Competencies Conference:
Future Directions in Education and
Credentialing in Professional Psychology

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The Competencies Conference: Future Directions in Education and Credentialing in Professional Psychology was organized around eight competency-focused work groups, as well as work groups on specialties and the assessment of competence. A diverse group of psychologists participated in this multisponsored conference. After describing the background and structure of the conference, this article reviews the common themes that surfaced across work groups, with attention paid to the identification, training, and assessment of competencies and competence. Recommendations to advance competency-based education, training, and credentialing in professional psychology are discussed. This is one of a series of articles published together in this issue of the Journal of Clinical Psychology. Several other articles that resulted from the Competencies Conference will appear in Professional Psychology: Research and Practice and The Counseling Psychologist. © 2004 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. J Clin Psychol 60: 699–712, 2004.

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Background and Rationale

During the two decades preceding the Competencies Conference: Future Directions in Education and Credentialing in Professional Psychology, a number of developments signaled the necessity to organize our efforts related to the identification, training, and assessment of competencies for health- and human-service providers in psychology. These disparate and widespread endeavors included conferences, work groups, organizational projects, and commissions throughout North America and Europe.1 Recent books have focused on defining and selecting key competencies (Rychen & Salganik, 2001) and on competency-based education and training in psychology (Sumerall, Lopez, & Oehlert, 2000).

The National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPP) has developed a competency-based core curriculum (Bourg et al., 1987; Bourg, Bent, McHolland, & Stricker, 1989; Callan, Peterson, & Stricker, 1986; Peterson et al., 1992; Peterson, Peterson, Abrams, & Stricker, 1997). In addition to identifying core competency domains based on the myriad roles that psychologists perform, NCSPP highlighted that each competency is composed of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for professional functioning. NCSPP acknowledged crosscutting competencies, such as diversity, that need to be integrated within each of the other competency domains. Scientist-practitioner clinical psychologists (Belar & Perry, 1992), counseling psychologists (Murdock, Alcorn, Heesacker, & Stoltenberg, 1998; Stoltenberg et al., 2000), and clinical scientists (http://psych.arizona.edu/apcs/apcs.html) also have discussed competency-based training models. The Committees on Accreditation in the United States (US) (http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/) and Canada (http://www.cpa.ca/accreditation.html) moved to competency-based approaches to accreditation during the 1990s. Various groups have identified core and specialized competencies, such as the Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists (American Psychological Association, 2002), Guidelines for Psychotherapy with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients (Division 44, 2000), Guidelines on Specialty Education and Training in Clinical Neuropsychology (Hannay et al., 1998), Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral Level in Industrial–Organizational Psychology (http://www.siop.org/PhDGuidelines98.html), and recommendations for the training of pediatric psychologists and psychologists who provide services for children and adolescents (La Greca & Hughes, 1999; Roberts et al., 1998; Spirito et al., 2003). Furthermore, consensus on competency-based regulations to facilitate mobility for professional psychologists has been achieved in Canada, the Mutual Recognition Agreement of the Regulatory Bodies for Professional Psychologists in Canada, 2001 (http://www.cpa.ca/MRA.pdf).

There was an increasing realization that the identification, training, and assessment of competencies that define a professional psychologist enable the profession to communicate to the public and legislators about services psychologists can provide. A growing consensus emerged that until there is better agreement about domains and levels of competence, tensions will continue among constituency groups regarding the curriculum in professional education and training, the role of practicum training, the timing of internship relative to awarding the doctoral degree, and licensure for independent practice.

Thus, the mission of the Competencies Conference, held November 7–9, 2002, in Scottsdale, Arizona, was toward gaining greater agreement about domains and levels of competence by bringing together representatives from diverse education, training, practice, public-interest, research, credentialing, and regulatory constituency groups. The overarching goals of this conference were to: (a) be a catalyst for continued collaborative efforts related to the identification, training, and assessment of competencies; (b) foster links among a broad array of constituency groups to train better the next generation of professional psychologists; (c) enhance the competence of professional psychologists; and (d) serve better and protect the public and consumers of psychological services. More specific goals were to: (a) identify core competencies, building upon already existing models, (b) formulate developmental and integrated models of competencies for the training of the next generation of professional psychologists, and (c) develop strategies for the evaluation of competencies and the assessment of competence. These latter goals were based on three core beliefs: (a) core or foundational competencies can be identified, (b) individuals can be educated and trained to develop these core competencies, and (c) core competencies can be assessed.
Conference Planning

