

## **MEMO FROM THE BOARD**

### **Suggestions Concerning Demonstrable Competency Forms, Work Samples, and the Oral Examination**

The Board of Examiners has been concerned for some time that there may be confusion or uncertainty among supervised psychologists and supervisors concerning the demonstrable competency forms, other written materials such as work samples, and the expectations for oral exams. The Board would like to pass along the following observations and comments, in hopes of clarifying our expectations and therefore improving communication and understanding between the Board and supervised psychologists and their supervisors.

1. Since psychology is both a discipline and a profession, we expect that licensure candidates are at least minimally familiar with the professional literature, ethical and legal issues, and current norms for practice in all areas that they consider themselves adequately prepared for independent practice.
2. The Demonstrable Competency forms should be seen as the vehicle for the candidate and supervisor to define a proposed scope of practice. It is very unlikely that any psychologist, at the time of initial licensure, is adequately prepared for practice in all areas of psychology and with all populations. It is sometimes challenging for supervisors and candidates to clarify exactly what candidates' particular areas of competence may be. This may be particularly difficult when the supervised work has been in a very general setting such as a behavioral health center. Even so, it is the mutual responsibility of supervisor and supervisee to carefully and appropriately identify areas of competence.
3. When licensure candidates and supervisors indicate perceived competence in any specific area of practice, the candidate is stating that he or she believes that they have the requisite knowledge, training and skill in that area to offer these services to the public. Candidates should be prepared to demonstrate how their education and supervised experience has prepared them for this work.
4. Appropriate preparation includes sustained study and supervised work in the proposed area. On the other extreme, simply having worked with several client/patients from a particular population or with a particular disorder, or having attended a single CE workshop, or sitting in with a supervisor for a few sessions is not sufficient preparation for including an area in the scope of practice. In situations where the applicant's graduate transcript does not include evidence of coursework in specific areas of practice, it is particularly important for applicants to be prepared to demonstrate/document the adequacy of their preparation.
5. Work samples submitted for the oral exam should reflect all primary areas of interest and of intended scope of practice. The Board assumes that the work samples are chosen because they are what the candidate and supervisor consider to be appropriate examples of the candidates work, and that they are good

examples of the type and quality of work performed in everyday practice. As such, the Board assumes that the candidate will be prepared to discuss the work samples in some detail, and to respond to questions about such things as implications of test results, rationale/justification for diagnoses and/or therapeutic strategies, alternative conceptualizations for the client/patient's problems, relationship between evaluation results and treatment strategies, use of diagnoses and other information from other professionals (if such are in the report), and ethical issues noted by the applicant or embedded in the work samples.

6. The scope of practice can change over time. It is certainly a sign of professional growth when psychologists seek out additional training and expertise. At any time, a psychologist can and should notify the Board that she/he has obtained additional training and supervised experience in a new area and wishes to modify his or her scope of practice. The Board will review the materials submitted to document the additional training, and will respond to the request. A new oral (limited to the new area(s)) may be required by the Board.
7. The Board believes that supervision is itself an area of competence, and thus not an automatic right associated with licensure. When applicants indicate on the form that they believe that they are ready to supervise "supervised psychologists", they should be prepared to describe/discuss how their education, training, and supervised experience has prepared them to be supervised. Simply having been supervised is not sufficient experience! Useful evidence would include coursework in supervision, significant involvement with reading and continuing education in the area of supervision, "apprentice" work as a co-supervisor with a more experienced supervisor, knowledge of laws, rules, and ethical issues associated with supervision, and overall sufficient professional experience to prepare a person to handle the supervisory responsibilities that are intended.