



Committee on  
Early Career  
Psychologists

American  
Psychological  
Association

Learn  
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Lead

# Advocating for Licensure at the Receipt of the Doctoral Degree

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Moving Forward: Overcoming Unnecessary Barriers to Licensure

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Initiating a Statewide Advocacy Effort to Update Licensure Requirements

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Discussant

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So You Passed a New Licensure Law: Now What?



# Moving Forward: Overcoming Unnecessary Barriers to Licensure

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APA Convention

August 11, 2006

# The New APA Policy (2/06):

*The American Psychological Association affirms the doctorate as the minimum educational requirement for entry into professional practice as a psychologist. The American Psychological Association recommends that for admission to licensure applicants demonstrate that they have completed a sequential, organized, supervised professional experience equivalent to two years of full-time training that can be completed prior or subsequent to the granting of the doctoral degree. For applicants preparing for practice in the health services domain of psychology, one of those two years of supervised professional experience shall be a predoctoral internship.*

*The American Psychological Association affirms that postdoctoral education and training remains an important part of the continuing professional development and credentialing process for professional psychologists. Postdoctoral education and training is a foundation for practice improvement, advanced competence, and inter-jurisdictional mobility.*

*In adopting the preceding policy statements, the Council supports further development of competency goals and assessment methods in the professional education and training of psychologists.*

# Overcoming Unnecessary Barriers to Licensure

- Requires understanding the context for the change
- Requires a solid rationale
- Understanding the impact on:
  - Students and ECPs
  - Practice
  - Public need
  - Education and training

# Historical Context (1):

- When the 1987 Model Act was passed, the internship was primary clinical experience
- Increased difficulties with the funding of post-doctoral supervision
- Questions about the utility of the post-doctoral supervision (APA estimates one third in quality postdoctoral supervision)
- Increasing amounts of practicum supervision in most predoctoral training

# Historical Context (2):

- Our license sequence unlike those in medicine and competing mental health professions
- Students are graduating with an increased debt load
- Specialty training often skipped

# APA Effort to Review the Sequence: the 2000 Commission

- 30 constituent groups
- License eligible after APA accredited doctoral degree and two years of supervised experience (one of which is internship)
- 10 recommendations with regard to education and training sequence
- Constituency groups to follow-up in their areas

# Board of Directors Approves Work Group – 2/05

- Review the progress since Commission
- Address the recommendations of the Commission
- Smaller group – BEA, BPA, CAPP, ECP, APAGS, ASPPB, CESPTPA, CCOPP, CCTC, and BOD

**Consequences of the  
recommended change:  
impact in multiple areas**

# Impact on Early Career Psychologists

- Increased amounts of predoctoral supervision now counts toward licensure
- Less dependency on postdoctoral experience of variable quality and efficacy
- Increased opportunity for service reimbursement – and ability to get federal loan forgiveness
- Immediate ability to make a living
- Academic careers no longer delayed

# Impact on Practice

- Reduced obstacles to a health profession – ability to practice upon graduation
- Policies now in step with other health care professions allowing practice with degree
- Improved appreciation for high level of education and training of psychologists
- Less trained providers no longer have advantage in marketplace

# Impact on the Public

- Public facilities would have a better chance of funding for services, often utilizing young psychologists
- Possibility of advanced training with underserved populations
- Better protection of the public: same amount of supervised experience (2 years), improved training of psychologists

# Impact on Education and Training

- Improved quality of supervision and training at predoctoral level
- Graduate programs and internships now fully accountable for competence
- Support for competency assessment
- Improved boundary between entry level and advanced competency and improved chance for advanced competency training
- Postdoctoral program funding possibilities improved

# Opportunity for Mobility

- Short-term solution for mobility in postdoctoral supervision (with license)
- Mobility available for those who choose postdoctoral advanced competency
- Long-term mobility problem resolved when enough Boards accept the changes

# A Win for the Profession

- Reduced barriers
- Improved training
  - Competency before graduation
  - Clarity for specialty training
- Sequence in step with modern funding
- Mobility opportunities preserved
- The public protected



# Tear Down This Wall: Strategies for Removing Unnecessary Barriers to Licensure

## The Maryland Experience

Jeffrey E. Barnett, PsyD, ABPP

# Latest APA/SPTPA Developments

- The APA Commission Report
- APA Council's Recent Vote
- What's Happening in the SPTPAs

# APA Policy

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The American Psychological Association affirms that postdoctoral education and training remains an important part of the continuing professional development and credentialing process for professional psychologists. Postdoctoral education and training is a foundation for practice improvement, advanced competence, and inter-jurisdictional mobility.

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# Making it Happen on the Local Level

- The Multi-year Project
- Educating SPTPA Leaders
- Building Support
- Educating the Membership
- Holding an Open Forum
- Creating a Formal SPTPA Policy
- Getting Board Members to Sign on the Dotted Line

# Involving the Membership

- Educating the Membership
- Energizing the Membership on this Issue
- Making it Personal
- Getting them Invested and Involved
- Getting their Letters of Support

# Developing a Strategy

- Working with the Licensure Board
- Building Support from Within
- Having the Licensure Board Take the Lead
  
- The SPTPA Taking the Lead with Licensure Board Support, With them Neutral, or With their Opposition

# The MPA Website

- Using the MPA Website to Support this Initiative
- Using it to Educate Members, the Licensure Board, Legislators, and the Public
- Visit to the MPA Website
- Moving Forward



# So Your Jurisdiction Passed a New Licensure Law - NOW WHAT ?

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Imagine all the people  
living life in peace.  
You may say I'm a dreamer.

