

Academy of Psychological Clinical Science (APCS) – Annual Meeting
Thursday, May 21, 2020

2020 APCS Membership Meeting

May 21, 2020

10:00 am, PDT (12:00 pm CDT, 1 pm EDT)

Zoom Meeting ID: 966 5758 4035

Present: Nicholas Eaton (SUNY Stony Brook), Mitch Prinstein (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill), Jennifer Callahan (University of North Texas), Alan Kraut (PCSAS), Amy Fiske (West Virginia University), Angus MacDonald (University of Minnesota), Atina Manvelian (University of Arizona, Doctoral Student), Rebecca Ready (UMass Amherst), Beth McQuaid (Brown University Internship), Bethany Teachman (University of Virginia), Brian D’Onofrio (Indiana University), Christine Larson (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Cindy Yee-Bradbury (UCLA), David Sbarra (University of Arizona), Debora Bell (University of Missouri), Edward Selby (Rutgers), Howard Berenbaum (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), Jeanette Hsu (VA Palo Alto Internship), Jennifer Cheavens (Ohio State University), Joanne Davila (SUNY Stony Brook), Justin Lavner (University of Georgia), Kiara Timpano (University of Miami), Lauren McGrath (University of Denver), Linda Craighead (Emory University), Linnea Burk (University of Wisconsin Madison), Lisa Starr (University of Rochester), Marc Atkins (University of Illinois at Chicago Internship), Mary O’Brien (Yale University), Mary-Frances O’Connor (University of Arizona), Meghan McDevitt-Murphy (University of Memphis), Melanie Dirks (McGill University), Michele Levine (WPIC Internship), Naomi Tabak (Southern Methodist University), Patricia Llewellyn (University of Virginia), Michael Pogue-Geile (University of Pittsburgh), Rhonda Sena (UCLA), Rich McNally (Harvard), Risa Weisberg (VA Boston Internship), Robert Levenson (UC Berkeley), Ryan Beveridge (University of Delaware), Sherryl Goodman (Emory), Stacy Frazier (Florida International University), Stephanie Mullins-Sweatt (Oklahoma State University), Susan Evans (Weill-Cornell Internship), Susan South (Purdue University), Tara Mehta (University of Illinois at Chicago Internship), Teresa Treat (University of Iowa), Thomas Rodebaugh (Washington University in St. Louis), Tim Fowles (University of Delaware), Tim Strauman (Duke), Tina Goldstein (University of Pittsburgh), Tom Oltmanns (Washington University in St. Louis), Vanessa Malcarne (UCSD/San Diego State), Viviane Valdes (Emory, Doctoral Student), Wayne Siegel (Minneapolis VA), Anne Zhang (Indiana University), Angela Scarpa (Virginia Tech), Patricia Deldin (University of Michigan), and assistance provided by Elisa Fattoracci (UCLA).

1. Welcome (Cindy Yee-Bradbury)

APCS President Cindy Yee-Bradbury welcomed everyone to the meeting. She noted that the meeting is being recorded to facilitate taking minutes and the recording will be deleted afterwards. Cindy invited attendees to turn off their cameras if it made them more comfortable.

Cindy thanked Dave Sbarra for his many contributions to APCS. She noted that 2020 is the 25th anniversary of APCS. There should have been a special clinical science forum and reception at APS, and they will be rescheduled for a future time.

2. The Forthcoming Requisite National Licensing Exam in Psychology: the EPPP-2 (Tim Strauman)

Tim Strauman acknowledged the work that Jennifer Callahan, Cindy Yee-Bradbury, Joanne Davila, Debi Bell, Sheri Johnson, and Jason Washburn have done concerning the issues surrounding the development and roll-out of the EPPP-2. Tim highly recommends watching Jennifer’s presentation about the EPPP-2. (<https://tinyurl.com/EPPP2talk>). A recent American Psychologist article also provides relevant background (Callahan et al., 2020, American Psychologist, 75, 52-65).

Tim reported that as more information emerges about the EPPP-2, there is growing concern that decisions about training and evaluation of students are being made without input from clinical science faculty and DCTs. Among the issues that have arisen is that there is a limited focus on outcome-based competency assessment and that although other organizations make their test data available, the developers of the EPPP-2, ASPPB, will not do this. At present, ASPPB plans to roll out the EPPP-2 in 2021 in spite of continued feedback that it is not ready.

