

## **American Board of Counseling Psychology**

### **PRACTICE SAMPLE**

All Candidates for board certification must submit a Practice Sample (PS). The Practice Sample typically includes (a) A Professional Self Study (PSS), and (b) A Work Sample (WS), and (c) A Curriculum Vitae. The Curriculum Vitae and Professional Self Study provide Candidates with the opportunity to communicate about themselves as Counseling Psychologists and serve as a basis for discussion in the Oral Examination. The Practice Sample should be submitted within one year after receiving notice of satisfactory completion of the credentials review. Short extensions can be obtained by requesting them from the Practice Sample Coordinator. All Practice Sample materials should be submitted directly to the Practice Sample Coordinator. Simultaneously, a check for the Practice Sample Review fee, along with the appropriate forms should be sent to the Central Office.

All Practice Samples will contain a Professional Self-Study (PSS) plus one or more additional submissions: Candidates with fewer than fifteen years of post-doctoral experience will submit a Work Sample (WS), which is essentially a case study. Candidates with fifteen or more year of post-doctoral experience may apply under the Senior Option.

Four (4) copies of the PS must be received by the Practice Sample Coordinator (PSC) within 12 months of acceptance into candidacy. If candidates must request an extension to complete the Practice Sample, they may request an extension from the PSC. Upon confirmation of receipt of the Practice Sample fee, the PSC will select two Board Certified Counseling Psychologists to review the PS.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

The Curriculum Vitae must include educational and training background, professional roles and responsibilities, and professional contributions (e.g., service activities, publications, presentations, grants, awards, professional recognitions, etc.) that support Candidates' professional identification with the specialty of Counseling Psychology.

### **Professional Self Study (PSS)**

All Candidates are required to provide a Professional Self Study (PSS). The PSS details Candidates' general approaches to psychological assessment and intervention, as well as the training and experience which led to these approaches. Candidates should address these approaches as they relate to one of the six Professional Practice Areas: (1) Counseling/Psychotherapy, (2) Career/Vocational Counseling, (3) Supervision, (4) Consultation, (5) Administration/Management, or (6) Training/Instruction. The PSS may reference specific papers, articles, books and courses produced by others or by the Candidate that support the applicant's competence in one of the six Professional Practice Areas. The PSS may also cite specific supervisory, career, therapeutic, administrative/management, training or personal experiences that have contributed to Candidates' views on both psychological assessment and intervention in a comprehensive and detailed manner.

The PSS should demonstrate an awareness of, and sensitivity to, contextual issues and

acknowledge ways in which diversity may impact both assessment and intervention. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, geographic region of birth and rearing as well as current residence, physical and psychological challenges and religion are examples of such diversity. Candidates should also note the potential role of both linguistic facility and history with regard to the language(s) in which assessment and interventions are conducted. Finally, the potential impact of relational status (e.g. parent, spouse, emigrant, etc.) on assessment and intervention should be addressed.

The purpose of the Professional Self-Study is to convey a sense of the Candidate - an image of the Candidate - that transfers to the written page. Candidates should be able to describe how their professional, personal, and academic roles evolved in the work set forth for the Practice Sample.

The Professional Self-Study should clearly define how Candidates' educational, supervisory, administrative/management, therapeutic, training or personal experiences have shaped their beliefs. Candidates must clearly explain and document their views and beliefs about psychological assessment and intervention. Candidates should clarify *what* assessments and interventions they use and *why* they have chosen them as well as demonstrate awareness of diversity issues in assessment and intervention.

Candidates are expected to accomplish the task in no fewer than eight (8) and no more than ten (10) double-spaced (typed, font 12 pt.) pages. The person reading the PSS should have a sense that what is contained in the materials provided is predictable and intelligible given the views expressed in the PSS. Examiners will consider whether Candidates' statements about their professional practice match what Candidates actually do in their professional practices. The Professional Self-Study should include:

- Description of current professional work (employment and professional activities at the local, state, and national level), continuing professional education activities, long-term plans in psychology, and reasons for seeking board certification
- Evidence of science base and application by addressing (a) discussion of evidence base that informs the practice as Counseling Psychologists *OR* (b) description of the Candidates' current clinical-research activities
- Assessment, intervention, consultation, and supervision/teaching/management activities (the latter only if applicable) and theoretical and empirical basis for these activities
- Examples of handling of complex interpersonal interactions (i.e., conflicts or disagreements in work relationships, challenging relationship dilemmas with clients/patients) in one or more of the areas of scholarship, assessment, intervention, consultation, and supervision/teaching/management
- Examples of awareness of individual and cultural diversity as pertinent to the Candidates' scholarship, assessments, interventions, consultations, and supervision/teaching/management (the latter only if applicable)
- Description of a meaningful and challenging ethical dilemma personally encountered, the aspects of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct pertinent to the dilemma, and how the dilemma was managed

- Verification that no ethical/legal action has been taken against the Candidate since having been admitted to candidacy.

