

## BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

### WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY Master of Clinical Psychology

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

**This program clearly meets Regents' standards for graduate degree programs. The Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study voted unanimous approval for the addition of a Master of Clinical Psychology (Psy.M.) degree to the existing Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree program. There were no serious concerns raised during the review.**

**Request:** Wright State University's School of Professional Psychology (SOPP) proposes the addition of a master's degree program entitled Master of Clinical Psychology (Psy.M.) for students who successfully complete the first year of the Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree program. The proposed master's degree program is designed for those students who do not already have a master's degree in clinical psychology, but desire to receive this additional academic credential during the course of their doctoral degree program course of study. The addition of a Psy.M. degree program will enable the Psy.D. students to qualify for internships and other clinical placements that require the master's credential. Students will not be separately admitted to the proposed master's degree program. Only students pursuing the Psy.D. program will be eligible to receive the Psy.M. degree. The proposed request will not be a terminal degree program; students would be admitted only to the doctoral program and the criteria for admission to the SOPP will not change. The introduction of this degree will require only minor curricular modifications and will not increase the number of students admitted to the program, nor will it require additional staff, faculty, budget or other resources. The SOPP's doctoral program follows a practitioner model of training which explicitly prepares students for the practice of clinical psychology. Students completing the SOPP program are awarded the Psy.D. degree.

**Program Purpose/Mission:** The proposed Master of Clinical Psychology degree, to be earned after successful completion of the first year of a five year professional clinical Psy.D. program, will allow the Psy.D. students to qualify for internships and other clinical placements that require the master's credential.

The doctoral program requires five years of full-time study, four years of which are devoted to coursework and clinical practicum training based at Wright State University, with the fifth year spent in a full-time clinical internship. In the internship year, SOPP students apply to multiple sites across the United States and secure an internship placement through a highly competitive national matching process.

**Enrollments:** The SOPP's doctoral program admits 25-30 students per year.

**Curriculum:** The introduction of the master's degree program requires only minor modifications to the SOPP curriculum. Specifically, two modifications are proposed, both of which would modify the curriculum in the first year of study leading to the Psy.M. degree. The first modification will be a formal requirement for students in the

first year of study to engage in a minimum of 100 hours of clinical practicum supervised by a psychologist. Currently, students entering the program without having had prior supervised clinical experience (these are mainly students without master's-level training) are required to participate in supervised clinical activities, but their clinical assignments are somewhat informal. A new course will be created entitled "Master of Clinical Practicum." Students will be enrolled for 1 credit hour in the quarter in which they participate in supervised practice. Their performance will be formally documented, evaluated and graded by the clinical supervisor and the Associate Dean for Clinical Training.

The second modification will involve changing the content in the course, PSI 808, Professional Development, which is currently a required course for first year students. Currently, a portion of this course is devoted to basic content in ethics and standards that govern the practice of clinical psychology. The Professional Development course would be modified to allow a greater depth and breadth of coverage of these issues. Since the School of Professional Psychology is adding a great deal of new content in the course, PSI 808, students will be required to enroll in the course for three quarters rather than one quarter as is currently the case.

**Faculty, Facilities and Resources:** No additional faculty, staff, budget or resources will be needed for the proposed request.

**Evidence of Need:** The education and training of clinical psychologists has always taken place in the context of the nation's health and mental health service delivery system. In recent years, because of changes in funding and reimbursement for mental health services, a shift has occurred that in many mental health care settings, locally and nationally, and serving as clinical psychology training sites, reimbursement is made for services rendered by trainees with master's degrees, but not for those without the master's degree. This shift has led to a reduction in clinical training sites that will accept a trainee, at either the practicum or internship level, who does not have a master's degree in clinical psychology. Although the SOPP can place a number of practicum trainees in WSU's own service centers and in many local and regional service settings, practicum students cannot be placed at a number of local and regional mental health agencies where they otherwise could receive excellent training and clinical experience because they do not possess a master's degree. When competing nationally for a pre-doctoral clinical internship, SOPP students would be at a distinct disadvantage if they did not have a master's degree, as more and more internship programs require applicants to have such a degree.