

My name is Dr. Megan O'Banion. I am a Director of Clinical Training, Chair of a Training Council, academician, APA member, licensed Psychologist in California, and social justice advocate. I am educated by, trained in, and **work** for APA-accredited programs.

My goal here today is to evoke APA's meaning behind accreditation and call for the critical evaluation of the CoA's effectiveness and social, cultural, ethical, moral, and political impacts on academic and training programs, students, public, and profession of psychology.

Concerns:

- 1) The CoA does not demonstrate the fundamental practice of researching or providing empirical support for some of the most decisive accreditation outcome requirements – ONE EXAMPLE being IR.D.4.7(b) that stipulates the 50% minimum threshold of APA-accredited internship placement rate.
- 2) By creating high-stakes standards that focus on numerical and narrow objectives, academic programs focus on meeting the standards to maintain their accreditation over prioritizing the student's individual personal, learning, and professional needs.
- 3) Institutionalizing a narrow view of education and training is harmful. Accreditation standards that promote application and training requirements that are most accessible to those in privileged and dominant groups threatens the health and diversity of the profession.

When powerful institutions demonstrate lack of evidence-basis for practice, limited inclusivity, and insufficient accountability, it impacts the **integrity of our profession**. Furthermore, the most harmful consequences fall on the most vulnerable – our students and our underserved communities. These are the stakeholders that accreditation is designed to protect.

This is a social justice issue.

How we standardize the design and methodology of accreditation can create opportunities for *inequality, oppression, and discrimination* within our programs and in the profession.

In the wake of the Hoffman report, I embrace APA/CoA's pledge for transparency, integrity, and renewed self-study. **I ask for the CoA to be held to the same level of accountability as that of the programs it accredits** by ENSURING:

- a. that the accreditation standards themselves are consistent with the science and practice of psychology (evidence basis)
- b. a transparent and rigorous ongoing review and improvement of accreditation processes and governance.
- c. quality education and training that TRULY meets the needs of our student body, the public, and our profession.

Thank you for your time.