of the letter, the program will be provided with an itemized list of any actions that the program needs to take prior to the next accreditation review.

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Domain A: Eligibility
As a prerequisite for accreditation, the program's purpose must be within the scope of the accrediting body and must be pursued in an institutional setting appropriate for the doctoral education and training of professional psychologists.

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UT) offers a Ph.D. program in School Psychology, providing education and training in psychology, including preparation for practice in the area of school psychology. UT is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
Commission on Colleges. The School Psychology program is an integral part of the Educational Psychology and Counseling Department within the College of Education, Health, and Human Services, which is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. The program is an integral part of the mission and academic unit of the department and college, and is represented in the institutional budget. The program requires a three year academic commitment with a minimum of one year in residence, and a one-year internship. The program engages in actions that indicate respect for diversity, and there are formal written policies in place regarding admissions, student performance and feedback, and due process and grievance procedures.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

Domain B: Program Philosophy, Objectives and Curriculum Plan
The program has a clearly specified philosophy of education and training, compatible with the mission of its sponsor institution and appropriate to the science and practice of psychology. The program's education and training model and its curriculum plan are consistent with this philosophy.

The program has a clearly specified “data-based problem-solving” model of training that is described as a “variant of the scientist-practitioner model and views the actions of both research and practice as requiring the same problem-solving steps” (site visit report [SVR], p. 4). The integration of science and practice is evident throughout the curriculum, and the curriculum reflects an understanding of sequential, cumulative, and increasingly complex training. The program has well-developed practicum settings that are sufficient for internship preparation. The program has clearly identified goals, objectives, competencies, evaluation tools, and minimum thresholds for achievement.

The program states that coverage of affective aspects of behavior is provided in courses SCHP 690 Psychopathology of Childhood, and COUN 551 Theory and Practice of Counseling. Based on review of the syllabi provided for these courses, in the professional judgment of the CoA, neither course appears to provide sufficient broad and general coverage of this curriculum area. By September 1, 2015, the program is asked to clarify how it provides adequate broad and general coverage of affective aspects of behavior, consistent with Domain B.3(a) of the Guidelines and Principles of Accreditation (G&P) and Implementing Regulation (IR) C-16 (attached).

Domain C: Program Resources
The program demonstrates that it has resources of appropriate quality and sufficiency to achieve its education and training goals.

The program has an identifiable number of core faculty that are appropriately credentialed, excellent role models for students, and sufficient in number to meet training needs. An associate professor has been recruited to replace a retiring core faculty member, assuring continuation of adequate faculty resources for training. The program has an identifiable body of students at
different levels of matriculation and with appropriate backgrounds and intended career paths. Students have access to the KLASS (Korn Learning Assessment and Social Skills) Center which is a particularly positive resource for student training, faculty supervision, and community service.

The site visitors noted the loss of the clerical staff member assigned to the program, and a related burden on the training director to maintain the complex files and record keeping on students required for accreditation (SVR, p. 13). By September 1, 2015, the program is asked to update the CoA on the adequacy of clerical support for the program.

Regarding the KLASS Center Clinic, the site visitors indicated an inability to ascertain “who is responsible for the various tasks in the clinic” (SVR, p. 14). By September 1, 2015, the program is asked to describe the administrative structure and oversight of the KLASS Center Clinic. Also, the site visitors indicated that the program’s training clinic (KLASS Center) manual was in draft form (SVR, p. 14). By September, 1, 2015, the program is asked to provide an updated copy of the KLASS Center Clinic manual.

**Domain D: Cultural and Individual Differences and Diversity**

*The program recognizes the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of psychologists.*

The program engages in systematic, long-term strategies to recruit diverse faculty and retain diverse faculty and students. Practicum placements provide opportunities for students to experience regional diversity, particularly in rural, Appalachian culture and economically disadvantaged populations. The program provides a welcoming training atmosphere and infuses diversity throughout curriculum.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

**Domain E: Student-Faculty Relations**

*The program demonstrates that its education, training, and socialization experiences are characterized by mutual respect and courtesy between students and faculty and that it operates in a manner that facilitates students' educational experiences.*

The program recognizes the rights of students and faculty to be treated with courtesy, respect, collegiality, and ethical sensitivity. Site visitors note that “Faculty serve as good role models for students and the students look to faculty for guidance and support” (SVR, p. 18). Students are oriented to policies, procedures, expectations, and requirements through the program and department handbooks as well as during orientation activities. Students receive written feedback at least annually based on an in-person annual performance review. No formal complaints or grievances were filed during this review period.

In its preliminary review letter, the program was asked to clarify whether students receive written feedback on the extent to which corrective actions have been successful in addressing
issues of concern (preliminary review [PR], Domain B). In its response, the program addressed the larger issue of written feedback; however, it does not appear that a procedure for feedback regarding the success of corrective actions was addressed (preliminary review response [PR-R], p. 10). Similarly, the site visitors reviewed a student folder which included a remedial plan, which serves as an example of correction action; however, there was no mention of written feedback regarding the success of the corrective action (SVR, Domain E.4). By September 1, 2015, the program is asked to clarify how students receive written feedback regarding the success in meeting corrective action plans.

