Oral Examination for Board Certification in Clinical Health Psychology:

Organizing yourself and preparing for the exam
Objectives

• Gain information about the four portions of the clinical health psychology oral examination
• Develop a better understanding of what to expect on examination day
• Identify methods of preparation for the examination
• Learn about virtual adaptations of the examination
Presenters

• Lloyd Berg, Ph.D., ABPP
• Christina Shook, Psy.D., ABPP
• Julie Radico, Psy.D., ABPP
• Mark Vogel, Ph.D., ABPP
Oral Examination

- Typically scheduled 3 times/year
- $450 fee for oral examination
- Assessment Center Model
  - Candidates meet with a different examiner for each module of the 4-hour oral examination
- Collegial in nature
Oral Examination

• 4 modules:
  – Ethical and Legal Issues
  – Professional Issues
  – Practice Sample or Distinguished Senior Candidate Portfolio
  – Standardized Clinical Case Assessment & Integration

• 5 cross-cutting competencies assessed:
  – Science base & application, interpersonal interactions, individual/cultural diversity, ethical & legal foundations, professional identification*
### Oral Examination New Cross Cutting Competencies for Those Applying After 12/18

#### Foundational Competencies
- Professionalism
- Reflective Practice/Self-Assessment/Self-Care
- Scientific Knowledge and Methods
- Relationships
- Individual and Cultural Diversity
- Ethical Legal Standards and Policy
- Interdisciplinary Systems
- Evidence-Based Practice

#### Functional Competencies
- Assessment
- Intervention
- Consultation
- Research/Evaluation
- Supervision
- Teaching
- Management/Administration
- Advocacy
What to Expect On Exam Day
(in person or virtual)

• Who will be there?
  – You, examinees, examiners, (examiners in training, location staff)
• Spans 5 hours, inclusive of breaks.
• Restroom.
• You will be assigned a (virtual) room, examiners will come to you.
• Information for each task will be provided in each section with clear parameters stated.
• You will NOT be given feedback that day.
Virtual

• Make sure to choose an environment that limits distractions and where you can be alone.
• You will be asked to **show your exam environment**.
• Allowed to bring copies of the materials you submitted for the written section such as your work samples.
  – Standardized case section: allowed to take notes or use a clinical interview outline, but whatever you write on we will request for you to shred after the exam.
• **Provide a phone number**, on which you can be reached the day of the exam.
  – This is a back-up in case there are unforeseen connectivity issues.
What are the Examiners Looking for?

• Many things, none of which are secret or are meant to trick you.

• **Think Out Loud.**
  – **Tell** the examiner what you are thinking.
    • What would be different if you had more or less information?
    • What would you have done differently if you could change ___?
Mistakes

• Be prepared to manage your anxiety.
  – The examiners want to know what you know, not prove what you don't know
  – Utilize your self-coaching/self-soothing strategies

• What to do if when you goof up.
  – Identify your mistake and address it (Name it!)
  – Show flexibility and critical thinking as information changes
General Encouragement

- Eat
- Hydrate
- Dress professionally (even during virtual exams)
- Be polite
- Set aside plenty of travel time
  - log in early
- Maintain confidentiality
  - Can still support fellow candidates
Questions About Preparing for the Oral Exam

• How did you go about preparing for the oral exam?
• Were their unique methods you utilized to prepare for each of the exam portions:
  – Ethical and Legal Issues?
  – Professional Issues?
  – Standardized Clinical Case Assessment and Integration?
  – Practice Sample?
# How to Prepare for Ethical Issues

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<th>How to Prepare</th>
<th>How to Navigate</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Read through the latest <a href="https://www.apa.org/ethics">APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct</a></td>
<td>• Remember that ethical and legal principles are applied not only in the ethics section, but throughout all portions of the exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Read through your state licensing board code of ethics and any code of ethics at your institution</td>
<td>• Be prepared to discuss ethical issues you have faced in your practice setting (not just those you provided in your practice sample)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consider reviewing a book of case studies related to health service psychology and have someone quiz</td>
<td>• Be able to discuss broader interprofessional ethics scenarios and population health ethics</td>
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<td>• Review laws in your state pertaining to the practice of psychology</td>
<td>• Identify how issues of diversity may come to play in any ethical or legal situations faced</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If you work in an institution or federal agency (VA/DoD), review how state laws and ethical principles are applied in your unique settings</td>
<td>• Identify some of the unique ethical scenarios faced by those practicing health psychology compared with other areas of psychology</td>
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# How to Prepare for Standardized Clinical Case Assessment and Integration

## How to Prepare

- Review a full health psychology textbook covering major health disorders and consider making notecards related to evidence-based assessment and intervention processes for each disorder.
- Quiz yourself on these assessment and intervention practices.
- Review your standardized health psychology assessment template with the latest literature; update if appropriate.

## How to Navigate

- Remember to bring a blank standardized assessment/intake template with you.
- If you don't ask something, the examiner will not offer the information – so don't be afraid to reference your template to make sure you review all relevant areas.
- Time your questions well – you only have 20-25 minutes to gather information.
- It's OK if you haven't treated either of the cases given to you. Reference what you know from the literature from your review and denote how you might refer/consult.
## How to Prepare for Professional Issues

**How to Prepare**

- Familiarize yourself with the [APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems](https://www.apa.org)
- Identify examples of how your professional activities align with each of the guidelines
- Be able to demonstrate identification as a CHP through involvement in professional organizations and professional development
- Be able to discuss professional self-assessment and how you remain up-to-date with professional competencies

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<tr>
<td>• Familiarize yourself with the APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems</td>
<td>• No outside notes or materials are used during this portion of the exam</td>
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<td>• Identify examples of how your professional activities align with each of the guidelines</td>
<td>• Don't hesitate to reference your personal statement – and be prepared to provide additional examples</td>
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<td>• Be able to demonstrate identification as a CHP through involvement in professional organizations and professional development</td>
<td>• If asked about a controversial CHP issue (ex., Rx privileges for psychologists), you will not be judged on your opinion; what is important is demonstrating an informed understanding of other perspectives</td>
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<td>• Be able to discuss professional self-assessment and how you remain up-to-date with professional competencies</td>
<td>• Remember, this is an opportunity to highlight your accomplishments!</td>
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How to Prepare for Practice Sample Discussion

### How to Prepare

- Review your case: What clinical practice areas of health psychology might be addressed?
- Be clear on how you decided on this case, rationale for your interventions, and conclusions reached
- How the case exemplifies your professional practice

### How to Navigate

- Expect questions that go beyond the case and examine your professional knowledge and skills:
  - controversies, problems, and gaps in our knowledge base
- Demonstrate a reasonable, rational, and defensible approach
Telehealth Practice

• How has your practice changed over a short period of time due to the Covid-19 pandemic and telehealth?
  – What makes it easier or more difficult for your specialty
  – What are some of the ethical issues related to this model of care
Upon Passing the Orals…

- Chair of exam committee sends results to ABPP Central Office
  - Candidates receive notice within 1 month
- Use of title ‘Board Certified in Clinical Health Psychology’
- Immediately conferred membership (Fellow status) in the American Academy of Clinical Health Psychology
- 20 CEU credits
- Recognition at ABPP Convocation at APA national convention
Questions?

Additional Resources
• American Academy of Clinical Health Psychology Website
• ACHP Video Tutorials

Please feel free to reach out to us with questions:
• Lisa.Kearney3@va.gov
• vogel1@msu.edu
• Christina.Shook@va.gov
• Juliera@pcom.edu