



ACCTA Liaison Report to CCPTP Winter 2024 Submitted by Bethany Riddle, Ph.D., President

The mission of the Association of Counseling Center Training Agencies (ACCTA) is to promote excellence in doctoral psychology internship training within university and college counseling centers. Fundamental to our values is appreciation of and support for diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice initiatives. We currently have 176 members.

ACCTA aims to: 1. Help internship programs succeed in providing interns with professional competencies in health service psychology in college mental health settings and beyond; 2. Enhance interns' learning experiences through innovative methodologies and technologies; 3. Strive for fair and ethically sound training and supervision; 4. Seek best practices in training and supervision; 5. Provide technical, professional, and moral support to Training Directors and Coordinators.

Activities and Observations to share with CCPTP

The ACCTA Board is staying apprised of trends in counseling centers which impact training. In the context of staff attrition (due to factors including but not limited to: dissatisfaction with salaries, changing counseling center demands, client acuity, lack of flexibility, and lack of opportunities for advancement), we are seeing a higher turnover among Training Directors and Coordinators than in previous years. Our members are reporting ongoing concerns about recruiting and retaining psychologists to supervise interns and direct their programs, and in the past two years we have had 2 Board members leave their counseling center TD role each Board year resulting in some turnover on the Board in addition to general membership. We seek feedback from membership in the form of a comprehensive annual survey, and we added a number of questions this past year regarding factors contributing to work satisfaction/dissatisfaction and anticipated internship closures or reduction in number of internship spots for the coming year. Data from our annual survey indicates that 78% of those surveyed (N=100) report increased staff turnover since the start of COVID for many of the reasons listed above. We are preparing for a Presidential leadership transition over the course of the next 2 years in conjunction with a change in our Bylaws which was passed during our Fall 2023 election and which reduces the total years of service in the President role (encompassing 1 year each of President-Elect, President, and Past President) from 4 years to 3 years. We hope that this shift will allow for additional mentorship at the Executive leadership level, additional opportunities for members to serve in this capacity, additional stability at the Executive leadership level to weather the higher turnover that we're seeing, and a time commitment to the role which may feel more realistic for members given the decreased longevity in the role that we're seeing.

We are paying attention to emerging factors in the post-covid era including Training Directors and Coordinators' experiences of intern preparedness for clinical practice. We are mindful of sociocultural factors that contribute to stress among Training Directors/Training Coordinators and psychology interns including challenges to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion curriculum in some states. Training Directors and Coordinators are navigating a complex set of pressures in which requirements in some states regarding cultural and individual diversity sit in tension with accreditation standards regarding cultural competency. In concern to support our members and to support psychology internship training



for ACCTA’s mission, we continue to foster conference programming and virtual spaces that promote connection and appreciation/support for diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice. Our listserv is active and members frequently share resources with one another.

Conference

The 46th annual ACCTA Conference was held from September 9-12 in Kansas City, MO (with pre-conference programming for New Training Directors/Coordinators on September 8th). We offered virtual programming for about half of our CE programs. We had 110 members in person at the conference and 15 members in attendance virtually. We are planning for a Fall 2024 conference from September 14-17 in Philadelphia, PA.

Future Activities

ACCTA anticipates continuing to focus on: supporting members to attain and maintain APA accreditation; addressing the ways in which sociopolitical issues impact psychological practice as well as training in psychology; supporting members in doubt of their potential longevity in their Training Director/Coordinator roles; and, reviewing membership criteria to provide the most support for the greatest number of trainers while retaining our mission to support Training Directors and Coordinators of internship programs.

The 2023-2024 ACCTA Board:

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Respectfully Submitted by Dr. Bethany Riddle

1/16/2024