We are pleased to report that in the October 2014 meeting of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Commission on Accreditation (CoA), the University of Houston’s (UH) School Psychology Program Doctoral Program was granted full reaccreditation by APA. Accreditation means that the doctoral program has formally met quality standards articulated by APA’s CoA. Doctoral students can expect an APA-accredited program will offer organized, sequential training curricula and qualified faculty in adequate numbers with clear training standards that are self-monitored by the program and reviewed at least every seven years by the APA. Having the full seven years before the next self-study and site visit is the best possible outcome of the reaccreditation process for Ph.D. programs in psychology, and reaffirms the excellence of the UH training program.

Much of the credit for the best possible APA reaccreditation outcome this year should be given to the recently retired School Psychology Program Director and current emeritus faculty member, Dr. Tom Kubiszyn. Along with a team of students, faculty, and some community volunteers (e.g., Ms. Nancy Kubiszyn), Dr. Kubiszyn compiled a self-study report that weighted over 16 pounds (878 pages). Then, he helped to organize what was described by several experienced APA site visitors as one of the best site visits they could remember. Finally, after a minor written response to the APA site visit team sent by the current Program Director, Dr. Brad Smith, the full set of materials was reviewed in October 2014 by the APA CoE. The best possible result of 7 more years of APA accreditation is a testament to the excellence of the program and the ability of Dr. Kubiszyn and colleagues to use data to communicate to APA how the School Psychology Program meets the rigorous standards across multiple domains assessed by APA.

Current Program Director Smith said that this best possible outcome is consistent with the aspiration of the School Psychology Ph.D. Program to be one of the top ten in the country. We appreciate the vision of Dean McPherson in starting the program and supporting this goal. We are grateful to our colleagues in the COE who have and will continue to contribute to the success of our students and program.
2015 Publication


2015 Publication in Press


2015 Presentations


Hilliard, K. A. (2015, April). Early prediction of reading difficulty among English Language Learners. Poster presented at the 2015 Annual Houston Symposium on Research in Education & Psychology, Houston, TX.


2015 Presentations Continued


Raff, N. S., Brewton, C. M., McKee, S., & Mire, S. M. (2015, February). Related services for students with autism: Regional differences and similarities. Poster presented at the National Association for School Psychology’s Annual Convention, Orlando, FL.


Greetings Faculty, Students, and Alum,

My name is Dr. Kennetha Frye and I graduated from the program in the summer of 2014 and I am currently completing my postdoctoral fellowship with Dallas ISD. A few months ago I was approached by Dr. Smith and Elizabeth about the possibility of starting an alumni association for our program and I thought it was a fantastic idea.

The goals of the association will be to:

1.) Keep alumni updated with program information.

2.) Provide current students with the contact information for alum that can help them with navigating through the program.

3.) Creating a network for alum to have individuals to consult and communicate with about certain issues in the field.

We are looking forward to planning events in the summer and hope to get as much alum participation as possible. If you are interested, please contact me at kennethafrye@yahoo.com.

Best,

Kennetha Frye, Ph.D., LSSP
Postdoctoral Fellow
Dallas Independent School District
Program Director Comments on the One Hundred Percent APPIC Match in 2015

This spring 100% of students in the University of Houston APA Accredited School Psychology Ph.D. Program matched at APPIC internship sites. Match data are very important for the reputation of the program. As an APA accredited program, the school program is required to report match data on our website, and students routinely attend to match rates when considering application and admission decisions. According to the APPIC site, in 2015, the national match average was 74% for School Psychology Ph.D. Programs and 82% for all programs and degrees.

