

RESULTS OF THE 1998-1999 APA SURVEY OF
GRADUATE DEPARTMENTS OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Background

The American Psychological Association's (APA) Research Office, in conjunction with APA's Education Directorate and various education and training groups conducted the *1998-1999 Survey of Graduate Departments of Psychology*. The survey was developed in response to requests over the past year by faculty, advocacy groups, and policy makers for national-level data on applications and enrollments of graduate students. The instrument specifically focuses on gathering data related to minority graduate students and program areas.

The survey was mailed to 663 graduate departments of psychology in the United States and Canada in Spring 1999. Approximately four weeks later, a follow-up mailing was conducted and surveys were sent to all non-responding departments. After data collection was completed, editing and follow-up for clarifications and corrections were conducted with responding departments. The Research Office received 345 surveys for a total response rate of 52%.

This report summarizes the changes in applications and enrollments in graduate programs in psychology for minority and non-minority students. In addition, enrollment information for program areas in psychology will be reported. Finally, recruitment strategies and initiatives for increasing minority enrollment in psychology graduate programs will be examined.

Caveats. Readers should be aware of possible misinterpretations and errors when using the information provided in this report. These analyses are based on a subset of departments, those responding to the survey, rather than all U.S. and Canadian departments. In addition, many departments reported overall totals only for their applications and enrollments rather than reporting these data by race/ethnicity categories. Therefore, for the sake of readability, those departments that reported only total information were **excluded** from the detailed tables. Decisions or interpretations should not be based on the raw numbers contained within these tables, but rather should be based on the percentages. The reader is urged **not** to use these data as the sole source for decision making and should locate other data sources to bolster any conclusions.

Departmental Characteristics

Overall, 345 graduate departments of psychology responded to the survey. Seventy percent (N = 241) of those reporting, were in public institutions and 30% (N = 104) were privately controlled institutions. When reporting highest degree granted by their department, almost three quarters (N = 273) of the departments indicated that a doctoral degree was the highest degree offered, while about 26% (N = 89) reported a master's degree as their terminal degree.

According to Table 1, most departments in public institutions offered a PhD (69%) and a terminal master's degree (54%). The remaining doctoral degrees (PsyD and EdD) were offered by less than 5% of reporting public institutions. Forty-four percent of departments in public institutions offered a non-terminal master's degree and 31% offered a master's degree within a doctoral program. Again, the Ph.D. was the most commonly offered degree by departments in private institutions (60%), however, unlike public institutions, PsyDs were offered by 26% of the departments in private institutions. This difference can be attributed to the inclusion of professional schools as private institutions; professional schools tend to offer the PsyD as their primary degree. Terminal master's degrees were granted by more than half the departments in private institutions while 40% granted non-terminal master's degrees and about one fourth offered master's degrees within a doctoral program.

Sixty-eight percent of all the departments also granted bachelor's degrees (see Table 2). Seventy percent of departments in public institutions and 63% of departments in private institutions offered the baccalaureate degree. Almost all of the departments offering a master's degree as their terminal degree also offered a baccalaureate degree while 60% of doctoral departments reported offering a baccalaureate degree (see Table 3).

Applications and Enrollments in Terminal Master's Degree Programs: 1997-1998

More than half of all students who applied to terminal master's degree programs in psychology for 1997-1998, applied to departments offering health service provider (HSP) programs (see Table 4). The HSP subfields include clinical psychology, counseling psychology, school psychology, and health psychology. The remaining applicants were almost equally split between research subfields (e.g., developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, and social psychology) and other psychology-related subfields (e.g., special education, marriage and family counseling). Although the majority of departments reported that they did not collect or track minority information during the application process, according to responding departments, 14% of all applicants were minorities, with other psychology-related programs receiving more minority applications than HSP programs and research programs. A note of caution, though, when examining application data: the numbers of applicants are per department and may count one student more than once.

Almost five times more students enrolled full time as opposed to part time in 1997-1998 (see Tables 5A and 5B). More than half of all students enrolled in HSP programs and of those students, 82% enrolled full time. Sixteen percent of all enrollees for 1997-1998 were minorities; 73% of minorities enrolled full time while the remaining 27% enrolled part time. Among full-time enrollments, higher proportions of minorities were enrolled in private than in public settings.

