

**Proposition Number: 15-15/16**

**Sponsor(s): Enedina Vázquez, Associate Dean -College of Education**

**Merranda Marin, Faculty -College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences**

**Proposed Committee:** Scholastic Affairs

**Actual Committee Assignment:** Scholastic Affairs

**Title: Major in Clinical Psychopharmacology (associated with MS Degree)**

**Proposal:** The College of Education proposes a major in Clinical Psychopharmacology. In 2002 the New Mexico Legislature signed into law prescriptive authority to licensed psychologists. As the first state in the nation to enact the law, NMSU's Counseling & Educational Psychology (CEP) Department became the first university, public or private, to prepare psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications. The degree initially used was the interdisciplinary master's degree between the CEP and Special Education/Communication Disorders Department (SPED/CD). In later years, partnering with the Nursing Department in the College of Health and Social Services became a more appropriate partnership and helped with the program attaining special Designation status granted by the American Psychological Association. The partnership with the Nursing Department will continue.

NMSU continues to be the only public institution in a state with a law granting prescriptive authority for psychologists. As more programs and states (Louisiana was second, Illinois third and currently a few more states are pursuing passing laws) the natural evolution of the program continues. To date all higher education institutions offer the MS degree with a major in Clinical Psychopharmacology.

**Rationale:** Although the interdisciplinary MA degree (IMAS) facilitated the development of a program consistent with national standards and clinical psychopharmacology, the program of study is more consistent with a Master of Science and not arts degree. Further, it is important to continuing accreditation/designation status to have a clear major in Clinical Psychopharmacology. In addition, the evolution of the field in clinical psychopharmacology is consistent with national standards and the major in Clinical Psychopharmacology will keep the first national program competitive. The major will facilitate the continued attainment of the prescriptive authority license in the state of New Mexico.

See attached full proposal for additional details.