March 15, 2021

To: William J. Karpus  
Dean of the Graduate School  
Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

Re: UW Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Capstone Certificate Program  
Department of Psychiatry, SMPH

We are responding to your request for a detailed summary of how we are continuing to address the recommendations made by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) and outlined in your letter in the UW Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Capstone Certificate Program.

1) **Continue practices to increase and maintain high completion rates.** We have addressed program completion through increased and ongoing communication with students, including assistance in identifying families for observational and other applied assignments, offering space in class to further discuss assignments and answer questions and by providing additional individualized support to students in completing their assignments. We are committed to sustaining these supportive practices. At this time, the completion rate for the class of 2019-2020 is 87% and expected to be 95% as two students who participated in the program last year are still actively working with the Program Co-Director to complete the program. These two students were both on track to complete the program on time; however, they each experienced the death of a close family member near the end of the spring semester. In the context of their significant losses and the pandemic, they have needed additional time to complete the program. This year, 87% of the cohort has completed and received a grade for fall semester and the remaining students are receiving active support from their Reflective Mentors and the Program Co-Director to complete fall semester assignments, remain on track with spring assignments and to complete the program in June. We have identified only one student who will likely need to take an incomplete at the end of the year and need more time to complete the program due to family health and other extenuating circumstances. We are expecting a 97% completion rate this year. It should be emphasized that the rate of completion has increased while maintaining the expectations, quality and integrity of student learning in the program.

2) **Develop a leadership succession plan.** Linda Tuchman-Ginsberg, PhD retired from her role as a Co-Director of the Capstone Certificate Program in December of 2019. Sarah Strong MSSW, LCSW, IMH-E® was promoted from Associate Director to Co-Director in the Fall of 2018 providing an opportunity for a thoughtful and thorough transfer of information and responsibilities. Ms. Strong has assumed the Co-Director responsibilities, has developed advising and mentoring relationships students in the program, as well as with guest faculty and contributes strong leadership and instructional capacity based on her clinical and teaching experience and areas of
expertise. Additionally, we are currently recruiting for a second Co-Director of the Capstone Certificate Program who will work alongside the Faculty Director, Roseanne Clark, PhD and Ms. Strong in continuing to develop and implement this program. Both Co-Directors will be mid-career infant/early childhood mental health professionals and graduates of this Program with significant instructional, supervisory and administrative experience. The second Co-Director will hold a doctoral degree and be hired as a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry to ensure the appropriate qualifications to assume the Faculty Director role in the next five years to ensure sustainability of the Capstone Certificate Program.

3) **Being mindful of bringing a diverse group of students and speakers/instructors to the program.** Recruitment and inclusion of a diverse class of students who more closely represent the client base for parent-infant/early childhood mental health services in urban, rural and tribal communities in Wisconsin is one of our priorities. We are committed to continuing our outreach and recruitment to contribute to increasing the diversity of the workforce in the field. This year, we were able to secure scholarships for seven Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who are mental health clinicians interested in providing Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation services to enroll in the Capstone Certificate Program. A third of the current cohort in the Capstone Certificate Program identify as BIPOC and are students from under-represented groups (e.g., African American, Native American, Latinx).

We have also been mindful of bringing a diverse group of speakers/instructors to the program to both integrate a focus on cultural humility, sensitivity, responsiveness and considerations across topics and to create space in the curriculum in which this is the primary topic and focus, including classes on Diversity-Informed Tenets for Working with Infants, Young Children and Families; Historical Trauma; Systemic Problems of Racism, Health Care Inequity and Educational Disparity; and Cultural Considerations in Assessment and Interventions with Families in the Perinatal Period and those with Young Children. Among our speakers/instructors this year, there have been five who identify as BIPOC and many others representing a range of ethnic diversity and disciplines, as well as three male instructors from the fields of psychiatry, developmental and counseling psychology. A new development in the Capstone Certificate Program this year has been to offer a BIPOC Affinity Group facilitated by a mental health clinician who is Black to provide space for reflection and sharing of individual and collective experiences of living and working within white culture and to experience validation, intimacy and recognition of one's resilience as well as contributing to self-preservation, self-care and discussion of the concepts and strategies being learned in the Capstone Certificate Program from a culturally meaningful perspective. Alongside this BIPOC Affinity Group, an Affinity Group has been offered in the program this year for students who identify as white who are interested in engaging in additional work to increase their understanding of white culture, power and privilege, and systemic racism; grow self-awareness and consideration of implicit bias; learning to be in spaces with Black, Indigenous and People of Color with cultural humility, openness, increased awareness and in non-harming ways; and growing in capacity to contribute to anti-racism efforts within their workplace and community.

4) **Create opportunities for alumni to connect with each other and with current students in the program.** Program Directors are aware of alumni’s interest in having opportunities for connection and ongoing learning opportunities. We have identified funding to begin an 18-month Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) Learning Collaborative this summer which will provide
an opportunity for current and former students in the Capstone Certificate Program who are licensed mental health clinicians to participate in this deeper professional development training with other Capstone Program alumni. The Capstone Certificate Program is generally a prerequisite for the CPP Learning Collaborative in Wisconsin. Licensed mental health clinicians from the current cohort and past five cohorts will be invited to participate in the CPP Learning Collaborative. In addition to CPP Training, we will continue to offer other training initiatives (e.g. Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood and the Brief Parent-Child Early Relational Assessment) to provide additional ongoing learning opportunities for graduates of this Capstone Certificate Program. We are also currently in dialogue with the Department of Health Services (DHS) Birth to Three Program about establishing a Community of Practice for Birth to 3 Professionals who have participated in the Capstone Certificate Program to connect, deepen their learning and collaborate.

Current students and all Capstone Certificate Program alumni have opportunities for ongoing learning and connection with others in the field through attendance at the Annual Wisconsin Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Conference planned by the Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health (WI- AIMH), the professional organization in this field in our state. We will continue to partner with WI-AIMH to plan for professional development opportunities for alumni through and beyond the WI-AIMH Annual Conference. The WI-AIMH Conference Keynote Speaker was included in the Capstone Certificate Program curriculum this year.

Although we were not able to do so this year due to the pandemic, we plan to provide the opportunity for alumni of the Capstone Certificate Program to join the current cohort in learning from one of the program’s national speaker/instructor in the year ahead, providing the opportunity for professional development and connection between current students and program alumni.

We were delighted to respond to your request for detail about how we have and will continue to address the GFEC recommendations that will enhance this innovative, comprehensive and nationally recognized program that contributes greatly to the growth of the workforce of well-prepared parent-infant and early childhood mental health professionals in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Roseanne Clark, PhD
Professor, Department of Psychiatry
Faculty Director,
UW Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Capstone Certificate Program

Sarah Strong, MSSW, LCSW
Co-Director
UW Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Capstone Certificate Program