The conference was initiated and hosted by the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). The steering committee, which consisted of ten members representing a range of education, training, credentialing and practice constituencies, reflected diversity in work settings and locations, professional roles and responsibilities, and areas of competence. The steering committee obtained co-sponsorship for the conference from Canada, Mexico, and the US, including boards, committees, and divisions of the American Psychological Association; education and training groups under the auspices of the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC); credentialing and regulatory bodies affiliated with the Council of Credentialing Organizations in Professional Psychology (CCOPP); ethnic minority psychology organizations; and other educational and professional institutions. The conference represented the first time that people from a range of organizations, who assume diverse professional roles, joined in a comprehensive effort to advance competency-based education, training, assessment, and credentialing in professional psychology.

Survey

In light of the myriad prior efforts to competencies in professional psychology, the steering committee conducted an on-line pre-conference survey to identify core competency domains about which most consensus existed to aid in conference organization. The steering committee encouraged participation in the on-line survey by contacting multiple education, training, practice, credentialing and regulatory groups, including all of the CCTC and CCOPP constituency groups. Respondents rated each domain and sub-domain

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2 Representing the APPIC Board of Directors were Nadine Kaslow, Ph.D. (Steering Committee Chair) and Joyce Illfelder-Kaye, Ph.D. Melba Vasquez, Ph.D., was invited by APPIC to represent the practice community. There were two representatives from the Council of Chairs of Training Councils: Frank Collins, Ph.D. (Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology) and Kathi Borden, Ph.D. (National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology) and two representatives from the Council of Credentialing Organizations in Professional Psychology: Joseph Rallo, Ph.D. (Council of Provincial Associations of Psychology) and Mary Willmuth, Ph.D. (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards). The American Psychological Association was represented by Paul Nelson, Ph.D. (Education Directorate) and Linda Forrest, Ph.D. (Board of Educational Affairs).

3 Conference Co-sponsors: American Board of Professional Psychology; American Psychological Association’s Board of Educational Affairs, Board of Professional Affairs, Division 5 (Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics), Division 12 (Society of Clinical Psychology), Division 13 (Society of Consulting Psychology), Division 16 (School Psychology), Division 17 (Society of Counseling Psychology), Division 20 (Adult Development and Aging), Division 29 (Psychotherapy), Division 35 (Society for the Psychology of Women), Division 39 (Psychoanalysis), Division 40 (Clinical Neuropsychology), Division 42 (Psychologists in Independent Practice), Division 43 (Family Psychology), Division 44 (Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues), and Division 54 (Pediatric Psychology); Asian American Psychological Association; Association of Counseling Center Training Agencies; Association of Directors of Psychology Training Clinics; Association of Postdoctoral Programs in Clinical Neuropsychology; Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards; Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs; Canadian Register of Health Service Providers; Consortium of Combined and Integrated Doctoral Programs in Psychology; Consortium of Combined and Integrated Doctoral Programs in Psychology; Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs; Council of Provincial Associations of Psychology; Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology; National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology; National Latino Psychological Association; National Register of Health Services Providers; Phillips Graduate School of Psychology; Professional Examination Service (PES); and Society for Personality Assessment.

4 There were 364 respondents, 49% women and 51% men. The majority of the respondents, 72%, were between 41–60 years of age. In addition, 91% of the sample was Caucasian, 3% Latino/Hispanic, 2% African American/Black, 1% Asian American, 1% Native American, and 2% other. Respondents were asked to indicate all of their professional occupational identities, and thus their responses total more than 100%. Of the respondents, 31% were educators in Ph.D. graduate programs, 10% in Psy.D. programs, fewer than 1% in Ed.D. programs, 47%
using the following categorization: core competency, specific competency, not sure, or not needed. *Core* competencies were defined as competencies required by all health- and human-service providers and educators in psychology. *Specific* competencies were defined as those needed for some, but not all, health- and human-service providers and educators in psychology, depending on the intended area or setting of practice. Respondents also identified any additional core or specific competencies that they believed were important. Survey results indicated a remarkable degree of consistency among respondents.

