Group Specialty Council Minutes  
October 31st, 2022

Present: Noelle Lefforge, President; Vinny Dehili, Vice President; Misha Bogomaz, Treasurer; Katie White, Secretary; Lorraine Wodiska, AGPA President-Elect; Steve Van Wagoner, IBCGP Chair; Gary Burlingame, AGPA President; Darryl Pure, ABGP/ABPP President;

Absent: Amy Nitza, Division 49 President; Kendra Jackson, ASGW Representative; Farooq Mohyuddin, St. Elizabeth’s Representative.

Noelle began the meeting by presenting the minutes for the June and July meetings, which were attached to the email invitation for the October meeting. No concerns were raised by the Group Specialty Council (GSC), and a motion was passed to approve the minutes. Misha agreed to post the minutes on the GSC website.

As a reminder, the GSC approved the group specialty taxonomy at the July meeting, with the understanding that Noelle would finalize and add additional program descriptions. Since that meeting, Noelle added additional program descriptions and made minor changes to the document. Noelle reminded the GSC of this history and shared that she submitted the taxonomy to Rick Seime and Vincent Molinaro, representatives from the Council of Specialties (CoS) that spearheaded APA’s initiative to achieve uniformity across taxonomies. They provided Noelle with written feedback, which is included in this document following the conclusion of the minutes. They highlighted in yellow the portions of the document that needed revision.

Noelle reviewed their feedback with the GSC. The feedback was very minor. Some of their feedback suggested that they were unfamiliar with group psychology and group psychotherapy terminology, as they suggested revision of commonly accepted group terms (e.g., “pre-group” on page 5).

Discussion was had regarding the examples of program descriptions for each stage of training on pages 5 and 6 of the taxonomy. Considering the historical tension within Division 49 between group psychology and group psychotherapy, they felt that it may be helpful to include a more inclusive term or an example of non-therapeutic group programming.

Misha and Noelle clarified that the taxonomy provides program metrics that are relevant to all group practitioners and perspectives. The examples on pages 5 and 6, however, are not meant to be so exhaustive. Rather, they are included to provide examples of real-life group programs at each stage of training. In this case, the example for the doctoral internship stage consists of language taken directly from the doctoral internship program at University of North Florida’s (UNF) Counseling Center.
Noelle went on to agree with the GSC that addressing the tensions between group psychology and group psychotherapy within Division 49 is needed. She plans to make that a priority of her tenure as President of Division 49 when she steps in in 2023. Noelle will present the taxonomy to CoS at their next meeting, which is scheduled for November 5th, 2022 in Washington D.C. Considering that she must present the taxonomy in a few days, Noelle stated that the inclusion of non-psychotherapy terminology should be a focus for future revisions of the taxonomy.

Lorraine expressed a desire to change the use of “process therapy group” in the doctoral internship program description example due to ongoing discussion in the field identifying process and therapy as distinct types of groups. The group worked collaboratively to find a better term, with “process-focused therapy group” being the best alternative. Noelle asked Misha (who is the Director of Training at UNF’s Counseling Center) whether that term is still accurate to the programs offered to doctoral interns, and he agreed that it is. Noelle changed the language to “process-focused therapy group” in the taxonomy.

Next, Noelle introduced the group to two tools that are relevant to the classification of programs according to levels of opportunity and connecting students, academic programs, and training sites to one another. The first tool is currently undergoing review and testing by CoS and allows psychology training programs to enter data and receive feedback on their classification according to various taxonomies. Noelle clicked through the tool using another taxonomy to demonstrate to the GSC how the tool is used. The group taxonomy has not been added to the site yet, but it should be added once the taxonomy is approved. She expects to learn more about the tool at the upcoming CoS meeting.

The second tool she shared was from the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). APPIC hosts the directory that all doctoral students and recent graduates use to apply for their doctoral internship and postdoctoral residencies. You can search the directory for a key term (e.g., “group therapy”) to locate all training sites that have that term in their listing. Each listing includes a “Treatment Modalities” section, which classifies each treatment modality in terms of its level of specialty (e.g., Exposure). Noelle highlighted that the group taxonomy does not match the APPIC classifications in terms of the minimum percentage of experience required for group at a doctoral internship to be classified as a Major Area of Study. The group taxonomy classifies a program as Major Area of Study at 45%, while APPIC classifies it as Major Area of Study at 50%. Noelle expressed that she is not sure if the APPIC classifications can be modified.

Noelle asked if the group still wanted to confirm the current taxonomy, considering that discrepancy with APPIC. A discussion was had regarding the reasoning for choosing 45% instead of 50%, with Misha and Noelle reminding the group that that limit was chosen to increase the ability for university and collegiate counseling centers to meet the requirements. The group verbally agreed that the reasoning made sense and the taxonomy didn’t require additional revision.
The Board approved a motion to approve the taxonomy. The approved taxonomy can be found following the minutes and the taxonomy with feedback. The group expressed satisfaction with the taxonomy and complimented Noelle on the quality of the document and her leadership throughout the taxonomy initiative.

