

DIVERSITY OFFICER

Job Description

Background: Initially construed as a “Diversity Ombudsperson”, the concept for this role came out of a discussion in 2005 relative to the development and advancement of broad diversity initiatives within WSPA. The first person to serve in this capacity was Stacey Prince, Ph.D., who engaged in a wide range of activities relative to diversity initiatives in the Association. These included monitoring diversity concerns in legislative as well as intra-Association initiatives, working in coalition with the leaders of CEMA, CLGBTC and Womens’ initiatives, and a wide range of specific activities ranging from input on awards to assisting with the planning of special events and educational initiatives.

Since that time, several individuals have held the position, with a variety of primary foci: legislative, organizational, membership recruitment/retention, etc. At this point in the development of the role, it is necessary to create a job description so that those holding this position have sufficient guidance yet adequate latitude to monitor the diversity needs of the Association and create new projects as appropriate. Please note that the position of “Ombudsperson” is historically seen as more connected with the processing an resolution of organizational complaints. Given the breadth of this role, we recommend that the term “Officer” be used instead.

Mission: The Diversity Officer plays a significant role in facilitating diversity-related initiatives in the Association, provides the Executive Board with input on legislative, organizational and procedural matters relative to diversity, ensures that the Association operates in such a manner as to optimize the execution of its diversity mission, and evaluates concerns and complaints of members, officers and staff related to diversity.

Duties: The Diversity Officer is a non-voting member of the Association’s Executive Board, and a voting member of the Council. In specific, the Diversity Officer’s primary focus is the diverse members (including, but not limited to, people of color, women, LGBT individuals, aging, differently abled people) of the Association, and the Association’s opportunities and responsibilities for infusing psychological science with social action diversity initiatives. It should be noted that the diverse groups of interest are those who may experience social marginalization or devaluation. Concerns arising from social variances that are generally not subject to systematic discrimination (i.e., those based on geography, work setting, etc) are not considered as part of the DO’s focus. The DO’s responsibilities include:

- Serve in an advisory position to Executive Board and attend all Executive Board meetings, and as such, be a non-voting member (to ensure that the Diversity Officer would be free to advocate on behalf of various points of view without the burden of responsibility to support any one of them);
- Serve on Council as a voting member and attend all Council meetings;
- Monitor Executive Board decisions on topics such as content and location of continuing education events, appointment of Council members, etc.,

- Monitor legislation and Executive Board decisions regarding legislation, keeping in mind the needs of the above-named groups;
- In monitoring Executive Board decisions, legislative activity, etc., listen for issues that might be of importance to under-represented groups including but not limited to ethnic minorities, LGBT individuals, the disabled, seniors, etc.;
- Liaison between association members, Council, and Executive Board.
- Coordinating with WSPA's Diversity Delegate to APA's State Leadership Conference, and the Chairs of The Diversity Committees (Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns, and Social Issues and Human Rights) on special projects and initiatives
- Evaluating complaints related to diversity issues from members, officers and staff; when necessary, reporting to the Executive Board with recommendations for corrective action
- Offering resources and consultation, when appropriate and/or requested., on diversity issues
- Facilitating or conducting education programs related to diversity, when requested and/or appropriate

Some additional possibilities for this position include:

- Regular contributions to the Washington Psychologist
- Assist in development of formal grievance procedure, and/or be the person to hear grievances and facilitate communication with Executive
- Identification of a special initiative relative to a diverse group and development of relevant project(s)
- Membership recruitment and retention initiatives inviting ethnic minorities, LGBT psychologists and students to join and become active in the Association