Applications and Enrollments in Terminal Master's Degree Programs: 1998-1999

Compared to 1997-1998, results indicate that the number of applications to graduate departments of psychology decreased by 9% (see Table 6). The largest decrease can be seen in research subfields where the number of applications decreased by 29%. In addition, the numbers of minorities who applied to these programs decreased by 28%. The cause of this decrease could be attributed to a number of factors. First, although the data indicated that the number of applications has decreased, it is important to remember that these are applicants who were reported by each department. Therefore, the same number of students could be applying to

psychology graduate programs, but each one could simply be applying to fewer programs. Second, the decrease could be due to a lack of minority-focused recruitment by graduate departments of psychology (Holliday et al., 1997). As a result, it appears that minorities are applying in greater numbers to those programs with a minority-focused approach.

Along with a decrease in the number of applications, there was also a decrease in the number of enrollments in graduate departments of psychology, as seen in Tables 7A and 7B. Specifically, overall enrollment to graduate programs declined by 13% between 1997 and 1998. Enrollment in HSP programs also fell 16%, followed by research-related programs (15%), while enrollment in other psychology-related programs dropped only 5%. Overall minority enrollment decreased by 21% while enrollment in HSP programs fell 24%, research-related programs decreased 29%, and other psychology related programs declined 9%.

One explanation for this decrease is a noted drop in openings within graduate programs. For example, the number of anticipated openings for master's programs in psychology declined 28% between the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 academic years. Likewise, expected openings in doctoral programs for 1999 fell 44% from 1998 (Murray & Williams, 1999). As a result, some programs may have chosen not to accept as many students as the year before, which would account for fewer enrollments.

A lack of financial aid or funding offered to the student by the institution or department may be another factor. Approximately 90% of students reported using their own or their family's earnings for financial support during their graduate career and 39% reported their own and their family's earnings as their primary source of financial support (Auguste, Wicherski, & Kohout, 1999). Furthermore, almost 30% of recent master's recipients reported acquiring non-university loans for their primary source of support. These results demonstrate a heavy reliance on non-university related funding.

Applications and Enrollments to Doctoral Programs: 1997-1998

In 1997-1998, doctoral programs in the United States and Canada received over 20,000 applications (see Table 8). Sixty-three percent were for HSP programs, 32% were for research-related programs, and the remaining 5% were for other psychology related programs. Minority applications accounted for 17% of all applications to doctoral programs of psychology. Overall, there were 77% more minorities applying to doctoral programs than terminal master's programs. Similar to the results found for terminal master's programs, applications to doctoral HSP programs outnumbered applications to all other programs. Sixteen percent of applicants to HSP programs, 17% of applicants to research-related programs, and 15% of applicants to other psychology related programs were minorities.

In general, public institutions received more applications than private institutions for doctoral psychology programs. However, within each type of institution, the percentage of reported minority applications to specific program areas was almost equal with the exception of other psychology-related programs.

Compared to the percentage of minority applications to doctoral programs, the percent of enrollments was higher (see Tables 9A and 9B). Specifically, 22% of enrollees to full-time doctoral programs were minorities. Of those enrollees, 66% enrolled in HSP programs, a quarter were enrolled in research programs, and the remaining 9% enrolled in other psychology related subfields. Part-time enrollment in doctoral programs accounted for only 2% of all doctoral enrollments highlighting the rarity of part-time doctoral programs.

Applications and Enrollments to Doctoral Programs for 1998-1999

According to Table 10, overall applications for the 1998-1999 academic year fell by approximately 2% when compared to the previous year. This difference, however, is very small and would not be considered a meaningful change. Results for 1998-1999 academic year were very similar to the previous year. The number of applications received by HSP programs increased slightly from 1997. Specifically, the number of applications received by HSP

programs in private institutions increased by 20% while applications to similar programs in public institutions decreased by 6%. The increase in applications to private HSP programs may be due to a rise in the popularity of professional schools. Most professional schools offer programs in clinical psychology, which by definition is included under HSP programs, and are considered private institutions. Therefore, professional schools may have seen an increase in the number of applications received for their programs.

The overall number of minority applications generally remained unchanged from 1997-1998 and the number of minority applications to HSP and research programs also remained unchanged. Other psychology-related programs, however, saw a small increase in the number of minority applications. This difference could be attributed to the decrease in the number of "unknown" applications from the previous year.

Enrollments in doctoral programs during the 1998-1999 academic year increased only slightly (see Tables 11A and 11B). Similar to applications in 1998, there was a 9% increase in full-time enrollments in private HSP programs while public institutions saw an 8% decrease. Research programs also experienced a slight decrease (3%) in full-time enrollments, but other psychology-related programs had an 11% increase. Overall, part-time enrollment for the 1998-1999 academic year accounted for only 2% of total doctoral enrollment.