To summarize, Tim described the development and roll out of the EPPP-2 as a “hot mess.” It is not based on clinical science and is not in the best interest of public health. Tim emphasized that this situation is a crisis for the field. He urged APCS to pair with CUDCP and others on this issue.

Tim highlighted that yesterday CUDCP and other stakeholders had a lengthy meeting with Matt Turner, senior director of examination services at ASPPB, and several ASPPB board members. This meeting maybe cracked the door open a bit to the possibility of more collaboration moving forward. However, Turner indicated that there are no plans to assess reliability or validity of the test beyond content validity. He stated that this approach is consistent with other disciplines; as summarized in Callahan et al. (2020), this is not true. Turner also reiterated that data from the test would not be made available.

Tim noted that a number of outstanding issues and questions remain, including: (1) in the absence of field testing, what evidence is there that passing this test is evidence of being able to practice independently; (2) if an individual passes EPPP-1 but fails EPPP-2 how should that be interpreted; (3) if someone fails the EPPP-2, but then passes it later after taking a test preparation course, how should that be interpreted, (3) it is expected that 95% of the people who pass Part 1 also pass Part 2, thus it’s not clear what additional information Part 2 is providing; (4) it’s not clear that the test performs comparably across subgroups, which is a critical issue given that there is an acute shortage of psychologists in many parts of N. America, and systematic barriers for many individuals pursuing licensure; (5) is it possible for Part 1 and 2 to be integrated to yield a single instrument?; (6) some internship sites are now expecting students to have passed Part 1 before starting and it’s not clear what the implications of that are; (7) there are plans to restrict access to candidates from accredited programs but currently PCSAS is not recognized.

In sum, Tim noted that the test is not based in clinical science and there are currently no other options available or in development.

Cindy thanked Tim and opened the floor for questions.

Mitch Prinstein asked whether ASPPB is responding to a federal requirement. He also questioned why Part 1 is still needed and wondered whether CoA could play a stronger role. He also noted that that the real issue is at the level of state licensure and asked what kinds of state psychological association advocacy efforts are underway.

Debi Bell responded that it’s not clear that ASPPB is responding to the Department of Education. She also noted that ASPPB has maintained that they need to be the gatekeepers in this process. She noted that many people are pushing ASPPB on this issue, and they are highlighting to ASPPB that there are many partners in this process and that there is room for collaboration with accredited programs.

Jennifer Callahan highlighted that the question of why there needs to be two exams is really critical. She noted that using two exams is based on a two-part model of competence that is rooted in a conference held in 2002. She noted that the science has advanced since that time, and suggests that competency is a general factor, which is not consistent with a two-part exam.

Dave Sbarra thanked Jennifer and Tim for their work on this issue. He suggested that we needed to think about what we could do that would change people's minds on this, and noted that it might be helpful to make a companion video to Jennifer's that evoked some of the strong affect that Tim is calling for.

Debi Bell noted that as a result of the meeting held yesterday, CUDCP is going to meet with ASPPB and that APCS has been and will continue to be represented in this process. The explicit goal is to work towards a more formal partnership that oversees the direction of the EPPP-2 and licensure more generally.

Dave Sbarra asked what we should do help move this along. Mitch Prinstein asked whether anyone had sent a coordinated letter to Cathi Grus, who is the chief education officer at APA. Jennifer responded that her sense was that APA was watching but did not want to get involved. Debi noted that thus far, most activity has mostly been through training councils. She suggested that it would be helpful to work with individual state licensing boards, because they are a key stakeholder for ASPPB.

Patty Deldin noted that at the state and federal level, individual voices will not make much of a difference. It will be necessary to get as many individual programs as possible on board with a signed letter, and to involve as many students as possible. The power broker in this process is the state psychological association, and it is necessary to get them to at least be neutral.

Jennifer Callahan agreed with Patty, and noted that when Callahan et al. 2020 came out they sent it to the licensing board in Texas. They then received an invitation to an informal meeting with the state board and licensing association. The state board also received a large volume of calls from students which was viewed as something that could not be ignored.

3. *Report from the Student Engagement Committee – Justin Lavner, Atina Manvelian & Stephanie Sweatt*

Atina Manvelian noted that the mandate of this committee is to spearhead initiatives that address student concerns. She thanked Justin Lavner and Stephanie Sweatt for their work on this committee.

