

American Board of Counseling Psychology

ORAL EXAMINATION

When Candidates are notified that the Practice Sample is acceptable without further revisions, they receive information about arranging the Oral Examination. Registration for the Oral Examination may take place immediately upon completion of the Practice Sample phase of the Certification process and should take place within one (1) year. Brief extensions, though not encouraged, can be obtained by requesting them from the Chair of the Oral Examination. The Board uses an assessment center model to conduct oral examinations: Several Candidates are examined on the same site on the same day by several examiners. The examination is conducted over a half day and consists of five areas: (1) Assessment Skills, (2) Intervention Skills, (3) Alternative Interventions, (4) Ethics, and (5) Professional Identity. Dates and locations of the examination, which are usually scheduled semiannually, are typically determined by the numbers of Candidates waiting to take the oral examination. An example of the format for the ABCoP Oral Examination:

Oral Examination Day Schedule

8:30 – 9:30 Examiners' Meeting
9:30 – 9:45 Orientation for Candidates
9:45 – 10:40 Theoretical Approach and Discussion of Work Sample
10:40 – 11:00 Break and Alternate Intervention Scenario Preparation
11:00 – 11:30 Alternate Intervention
11:30 – 11:50 Break and ethics vignette prep
11:50 – 12:30 Ethics
12:30 - 12:45 Debriefing for Candidates

Reserving a Space for the Oral Examination

Because the assessment center model brings several Candidates and examiners together at the same site, timely coordination is essential. The Board establishes Oral Examination dates several months in advance; Candidates may contact the Oral Examination Chair for current dates. Candidates must pay the Oral Examination fee to the Central Office and inform the Oral Examination Chair of payment no later than sixty (60) days prior to the date on which they wish to take the examination. At the discretion of the Oral Examination Chair and on the basis of available space, exceptions can be made for Candidates completing their Practice Sample after the deadline who wish to be examined as soon as possible.

Except for extreme circumstances, Candidates, not attending the examination for which they have reserved a space, will forfeit their examination fee and must pay a second fee to sit for a later examination.

Materials Reviewed During the Oral Examination

The oral examination will include discussion of the Practice Sample, previously submitted during the Practice Sample phase of the board certification process. Additionally, when applicable a video will be reviewed.

Video Submissions

Videos are required for these three Professional Practice Areas: Counseling/Psychotherapy, Career, and Supervision. Videos are preferred for the three Professional Practice Areas of: Consultation, Administration/Management, and Training. (note- videos are not required for those qualifying under the Senior Option) Two (2) copies of videos must be submitted to the Oral Examination Committee Chair at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the oral examination. Prior to submitting the video, candidates should obtain a copy of a Voluntary Informed Consent Agreement signed by the client, as well as any relevant Health Information Portability and Privacy Act (HIPPA). These documents must be submitted with the video if they have not been presented with the Practice Sample. (If candidates are using groups or families, they must get an individual consent agreement from each participant.)

The video should be no more than six months old prior to the submission. The video should be an unrehearsed session (any modality) depicting a typical intervention in one's practice. Candidates are encouraged to submit video samples that reflect their competence and expertise (typical rather than exemplary situations are customary) and that depict their interactive style in their professional context(s).

Videos shall be submitted in a continuous, unedited 45-minute-run on DVD, CD format discs, or a usb flash drive. The video shall provide continuous audible interactions between the Candidate and the other participant(s) and depict visible interactions, preferably between the Candidate and other participant(s), but in all cases at least the Candidate. Good audio and video quality is essential. If the audio is not completely clear and distinct, the Candidate must provide a typed transcript of the session.

A sample Voluntary Consent Agreement is in Appendix B. This agreement (or any other version employed) should include a full explanation of the nature and purpose of the examination, the fact that those involved in the examination process will review the Practice Sample and that the video will be returned to the Candidate upon successful completion of the examination. (If candidates are using groups or families, they must get an individual consent agreement from each participant.) Candidates should take great care to remove all identifiers from all materials, including test protocols.