Noelle closed the meeting by identifying the next steps. She will present the taxonomy at the upcoming CoS meeting. Once it is approved, the GSC can shift its focus to developing strategic initiatives for 2023. These initiatives will focus on using the tools to contact programs and working on the renewal petition, which is due on January 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2025. The group agreed to discuss the plan for 2023 at the November meeting. Noelle will send out the strategic initiative document to the GSC for review before that meeting.

The next meeting will be on Monday, November 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2022 at 1 PM EST. There will not be a December meeting. In 2023, the GSC will continue to meet on the last Monday of each month in 2023 with the exception of February (due to conflict with AGPA meeting).

Respectfully submitted,
Katie White, PsyD
Secretary
**The term “focus” should be used to describe opportunities in areas of training which are not recognized specialties. Training programs should strive to provide explicit explanations of the type of training provided in these non-specialty areas.**
Common Definitions and Criteria Across All Recognized Specialties
Clarifications to help recognized specialties use the APA-Taxonomy in a consistent manner

- Broad and general training forms the core of education and training in health service psychology. Programs are accredited by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association. Programs integrate the broad and general training with those educational and training activities related to recognized specialties as determined by the specialty and described in a specialty taxonomy. In addition, each specialty will have education and training guidelines consistent with its specialty area. Specialty training may be acquired at the doctoral, doctoral internship, postdoctoral, or post-licensure stages as defined by the specialty.

- By definition, postdoctoral education and training is a Major Area of Study in a specialty recognized by the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP) and requires that 80% or more of time be spent in the specialty area. At the postdoctoral training stage, as per above, it is recognized that training in the Major Area of Study will be consistent with the education and training guidelines set forth by the specialty.

- A course is typically defined as 3 semester-credit hours (or equivalent) in a health service psychology training program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

- A practicum is typically defined as the equivalent of one academic year (e.g., 9 months, in semester or quarter systems) consisting of supervised training for at least 8 hours per week, or its equivalent, with at least 50% of time in the provision of clinical services.

- Consistent with what is described in CoA Standards of Accreditation, supervision should be provided by persons with competencies in the specialty demonstrated by appropriate training, credentials, and qualifications for training in the specialty as defined by the specialty.

- Additional training experiences can also include, but are not limited to, research experiences, lab meetings, brown bags, lecture/colloquia series, and grand rounds, as defined by the specialty.
For definitions of continuing education (CE) and continuing professional development (CPD) see the APA Quality Professional Development and Continuing Education Resolution. A continuing education (CE) course is defined as an organized program by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association, a State Psychological Association, or other major provider of CE (e.g., Society of Behavioral Medicine).


**Specialty Specific Definitions and Criteria**

Use superscripts in table entries above to reference footnotes provide in this section which expand upon or clarify table entries as needed.

1. **Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy Course** = Must have content congruent with Group Specialty Council’s Practice Guidelines ([https://www.apadivisions.org/division-49/leadership/committees/group-specialty](https://www.apadivisions.org/division-49/leadership/committees/group-specialty); to be superseded by finalized and/or published versions). While courses are typically 3 credit hours, a course series (e.g., an advanced clinical seminar encompassing 1 credit hour for each of four semesters) would serve as equivalent. In addition, doctoral programs with Major Area of Study or Emphasis in GPGP are strongly encouraged to infuse group content across applicable courses when possible (e.g., multicultural courses should include information on group dynamics, social psychology should cover group behavior, research methods should include study design for evaluating groups, professional issues and ethics should cover content related to groups). Instructor must be engaged in GPGP practice and/or research.

2. **GPGP Practicum** = Must have at least 50% acquired through direct clinical hours, supervision, and support activities directly related to leading group psychotherapy/consultation (e.g., leading group psychotherapy with clinical contact, preparing and debriefing group therapy immediately before and after, providing peer consultation of group therapy, program development and evaluation, direct contact with individual group members in relation to group, supervision of group, and/or participating in an experiential training group) or direct consultation to an organization and/or organizational development.

3. **Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy Project** = Completion of capstone paper, dissertation, publication, and/or equivalent work product in the area of group psychology and group psychotherapy. Can include empirical research, qualitative analyses, comprehensive literature reviews or literature critique/analysis, or extended case study/small-n design. Programs must have at least one faculty member whose area of expertise is in group psychology and group psychotherapy, and students entering this program would have the opportunity to have this faculty member chair or serve on the project committee.
Supervised Experience = 50% must be acquired through direct clinical hours and supervision (e.g., leading group psychotherapy with clinical contact, preparing and debriefing group therapy immediately before and after, providing peer consultation of group therapy, program development and evaluation, direct contact with individual group members in relation to group, supervision of group, and/or participating in an experiential training group) or direct consultation to an organization and/or organizational development. The remaining supervised experience can be acquired through indirect GPGP experiences such as seminar attendance, interdisciplinary team participation, readings, and research may count as part of the supervised experience for doctoral students, interns & postdoctoral fellows. Primary supervisor must be a psychologist with expertise in the specialty as evidenced by holding a credential (e.g., Board Certified in GPGP by the American Board of Professional Psychology, Certified Group Psychotherapist) or equivalent experience.