The current Program Director, Dr. Brad Smith, said “I think the credit for this high match rate goes to the quality of our recruiting, academic programs, outstanding variety of high quality practicum placements, and a high level of support in the application process by the APA accredited program directors. The students in our Ph.D. programs work very hard, usually 20 hours per week on an assistantship, usually 2 days a week (sometimes 2.5) at a practicum site, take a full-time load of classes, and are active in research. This builds a huge portfolio of successful experiences, which combined with the unique variety of practicum placements and the diversity of Houston, make for very well prepared students. Furthermore, peers help students with their applications, and the program directors have an intensive seminar series that meets approximately twice monthly staring in June to help students select sites, write applications, prepare CVS, draft essays, practice interviewing skills, and discuss how to rank sites.”
Catherine Abrahamson

Catherine has accepted an APA-accredited internship at Cypress-Fairbanks ISD in the Houston area. The internship provides numerous training opportunities in indirect service delivery, including behavioral consultation, parent and staff training, and prevention programming using evidence-based interventions. It also offers emotional/behavioral assessment, individual and group therapy, and research opportunities. Catherine feels her previous practicum experiences at the University of Houston’s Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic, MHMRA, Adolescent Medicine at Texas Children’s Hospital, and the Dept. of Pediatrics at the University of Texas Health Science Center have prepared her for next year. She is also looking forward to continuing her research interests in child development and completing her LSSP Trainee year during her CFISD internship.

Natashia Comeaux

Victoria Natashia "Tasha" matched at the APA-accredited Lewisville ISD (LISD). The internship program has been in existence since 1994 and at this time, four fully-funded internship positions are available. The LISD is one of the largest school districts in the state of Texas (i.e., over 52,000 students on 72 campuses), with 10% of the student population being served in SpEd. Under supervision of licensed psychologists, interns provide psychoeducational and psychological evaluation, consultation, training, counseling, behavior management, and crisis intervention services, within both the Special Education and General Education programs. The wide range of diversity among students and staff in the LISD allows the internship to offer considerable multicultural experiences to interns. Tasha is very excited to be completing her internship in the Dallas area because this where her fiancé lives! After their wedding this summer, they will be able to begin their marriage TOGETHER!
Congratulations to our Students going on Internship!

Ashlie Llorens

Ashlie will start her internship in July at the APA-accredited Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology. Within the consortium, she matched at Munroe-Meyer Institute in the Behavioral Pediatrics and Integrated Care Program in Omaha. Her internship in the Behavioral Peds and Integrated Care track will include two 6-month rotations with different supervisors. The program includes various rotations, of which, Ashlie hopes to focus on the rotations that provide behavioral health services directly in primary care clinics. Intern training will emphasize outpatient behavioral assessment and treatment for common developmental and behavioral problems, and will include work with children, adolescents, and families. The internship will also include opportunities to participate in research, and Ashlie is excited to take advantage of opportunities to hopefully participate in research that combines her interests in Autism identification disparities with ongoing research in Integrated Care service delivery models. While at UH, Ashlie completed practica at Deer Park ISD, Simon’s Variation in Individuals Project at TCH/BCM, Katy ISD, HealthBridge Children’s Hospital, Summer Treatment Program for ADHD, and LoneStar LEND Fellowship. She also enjoyed her experiences being a TA, and later, instructor of record for various HDFS courses. Finally, throughout the years at UH Ashlie has completed 5 peer reviewed publications, 10 national/international poster, paper, and symposium presentations, and 3 local/state poster presentations.

Kerri Nowell

Kerri will be completing her internship within the Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology at the Munroe-Meyer Institute in Omaha. She will be working in the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders Program, which includes a severe behavior program, an early intervention program, and a feeding disorder program. Her training will consist of two, six month rotations. The first rotation will be with the feeding disorder program and the second will be with the severe behavior program. Her training experience will also include opportunities to hone her skills in evidence based assessment of children with developmental disabilities as well as gain additional experience delivering parent training. Kerri enrolled in the UH program with several years of experience as a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. Through her practica placements at UH, she obtained specialized training in evidence based practice with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at Texas Children’s Hospital and MHMRA. She also received training in evidenced based, parent training via a practicum placement with the Disruptive Behaviors Disorders clinic at Texas Children’s Hospital. Kerri is entering her internship year with several publications and is excited about the opportunity to develop her research competencies in single case design methodology.

