

The third *Interorganizational Summit on Specialty, Specialization and Board Certification* was held at the APA Building in Washington, DC on June 15 & 16, 2017. Two previous Summits were held in 2016, in Chicago, IL and in Chapel Hill, NC. The Summit 3.0 participants and groups they represent are provided in Attachment A.

The Conclusions and Recommendations in this executive summary reflect the outcomes of the Summit. Notes from Summit 3.0 are provided in Attachment B. These notes reflect the structure and agenda for the summit, presentations, and the topical discussions.

### Conclusion and Recommendations of Summit 3.0

- **Specialty definition** – A slightly modified version of the previously jointly-adopted “specialty” definition was agreed upon as follows (modifications are noted in *bold italic* font): A specialty is a defined area of professional psychology practice characterized by a distinctive configuration of competent services for specified problems and populations. Practice in a specialty requires advanced knowledge and skills acquired through an organized sequence of *formal* education, training, and *experience* in addition to the broad and general education and core scientific and professional foundations acquired through an APA or CPA accredited doctoral program.\* Specialty training may be acquired at the doctoral, *internship*, postdoctoral or *post-licensure* level as defined by the specialty. \* Except where APA or CPA program accreditation does not exist for that area of professional psychology. o It was agreed that each organization would take this modified version back to its leadership group/Board of Directors, and ask that it *be adopted and utilized* in all documents, publications, and applications where appropriate.
- [APA’s Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology](#) (CRSPPP) will submit this for approval to APA’s Council of Representatives (COR or APA Council) as a slight modification to the existing policy document and note that the changes are a positive, interorganizational agreement.
- CRSPPP and the [American Board of Professional Psychology](#) (ABPP) will work jointly to have a consistent definition of ‘subspecialty’ and discuss how subspecialty can be introduced as APA policy as part of the definition of specialty.
- APA (CRSPPP) and ABPP agreed to work through/via the [Council of Specialties in Professional Psychology](#) (COS) to establish a mechanism to jointly **review applications for specialty recognition** to save time and decrease duplication of effort and promote consistency across organizations.
- To foster uniformity with the field, COS will ask the [Commission on Accreditation](#) (COA) *to accept the current list of specialties recognized* by COS and/or ABPP rather than embark on its own review for recognition of specialties when a program wishes to be accredited as providing education and training in that specialty.
- CRSPPP and ABPP have agreed that COS will ask each recognized specialty to choose the name of their specialty so that both ABPP and APA use the same name for the same specialty. o Once agreed upon, each organization will initiate the required administrative changes to utilize the agreed upon names. CRSPPP will submit necessary name changes to the APA Council for approval as a minor amendment based on a major

interorganizational agreement. If needed, ABPP will initiate the name changes to its Board of Trustees to change the name of the specialty when recognizing specialists. o [The American Psychological Association of Graduate Students](#) (APAGS) and [Committee on Early Career Psychologists](#) (CECP) will work with COS and CRSPPP to support COR's adoption of any revised names.

- **Taxonomy** – A primary focus of discussion was related to adoption of the Taxonomy language. o All organizations agreed that it is important to adopt the language of the Taxonomy to help programs consistently describe the content of their educational opportunities for students at all levels of education and training.
- It is of key importance that organizations focus on the use of the Taxonomy language to describe programmatic content. o COS will lead the organizations in drafting language to help clarify how the use of the Taxonomy for describing learning content in programs will help: (1) programs consistently describe these learning opportunities; (2) individuals describe their own learning experiences; and, (3) individuals and programs understand, using the information on the COS website, what recognized specialties expect of programmatic content at each level of training. o Although the Taxonomy was specifically developed for programs to use consistent program descriptors rather than be focused on individual learner's opportunities, it is expected that such changes will allow both students and licensed psychologists to better plan their trajectory of training, and then consistently describe their learning histories.
- COS will draft a letter to COA to be jointly signed by organizational representatives participating in the Summit stating that the field **has agreed to the use of the language of the Taxonomy, and ask that COA incorporate the definition of Specialty** (which is APA policy) **and the Taxonomy language** (which is APA policy) into its materials.

