

Bylaws of the Specialty Council for Serious Mental Illness (SMI) Psychology

Article I – Name

The name of the organization shall be the Specialty Council for Psychological Training in Serious Mental Illness (SMI) Psychology.

Article II – Purposes

The purposes of the Council are to:

1. Promote understanding of the etiology, nature, impact, and amelioration of serious mental illness and severe emotional disturbance (SMI/SED) among psychologists and the general public;
2. Advance appropriate education and training of psychologists with regard to the etiology, nature, impact, and amelioration of SMI and SED.

The Council works to achieve these purposes by:

- (a) developing and maintaining standards, including evaluation mechanisms, for the education and training of psychologists at all levels, focusing on the post-doctoral (specialization) level;
- (b) encouraging the development of psychological knowledge and expertise through research and other means that are relevant to SMI and SED;
- (c) providing a forum for information exchange for psychologists treating those with SMI and SED;
- (d) communicating the most recent psychological knowledge, research, evidence and practice developments relevant to SMI and SED through education and training, principally to psychologists but also to other health professionals and to the general public.

The Council is responsible for providing guidance about the overall processes and procedures for specialty status in this specialization. The Council receives recommendations from the Council's committees and makes determinations about adoption of those recommendations.

Article III – General Provisions

As a national body concerned principally with the education and training of psychologists, the Council is governed by the bylaws, rules, and policies of the American Psychological Association (APA) in addition to these Council-specific bylaws.

Article IV – Membership

National and international organizations with an interest in training psychologists to work with individuals with SMI and SED may apply to be organizational members and after acceptance will identify representatives to serve as members in the Council. Founding organizational members of the Council are: The APA Task Force on SMI/SED, Division 18 of the APA, the APA Division 18 SMI/SED Section (as a separate entity from Division 18), and the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) Psychosis and Schizophrenia Spectrum Special Interest Group (PASS-SIG). Organizations may be added to the Council membership by a majority vote of the existing Council members. Organizations may be removed from the Council by a unanimous vote of the members of the Council not affiliated with the organization subject to removal.

Each member organization shall nominate two individuals to represent the organization to the Council as members. The term of service of each representative shall be two years, beginning and ending following the end of the APA convention. Representatives serve at the pleasure of their organization and may serve as many terms as their organization wishes. To ensure continuity, terms of service for the representatives of any one organization shall not expire at the same time, i.e., in the same year. In the first years of the SMI Psychology Council, organizations will have discretion for the length of terms (e.g., 1 – 3 years) in order to achieve this goal of staggering term expiration dates.

An individual may also become a Council member if elected to serve as Chair of a Committee for the SMI Psychology Specialty Council. Committees are described under Article VI.

Each Council member shall take an active role by participating in meetings as described in Article VII and providing updated reports to a member organization or a committee to ensure it is fully informed. If any member does not participate adequately (defined as missing 50% or more of the meetings described in Article VII), the Council has the right to terminate the participation of the member by a majority vote of the other Council members. If this occurs, the member organization or Council committee will be asked to provide another representative to the Council to complete the term of the Council member who is leaving the group.

Article V – Executive Board and Elected Officers

The Executive Board is comprised of officers elected from the SMI Psychology Specialty Council, including the Executive Officer, the Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past Chair. Elections for officers will be held in June of years ending in an even number. All members of the Specialty Council are eligible to run for an elected Office and may self-nominate candidacy. All Council members have one vote, with the candidate receiving the most votes winning the position.

The Executive Officer is appointed by a majority vote of the SMI Psychology Specialty Council members to serve a five-year term with unlimited renewal. This individual should have expertise in SMI/SED and APA practices and policies and be able to assist with the Council's day-to-day business. The Executive Officer is also tasked with developing agendas for all Council meetings.

All other elected officers are appointed by a majority vote of the Council members to serve a two-year non-renewable term. Newly elected officers will assume office at the end of the APA convention.

It shall be the duty of the Chair to preside at all Council meetings and to exercise supervision over the affairs of the Council with the approval of the Executive Board. The Chair will serve as the SMI Psychology Specialty Council representative to the Council of Specialties in Professional Psychology (CoSPP). The Chair is also tasked with other duties as are incident to the office or as may properly be required by vote of the Executive Board.

It shall be the duty of the Chair-Elect to assume the duties of the Chair in case of the latter's inability to do so and to coordinate with the affiliated groups to assure term limits for positions on the Executive Board are not exceeded.

The Past Chair will remain a member of the Executive Board for two years and will coordinate any necessary council elections.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to take minutes of the meetings, to keep records of all meetings of the Council, and to ensure that the Council follows and maintains the bylaws.

The Treasurer will maintain oversight of all funds and property of the Council and ensure that all necessary monetary controls are maintained. The Treasurer serves as the Chair of the Fiscal Committee.

In the case of death, incapacity, or resignation of any of the officers, the Executive Board shall by majority vote elect a member to hold office until a successor is elected by the Council per the regular election procedures.

