FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

East Carolina University Announces Full Accreditation of Clinical Health Psychology Program

GREENVILLE, N.C. (Aug. 7, 2012) — The American Psychological Association Commission on Accreditation has approved the full accreditation of East Carolina University’s clinical psychology program in health psychology for the next seven years. Accreditation by the APA requires full program review, including a self-study document describing the goals of training, methods of quality assessment and outcomes for students, and processes and procedures to ensure that training meets national standards.

“Our program and department believe in the East Carolina motto of ‘Servire,’ and accreditation provides further evidence that we can train our students to serve North Carolina with the highest level of both research and clinical skills,” said Dr. Susan McCammon, interim chair of the Department of Psychology.

ECU received permission to plan the new doctoral program in 2004. Recently retired Chair of the Psychology Department Dr. Kathleen Row led efforts to build the program, recruiting nationally to add to the psychology department’s strong faculty base. The clinical psychology program has 10 core faculty members, 12 associate faculty and 6 affiliated clinical supervisors.

Dr. Sam Sears, director of the health psychology doctoral program said, “APA accreditation was an essential step for our program to be recognized nationally for the highest standards of quality of training.”

ECU joins Duke University, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and The University of North Carolina at Greensboro as the only accredited training program in North Carolina for clinical psychologists. In addition, it is the only program focused on health psychology.

Only four to six new students are admitted into the highly selective program each year. The program offers courses spanning clinical assessment and treatment of psychological disorders, with a particular emphasis in the psychological aspects of health, which includes disease prevention and chronic disease management.

While enrolled in the program, students are required to complete at least 100 semester hours of courses, including both classroom and clinic-based training. Students also must complete a one-year, full-time clinical internship involving a national computerized match.
The ECU clinical psychology program endeavors to increase the availability of clinical psychologists for Eastern North Carolina counties that are deprived of sufficient psychologists for the population. Recent graduates have successfully gained employment in Eastern North Carolina.

“I was a member of the inaugural cohort of the program and got to experience it in its infancy. The opportunity to be a part of the journey through to APA accreditation is an honor and an incredible achievement for myself and the university,” said recent clinical health psychology doctoral graduate Dr. Kari Kirian.

“The full accreditation of the clinical program confirms that my training has equipped me to provide psychological services in a wide variety of health settings and in a state-of-the-art manner,” Kirian continued. “The ECU program represents training for today’s modern approaches that integrate psychological care right alongside medical care; mind and body health are integrally connected. I appreciate the opportunity East Carolina gave me.”

Kirian joined the professional staff of ECU this July 2012 as a clinical instructor in the Department of Family Medicine.

For additional information, contact Sears at 252-328-6118 or searss@ecu.edu.

###