Applications, Acceptances, Enrollments, and Anticipated Openings for Terminal Master's Programs: 1998-1999

The most common programs offered by graduate departments of psychology in public institutions were in the fields of clinical, school, experimental, industrial/organizational, and counseling psychology, respectively. Departments in private institutions offered mostly clinical and counseling programs.

As has been discussed, public institutions received more applications and enrolled more students than private institutions (see Tables 12A and 12B). Counseling programs in public institutions had the highest ratio of acceptances to new enrollments. In addition, counseling

programs in public institutions reported accepting 21% more applicants than clinical programs even though their applicant pools were almost the same size. Counseling programs in private institutions received 45% more applications than clinical programs and, similar to public institutions, accepted and enrolled more new students, too.

Graduate departments of psychology in public institutions reported offering more school psychology programs than departments in private institutions. Specifically, school psychology programs comprised 18% of all departments of psychology in public settings while only 9% of departments in private settings offered a school psychology program.

Applications, Acceptances, Enrollments, and Anticipated Openings for Doctoral Programs: 1998-1999

Clinical psychology programs in public and private institutions were still found to be the most common among doctoral programs (see Tables 13A and 13B). Fifty-five percent of departments in public settings reported offering a clinical psychology program while clinical programs were offered by 62% of departments in private settings.

Most other program areas were offered by more than 20% of departments granting doctoral degrees. Program areas least commonly offered included educational psychology (8%), psychometric/quantitative psychology (12%), and school psychology (18%). This was the case for departments in both public and private institutions.

Similar to results found in previously reported application and enrollment information, more doctoral programs received more applications for admissions than terminal master's programs. Likewise, doctoral programs in both public and private institutions also accepted and enrolled more students. However, the data indicate that competition for acceptance was much higher for doctoral programs than master's programs. For example, 30% of all students who applied to terminal master's programs for clinical psychology in public institutions were accepted while only 7% of students applying to clinical doctoral programs in the public settings were accepted.

Regardless of institution control, doctoral programs were more apt to receive higher numbers of applications and enroll larger numbers of students than were master's programs.

Efforts and Initiatives by Graduate Departments of Psychology to Increase Applications and Enrollments of Minority Students: 1998-1999

Faculty, students, and policy-makers are among those concerned with what departments and institutions are doing to offset the effects of decreased affirmative action initiatives as federal and state support declines.

Table 14 shows that almost half of all institutions surveyed have specific recruitment plans for targeting people of color and 39% of the psychology departments within those institutions have developed their own department-level strategies for recruitment. Some of the most common institution-level plans have included outreach programs targeting ethnic minority communities or "feeder" schools (43%) and providing adequate financial assistance for needy students of color (41%).

Public and private institutions reported using a variety of tactics for recruiting people of color. Forty percent of public institutions involved faculty, students, and alumni of color in the recruitment process while only 34% of reporting private institutions used this strategy. In addition, public institutions employed flexible admissions criteria and more financial assistance for students of color more often than private institutions. Slightly more private institutions involved **all** faculty in the recruitment of students of color (23%) and had faculty, students, and alumni of color involved in the screening process (19%) than public institutions (16% and 17%, respectively).

Although departments in private settings reported using fewer recruitment strategies for minorities at the institutional level, results demonstrated that psychology departments within private institutions used more department-level approaches in almost all cases than did public institutions. Some of the largest gaps were seen with the use of materials or brochures geared toward people of color, involving faculty, students, and alumni of color in the screening process,

providing adequate financial assistance to needy students of color, and involving all faculty in the recruitment of minority students.

Table 15 shows the differences between institutions and departments based on highest degree offered. Overall, institutions and departments offering doctoral degrees reported implementing more recruitment initiatives than institutions and departments offering terminal master's degrees. This difference may be explained by a couple of possibilities. Funding earmarked for minority recruitment may differ across institutions and departments, which could have an impact on ability to award financial aid and develop minority recruitment materials. In addition, institutions and departments with less funding may also have fewer overall faculty, as well as fewer ethnic minority faculty. With fewer faculty on staff, departments may not have the resources available to develop recruitment and retention policy procedures (Holliday et al., 1997).

In general, implementation of activities specifically geared toward increasing the level of student diversity has occurred within most institutions and departments. Differences in rate and type recruitment are mainly due to the type of institution (public or private), the amount of funding allocated to minority recruitment efforts, and the resources available to design recruitment and retention policies.

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Detailed Tables

Appendix