

NAPPP

National Alliance of Professional Psychology Providers
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Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

Dear Colleagues,

We are sure that the APA Accrediting Commission is aware of the assault on education in the state of Florida with respect to the governor's agenda to eliminate and revise the history and culture of African Americans and other people of color, including people with diverse sexual orientations. Although the media generally reports on the governor's actions confined to elementary and high school curricula, in reality, the attack on public education at the college and university levels are also as pernicious and part of his political agenda to promote lies and distortions targeting the above populations.

With respect to psychology programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels, we must all be aware of the importance that students understand the major issues in psychology related to race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. In fact, APA requires accredited programs to teach and prepare students when dealing with minority clients and patients. The reason for this mandate in doctoral clinical programs, as well as lower degree levels, needs little to no explanation. The issue, however, is what can we all do to ensure psychology students in Florida get access to the information and education that will prepare them to become professional psychologists? Clearly, few of us will be able to do anything politically in Florida as this approach is not a feasible strategy. Yet, APA has available the means to actually ensure that Florida's Governor step back his attempt to downgrade psychology education in his state. APA has the legal ability to inform the educational institutions in Florida and the governor that any attempt to interfere with APA accredited psychology programs will result in those institutions losing their accreditation. Moreover, any accredited training sites in Florida will also be affected in the loss of accreditation. Further, APA can work with state BOPs to ensure that graduates from Florida meet the requirements and training with respect to working with special populations.

Currently, APA accredits psychology programs at the following institutions in Florida:

Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne
Florida State University, Tallahassee
University of Florida, Gainesville
University of Miami, Coral Gables

Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale
University of South Florida, Tampa
Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale
Carlos Albizu University, Miami Campus
University of Central Florida ,Orlando
Florida International University, Miami
Florida School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University, Tampa

These institutions represent the major venues that are training psychologists in the entire state of Florida. The percentages of minorities in Florida is substantial. African Americans are comprise 26.8 % of the population, Hispanics 17% and Asians 3,0%. People identifying as LGBTQ comprise about 4.5% of Florida's population. As elsewhere, the mental healthcare needs of these populations are significant. The loss of accreditation would a powerful reminder to the governor and these institutions that they cannot change history, revise reality, and ill prepare psychologists to render services to important and protected populations. Further, as we have seen in similar actions that Florida's legislative body has taken in passing many outrageous laws hindering the education of students, other like minded states have taken Florida's dangerous lead to downgrade their educational programs. Like Florida, many states are banning books, eliminating important educational content, and firing personnel who simply oppose the wrongfulness of this political agenda.

We believe that APA must take a stand and take the leadership in opposing this harmful trend that lacks any merit whatsoever in the education of children and students at all levels. Should APA fail to act, it can no longer impose any requirement or mandate that psychology programs must teach and train the importance of diversity, and in clinical programs particularly, the importance issues when evaluating and treating these special populations. Florida cannot be exempt from academic and training requirements.

In closing, APA must lead on this matter not only because it is the right and moral thing to do but also because APA accredits these institutions. This confers on APA a special, and perhaps even a legal mandate, to act to preserve the accreditation process and ensure these institutions understand that the education of psychologists in the state of Florida must resist political pressures to downgrade its accredited programs. NAPPP, of course, is willing help in anyway possible to stop this ahistoric attack on education and people's right to care.

Very truly yours,
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