

DRAFT

November 4, 2007

TO : THE APA MODEL ACT TASK FORCE

FROM: SIOP Committee (Janet Barnes-Farrell, Judith Blanton, Jose Cortina, Robert Dipboye, Deirdre Knapp, Ed Salas)

The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) has reviewed the current draft of the APA Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists.

Because this is such an important issue, we respectfully suggest that the Model Act Task Force delay a final draft until SIOP can address this issue in more depth and provide a more complete critique. We are planning a summit in which these issues can be discussed thoughtfully and with additional data on important issues such as current curriculum requirements in I-O programs, alternate models of supervision of I-O students, etc. In the interim, however we do want to respond with our initial comments.

We recognize that considerable thought and effort have gone into this draft; however we have serious concerns related to the needs of our division membership. Before proposing specific changes, we would like to give some context to our perspective.

First, despite the fact that a majority of jurisdictions require licensure of I-O psychologists, relatively few I-O psychologists are licensed. There are several reasons for this circumstance, including (a) that most employers and clients of I-O psychologists do not expect us to be licensed ; (b) most state licensure requirements are not suited to the discipline of I-O psychology, making it difficult or impossible for I-O psychologists to obtain licensure; and (c) the feeling by many I-O psychologists (and evidently their clients and/or employers) that licensure is not required to protect the public from the services most of us render in our practices.

In the 1987 Model Act, most I-O psychologists were exempt from licensure because they provide services to organizations. The underlying assumption to this provision is that organizations are not vulnerable in the way that individuals receiving mental health care services clearly are. It is also the case that the employment-related selection and performance management services provided by I-O psychologists that impact individuals through their relationship to employing organizations are also heavily regulated by Federal and state laws. There is a diversity of opinion in our division regarding licensure reflecting the varying nature of our practices, however, there is no doubt that many of us continue to believe that the services we provide as psychologists do not warrant licensure. There are others whose services include, for example, executive coaching, who arguably should be licensed. Finally there are many of us who strongly identify with our chosen profession of psychology but are prohibited in many jurisdictions from legally calling ourselves psychologists. In jurisdictions in which we are unable to be licensed because of the nature of the requirements for licensure, this is particularly frustrating.

There is considerable interest from many of our members in seeing the 1987 exemption for psychologists providing services to organizations restored for the reasons cited above. We ask that the Task Force consider these arguments. The remainder of our recommendations, however, focus on the requirements for licensure, which we feel must be further revised to make them more suitable for I-O psychologists and other practicing non-health service provider (HSP) psychologists. We are committed to ensuring that APA's new Model Act facilitates the establishment of licensure requirements that are suited to the education and training of I-O psychologists rather than a retro-fitting of an HSP-oriented system.

The Definitions section is useful for educating licensing boards about the breadth of what practicing psychologists do in addition to clinical and counseling services. This is important because, despite the diversity of disciplines in psychology, most jurisdictions have generic licensure. The only thing that prevents psychologists from working outside of their area of expertise is the APA (or comparable) Ethics Code. We have thus suggested language that emphasizes the need for retraining when a psychologist wishes to shift from one specialty area to another. Indeed, we would prefer that states have multiple licensure systems such as that used in Virginia to help address both the conceptual differences between HSP and non-HSP requirements and to minimize the possibility that a licensed psychologist could practice well outside the specialty in which he or she was originally licensed.

There is considerable momentum within SIOP to more fully articulate standards for education and practice in our discipline to foster quality performance of psychologists offering services in our specialty. We hope that these efforts can be used to help licensing jurisdictions apply education standards suitable for I-O psychologists and retraining for licensed psychologists from other disciplines who wish to shift their practice from individuals to organizations.

Although there has clearly been an effort to target the education, supervision and practice of I-O psychologists in the new Model Act, there are areas that need modification or clarification to ensure that the Act is relevant for I-O practitioners. As a division of APA, SIOP objects to APA promulgation and advocacy of any model licensing legislation that has the potential to create barriers for I-O psychologists and other non-HSPs to practice in their areas of expertise. The current version of the Model Act includes language that continues to be problematic in this respect.

Below , we have noted comments on specific lines of the Act.

A. Declaration of Policy

(Line 61)

We recommend removing the words "licensed and" from this line. Requiring that practitioners be BOTH licensed and qualified runs directly contrary to later statements in the Model Act which explicitly exempt some individuals from the requirement of licensure.

B. Definitions:

(Line 101)

Insert the word “prediction” after interpretation, as this is a major goal of I-O psychology practice.

(Lines 116 to 118)

Many other professionals (such as consultants with degrees in Organizational Behavior (OB) and Master’s –degree level practitioners) actively and legitimately provide the services described in these lines. We assume that this law would not preclude the exercise of their training and experience.

Section B.5 Health service provider

(Lines 129-133)

We suggest that this paragraph be changed to include non-HSPs or that an additional paragraph be added that addresses Non-Health Service Providers that would clarify this role and any unique scientific and professional training they require.

Section C. Board composition

(Lines 175-179)

We support the recommendation that a Board involve licensed psychologists but further suggest that Boards should be encouraged to involve a non-HSP psychologist as one of the six psychologists.

(Lines 214-216)

Add to the end of line 216 “, nor does it automatically exempt the Board as an entity from legal action permissible under applicable state law.” This addition still protects board members as individuals and it does not create any legal liability to the board as a whole unless state law allows it. However, where state law does permit, it explicitly offers protection to psychologists as well as the public. Most important, it reminds boards that they also are accountable for their actions, which is sometimes needed.

