

OSU program "Graduate Psychology Training for American Indians"

STILLWATER, Okla. — Oklahoma State University has started a new program which will hopefully enlarge the number of American Indian psychologists.

The new program, Psychology Graduate Training for American Indians, is funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health.

"There are only about five American Indians with PhD's in psychology in America," said Gloria Valencia-Weber, program coordinator.

"Our goal is to increase the number of Indians working in psychology so that their people needing psychological services can be serviced by people who identify with and understand the cultural aspects that distinguish contemporary American Indian life," Ms. Weber said.

The new program is being developed by the OSU college of education department with Ms. Weber and Dr. Ken Sandvold, head of clinical services and director of clinical training.

The clinical program at OSU is accredited by the American Psychological Association and is the only program of its type accredited in the state.

"What we are looking for at the present time are college students from recognized tribes who are interested in working professionally with American Indians," the program director said.

The program will also result in additions to the faculty and coursework in the department.

Another part of Ms. Weber's work is helping find a new faculty member, either an American Indian or a PhD with experience working with Indians.

"Out of this will come new courses relating psychology to Indian culture," Ms. Weber said.

"This is not an American

Indian or Native American Studies program but is for training mental health specialists or PhD's," Ms. Weber said.

The mental health specialist program is for students who want to obtain a master's degree in clinical skills for working with people in community health centers and other clinical counseling settings.

A master's degree program is available for students who have made a commitment to work as professional rehabilitation counselors with handicapped clientele in a rehabilitation agency or setting.

A clinical PhD would allow the graduate to head a clinic, a position now filled mostly by non-Indians, Ms. Weber said.

Any bachelor's or master's degree can be used as the basis for an application for admission to graduate study in psychology at OSU.

Decision making in admissions involves students and faculty and academic preparation, graduate record examination, letters of recommendation from faculty and community members, applicant's statement of purpose, employment experience and samples of graduate or undergraduate work will be evaluated.

Financial aid is available according to program specialty. The staff will work with students in their efforts to secure financial aid.

Further information can be obtained by contacting OSU, which is centrally located in the state with the largest American Indian population, at Psychology American Indian Program, North Murray Hall, OSU, Stillwater, Okla. 74074.

"We would like to hear from Indian students nearing graduation, but also those students at junior colleges who are looking for a place to transfer," Ms. Weber said.