### Delegates

The 126 conference delegates from Canada, Mexico, and the US were selected in three ways. First, each sponsoring organization was invited to send a delegate of its choosing. Second, calls for members-at-large appeared in multiple publications and listservs. Interested individuals submitted a curriculum vita and a letter of interest containing their contact information, work setting, areas of expertise, diversity status, and organizational memberships. The steering committee selected a diverse group of delegates from this applicant pool. Third, individuals with expertise in the theme of the conference or in core competency domains were invited by the steering committee. Delegates came from settings emphasizing training undergraduate or graduate students, internship and postdoctoral training programs, and regulatory bodies or credentialing organizations. Participants, or their institutions or sponsoring organizations, were responsible for the costs associated with attendance.

### Creation of Work Groups

Work groups were formed around the eight core competency domains, nicknamed the “Big 8,” identified in the survey: (a) scientific foundations of psychology and research; (b) ethical, legal, public policy/advocacy, and professional issues; (c) supervision; (d) psychological assessment; (e) individual and cultural diversity; (f) intervention; (g) consultation and interdisciplinary relationships; and (h) professional development. Two other work groups were created: (a) assessment of competence and (b) specialties. Each work group had members with substantial knowledge about the competency area, as well as individuals with other expertise. The expectation was that most of the work would occur in the work groups.

### Pre-conference Readings

Eight influential papers were sent to delegates before the meeting. These articles addressed the definition and assessment of professional competence (Epstein & Hundert, 2002; Summerall et al., 2000), models of competency-based education and training (Belar & Perry, 1992; Peterson et al., 1997; Stoltenberg et al., 2000), specific competency domains (American Psychological Association, 2002), specialization (Drum & Blom, 2001) and broader issues regarding the education, training, and credentialing of professional psychologists (Benjamin, 2001).
Resource Room

A resource room was created with over 1000 readings associated with the overall conference theme and the work groups. A reference list of the resource-room articles was available on-line prior to the conference and was provided to those in attendance (http://www.appic.org/news/3_1_news_competencies.htm).

Conference Structure

Plenary

The opening plenary by Nadine Kaslow, Ph.D., overviewed the definitions and components of competence; history and current status of the competency-based movement in professional psychology; core competency domains highlighted by various constituency groups; and controversies, challenges, and future directions. Attention was paid to the arguments for and against the identification of core competencies, the question of training for competence or capability, notions from other professions about how to identify competencies, background on training of competencies, and the key challenges in assessing competencies.

Landscape Panel

The Landscape panel reviewed previous work on competencies and identified a starting point for the conference and its work groups. The panelists, Cynthia Belar, Ph.D., Joseph Rallo, Ph.D., Roger Peterson, Ph.D., Nadya Fouad, Ph.D., and Nicholas Cummings, Ph.D., were selected because of their recognized expertise in the area of competencies. They addressed the issue of competencies from their diverse perspectives and how they understood both the challenges and progress that have occurred in the area. They spoke about why they thought a focus on competencies is important to professional psychology at this time. Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D., served as discussant. The main themes of this panel were the growing consensus about the essential competencies training programs have identified, the importance of competence in diversity for all psychologists, and the ways in which competency-based training needs to take into account the changing financial realities of the workplace.

Assessment Panel

On the second day of the conference, a panel of experts in the assessment of competence was assembled. This panel provided delegates an overview of the current status of assessment of competence and outlined future directions. This review moved beyond the identification of competence (on Day 1) into the realm of training and assessment of competence. The panelists, Jane Halonen, Ph.D., Lynn Rehm, Ph.D., Edward Sheridan, Ph.D., and I. Leon Smith, Ph.D., were selected for their expertise in professional and educational assessment. The main themes of this panel were the need for psychology to use its own expertise in measurement when designing strategies to assess competence, the importance of using comprehensive and innovative assessment strategies at all stages of professional development, and the value of integrating developments in the assessment of competence from other professional disciplines.

Charge to the Work Groups

There was an expectation that the work groups would identify issues and questions on which they both achieved consensus and about which consensus could not be reached.
Work groups were not expected to achieve consensus on every issue or question discussed in relation to their charge.