Educational Requirements

(Lines 227-229)

Each practitioner must also master the specific skills and knowledge appropriate for the competent performance of psychological practice.

The following lines should be added:

It is expected that individuals practice within their scope of training. Those without formal training in a specialty area (such as I-O, Neuropsychological or Forensic psychology) would be expected to undergo substantial additional training and supervision if they wanted to practice in such an area.

We appreciate the Task Force's efforts to broaden the acceptance of programs beyond those that are APA or CPA accredited. However, APA/CPA accreditation still appears to represent the preferred and default means of recognizing that appropriate educational requirements have been met. We believe that the Model Act should explicitly state that APA/CPA accreditation is not available for all specialties in professional psychology. Furthermore, we suggest that an additional option be added (beyond the criteria noted in lines 257 to 307). Because I-O and other non-HSP programs have unique needs and criteria for quality, we suggest that carefully identified professional bodies be allowed to suggest criteria to the states to assist them to judge the quality of such programs. For example, SIOP or another recognized APA Division might suggest criteria for States to judge the quality of a program.

The modification in wording would be in lines 254-256 and would read:

Applicants for licensure shall have completed a doctoral program in psychology that is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) or that meets the requirements listed below

Any specialized training for non-HSP programs should include a curriculum based on criteria established by the applicable specialty division within APA or CPA, for example, criteria established by SIOP for I-O programs. .

SIOP would not, itself, approve or accredit programs but would offer jurisdictions (or ASPPB/National Register) clear criteria for them to judge the quality of graduates from I-O programs. SIOP is currently discussing the process of developing credentialing criteria and/or working with ASPPB/National Register to facilitate the ability of I-O programs to be designated.

Lines 285-289

We suggest that it be clear that the examples in parenthesis aimed at providing examples of courses that fit the content area are examples only and not inclusive. It would also be valuable to provide examples of courses that would be appropriate for I-O or other non-HSPs.

For example, under h: individual differences it could read:

h: individual differences (for example personality theory, human development, personnel psychology and abnormal psychology)

or under "cognitive-affective basis of behavior", the content area of job attitudes could be added.

It should also be made clear that content could be imbedded in the coursework rather than being a separate class with the name of one of the designated areas. For areas such as ethics, this would actually be preferable.

D. 2. Experience Requirements

We support the Task Force's efforts to assist non-HSPs that do not have formal internships approved by APA to obtain their supervision experience post doctorally (see lines 311-319)

We note that many I-O programs already have excellent practicum experiences or internships but these are not APA approved. Many are taught by faculty who are not licensed. We would like to find a way of recognizing these programs and the experience they provide to our doctoral students so the students could obtain pre-doctoral credit for such experience. Some way of noting that internships within non-HSP programs could be recognized would be very useful. In addition, we think it is important to be able to recognize such experience within an I-O program even if the direct supervisor was not licensed. The reality is that although a faculty member (who is licensed or not) oversees such internships, placements for professionals in the field of I-O psychology are often in large corporations where the direct supervisor is an HR executive or other non-licensed person but who is highly qualified to provide appropriate educational experience.

Another major concern is the difficulty for a non-HSP such an I-O psychologist to find licensed supervisors to provide the post doctoral experience. We believe it is important to find creative options for these people. Supervision by a licensed clinician for example would meet the requirement of the law but such a supervisor would not be appropriate to guide and support the I-O psychologist. States such as California, Texas and Georgia have developed models that allow alternate supervisory models for non-HSPs and we recommend that states should develop such options that acknowledge the realities of non-clinical practice.

(Line 319) add an additional sentence

Any change of practice from that of the original graduate training would be expected to require additional education and supervision.

(Line 417)

PUT BACK A VARIATION OF OLD SECTION

This limitation is intended to ensure that a psychologist trained in one area (e.g. experimental or developmental) will not practice in another area (e.g. counseling, industrial/ organizational) without additional, substantial and appropriate training.

E. Interstate Practice of psychology

(Lines 372 -391).

We appreciate the efforts of the Model Act task force to ease the issue of inter-jurisdictional practice. Many I-O psychologists work with client organizations that span multiple jurisdictions. Limits to inter-jurisdictional practice are a major impediment to practice and put psychologists at a competitive disadvantage to other professionals who face no legal obstacles when practicing across boundaries. We would encourage the least possible hindrance for psychologists who are licensed in one state to provide appropriate services in another jurisdiction.

We support a minimum of 60 days cross-state practice and oppose any requirement to obtain advance approval of any cross-jurisdictional work.

G. Limitations of Practice; Maintaining and Expanding Competence.

(Lines 422-424).

The statement that practice should be limited to areas of competence is an important one. We believe that the basis for demonstrating competence in a particular area should include substantial graduate level training in that area prior to embarking on that area of practice, followed by practical supervision. We recommend that an explicit statement to this effect be inserted on line 424, immediately preceding “The Board develops...”

J. Exemptions

(Line 477 to 496)

As discussed at the beginning of this document, we believe that most I-O psychologists as well as their clients and employers, do not perceive a need for licensure of I-O psychology practice activities in order to protect the public. We therefore recommend restoration of the 1987 Model Licensure Act wording which exempts psychologists providing services to organizations from licensure.

(Lines 544-548) – Grandparenting of I-O and consulting psychologists.

We support efforts to grandparent those who have previously been exempt or excluded from license. However, even in jurisdictions where it may have been possible to be licensed, laws and regulations often made this extremely difficult for non-HSPs and there was little effort to encourage them to be licensed. We would urge the Model Act to broaden the possibility of “Grandparenting” for I-O and Consulting Psychologists within all jurisdictions.