John Lennon

# Scope of Problem

- In 2004, the Washington's licensure statute was going to be opened by the Board of Health that runs our licensing board
- WSPA seized the opportunity and created an education campaign for the WSPA Council and licensing board to define the scope of the problem

There something happening here.

What it is ain't exactly clear.

Buffalo Springfield

# Scope of Problem

- Approximately 150 postdoctoral students and early career psychologists wrote to the Licensing Board

I was bruised and battered;  
I couldn't tell what I felt;  
I was unrecognizable  
to myself.

Bruce Springsteen

# ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF OUR YOUNG

- Postdoctoral Supervision sporadic at best
- Many worked 1500 postdoctoral hours without pay, and in fact, had to pay for supervision
- Opportunity costs ran \$40-80000

Hey now, all you children,  
leave your lights on,  
better leave your lights on.  
Cause there's a monster,  
living under my bed,  
whispering in my ear.

Santana//Everlast

# Signs of Disconnect

- Jurisdictions are not succeeding in attracting most of their early career psychologists to join their associations

She said don't give or  
sell your soul away,  
cause all that  
you have  
is your  
soul.

Tracy Chapman

# Moving Forward

- Demonstrate care and connect with nascent potential members through this very personal lifeblood issue
- Bring them to the fight

Been

dazed and confused

for so long

its not true.

Led Zeppelin

# Legislature and Rule Makers

- 3300 hours that are under the direction of the student and the student's doctoral program
- Quality of the supervision will markedly increase

What you want? Baby I got it.

What you need?

Do you know that I got it?

All I'm asking is for respect ...

Aretha Franklin

# Public Hearings

- Number of clinical hours do not change
- Only Choices about sequencing change
- Quality of the supervision will markedly increase

I feel good.

I knew that I would now.

I feel good.

I knew that I would now, so good, so good ...

James Brown

**APAGS**

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# Engaging Students & ECPs in Licensure Advocacy

Michael B. Madson, Ph.D.  
Chair, APAGS

# Student/ECP Advocacy to Date

- APAGS was highly involved from the beginning (The Commission)
  - 2 Voting members (APAGS Committee member & member from APAGS Taskforce on New Professionals issues – Now CECP)
- Always strong supporters of the change
- Involved in the BoD Follow Up Workgroup
- APAGS/CECP collaboration on advocacy letter
- APAGS created advocacy talking points
- APAGS & APAGS ACT advocated with CoR reps
- Attended CoR Caucus meetings & spoke at CoR

# Student & ECP Reaction

- As expected very excited
  - “I'm very excited to hear about the new policy! I'm contacting my state board about implementing these changes. Below is a letter I've drafted to send to my state board. I would like to share this letter (upon completion) to the listserv to encourage others to write to their state boards and use the letter as a template. I doubt that my state will make these changes without a HUGE push from students and post-docs.”
  - “I would also like to do this too. I also live in the state and perhaps we can do this together. Maybe, we can get the support of the state psych association as well. It's worth a shot.”

From ECP Listserv 2-06

# Bottom Line!



Students and ECPs have the knowledge, skills, and energy to become active allies in legislative advocacy on this and other issues!!

# APAGS & CECP Efforts to Educate

- Using Listservs to “Get the correct word out.”
- APAGS developed advocacy talking points that students & ECPs can use
- Articles to be published in gradPSYCh
- Use the APAGS Advocacy Coordinating Team for grassroots education

# APAGS ACT

- Subcommittee of APAGS
- Chair, 6 Regional Coordinators, 50 State Coordinators, 350+ Campus Representatives
- Major focus on legislative advocacy
- Coordinates grassroots advocacy efforts
- Can be an extremely valuable tool for state advocacy!!

# Engage Students & ECPs On These Issues

- Develop a welcoming environment for student & ECP enthusiasm
  - Respond to student & ECP letters or requests on this issue
  - Offer to have discussions with students and ECPs
  - Invite them to your board meeting to discuss the issue

# Engaging (Continued)

- Reach out to your APAGS-ACT State Advocacy Coordinator
  - All regional Coordinators are here to discuss how to connect with your state's coordinator
- Consider students as colleagues in training and ECPs as your new colleagues
  - Ask them for their ideas
    - Many have good ones or alternative perspectives!

# Engaging (Continued)

- Consider this an Association issue
  - Collaborate with vs. assign to students/ECPs
  - Be willing to offer association/member resources to assist
- Reach out!
  - Offer workshops or student/ECP specific programming
  - Send outreach letters to academic departments, formal postdocs, and internship sites

# The Future

- Students and ECPs ARE the future of APA and SPTAs
- APA has made a direct statement of this by changing their policy
- It will be important for SPTAs to send a similar message through their inclusion and advocacy on this issue