An elected officer does not count as one of the organizational member's two representatives. Membership organizations will be responsible for maintaining the requirement for two non-officer positions on the Council and providing a new representative to the Specialty Council if an organizational member's representative assumes an elected position on the Council.

It shall be the duty of the SMI Psychology Specialty Council Executive Board to ensure that the SMI Psychology Specialty training is in compliance with CoSPP requirements for quality assurance in education, training, credentialing and professional practice.

Article VI – Committees

The Specialty Council is responsible for working to ensure that the stated purposes are met. This is accomplished through the work of the Committees of the Council.

1. Committee Chairs

A Committee Chair is not required to be a member of an organization comprising the Council. Individuals will become members of the SMI Psychology Specialty Council when elected to Chair a committee. All Committee Chairs must be elected by majority vote by the Specialty Council to serve renewable three-year terms. Elections will be held in June of years when terms are expiring.

Committee Chairs have final responsibility for their Committee members and may invite or uninvite individual members as necessary to advance the work of the Committee.

2. Committee Operations

Committees serve at the discretion of the SMI Psychology Specialty Council and will be formed, put on hiatus, or dissolved as needed. The Executive Board will designate committee(s) considered to be useful to the purposes of the Council. All new committees must be ratified by a majority vote of the Executive Board before committee business may be undertaken. Committees may be dissolved or put on hiatus following a vote by a majority of the Executive Board to dissolve the committee. A list of active, inactive, and dissolved committees will be maintained by the Secretary.

All Committees report to the Specialty Council. Committees are encouraged to recruit members to contribute to the SMI Psychology Specialty Council missions. Committee members are not required to be members of the organizations comprising the Council and do not need to be elected. Committee chairs have discretion to determine the appropriate number of members to meet the goals of each committee.

3. Committees

a. Research and Practice Committee:

The Research and Practice Committee is responsible for:

(1) reviewing the scientific literature to identify current empirical developments and promising practices that should be posted on the website and that may impact on training programs;

(2) advising other committees of emerging research and best practices that may affect the implementation of the Specialty;

(3) reviewing the clinical practice literature including clinical practice guidelines to identify current practice developments that may impact on training programs

and notifying the Training and Evaluation committee if items should be considered for incorporation into the training guidelines and/or posted on the website.

b. Training and Evaluation Committee:

The Training and Evaluation Committee is responsible for:

- (1) updating the list of desired competencies in the Training Guidelines for the specialization;
- (2) recommending changes to the Training Guidelines for the Specialty;
- (3) recommending evaluation mechanisms for psychologists seeking recognition in the area of practice.

c. Accreditation Committee:

The Accreditation Committee is responsible for:

- (1) promoting accreditation in SMI Psychology among post-doctoral programs with a major area of study in the specialty;
- (2) engaging in activities to recruit and train site visitors for specialty accreditation by participating in training at the APA convention and other venues and working with the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) to encourage participation in Commission on Accreditation (CoA) self-study workshops;
- (3) establishing and maintaining liaison with relevant organizations to remain abreast of new developments and ensure that the Specialty is fully up to date and in compliance with all accreditation requirements and those that may impact on Specialty status. These include the APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA), the Association of Psychology Post-Doctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC), the APA Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP), and any others that may be relevant for these purposes;
- (4) recommending means to inform training programs and practicing psychologists about the Specialty and for recommending mechanisms to encourage training programs to seek accreditation in the Specialty;
- (5) keeping the Council informed about upcoming events of relevant organizations and about new developments that may affect accreditation and specialty status.

d. Fiscal Committee

The Fiscal Committee is Chaired by the Treasurer of the Executive Board and is responsible for:

- (1) maintaining the fiscal health of the Specialty and its Council, including providing recommendations about monetary controls and ensuring separation of duties;
- (2) creating a budget, in collaboration with the Executive Officer, for approval by the Specialty Council;
- (3) fundraising;
- (4) monitoring use of Specialty funds together with the Treasurer and the Executive Officer;
- (5) receiving funds and making payments.

Article VII – Meetings

The SMI Psychology Specialty Council shall meet monthly or as needed by teleconference and may hold at least one face to face meeting during the annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. The Council shall seek to coordinate its meeting with the programs and sessions of its member representatives. A majority of the Council members will constitute a quorum and will be required for all official votes.

The Executive Board shall meet monthly or as needed by teleconference. A majority of the officers will constitute a quorum and will be required for all official votes.

Additional meetings may be called as necessary.

Article VIII – Amending the Bylaws

Amendments to the Council bylaws may be proposed by a member of the Specialty Council and ratified by a majority of the Council.

Proposed amendments to the Council bylaws must be distributed to the Specialty Council 7 days prior to the date of voting on the proposed amendment.

Ratified amendments will be adopted by the Specialty Council and incorporated into the bylaws within 30 days of adoption.

ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: December, 2014

REVISED: January, 2020; September, 2021; November, 2022