Anita Payan

Anita will begin her pre-doctoral internship with the Psychological Services Department of Houston Independent School District (HISD) in August. HISD is an APA-accredited site that prepares trainees to practice in schools as well as other public and private clinical settings. Anita was drawn to HISD because of its emphasis in diversity and the well-rounded training the internship provides, including in assessment, consultation, individual and group counseling, and crisis intervention. Individual and school-wide crisis intervention is a major focus of the department. At UH, Anita completed practicum placements at Sheldon ISD, Houston ISD, Texas Children’s Hospital — Adolescent Medicine Division, and UT Psychiatry — Developmental Neuropsychology Clinic. On internship, Anita hopes to combine her previous knowledge gained from working in a variety of clinical settings with her increased exposure to community-based mental health clinics around HISD to enhance coordination of care for children and their families.
Student Milestones

Sonia Babu, Rachel Halpern Fein, Christie Brewton, Sarah Ochs, and Whitney Gealy passed Comprehensive Examinations.

Rachel Halpern Fein successfully proposed her dissertation.

Erika Gonzalez successfully proposed her dissertation.

Kennetha Frye graduated from our program.

Kerri Nowell’s oldest son is graduating from high school in May.

Welcome 2015 Cohort!

Rainey Hughes
I will be entering the School Psychology PhD program in the Fall of 2015. I was born and raised in Columbia, South Carolina where I attended The University of South Carolina and earned my Bachelor of Art’s degree in Experimental Psychology. My current research interests primarily focuses on the early detection of autism spectrum disorder and intervention related issues. My undergraduate research experience includes two years as a research assistant at the Neurodevelopmental Disorders Lab at USC. My research there was funded by the Magellan Scholars program and focused on gesture development in infants with fragile X syndrome. During my free time I enjoy spending time with my friends, practicing yoga and relaxing while watching Netflix.

Raineyhughes28@gmail.com

Becca Johnson
I am originally from Houston, and I graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in May 2015 with a degree in Plan II Honors and Sociology. My research interests include youth mentoring, parental involvement in schools, and single-sex schooling. I look forward to assisting Dr. McQuillin with his research on youth mentoring programs.

rebeccareesejohnson@gmail.com
The School Psychology Program at the University of Houston is accredited by the American Psychological Association. The Program adheres to a scientist practitioner training model, and is committed to developing professional school psychologists who are competent to engage in applied research and ecologically sensitive evidence-based practice (i.e., students learn to apply critical analysis and inquiry to identify, select, implement, and evaluate evidence-based practices with sensitivity to cultural and linguistic considerations, and in consideration of diverse client preferences). Sensitivity to diversity issues is addressed in specific course work and embedded throughout the training experience. Awareness of diversity issues is ensured because UH is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse research institutions in the nation.

Jamie Manis

I recently received my B.S. with a double major in Psychology and Child Development from Texas Christian University. I am a native Houstonian, and am happy to be coming back to Houston to pursue my studies in School Psychology. I have experience as a research assistant in a developmental psychology lab where I worked with children and families and conducted studies with focuses on attachment and Autism Spectrum Disorder. I also have experience interning in school settings such as the YWCA Child Development Center. My research interests include early intervention and the impacts of ASD at home and at school, specifically considering parent-child and teacher-child relationships. I am excited to join the program at UH! My email is jkmanis21@gmail.com.

Erin Reid

My name is Erin Reid, and I will be entering the School Psychology PhD Program in the fall of 2015. I am originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but have happily called Houston my hometown for the past two years. I graduated from the University of Virginia in 2011 with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Music as well as a minor in French. Upon graduating, I joined the 2011 Teach For America corps and taught middle school special education at a KIPP charter school in Central City New Orleans. I currently teach sixth grade literature at the Briarwood School in Houston, a school for children with learning differences and intellectual disabilities. At the University of Houston, I hope to continue my pursuit to equip students with learning disabilities with the tools that they need to be successful students and thriving members of society. Specifically, I plan to study school-based yoga interventions and the application of motivational interviewing with adolescents. Outside of work, I enjoy going to the opera, picnicking at Miller Outdoor Theater, trying new restaurants, and practicing yoga. Thereids.erin@gmail.com