

Report from the Summer Meeting of the American Psychological Association Council of Representatives

APA's policy-making body continued its work to move APA forward, approving details of a new organizational structure

The American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives (Council) met in San Francisco, California, August 8 and 10, 2018, adjacent to the association's annual national convention. 178 Council members came for the two-day meeting, along with invited board and committee chairs, and observers from the National Ethnic Minority Psychological Associations.

The two days of engaged conversation were focused on learning from the past and forging ahead to build a new APA, including working on co-creating APA's new strategic plan, which is slated to come to Council for final approval in February 2019.

A few highlights.

Moving forward as a unified organization. Council took historic actions to move forward with transitioning APA to an integrated c3/c6 advocacy model. At its August meeting, Council received the report of the Presidential Workgroup on an Expanded APA Advocacy Model, which was convened after Council's March meeting. Council approved the Workgroup's recommendations, including the concept of a unified Finance Committee and a single board of directors to serve both the c3 and c6, the allocation of 2019 member dues 60% to the c6 and 40% to the c3, and c6 bylaw changes to expand the purpose of the c6 and create a new Advocacy Coordinating Committee.

This new model will establish a pathway to enhance APA and build a robust, unified advocacy agenda for all of psychology. This transformational change ensures the following:

- A comprehensive process to gather broader input from all constituencies to help set advocacy priorities annually.
- A larger role for Council in shaping APA's advocacy agenda.
- Increased resources for advocacy initiatives spanning science, education, public interest, practice and applied psychology.
- All psychologists who join APA will be members of a combined c3/c6 organization, allowing membership dues to be allocated to both entities for advocacy initiatives.
- A new approach to the development and delivery of professional member benefits.

Council provided input to the CEO's development of the APA diversity and inclusion plan.

Council heard from Dr. Kumea Shorter-Gooden, an APA member consultant, on diversity and inclusion issues. Dr. Shorter-Gooden presented an outline for the development of a comprehensive framework for APA's diversity and inclusion activities and asked for Council's feedback. The key feature of the framework is a set of 10 domains within which APA may choose to take action on diversity and inclusion. Council will soon receive an invitation to recommend strategic goals for APA to pursue within the domains and to identify the key stakeholders that need to be involved in pursuing the goals. The aim is to use the Council input to develop a complete draft of the framework, to develop a job

description for hiring a Chief Diversity Officer later in 2018, and to coordinate the APA plan for diversity and inclusion with the APA strategic plan.

Opting to leave unchanged APA’s long-standing policy on the role of military psychologists in treating detainees. Council voted down New Business Item 35B, which would have supported military psychologists as providers of health care services to detainees in any national security setting. After more than an hour of debate on both sides of the issue, Council voted 105-57, with 11 abstentions, to retain the existing policy that restricts the role of military psychologists in detention sites that are in violation of the U.S. Constitution or international law. The individuals who proposed the measure said it was aimed at allowing military psychologists to provide needed health care to detainees without any restrictions as to the setting in which services are provided, making the role of psychologists consistent with the role of psychiatrists and other military health providers who may treat detainees at any site. Many of those who opposed the measure indicated that they feared it would open the door to military psychologists becoming involved in detainee interrogations and risk compromising the human rights of detainees.

“This was a very challenging decision since many critical professional issues and values were at stake,” APA President Jessica Henderson Daniel, PhD, said in a [public statement](#). “After much deliberation, the council decided that it was most important for the association to uphold the current policies that date back to 2009.” APA’s council adopted a series of resolutions – in 2009, 2013 and 2015 – that were aimed at ensuring that psychologists did not in any way assist in so-called “enhanced interrogation” techniques or contribute to the operation of detention settings where such techniques were used during the Bush administration’s “global war on terror.” The 2009 resolution (which was passed by a vote of APA members in 2008) stated that “psychologists may not work in settings where persons are held outside of, or in violation of, either International Law (e.g., the UN Convention Against Torture and the Geneva Conventions) or the US Constitution (where appropriate), unless they are working directly for the persons being detained or for an independent third party working to protect human rights.” That resolution allowed for military psychologists to provide treatment to military personnel in all settings and was incorporated in the subsequent policies.

Other actions included the following.

- Council voted to support the formation of a task force, appointed by BAPPI and BSA, to conduct a comprehensive, up-to-date, and systematic review of the violent video game literature and to recommend whether the 2015 Resolution on Violent Video Games should be amended.
- Council voted to adopt as APA policy the *Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures* (5th ed.) and approved August 2028 as the expiration date for the document.
- Council voted to approve the formation of a Task Force on Differences in Sex Development that will, as part of its mandate, review current literature and policies in this area and develop recommendations for education, training, practice, and further research.
- Council voted to remove from APA’s website the page featuring the Independent Review (IR), noting that the association has fulfilled 17 of the items it committed to when the report was issued in 2015. Instead, the Timeline of APA Policies and Actions Related to Detainee Welfare and Interrogation in National Security Settings, posted on the APA website, will retain a link to

the IR report, along with links to the appendices. The substitute motion adopted by Council called for links to several relevant documents to be added.

- Council voted to approve that, for a three-year trial period, the Board of Directors and Council Leadership Team will publish their members' votes on each open session agenda item on the Association's website with access for members only. Additionally, for a three-year trial period, Council will be asked to vote at the beginning of each meeting to agree to publish Council member votes on each open session agenda item.

Recognition. The Committee on Early Career Psychologists presented the Nevada Psychological Association with a recognition for promoting the expertise of early career psychologists and encouraging early career involvement in leadership. Merry Bullock, PhD, was presented with the Raymond D. Fowler Award for Outstanding Member Contributions. Kim Baranowski, PhD, W. Rodney Hammond, PhD, and Arlene Noriega, PhD, were recognized with APA Citizen Psychologist presidential citations.

Read more in the full [minutes](#).