Justin noted that this committee recently completed work on a clearinghouse of resources for students which are compiled in a shared google doc available through the APCS website. They are currently working on a mentoring initiative that has the goal of helping students learn how to get the most out of their mentoring relationships.

There was a very successful call for APCS training awards in the fall, and six applications were funded. The spring cycle had to be postponed due to COVID-19.

Sarah Moss (Ohio State) and Miranda Belzer (University of Virginia) are the two other doctoral students who serve on this committee (with Atina), and their terms are ending this year. The committee will be actively seeking more graduate student members. Justin Lavner will also be ending his term this year and the committee will be actively recruiting a replacement.

Atina noted that one of the ways that the committee is trying to help students improve their mentor-mentee relationships is by encouraging mentors to use mentor-mentee agreements. These are informal contracts that are co-created together and consist of two parts. Part 1 focuses on lab culture and roles and expectations. Part 2 is focused on setting goals for each semester. These contracts provide both the mentor and the mentee with feedback, and they improve student wellness and increase productivity.

The committee is collating resources related to creating these contracts and will be sending them to mentors soon.

4. Applying for Internships in the Era of COVID-19 – Wayne Siegel

Wayne reported that a group of academy internships met at ABCT and talked about trying to coordinate interview dates. There was interest in doing that but the consensus was that they needed to wait until after the 2020 match to move forward. Right after the 2020 match, COVID-19 happened which derailed that process. However, COVID-19 has really brought the idea of doing virtual interviews to the forefront, and represents a great opportunity to make changes in this area.

Wayne has had a lot of discussions with training directors about this issue and there is a lot of receptivity among them to the idea of virtual interviews. He has also had conversations with the APPIC board. Wayne noted that he does not speak for the APPIC board, and his sense is that they will not mandate virtual interviews but will recommend that programs go this route. APPIC is updating the online directory to include a category for programs to indicate whether they will hold virtual interviews and they are also hosting a webinar focused on how to manage virtual interviews. Wayne noted that his program has a statement online that they will only do virtual interviews next year. They are proposing three dates and planning to interview 25 to 30 people. Wayne anticipates that his program will continue to use this approach even after the situation with COVID-19 has been resolved. He is aware that many applicants think that they will be rated higher if they show up to the site in person, so they are going to remove this as an option.

5. Goals for Advancing Clinical Science – Breakout Groups (20 minutes)

At this point in the meeting, participants split up into break up groups to discuss specific topics of interest, specifically: (1) the ramifications of COVID-19 (led by Chris Larson and Atina Manvelian), (2) alleviating the financial demands of applying to graduate programs and diversifying the applicant pool (led by Melanie Dirks and Nick Eaton), (3) reducing the burden of applying to internships (led by Wayne Siegel and Susan South), and (4) achieving PCSAS parity in a dual-accreditation environment (led by Joanne Davila and Dave Sbarra). A summary of these discussions is presented in sections 6a to d.

6. Summary of breakout group discussions.

The group reconvened to learn about what was discussed in the breakout sessions.

(a) The ramifications of COVID-19 (Chris Larson and Atina Manvelian)

In this group, Bethany Teachman reported that CAAPS had run a large survey assessing student concerns about COVID-19, and the results indicated that their big concern was availability of data. Atina highlighted that Edward Selby had noted that maybe we can view this time as a way to think about how we could transform graduate training. For example, are there ways to share resources among programs or for students to take courses at different institutions? Concerns were raised about job prospects dwindling. Participants also expressed concern about how this situation would affect vulnerable students, including students from underrepresented groups. It was also noted that programs will have to think about how they will handle admissions.

Bethany Teachman noted that CAAPS would create a shared google doc to report the results of the survey and would reach out to APCS leadership regarding this issue.

(b) Alleviating the financial demands of applying to graduate programs and diversifying the applicant pool (Melanie Dirks and Nick Eaton)

Nick Eaton reported that this group framed their discussion around two issues that result when applicants have to travel to doctoral programs to interview: (1) It's expensive and many universities do not give reimbursement; (2) There is often a bottleneck of interviews in January and February, which may force applicants to decline interviews. Importantly, in person interviews have implications for diversity in training programs, as they advantage more privileged applicants. This year, many programs will be forced to have virtual interviews due to COVID-19, but if it goes well, programs may adopt this approach moving forward. The possibility of releasing an Academy statement regarding issues that arise from in-person interviews was discussed. The possibility of collecting data to assess the validity and reliability of our interview practices was also discussed.

