

Call for Nominations

Board of Professional Affairs (BPA) Working Group (WG) to recommend an appropriate Master's Title and Scope in Health Service Psychology (HSP)

Mission and Charge

The Working Group will be tasked by the Board of Professional Affairs (BPA) to develop recommendations on the appropriate title and scope of practice for those who attain a terminal master's degree in health service psychology (HSP). Recommendations initiated by this group will not constitute APA policy and will be subject to formal review in accordance with Association Rules.

In this regard, the Working Group will be asked to:

- Develop specific recommendations or options for an appropriate title, as distinguished from doctoral-level practice and not to include "psychologist." Recommendations should include an appropriate professional title for master's level, psychology-trained practitioners that is (a) clearly distinct from that of a doctoral psychologist, but (b) accurately conveys the profession's base within psychology as a discipline.
- Develop recommendations for an appropriate scope of practice (SOP) for master's-level practitioners, which will be distinguished from doctoral psychologists who practice and supervise with a scope of greatest breadth and depth.

To accomplish this charge, the Working Group will review APA efforts to date and summary documents of discussions relevant to master's level issues, including recommended competencies of individuals completing accredited master's programs in these specific areas. The Working Group will also review how other doctoral and master's level professions determine how master's level, psychology-trained practitioners will continue to fit into health care roles. In accomplishing their charge, the Working Group might also identify activities that are performed by a doctoral-level psychologist distinct from those activities that may be performed with or without supervision if the master's level person has the requisite knowledge and experience. The Working Group may suggest possible next steps, including stakeholder engagement and messaging. This work will also serve to inform policies relevant to accreditation of master's programs in health service areas (clinical, counseling, school) of psychology, and other activities relevant to master's level issues.

Once the Working Group is approved, work is planned to begin immediately and not to exceed 1.5 years. Work will be conducted via virtual meetings in Zoom and e-mail. The Working Group will also meet during the Summit on the Future of Education and Practice that is scheduled to start the evening of October 21, 2021 and meet most of the day on the 22nd and 23rd.

To facilitate effective communications and encourage stakeholder engagement, a webpage will be created to post summaries and updates on group efforts and tools and strategies to secure stakeholder input on key issues. Designated staff in the APA Practice Directorate will provide substantive expertise and administrative support to the Working Group.

Background, History and Need for Working Group

APA has discussed the role of master's training in psychology through numerous initiatives dating as far back as 70 years with no consensus. However, in August 2017 the APA Council of Representative voted that:

“Current issues and developments have risen to the level that APA should consider options related to master’s level training and/or practice and that staff and governance should identify and explore options for APA to consider.”

In March 2018, the Council was provided this information and voted to approve pursuing accreditation of master’s level programs in areas where APA already accredits (clinical, counseling, school). Council directed staff and governance, in particular the Board of Educational Affairs, to take steps to develop an accreditation system. A task force was formed to develop competencies for those who attain master’s degrees in HSP. This work was overseen and guided by both the BEA and BPA. In Fall 2021, it is expected that a Summit will facilitate development of additional strategies relevant to advancing education, practice, and training, where distinctions between doctoral-level and masters trained individuals is relevant.

Areas of Expertise Needed

BPA will appoint no more than ten (10) members (including a Chair), to the Working Group from those that apply. BPA will also invite key stakeholder groups, including APA Divisions and legal and regulatory communities, to appoint liaisons to the same. The Working Group will include one member each from BPA and BEA. Individuals with a strong background in the following are particularly sought:

- Strong familiarity with doctoral and master’s level roles, responsibilities, interface, and work settings.
- Experience in licensure, psychology regulation or policy development.
- Diverse experiences in independent practice.
- Experience with large system expertise; institutional/public sector administration, and/or broad knowledge and experience in community-based and/or institutional health systems.
- Practice expertise from many areas including forensic, neuropsychology, health, school, rehab, testing, and assessment.
- Knowledge of health care, health care financing, health care systems, practice innovation and interprofessional practice.
- Graduate education and accreditation, at the master’s and/or doctoral-level, in clinical, counseling, or school psychology.

Individuals with multiple areas of experience and relevant subject matter expertise will receive precedence and are strongly encouraged to apply. Self-nominations are expected.

BPA seeks nominees from a wide range of practice settings, populations, and professional roles. BPA values perspectives and insights of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including early career candidates, those new to APA governance, psychologists practicing in rural areas, and individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds.

BPA seeks nominees who will enhance the diversity of the Working Group broadly defined and through their racial/ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, economic background, areas of clinical expertise, experience with special populations, geographic location, and practice settings, including independent practice.

Those interested in serving on the Working Group should submit:

- A curriculum vitae (CV) or resume documenting experience and knowledge related to the charge of this Working Group.
- A one-page (maximum) summary articulating how qualifications relate to the areas of expertise outlined above and any aspects of diversity that you represent and choose to make known.
- Matrix for WG Masters Title and Scope of Practice (which will be provided only upon receipt of candidate's CV and summary statement)

Deadline for Submitting Materials: Friday, September 3, 2021.

Questions and nomination materials should be emailed to optq@apa.org with attention to: Sarah A. Rose, Senior Associate, Practice Transformation and Quality. *Note: this Working Group will not be engaged in establishing new policy, rather its recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Professional Affairs and may serve to inform activities and initiatives relevant to doctoral and master's level programs and practice.*