

American Psychological Association

Board of Educational Affairs Fall Consolidated Meetings

October 22 – 24, 2010

The APA Fall Consolidated Meetings, a gathering of various APA boards and committees, were held at the Washington Renaissance Hotel on October 22 through 24, 2010. The meetings started with addresses by APA President Carol Goodheart and by APA CEO Norman Anderson. Dr. Goodheart's address included a statement on an increased focus on Diversity Issues within APA, the initiation of a Caregiver Task Force which includes a web-based initiative making information more easily available to interested individuals, and a report of eight Strategic Initiatives, including advocacy, alliances with various health care organizations, the future of psychology, and issues related to training.

APA CEO Norman Anderson, in his address, talked about the APA budget and its improved outlook as compared to the past couple of years. He discussed a Public Education Campaign with strategies related to advancing education about the science of psychology, Diversity Issues including a Model Diversity Action Plan and a Diversity Leadership Training Program, and about recent Health Care Reform with the development of a Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute and a focus on the continued battle for parity.

During the Board of Education Affairs (BEA) Meeting, Cynthia Belar, Executive Director of APA's Education Directorate, started the meeting by talking about strategic planning for the Public Education Campaign. Her presentation points included a promotion of education for psychologists, including continued education with an emphasis in interdisciplinary training. She spoke about a workforce need analysis, including assessment of internship access decision making which would consider the demands for the future including workforce considerations, a Center for Psychology in Schools and Education, NSF grants, the promotion of psychology as a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) discipline, and the Core Psychology for Teachers Education Project which is aimed at elementary school, and higher, teachers. She remarked upon issues of Graduate Education including the need for accreditation data and outcomes. Related to the Education Government Relations Office, Dr. Belar said that U.S. House of Representatives had passed a bill funding \$7 million for GPE. And, she raised the issue of how to effectively deal with the infrastructure of Health Care Reform.

The BEA commenced discussions, and voting, on the meeting's agenda items. Of particular note was the development of an APA Taskforce on the Integration of Psychology in Primary Care. As this was discussed, the taskforce is charged with setting up priorities, bringing in experts on how to establish this undertaking, and with the determination of training needs. It was noted that CE's would be needed for psychologists who are already embarked on their careers to attend such training. Goals related to this will be created and presented to the APA Board of Directors. It was opined that graduate schools are not currently preparing students in sufficient numbers for employment in this area and the jobs are

therefore going to other professions. BEA voted to approve a workgroup related to this matter. It is noted that Dr. Belar was approached during a break to discuss the current existence of expertise in VA related to Primary Care and Mental Health integration. She noted that in the past VA psychologists have been a part of the board and had contributed to BEA's work. The exact input from VA is currently limited, but the board annually has openings which VA psychologists may apply for.

Discussions were continued by the board related to the Education Leadership conference for 2010-2011. Specifically, the need to develop a comprehensive plan for education and training at different levels, from graduate school through postdoctoral training, preparing psychologists for integration in primary care with different populations and in different settings was discussed.

Another topic of interest to VA was the Internship Match imbalance. The board was informed that there has been an increase in the number of internships, but an approximate 25% imbalance remains. A study was cited which reported that approximately 17% of graduate schools are responsible for this excess number of non-matched students. Significant time was devoted to the discussion of masters-level education and the usefulness of this degree. A part of this discussion was the "added value" of a doctoral degree and the need to express this to potential employers. It is noted that the discussion was focused on the education of Master's level psychologists and not on their training for jobs. This education focus was maintained during subsequent discussions on the topic.

The agenda included a report on Education Advocacy for the 112th Congress. The above noted \$7 million House approved GPE was talked about along with the Senate's current level funding. An expectation was reported that the reconciliation of the bills may result in an overall increase in funding, and that the President's budget includes an increase in funding. If this does receive approval, the results would be an increase in the number of available GPE grants. The areas of focus will likely be for training to work with Veterans and their families, the Geropsych population, the unemployed, and with Community Health Centers.

Various other topics were discussed. These include work on an APA-CPA accord on accreditation. It was noted that criteria for accreditation is not the same between the two organizations, though standards are very similar in specific areas. The accord between the US and Canada was initially considered as APA is very familiar with the CPA system. Expansion to other countries is likely once this initial accord is worked out. Another important area of discussion was the inclusion of psychology as a STEM discipline. STEM professions are the core education disciplines for scientific training; the recognized disciplines are in the forefront of scientific educational priorities. This was given lengthy discussion. The notion of psychology gaining importance in the eyes of educators and students as the result of its being taught beginning in elementary school, along-side such other areas as biology, is seen as critical to the furtherance of the science. APA is working to establish this prominence. To this end, there was a recommendation put forth for advanced funding in order to accomplishing this goal. Additionally, participation in a multidisciplinary team approach (members yet to be determined) was discussed. The idea of a broad psychology representation in the team of sciences was advanced.

The meeting's most important focuses, related to impact on VA, were in the areas of the integration of psychology in primary care, the importance and impact of Masters –level trained psychologists, and various training issues ranging from the Match imbalance to international accreditation to attempts to introduce psychology as a STEM science, with the associated resultant development of a raising of the interest and stature of the science. Currently, VA input into these issues is through liaison representation. The history of BEA indicates that a more formal input, through membership on the board, is a possibility.