Wayne Siegel noted that in-person interviews create similar issues for internship and doctoral programs. It was pointed out that one reason to hold in-person interviews is so that applicants can get a better sense of the program. Nick suggested that having in-person visits after acceptances are offered would allow students to do that while reducing the equity issues arising from holding interviews prior to admissions decisions. Rhonda Sena highlighted that it will be important to have a discussion of stipends for interns, which are often low and do not provide a living wage. Risa Weisberg highlighted that we should rethink whether a one-year internship is the best approach, given the costs associated with moving and possibly supporting two different homes. Integrating internship and post-doctoral fellowships together may reduce some of this burden. Alternatively, students could do their internships in their doctoral programs.

Atina Manvelian suggesting creating a working group to continue working on this issues. She also highlighted issues of privilege that occur before applications to doctoral programs and internship, including the cost of the GRE, and the fact that many students work for free in labs to gain experience.

(c) Reducing the burden of applying to internships (Wayne Siegel and Susan South)

Wayne Siegel noted that there was a lot of agreement among people in this group about the negative impacts of in-person internship interviews on students. They reported that this group discussed the issue of training councils, and having these councils be driven more by internship programs than doctoral programs.

A lot of discussion in this group focused on doing virtual interviews. They discussed the importance of engaging APPIC, as well as how internships could pool resources and help each other figure out how best to move forward with virtual interviews. Wayne noted that one thing doctoral programs could do is educate their students about virtual interviewing (e.g., the technology that is used).

Atina Manvelian highlighted that it will be helpful to include students in these discussions and Wayne agreed that this was critical.

Mitch Prinstein highlighted that for students who are fortunate to get a lot of interviews, the lack of a uniform notification date for interviews is problematic, and Lisa Starr noted that students are being told to check their emails constantly when they are waiting for interviews which is creating stress. Risa Weisberg highlighted that it does not have to be the case that programs assign students to an interview day with no flexibility, and encouraged programs to think outside of the box. Doug Samuel noted that one advantage to having in person interviews is that these interactions may help programs evaluate students. There was discussion about other ways to achieve this; for example, Mitch Prinstein wondered if it might be possible to revamp the letter of recommendation to cover topics like social skills.

(d) Achieving PCSAS parity in a dual-accreditation environment (Joanne Davila and Dave Sbarra)

Joanne Davila noted that over time we will have programs moving to having only PCSAS accreditation, and this group was focused on thinking about what students in these programs will need to ensure unrestricted access to training and employment opportunities. For example, we need to ensure that we are creating job ads that are inclusive of applicants not coming from APA/CPA accredited programs. In terms of achieving licensing parity, the group discussed the importance of getting the correct people on board to make legislative changes. PCSAS is always willing to consult on these issues, and anyone who is pursuing licensing parity can contact PCSAS for help.

Much of the discussion was focused on how to ensure that students from PCSAS programs will have access to internship. Group members highlighted the importance of making sure that training directors and internship faculty really understand what PCSAS is. It was suggested that it may be helpful to have PCSAS representatives meet with internship faculty.

Dave Sbarra noted that APCS internships are in a position to lead on this issue, and that we should help APCS internships to educate non-academy internships about who PCSAS students are.

Mary-Frances O'Connor highlighted that it will be important to think about other groups that we may need to work with around understanding PCSAS. For example, students in health psych or neuropsych may need additional certifications.

Cindy Yee-Bradbury noted that APCS has been actively trying to increase the number of internship programs who are members. Susan Evans, who is the training director at Weill-Cornell, noted that their program joined because Tim Strauman spoke with her about it and supported her through the application process and that this personalized approach was very helpful. Beth McQuaid highlighted that it remains unclear to internships how they would benefit from APCS membership, because historically the focus has been on doctoral programs. Dave noted that Wayne Seigel developed a recruitment document that may help with this. Susan Evans noted that since Weill-Cornell joined APCS, they have gotten more applicants from APCS doctoral programs. Her sense is that these students are looking for an APCS internship.

7. Wrap-up and Future Directions – Cindy Yee-Bradbury

Cindy Yee-Bradbury wrapped up the meeting by acknowledging the contributions of Joanne Davila and the Academy Executive committee and she thanked the members for participating. Cindy highlighted that there is still much work to be done, and that ultimately the future of clinical science will come down to all of us. Cindy looks forward to receiving feedback about the meeting.