### **Candidates with Fewer than Fifteen (15) Years of Post-Doctoral Experience**

Candidates with fewer than fifteen (15) years of post-doctoral experience are required to submit a Work Sample (WS) in addition to the PSS. Depending upon the Professional Practice Area under which the Candidate is applying, the Candidate can submit a Work Sample consisting of group or organizational assessments and interventions or supervision, career, training/instruction, administration and consultation assessments and interventions.

#### **Work Sample**

The WS has two components; the Assessment Practice Sample and the Intervention Practice Sample and should not only detail the specific assessments and interventions associated with the particular case, but also detail how the two components exemplify the overall approach to the approaches elucidated in the PSS. Candidates demonstrate their mindfulness of diversity in the WS including, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, SES, physical and psychological challenges, geographic regions of birth, rearing and current residence as well as linguistic history and facility. Although the case submitted should clearly and specifically detail the course of work presented, it should also specifically state how these activities exemplify Candidates' broader, views on psychological assessment and intervention as previously detailed in the PSS. Candidates are expected to complete this task in no fewer than ten (10) and no more than twenty (20) double spaced type written pages (font 12 pt.) excluding copies of tests, profiles, and other supporting documents.

The Assessment Practice Sample may include a clinical interview, psychological testing or both. Formal testing is not required for an Assessment Practice Sample, but if formal testing is part of the assessment, Candidates should demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the construction, administration, validity and reliability and interpretation of such instruments as well as any cultural limitations.

### **Candidates with Fifteen or More Years of Post-Doctoral Experience (Senior Option)**

Candidates with fifteen (15) or more years of post-doctoral experience may choose from two alternatives. The first is submission of the PSS and Case Study. The second is submission of the PSS and two examples of professional writing from a variety of categories. The submissions must relate to either the direct provision of client services or the supervision of individuals providing direct service. The two examples may both be from the same category or from different categories. The categories are:

1. First authored, or co-authored substantive articles (not brief reports) which are directly relevant to the practice of Counseling Psychology and which were published in peer reviewed journals.
2. First authored, or co-authored book chapters covering topics relevant to the practice of Counseling Psychology.

3. A first authored or co-authored (not edited) book relevant to the practice of Counseling Psychology.

4. Documentation of innovative approaches to the training/supervision of Counseling Psychologists or the delivery of Counseling Psychology services. Such documentation may be in the form of training or supervision manuals or service provision center procedure manuals and should include evidence of the successful implementation of the procedures contained therein. The important aspects are that the submitted material documents innovative procedures, which were authored/established by the applicant and that produced improved practice.

Candidates, seeking to complete the Practice Sample using this option, must submit a Professional Self-Study that correlates with the publications presented. Candidates who use the Senior Option may also present a video of their work, although it is not required.

#### **Submission of the Practice Sample (all Practice Sample Submissions)**

Candidates will submit four (4) copies of the Practice Sample, four (4) copies of their Curriculum Vitae, and two (2) copies of the video (when applicable) to the Practice Sample Coordinator. The Practice Sample Coordinator's (PSC) name and address can be found in the letter admitting applicants to candidacy.

#### **Practice Sample Extension**

Candidates who wish an extension to complete their Practice Samples should address the request to the PSC. The request must detail those events that constitute the basis of the need for the extension. The PSC will make the final decision on the six (6) month extension and communicate in writing to the Candidates within two weeks after receiving the request. If the request is granted, the six (6) month period begins on the date of this written communication.

#### **Practice Sample Reviewers (all Practice Sample Submissions)**

A team of two board certified Counseling Psychologists reviews each Practice Sample. The reviewers collaborate in evaluating the material submitted; reviewers make their decisions by consensus and are requested to do so within thirty days of receiving the Practice Sample materials. Reviewers will have three responses from which to choose: (1) unacceptable, (2) acceptable with revisions and (3) acceptable without further revision. Reviewers communicate their decision to the Practice Sample Coordinator who, in turn, communicates with Candidates.

If the reviewing team asks for revisions of the Practice Sample, the reviewers communicate, through the Practice Sample Coordinator, the specific revisions they request. The reviewers will continue to work with the Candidates for up to six months and through two revisions until the Practice Sample is found to be acceptable. Using written and/or oral forms of communication, they aim to assist the Candidates in producing a Practice Sample that the reviewing team can rate as acceptable without further revision. If Candidates are successful, they will be advanced to the Oral Examination. If, by the end of the six-month period, Candidates have not produced a Practice Sample evaluated by the team as acceptable without further revision, Candidates may request a six-month extension. If Candidates do not ask for an

extension, they will be advised to develop a new Practice Sample and will be assigned a new set of reviewers when new Practice Sample is submitted. In this event Candidates must pay a second Practice Sample fee when a new Practice Sample is submitted.