

HIGH QUALITY ACCREDITATION TO THE PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBIA

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We wish to share with our readers the information that, according to Resolution No. 3239 of 5 April, 2013 of the *Ministerio de Educación Nacional* [Ministry of National Education], the undergraduate program in Psychology at the Catholic University of Colombia has obtained High Quality Accreditation Renewal for eight (8) years. This recognition was awarded for the significant progress and changes that the university has shown over the last seven years compared to what it had achieved until 2005, in addition to the implementation of the improvement plan that pointed out the weaknesses found in the self-assessment process carried out in 2011-2012. Given the ongoing and historical close bond with our academic publication, *Acta Colombiana de Psicología* is honored and pleased by this high quality recognition that for second time has been awarded to such an outstanding psychology program.

Among the reasons for granting this high quality accreditation to the undergraduate program of Psychology at the Catholic University of Colombia we highlight the following whose text has been taken verbatim from the Resolution cited above:

1. The improvements implemented since the last accreditation process (2005) in relation to the teaching staff, research, curriculum processes, external relations, infrastructure and academic support resources, among others.
2. The Program Educational Project committed to a comprehensive education consistent with the Institutional Educational Project and structured by different mechanisms for discussion and update.
3. The strengthening of the Program's full-time faculty that went from 49 teachers in 2005 (of which one had Ph.D. and five had Masters' degrees) to 65 in 2012 (of which five have PH.D's and 35 have Masters' degrees) while the number of students has remained stable in that period.

4. The incentive policy for teacher training in masters' and doctoral programs which has led several teachers to be currently enrolled in training processes in different institutions.

5. The outstanding performance of some of the teachers whom have been granted institutional distinctions for academic Excellence and the Sapientia aedificavit sibi domun Award.

6. Proper time allocation in teaching activities to meet the diverse substantive and administrative activities, as well as the teachers' periodic performance appraisal system that brings benefits to their qualification.

7. The Systematic reflection that teachers carry out about curriculum guidelines in relation to current trends in the discipline, training processes in this field at international level, and contemporary context situations, which are reflected in judicious and well based adjustments that have favored the integrity of the curriculum.

8. The concentration of research efforts on three groups, nine (9) in 2005: the "Gaem" Group, classified in "A1" category by Colciencias [Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, for its Spanish acronym], an institutional group created jointly with the Universidad de La Salle; the "Enlace" Group, classified in "B" category with research lines on psychobiology, clinical psychology and health, and "Europsis" Group, classified in "C" category, with lines on organizational, legal and educational psychology.

9. Increase of the teachers' participation in various academic and professional networks. At national level the ones highlighted are: Red de Investigadores de ASCO-FAPSI [Research Network of the Colombian Association of Psychology Schools, for its Spanish acronym],

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Red de Prácticas Profesionales de Psicología [Network of Professional Practice in Psychology], Colegio Colombiano de Psicólogos COLPSIC [Colombian College of Psychologists, for its Spanish Acronym] and Asociación Colombiana de Psicología [Colombian Psychological Association]. And at international level there are: American Psychological Association, Asociación Latinoamericana de Psicología de la Salud [Latin American Association of Health Psychology], Advances in Behavior Analysis, Red Latinoamericana de Psicología Comunitaria [Latin American Network of Community Psychology] American Psychological Society, American Network of Community Psychology, Sociedad Interamericana de Psicología [Interamerican Psychological Society], Asociación Colombiana de Terapia Cognitiva [Colombian Association of Cognitive Therapy] and Red Interinstitucional de Cirugía Bariátrica [Interinstitutional Network of Bariatric Surgery].

10. The support for students in their academic processes through the Tutoring and Accompanying Program oriented to dropout intervention.

11. The program's social commitment demonstrated through their participation in the Observatory "University, Social Responsibility", the professional practicum and the intervention projects led by the Community Psychology area. The Psychological Services Unit also plays an important role in vulnerable communities.

12. Significant improvement in infrastructure and in the acquisition of sufficient library resources in response to the needs of the Program, as well as technological resources to support the academic processes such as audiovisual material, computer rooms equipped with specialized software required for the development of educational and research processes in Psychology.

13. The Program's laboratories that count on a group of well trained people and a full spectrum of devices and equipment for research exercises: laboratories of behavior analysis, biology and neuropsychology, measurement and evaluation, psychological processes and the center for development of teaching aids.

14. Advances in mobility policy and teacher participation in national academic events, as well as agree-

ments for academic development projects with foreign universities such as the Universidad Autónoma of Mexico, the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, the Universidad Católica of Chile and the Red de Universidades Católicas [Network of Catholic Universities].

15. The production of teaching materials for Virtual Learning Environments and for practicum, research and psychology laboratories.

16. Increased curricular flexibility with fewer requirements and more choice possibilities, as well as the various formative spaces that promote interdisciplinary training and the development of research skills in students

17. Effective communication systems and mechanisms of the Program

18. The studies designed to carry out the follow-up of graduates, which have been successful to identify their work status and the relationship between the professional placement of graduates and the academic profile of the program. Continuing education programs such as diploma and update courses, workshops, seminars and symposia have a very good acceptance among graduates and members of the psychological community.

19. The broad service portfolio offered by University Welfare, with coverage for teachers, students, parents and members of the program's administrative staff, which foster a more comprehensive education for their recipients.

Based on the institutional and program conditions that guarantee the sustainability of the above mentioned strengths, we, the undersigned assessors conceptualize that the Psychology Program of the UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE COLOMBIA [CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBIA], based in Bogotá, D.C must receive RENEWAL OF HIGH QUALITY ACCREDITATION VALID FOR EIGHT (8) YEARS, counted from the date of the accreditation act.

Therefore, Acta Colombiana de Psicología congratulates our Dean, Dr. Carlos Vargas Ordoñez, our colleagues, teachers and administrators, obviously the managers of the *Universidad Católica de Colombia* and other people who have contributed to this national recognition.

Furthermore, this issue of *Acta Colombiana de Psicología* offers international articles to our readers such as the ones from the Universidad de Talca, at Talca (Chile). From Spain, there are papers from the Universidad Católica de Valencia San Vicente Mártir, Universidad de Granada, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) [for its Spanish acronym] and *Convives con Espasticidad*. Likewise, there are papers from Mexico, from the Instituto Tecnológico de Sonora, Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, Universidad de Sonora, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Universidad Iberoamericana y Universidad de Guadalajara. Furthermore, from Brazil, from the Universidade de Sao Paulo y Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. Also, local papers

from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia at Bogotá, Universidad del Valle, Universidad del Magdalena, Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar and Pontificia Universidad Javeriana at Cali.

On behalf of *Acta Colombiana de Psicología*, we thank all the authors of the articles, groups and research networks, referees, members of the Editorial Committee, Scientific Committee, the Editorial Board, and the team of translators, proofreaders and statistical, methodological, technical and style reviewers for contributing to the good academic and scientific level of this journal. Also, we invite interested authors to send their publications or literature reviews to be proposed for publication in *Acta*.