

The APA currently has a monopoly on the field of psychology based upon accreditation processes which has a profoundly negative cascade effect upon public welfare, the profession of psychology, academic programs, training sites, students, interns, and employment opportunities for licensed psychologists. This is an urgent matter in need of remediation given the likely harm to the public welfare within the current accreditation paradigm.

The negative ramifications are heavily interrelated:

Phenomenal academic programs and internships sites are not APA accredited to due financial limitations or because these programs offer different training than the majority accredited by the APA. Despite the fact that these schools and sites are WASC and CAPIC accredited, meeting standards of excellence often exceeding requirements of APA, there is undue pressure placed upon students and interns to exclusively attend APA accredited programs. Further compounding this problem, a number of employers, like the VA, only hire psychologists who attended schools and internships accredited by the APA even if they are licensed by state boards. Subsequently, this results in homogeneity of training, limiting the variety of services offered to the public who have diverse needs.

Presently, students are dissuaded by their schools from attending non-APA internships due to pressures placed upon schools by the APA in order that schools remain eligible for accreditation. This poses several ethical concerns.

To illustrate, this pressure has extreme consequences for the public because several internship sites that are county funded cannot afford application for APA accreditation; however, these sites offer services to individuals in high need who would otherwise be unable to pay for services. Although these sites are of high caliber and accredited by CAPIC, there is a marked reduction in internship applicants placing programs at risk of closure since

they rely upon interns to provide cost-effective services. This is unfortunate for the public and clinicians in training as a multitude of students report their training at CAPIC sites being superior to their training APA sites.

There are additional consequences for students who are pressured by their schools to wait an additional year to attend internship if not placed at an APA site which include: additional tuition, delays in graduation, and postponing date of license eligibility. These delays then limit the number licensed psychologists available to serve the welfare of people and society.

Therefore, in concluding, contrary to APA's mission to benefit society and improve people's lives, the leverage the APA possesses in terms of accreditation is presently to the detriment of society and people's lives.

Jaclyn D. Deilgat, Ph.D.

California Licensed Clinical Psychologist (PSY27879)

Executive Director, Collective Connections Counseling & Consultation  
Services