CE Coursework = Continuing education must be approved by APA or other related accrediting organization (e.g., CPA, MCE) or another major group psychology or group psychotherapy organization (e.g., AGPA, ASGW, SIOP).

Unsupervised Experience = Must include 100% experience leading group psychotherapy with clinical contact or direct consultation to an organization. Supervised experience supersedes unsupervised experience and can be used to count toward this requirement once the required amount of supervised experience is met.

Experiential Training = It is strongly recommended that experiential training be integrated into coursework, practica, supervision, and/or CEs.
Examples of Program Descriptors for Each Stage of Training

Doctoral

**Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty – Major Area of Study**

The Counseling Psychology PhD program at Brigham Young University provides ample opportunity for students to obtain group specialty training as a Major Area of Study. This program requires two group therapy courses, including (1) Group Counseling and Intervention and (2) Advanced Theory of Group Counseling. As part of their coursework, students obtain both experiential (e.g., participation in a mock group) and didactic training. At least two of the annual practicum offerings each year provide experience in group therapy. For example, one offered practica is at BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), which enables students to co-lead a general process group and/or topic-specific groups. At this practicum site, students meet with co-leaders before and/or after group sessions as well as attend weekly group consultation meetings with faculty to discuss questions and issues related to groups. Students have opportunities to engage in group therapy research (e.g., participation in the Consortium for Group Research and Practice—C-GRP), through which students may present at conferences, publish articles, complete dissertations, and so on.

Doctoral internship

**Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty - Emphasis**

University of North Florida Counseling Center internship program provides an emphasis in Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy as a Major Area of Study. Interns co-facilitate at least one process-focused therapy group each semester and have an option to co-facilitate additional psychoeducational and support groups. Interns are provided group psychology and group psychotherapy didactic seminars throughout their year of training. Group facilitators meeting offers an avenue to learn from other facilitators and counts as an additional hour of group supervision. Additional activities include conducting an orientation for new group members and debriefing with a co-facilitator. Furthermore, throughout their training interns maintain a caseload of individual clients, conduct outreach, administer psychological tests, and engage in other service deliveries activities.

Postdoctoral residency

**Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty – Major Area of Study**

The PRACTICE at UNLV offers a postdoctoral fellowship in Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy as a Major Area of Study. Postdoctoral fellows are supervised by group therapy specialists and their training occurs primarily within the clinic’s group psychotherapy program. The multi-faceted group program consists of process groups and skills groups based on research-supported treatments like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy. The Fellow will co-facilitate an interpersonal process group with an advanced, independent clinician. They will also co-lead and provide supervision to predoctoral practicum students in 5-7 groups per week. They will assist with program development and oversight.
preparation and coordination, and case rounds with a group focus. In addition to co-facilitating groups, the Fellow will also maintain a very small caseload of individual clients and supervision of graduate student clinicians.

Post-licensure training

Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty – Major Area of Study
The Adelphi University’s two-year postgraduate Group Psychotherapy training program provides post-licensure major area of study through didactic and experiential course work, clinical supervision and personal group therapy. The program requires candidates to commit to two 6-hour meetings per month of didactic and experiential coursework. In addition, candidates commit to gaining experience leading groups and they participate in both group supervision and individual supervision. Candidates also engage in their own personal group psychotherapy.
**Focus**

The term “focus” should be used to describe opportunities in areas of training which are not recognized specialties. Training programs should strive to provide explicit explanations of the type of training provided in these non-specialty areas.

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<th>Level of Opportunity**</th>
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<tr>
<th>Stages of Training</th>
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Approved by CoS Board of Directors, 2/20/2021

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**Doctoral internship**

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**Postdoctoral residency**

**Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty – Major Area of Study**

The PRACTICE at UNLV offers a postdoctoral fellowship in Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy as a Major Area of Study. Postdoctoral fellows are supervised by group therapy specialists and their training occurs primarily within the clinic’s group psychotherapy program. The multi-faceted group program consists of process groups and skills groups based on research-supported treatments like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy. The Fellow will co-facilitate an interpersonal process group with an advanced, independent clinician. They will also co-lead and provide supervision to predoctoral practicum students in 5-7 groups per week. They will assist with program development and oversight, pre-group
preparation and coordination, and case rounds with a group focus. In addition to co-facilitating groups, the Fellow will also maintain a very small caseload of individual clients and supervision of graduate student clinicians.

Post-licensure training

Group Psychology and Psychotherapy Specialty – Major Area of Study
The Adelphi University’s two-year postgraduate Group Psychotherapy training program provides post-licensure major area of study through didactic and experiential course work, clinical supervision and personal group therapy. The program requires candidates to commit to two 6-hour meetings per month of didactic and experiential coursework. In addition, candidates commit to gaining experience leading groups and they participate in both group supervision and individual supervision. Candidates also engage in their own personal group psychotherapy.