

APA/OPCA Update – March 2022

Includes selected articles from the [December 2021 Commission on Accreditation \(CoA\) Update](#), which are available on the website of the American Psychological Association, CoA / Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation (OPCA).

2021 CoA Meetings

The Commission on Accreditation (CoA) met on the following dates during calendar year 2021: February 2 (new member orientation); February 4-7 (policy); April 8-11 (program review and policy); July 15-18 (program review and policy); and October 20-23 (program review and policy). Commissioners are responsible for conducting program reviews and participating in both a “policy panel” and a “work group”; these groups serve to work on policy and procedural issues that the CoA has determined warrant examination. Given COVID-19, all meetings were held virtually.

2021 CoA Program Review Summary

The Commission on Accreditation (CoA) held its fall 2021 program review meeting from October 20-23, 2021. In the CoA’s review of programs during this meeting, decisions were made on 45 programs including six applicant programs that were awarded an initial accredited status. As a result of travel restrictions consequent to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the applicant programs participated in a virtual site visit as part of the accreditation application process.

All programs that underwent or will undergo a virtual site visit must have an in-person verification visit when it is safe to do so. These programs will receive notice when decisions are made regarding approving and scheduling the required on-site verification visit.

The commission’s workgroups and policy groups convened to review policy and work on policy matters including the election of chairs for 2022 and implementing regulations (IRs) with forthcoming public comment.

Decisions from the 2021 fall program review meeting are available on the OPCA's [website](#). Please see the following table for a summary of accredited programs as of October 23, 2021:

*Table 1. Number and Type of APA Accredited Programs**

Programs (Level and Area)			Number of Accredited Programs		
Doctoral programs	Area	PhD		PsyD	
		Full	Cont.	Full	Cont.
	Clinical	174	4	65	8
	Counseling	65	0	9	2
	School	59	2	8	3
	Combined	7	1	4	3
	Total doctoral programs	414			
Internship programs		Full		Contingent	
		631		16	
	Total internship programs	647			
Postdoctoral residency programs	Area	Full		Contingent	
	Traditional - Clinical	94		3	
	Specialty - Clinical Child Psychology	8		1	
	Specialty - Clinical Health Psychology	11		1	
	Specialty - Clinical Neuropsychology	33		9	
	Specialty – Forensic Psychology	1		0	
	Specialty - Geropsychology	3		0	
	Specialty – Rehabilitation Psychology	10		1	
	Total postdoctoral programs	175			
Total		1,236			

Note. Cont. = Contingent.

*As of October 23, 2021

Future States of Site Visits

Regarding site visits, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) elected to use virtual site visits to continue accreditation activities in a way that would protect and promote health and well-being. From implementation to October 23, 2021, 72 virtual site visits have occurred, and 101 site visits will have occurred by the end of 2021! With the success of

these virtual site visits, the CoA will be continuing with virtual site visits for the beginning of 2022.

As a reminder, all programs that receive a virtual site visit that leads to an award or reaffirmation of accreditation must have an in-person verification visit when safe. More information regarding the details of this visit can be found on the [website](#). More information about the qualifications to be a site visitor can be found on our [website](#).

USDE Recognition Awarded for Five Years

The APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA) recently completed a review for continued recognition by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The recognition process was initiated in January of 2020 with the submission of a petition, and subsequently included an observation visit of the CoA's July 2020 program review meeting. In addition, CoA leadership and APA office staff represented the APA CoA during the July 2021 National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) meeting. The ED awarded continued recognition for a five-year period; the APA CoA scope is:

The accreditation in the United States of doctoral programs in clinical, counseling, school and combined professional-scientific psychology; doctoral internship programs in health service psychology; and postdoctoral residency programs in health service psychology; and the preaccreditation in the United States of doctoral internship programs in health service psychology; and postdoctoral residency programs in health service psychology.

The CoA extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who aided in this process!

Public Comment for Accreditation Operating Procedures Sections 8.6 (D, I and P), and Implementing Regulations D.4-11

During the fall 2021 program review meeting, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) voted to approve the Master's Accreditation Operating Procedures (AOP), AOP Sections 8.6 (D, I and P), and Implementing Regulation (IR) D.4-11 for a sixty-day period of public review and comment.

Per the AOP (§1.3), an accredited program may request to voluntarily withdraw from accredited status at any time by advising the CoA in writing in advance of the requested withdrawal date. IR D.4-11 has been created to provide APA-accredited programs with clarification regarding AOP-compliant withdrawal procedures for programs who wish to withdraw from accreditation and continue to operate.

The CoA has elected to change the date when accreditation decisions are awarded. Once finalized, the award of accreditation will be effective on the final day of the site visit preceding the CoA decision for programs. This change impacts all levels of education and training that are currently part of the CoA scope (i.e., doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral residency). AOP Sections 8.6 D, 8.6 I, and 8.6 P have been revised accordingly.

Following the creation and approval of the Standards of Accreditation for Health Service Psychology: Master's Programs (SoA-M), the CoA has developed operating procedures for the accreditation of eligible master's degree programs in health service psychology (HSP).

These documents will be made available for public comment at <http://apps.apa.org/accredcomment/> starting December 6, 2021 and continuing until February 3, 2022.