Each of the eight competency-focused work groups was asked to identify the subcomponents of the assigned competency domain and address how competencies (once identified) are acquired, that is, the most critical educational and training experiences needed to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes fundamental to the competency domain at issue, including sequence of experience from a professional-development perspective. Work groups were asked to articulate the differences in expectations about their competency domains as training progresses from undergraduate psychology and predoctoral experiences to more focused training experiences at the internship and postdoctoral level, to continuing professional education. Components of training, including specific coursework, supervised practice and research experience, modeling, mentoring, professional socialization, personal development, and psychotherapy, also were to be addressed. Interrelated to the identification and training of competencies, each work group was asked to focus on assessment of that competency.

The work group on assessment of competence across domains was asked to identify effective strategies and methods for the assessment of competence in professional psychology, considering issues such as quality assurance, protection of the public, validity, developmental considerations, dichotomous versus continuous outcomes, minimal competence, proximal and distal outcomes, qualitative versus quantitative approaches, and the strengths of particular assessment methods. Specifically, this work group was asked which competencies should be assessed for which individuals using what methods and at what point in time.

The work group focused on specialties was asked to comment on when and how advanced knowledge and skills specific to a specialty are obtained after the acquisition of core scientific and professional competencies in psychology. This work group was asked to identify core prerequisite competencies expected before the introduction of specialty training and at what level(s) of training they should occur. Finally, this work group was asked to address how specialties were related to the “Big 8.”

**Integration Activities**

During the morning of the third day of the conference, 90 minutes were set aside for integrating the discussions and accomplishments across work groups. To accomplish this, each work group identified an individual in their group who would attend each of the other nine groups and represent their group’s work to the newly configured integrative groups. For this integration process, work-group leaders, recorders, and steering-committee members remained in the same location and members from the other nine groups joined them to create the new integrative work groups. Thus, each of the ten new groups had at least one member from every other work group.

The integration meetings started with the work-group leader briefly reviewing the previous daily summaries, identifying key assumptions and accomplishments from their work group. They identified points of consensus and ascertained if these were sustained in the new group configurations. Next, the integrative groups provided insights and creative solutions to the points of disagreement that surfaced in the initial group. They also delineated gaps in the original group’s work and shared instances in which the discourse from the nine other original groups intersected with the work of the current group. Participants in the new group configurations highlighted commonalities across groups and determined structures and strategies to support the remaining tasks of the conference. For
the remainder of the conference, delegates returned to their original work group to process the information that surfaced in the integrative work groups.

**Common Themes Across Work Groups**

The common themes across work groups are organized around the core beliefs about competencies (i.e., identification, training, assessment).

**Identification.** Work groups reaffirmed the conceptualization of competence as including knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Several work groups used this conceptualization to organize their efforts to identify critical subcompetencies within their competency domain. Equally important was the acknowledgement across groups that there are crosscutting competencies relevant to all aspects of competence at all levels of professional development. Although the specific crosscutting competencies varied from group to group, crosscutting competencies identified by multiple groups included individual and cultural diversity, ethical practice, interpersonal and relationship skills, critical thinking, and knowledge of self. Several work groups described individual and cultural diversity as a superordinate competency and underscored the necessity to recognize that training occurs in a sociocultural and political context.

**Training.** All groups placed a strong value on developmentally informed education and training. Several groups laid out a developmentally appropriate training sequence by describing progressively more complex and sophisticated content and methods for teaching the subcompetencies in their domain. Work groups underscored the value of modeling, role plays, vignettes, in-vivo experiences, supervised experience, and other applied real-world experiences as critical instructional strategies. The crucial role of establishing and maintaining a respectful and facilitative learning environment was affirmed. Work groups also highlighted the importance of close mentoring relationships as key to high-level professional training. Every work group endorsed the central role of the integration of science and practice into all aspects of education and training, as well as the importance of evidence-based and informed practice. Finally, the importance of establishing during training an internalized commitment to life-long continuous learning and improvement was viewed as essential to being a professional psychologist. Groups detailed this process, noting the necessity to train students in self-reflection, self-assessment, and self-evaluation.

The work group on specialties developed a three-dimensional model, the competencies cube, which assumed that foundational or core competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes) and functional or specialty competencies (what psychologists do) become increasingly interdependent over the course of professional development. The development of specialty competencies may vary by specialty depending on how the distinctive patterns of practice that define specialties are introduced in the training sequence. Practice parameters crucial to this development are those of populations served, problems addressed, procedures employed, and settings of practice (American Psychological Association Board of Professional Affairs Subcommittee on Specialization, 1984). A more-detailed analysis of stages of development is needed to assess how and when specialty competencies are developed across specialties.