**Domain F: Program Self-Assessment and Quality Enhancement**
The program demonstrates a commitment to excellence through self-study, which assures that its goals and objectives are met, enhances the quality of professional education and training obtained by its students, and contributes to the fulfillment of its sponsor institution's mission.

The program engages in regular, ongoing self-assessment and quality enhancement processes. The program is commended for the development of a competency-based student assessment process in 2012-2013 that will further monitor program effectiveness. The program faculty are active in professional organizations and standards of professional practice. The program has a strong commitment to considering multiple sources of information at the local, state, and national level to continually implement important changes and improvements to their goals, objectives, and curriculum.

**Domain F.1(a): Outcome Data**
The program, with appropriate involvement from its students, engages in regular, ongoing self-studies that address its effectiveness in achieving program goals and objectives in terms of outcome data (i.e., while students are in the program and after completion).

The program engages in multi-source data collection that informs the program of its effectiveness in meeting stated goals and objectives, and has provided outcome data consistent with the program's goals and objectives for both current students and program alumni.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

**Domain G: Public Disclosure**
The program demonstrates its commitment to public disclosure by providing written materials and other communications that appropriately represent it to the relevant publics.

Requirements for admission and graduation are clearly identified on the program website, as well as descriptions of program faculty and facilities.

On its website, the program has identified its accreditation status as being "APA approved," and does not include the CoA contact information. In an effort to ensure that the accreditation status is accurately and clearly identified to the public, the program is asked to update its website and
other public documents consistent with IR C-6(b) (attached). Additionally, the program is asked to update the website to include information regarding program curriculum, training goals and objectives, and practicum experiences. By September 1, 2015, the program is asked to provide documentation illustrating that these changes have been made.

The CoA recently approved revisions to IR C-20 (attached) to better define the specific information required for public disclosure of the program’s educational and training outcomes. Based on a review of the program’s website on July 17, 2014, the program does not appear to be in compliance with the most recent version of IR C-20. The program is asked to ensure that it is using the correct table templates, and that these data are “one click away” from the Ph.D. page. There may be confusion given that both the Ed.D. program and the Ph.D. program are listed on the same webpage. Please note that the program’s public information will be reviewed on or after October 1 of each year to ensure that the disclosure data has been updated and is in compliance with the most recent version of IR C-20.

**Domain II: Relationship with Accrediting Body**

*The program demonstrates its commitment to the accreditation process by fulfilling its responsibilities to the accrediting body from which its accredited status is granted.*

The program abides by the CoA’s policies and procedures regarding timely communication and payment of necessary fees.

The program is consistent with the provisions of this domain.

In order to keep the Commission informed of the program’s commitment to the ongoing self-study process, the program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by September 1, 2015:

- Update the CoA on the adequacy of clerical support for the program.

- Update program website to represent accreditation status consistent with IR C-6(b), and include information on program curriculum, goals and objectives, and practicum, and provide documentation of these updates.

The program is asked to address the following issues in a narrative response by September 1, 2015 for formal review by the Commission:

- Address how the program provides adequate broad and general coverage of affective aspects of behavior, consistent with IR C-16.

- Describe the administrative structure and oversight of the KLASS Center Clinic.

- Provide an updated copy of the KLASS Center Clinic manual.
• Clarify how students receive written feedback regarding the success in meeting corrective action plans.

While these items are considered an addendum to the data provided in the Annual Report Online (ARO), they are not to be submitted online. The program’s response to the items listed above should be identified as ‘Narrative Response – Program Review’ and mailed or faxed to the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation by the designated due date(s).

The accreditation website (www.apa.org/ed/accreditation) provides important updates and policy changes related to the accreditation process. As an accredited program, we encourage you to periodically visit the website to remain current on all new accreditation policies. The Commission on Accreditation would also like to remind you that all accredited programs must inform the accrediting body in a timely manner of changes that could alter the program’s quality. A copy of Implementing Regulation C-19 (Notification of Changes to Accredited Programs) is attached for your information.

In closing, on behalf of the Commission on Accreditation, I extend congratulations to the faculty and students of the professional psychology program for their achievements. The Commission also expresses its appreciation for your personal commitment, and the corresponding support of your administration, to develop and maintain the best possible quality of graduate education and training in psychology. If the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation may be of service at any time on administrative matters of accreditation, please call upon us.

Sincerely,

Susan Zlotlow, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

cc: Susan Martin, Provost and Vice Chancellor
    Robert A. Rider, Ph.D., Dean, College of Education, Health and Human Sciences
    R. Steve McCallum, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Educational Psychology & Counseling
    Christopher H. Skinner, Ph.D., Program Director
    Elaine Clark, Ph.D., Site Visit Chair
    Gary Duhon, Ph.D., Site Visit Member
    Larry Alferink, Ph.D., Site Visit Member