

Western Carolina University PsyD Advisory Board Meeting Minutes (March 23, 2020), 4-5 pm

Attending: Valerie Gortmaker, Al Ledford, Rebecca Daniel, Alyssa Raggio, Jonathan Campbell

Minutes:

1. Campbell welcomed participants to the advisory board meeting. He explained that several members were unable to participate via videoconference due to emergency circumstances and unanticipated conflicts.
2. Attendees introduced themselves and their connection to the PsyD program.
3. Campbell introduced the purpose of the PsyD Advisory Board, which is an independent group to provide feedback on all aspects of the PsyD program, including curriculum, practicum training, student selection, student recruitment, among other areas of program functioning.
4. Campbell provided an update on Western Carolina University's response to COVID-19 and its impact on PsyD program, particularly teaching, McKee Clinic functions, and external practicum placements. Ledford asked PsyD students how the response had impacted their experience; students acknowledged the unusual situation, but felt supported by WCU and faculty.
5. Campbell provided updates on Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 admissions. Fall 2019 applications and admissions featured 7 applications and 5 students matriculating into the program. Fall 2020 applications and admissions featured 7 applications and 5 students accepted into the program; students have until April 15, 2020 to accept or decline the offer of admission.
6. Campbell provided an update regarding American Psychological Association (APA) Accreditation activities. Faculty are working on the APA "Intent to apply" application with plans to submit by April 15th.

7. Campbell opened meeting for feedback, ideas, and discussion. He requested ideas and strategies regarding how to increase applications and interest from students interested in the school psychology concentration. The advisory committee generated a host of ideas and strategies, including the following:

a. Advertise the launch of the program nationally, such as through paid advertisements or dissemination through the School Psychology Trainers Listserv.

b. Advertise and have presence at professional conferences, such as the North Carolina School Psychology Association (NCSPA); National Association of School Psychologists (NASP); Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA). Campbell reported that WCU has a strong presence at SEPA and routinely advertises, but SEPA cancelled in light of COVID-19.

c. Ledford asked “What are barriers to seeking doctoral degree for school psychology?” Gortmaker explained that doctoral degree not necessary for school psychology practice. Campbell reported that he received inquiries from practicing school psychologists who were interested in the program, but asked if the program could be completed on a part-time basis to accommodate work. Part-time enrollment is not possible due to curriculum and accreditation standards.

d. Daniel suggested reviewing curricula from other M.A. programs in N.C. and the region that align well with WCU’s M.A. Clinical and School curriculum. Possibilities include: UNC-W; NCCU; ETSU.

e. Ledford recommended the development and use of a letter of introduction to potential students explaining program and initiating a personal connection with WCU program faculty.

8. Meeting adjourned at 5 p.m. Campbell thanked all for their participation and willingness to serve on the PsyD Advisory Board. Next meeting time TBD, perhaps Fall 2020, but may wait until Spring 2021 to align with CEAP Advisory Meetings and Dinner.