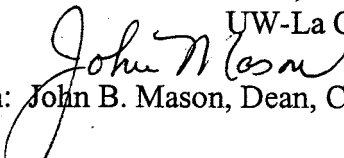


UNIVERSITY *of* WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

March 15, 2005

To: Professor Richard Pein, Chair, Academic Program Review Committee

UW-La Crosse

From:  John B. Mason, Dean, College of Liberal studies, UW- La Crosse

Re: School Psychology Program Review

Dear Professor Pein:

I have received from the School Psychology Program a copy of its self-study document for its National Association of School Psychology (NASP) Review, a copy of the external report written by Joseph Prus of the NASP Program Approval Board, and a copy of the Program Director's response to the external review (Self-study, pg. 8). The purpose of this letter is to acknowledge that the review process has been completed and to advise the Academic Program Review Committee of the response to the review by the College of Liberal Studies.

It is clear from the self study that the School Psychology program has evolved and changed in order to meet state and national accreditation standards. In 2003, NASP granted the School Psychology Program **Full Approval** for the period July 1, 2004 through December 31, 2008. As part of the rigorous review process, the program was evaluated independently by at least two reviewers with training in the application of the NASP Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology.

I offer the following responses to issues raised by the Program and NASP reviewers:

1. **Strengths of the program:** The College acknowledges the strengths identified in the NASP report and the self-study. Below is a summary of those strengths:
 - The program has a well established culture of assessment, with fully integrated assessment initiatives. The program has evidence to demonstrate how assessment data have been used to make programmatic improvements.
 - The program provides a broad background in assessment and academic interventions. It also has comprehensive data collection procedures for assessment and attainment measures.

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- The program has a demonstrated track record of producing highly qualified and employable graduates.
The curriculum has been closely aligned with the NASP standards.
- The program gives students extensive practicum experience compared to most programs in the nation.
- The program offers a psychological assessment sequence that significantly advantages students in the field.
- A recent curriculum redesign to reduce repetition of content between classes as well as reduce load on students and faculty.
Student competencies are consistent with the goals and objectives for training standards established by NASP and reflected in the certification standards for school psychologists by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

2. **Areas for improvement:** While the School Psychology Program has unquestionable strengths, a few areas for improvement were identified in the self-study and NASP review.

- The NASP review identified three program areas with insufficiencies: Family/school/community interventions, diversity, and information technology. The report also mentioned a need for additional documentation of field experiences.
The self-study identified the following needs: Further refinement of the Academic & Behavior Interventions (Psy 752) is needed to enhance student learning outcomes; selected education electives need to be refined; and, in light of new program requirements, a manual is needed to assist students with thesis development and their maintenance of electronic portfolios.

3. **Recommendations:** The School Psychology Program should maintain its commitment to continuous improvement by closely examining the curriculum to identify areas where diversity and multicultural issues can be further integrated across the curriculum. The College encourages the program faculty to work actively towards addressing issues of diversity in every aspect of its program. Furthermore, we suggest that the faculty be more intentional in creating additional opportunities for students to develop skills in home-school-community collaborations and in utilizing existing assessment processes to collect evidence of these collaborations. We also encourage the program faculty to explore ways to meet the changing technological needs of students and to document more fully students' field experiences. We encourage the program faculty to develop Thesis/Portfolio manual for students and to continue commitment to an ongoing review of the curriculum.

In conclusion, the School Psychology faculty are fully committed to maintain an excellent program commensurate with national standards. By continuing to refine the program and demonstrate success, the program could serve as a national model for training school psychologists. We are confident the program faculty will develop action plans to bolster areas of strength and to address areas for improvement. The College of Liberal Studies is proud of the accomplishments of the program and looks forward to its continued success. Given the availability of additional resources, the College will invite conversations about possible expansion of the program.

cc: Provost Elizabeth Hitch
Professor Betsy Morgan
✓ Program Director Robert Dixon
Associate Dean Charles Martin-Stanley