The APA Council of Representatives met February 17 through 19, 2006 in Washington, DC. From the perspective of Division 14 members, the meeting was more eventful than some. A particularly relevant Workgroup Report on Education and Training Leading to Licensure was discussed at considerable length among your Council Representatives and the representatives of other divisions in the hours leading up to the meeting. The outcome of these discussions was a revised APA policy statement regarding the nature/extent of supervised experience required for licensure. The new policy statement, which was adopted by APA Council in February 2006, responds to SIOP’s expressed concerns that the supervised experience requirement should not preclude appropriately trained members of our division from practicing in their areas of competence.

Some history will probably help. In 2000, a commission was appointed within APA to review the status of education and training leading to licensure. The commission reported back in 2001 with recommended changes to APA policy. Bill Macey was president of SIOP at the time and responded with a number of concerns about those changes (see TIP; January 2002). The Executive Committee was particularly concerned over language that would preclude I-O psychologists as being identified as psychologists or practicing in areas where we are competent to practice. This was in part because the proposed policy stipulated a requirement for APA or CPA accredited predoctoral internships, which simply would not be relevant or appropriate for I-O psychologists.

The Council of Representatives deferred taking action on the recommendations and commissioned a workgroup to review progress of various constituencies (including the Board of Professional Affairs and the Board of Educational Affairs) charged with working together to address the original recommendations. In August 2005, APA Council received the workgroup report and proposed policy statement. The report was disseminated widely on August 29 for comment. Leaetta Hough responded for SIOP noting some remaining concerns but also indicating that the proposed policy change had been modified in a way that no longer referenced the specific form in which supervised experience might be achieved. That was good news for I-O psychologists.

As is normally the case, the agenda for the February council meeting was sent to your Council Representatives several weeks in advance. To our surprise, the proposed policy statement had been revised again (because of concerns brought forward by other groups) to require an internship as a require-
ment for licensure. The wording of the then current motion read to say with respect to the requirement for supervised experience that “One of these years shall include a predoctoral internship and the other shall be of supervised professional training.” This had replaced the wording “…applicants demonstrate that they have completed two years of supervised experience.” Clearly, this was an unwelcome development.

Prior to the start of the council meeting on February 17, your Council Representatives attended the meeting of the Coalition of Academic, Scientific, and Applied Psychologists (CASAP), a caucus representing the interests of scientific psychologists at which the proposed policy statement and workgroup report was discussed. There, we argued that the motion was unacceptable because it failed to recognize the concerns of nonhealthcare psychologists. The meeting was attended by several representatives of the APA Board of Directors, and immediately following the CASAP meeting a discussion was held with representatives of other interested divisions (notably, Leona Aiken of Division 5, Ann O’Roark of Division 13, Steve Sellman of Division 19, and Hank Taylor of Division 21). With their support and that of Tom DeMaio of the Board of Directors, a substitute motion was prepared and then accepted by Council. The relevant portion of that motion reads as follows:

The American Psychological Association recommends that for admission to licensure applicants demonstrate that they have completed a sequential, organized, supervised professional experience equivalent to two years of full-time training that can be completed prior or subsequent to the granting of the doctoral degree. For applicants prepared for practice in the health services domain of psychology, one of those two years of supervised professional experience shall be a predoctoral internship.

This alternative addressed our concerns, limiting the internship requirement to the health services providers. This was achieved because of the collaborative views taken by many individuals. Your Council Representatives are particularly grateful to their colleagues in other divisions for their support.