

APA Accreditation Granted to Counseling Psych PhD

Andrews is now the only Adventist educational institution to offer this accredited program

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The Department of Graduate Psychology & Counseling (GPC) in the School of Education (SED) has received a three-year accreditation from the American Psychological Association (APA) for the counseling psychology PhD program. APA is the largest professional association of psychologists in the world and the major accrediting association in the U.S. for psychology programs, internships and post-doctoral programs.

Robson Marinho, dean, School of Education, stated, "This is a huge accomplishment and for sure, a major turning point for GPC, SED and Andrews University, which now joins a very select group of institutions that offer an APA-accredited PhD. Thanks to Dr. Woolford-Hunt for her outstanding leadership during the entire process and congratulations to the entire GPC team for their hard work, dedication and commitment!"

In the worldwide Adventist educational system, there are currently only two psychology PhD programs that prepare students to provide clinical services and to be eligible to become fully licensed doctoral-level psychologists. Andrews University now joins Loma Linda University (California), which has an APA accredited clinical psychology PhD program.

The APA accredits approximately 850 doctoral programs in school, counseling and clinical psychology. Only about 69 of these programs are counseling psychology PhD programs, and Andrews University is now the only Adventist educational institution to offer this accredited program.

“Because APA is the major professional representative body of psychologists, it has become almost impossible to maintain a viable PhD program in counseling psychology without APA accreditation, particularly with state licensure of psychologists often relying on APA accreditation as evidence of professional competencies,” explains Carole Woolford-Hunt, program coordinator and department chair. “This will result in increased applicants, and result in an even stronger program.”

Andrews University’s APA-accredited counseling psychology PhD program not only provides Adventist students with a uniquely Christian environment in which to train to be psychologists, but is also sought out by people of other faiths as there are so few faith-based universities with this level of psychology training in the country.

“The tension between psychology, philosophy and religion is longstanding,” Woolford-Hunt says, “As such, it is a tremendously challenging enterprise to balance the worldview perspectives of both the faith-based university and professional psychology.”

For students in the program, APA accreditation means they have the option to be licensed in all states and are now eligible to work for the federal government if they desire. It maximizes their opportunities for careers in clinical practice, academics, research and consultation.

For more information about the counseling psychology PhD program, visit andrews.edu/sed/gpc or email gpc@andrews.edu.

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