This would mean that COA would then:

- be asking programs seeking APA accreditation to use consistent language to describe their educational and training content per the Taxonomy language; and,
- use the learning opportunity descriptors (Taxonomy language) listed by each Specialty on the COS website as guidelines for specialty-defined content descriptions of learning opportunities at each level of training.

o The [Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers](#) (APPIC), ABPP, and the [Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards](#) (ASPPB) will each bring the Taxonomy language to their organizations and **seek agreement to adopt the language** in all their publications, material, and applications as appropriate.

o COS will work with the [Council of Chairs of Training Councils](#) (CCTC) to have training councils adopt the Taxonomy, and encourage training directors to use the Taxonomy when describing their programs.

- COS and CRSPPP will facilitate this dissemination of the Taxonomy language, and help training councils identify speakers who can help each council bring the language and practical examples of the use of the Taxonomy language to their members.

o APAGS and CECF will work to help lead/promote adoption of the Taxonomy language, and to help its members see the utility of the use of the language in both choosing their graduate education and describing their educational history.

· **Other recommendations and follow-up**

o CRSPPP and COS will develop a 10:00 minute +/- video that outlines the definition of Specialty and the importance of the use of the Taxonomy in helping clarify program content - the video will specify how/why this clarification is helpful, both to students in terms of specialty training, and to consumers in relation to understanding the intensity of the training experiences needed to become psychology specialists.

- This video can be presented at meetings of all organizations, including CCTC, to develop the knowledge and skills needed to ultimately support each organization in the adoption of the definition and language of the Taxonomy.

o COS will take the lead in developing an APA Convention 2018 proposal – jointly sponsored by relevant Divisions – to present the importance of the uniform specialty definition and use of the Taxonomy language

- APAGS and CECF will be involved in developing a goal(s) to engage the next generation in the adoption of the definition and Taxonomy language.

o APA staff will approach *The Monitor* regarding inclusion of an article about the Summit and the importance of the recommendations of an interorganizational adoption of the definition and the Taxonomy language.

o CRSPPP will be asked to submit this Executive Summary as an Information item for the next possible (February 2018) Council agenda, following the final date of its approval by relevant parties.

o ABPP will provide notification of the use of the definition and Taxonomy language in *The Specialist*.

o COS will address the details of approaching TEPP and/or PPRP regarding a special issue or articles about the Summit's recommendations.

## **Activities that have taken place since the Summit (and dates)**

o Several organizations have met since the Summit and worked toward implementation of some of the agreed upon actions

- ABPP: This group has discussed the Summit at the Executive Committee level and will be asking the ABPP Board of Trustees to adopt the specialty definition, and have each specialty board to work on incorporating the Taxonomy into appropriate sections of their requirements.

- APPIC: June 2017, agreed to begin adopting the Taxonomy.

- ASPPB: June 2017, ASPPB's BOD adopted the definition of Specialty as ASPPB policy.

o The COA will be informed about the Summit recommendations by the Director of Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation at the July COA meeting.

### **Attachment A: Attendee List**

#### **Participant Group Represented**

Eddy Ameen, PhD *Office of Early Career Psychologists*

Kevin Arnold, PhD, ABPP *CRSPPP/ABPP-Foundation/Summit Planning Group*

Jeff Baker, PhD, ABPP *APPIC*

David Cox, PhD, ABPP *ABPP Executive Director/Summit Planning Group*

Jim Diaz-Granados, PhD *APA Education Directorate*

Elena Eisman, EdD, ABPP *APA Center for Psychology and Health*

Nabil El-Ghoroury, PhD *APAGS*

Phillip Keck, PhD *CRSPPP*

Jennifer Kelly, PhD, ABPP *APA Board of Directors*

Toni Minniti, PhD *APA Education Directorate*

Victor Molinari, PhD, ABPP *COS/Summit Planning Group*

Lavita Nadkarni, PhD *NCSP*

Katherine Nordal, PhD *APA Practice Directorate/APAPO*

Ronald Rozensky, PhD, ABPP *Speaker/Summit Planning Group*

Richard Seime, PhD, ABPP *COS Chair/Summit Planning Group*

Alex Siegel, JD, PhD *ASPPB/Summit Planning Group*

Jared Skillings, PhD, ABPP *APA Board of Professional Affairs*

Ann Springer, JD *Speaker/APA Associate General Counsel*

Michael Tansy, PhD, ABPP *ABPP Board of Trustees*

Jacque Wall, PhD *APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation*

Jason Williams, PsyD, MS, ED *Council of Chairs of Training Councils*