**Assessment.** There was consensus that as a profession we need to develop strategies to become equally effective at assessing knowledge, skills, and attitudes for each competency domain. To date, assessment of knowledge has been more successful than
assessment of skills and attitudes (e.g., Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology, course examinations). Therefore, the assessment of overall competence in both integrated and competency-by-competency formats is an area ripe for growth in the context of education, training, and credentialing. Assessment techniques employed for licensure and other credentialing (e.g., board certification) might begin during education and training at developmentally appropriate times. This could result in a “culture shift” in psychology, so that methods of assessment are used continuously throughout a psychologist’s training and career.

Matching assessment strategies to training goals is essential. Both formative (i.e., corrective feedback for further development) and summative (i.e., conclusive evaluations for progression and gate-keeping purposes) assessment procedures are needed. A developmental perspective in training and assessment must be maintained, particularly in deciding which competencies should be mastered, when they should be mastered, and how to establish developmentally appropriate assessment criteria. Assessments should be multi-method and multi-informant. Diversity considerations need attention in all approaches to assessment. Several methods of assessment seem particularly promising at this point in time, including the development of simulations or standardized vignettes, improvement in the effectiveness of supervisor ratings, and training in diverse methods of self-assessment that can be used by psychologists throughout their careers.

Finally, work groups identified the need for educators, trainers, credentialers and regulators, practitioners, and policy makers to create collaboratively strategies for evaluating competencies in professional psychology so that our assessment practices are comprehensive and integrative across the spectrum of education, training, and practice. New and innovative assessment methods need to be developed, pilot tested, and incorporated into academic training before they become part of assessment for licensure.

Dissemination and Implementation

By design, this conference did not result in a single document of proceedings or consensus resolutions established by a vote of the delegates. Rather, the intent of the conference was to initiate an ongoing dialogue in the profession that will transform education, training, and credentialing practices in professional psychology. It is hoped that such transformation will yield a conceptually coherent and broadly endorsed perspective on competencies, yet one that allows for creativity and innovation.

Conference outcomes, in the form of near-term products to stimulate and guide this dialogue, include: (a) a website summary of the conference (http://www.appic.org/downloads/CompetenciesCombinedWorkgroupSummaries.pdf); (b) conference descriptions in various professional newsletters written by delegates; (c) a series of publications from the 10 work groups, as well as an in-depth review of the history and current status of competency-based education, training, and credentialing in professional psychology; (d) symposium presentation at national and international conferences; (e) presentations at various education, training, and credentialing conferences; and (f) further development of concepts by relevant organizations in education, training, credentialing, and regulation. The aforementioned efforts will yield to the formulation of professional education, training, and credentialing recommendations and guidelines pertaining to the identification and assessment of competencies for practice at various stages of professional development.

Evaluation of the Conference

Participants evaluated the conference at several points in time. Most comments were extremely positive. Delegates indicated that the best aspects of the conference were the
opportunity to meet other delegates representing a range of perspectives, the quality of the work groups and plenary sessions, and the integration process. Suggestions included broadening the focus beyond health-care psychology, increasing the emphasis on the importance of marketing psychology and competing in the market place, making greater use of the contributions of industrial and organizational psychology related to the assessment of competence, wanting more time or a narrower scope, and wanting to know work-group assignments prior to the conference.

Concluding Comments and Future Directions

Critical to continuing the momentum of the conference is identifying, prioritizing, and implementing the recommendations. Some recommendations relate to the identification, training, and assessment of competencies. Others are more general recommendations for future collaborative efforts within the field of psychology.

Identification

To advance the work of the conference, we recommend a culture shift away from a focus on core curriculum toward an emphasis on the identification of core competencies. We also suggest the consistent use of terminology to describe competence. We propose using the term “competence” to describe overall or integrated professional abilities (i.e., the quality of being adequately qualified) and “competencies” to refer to elements or components of competence (i.e., specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes). In other words, professional competence refers to an individual’s overall capability or demonstrated ability to perform as a professional psychologist, whereas competencies refer to components of performance, such as assessment or intervention.

Work-group discussions confirmed the results of the pre-conference survey with respect to the identification of core competency areas. However, more work is needed to ascertain the specific components of each competency. For example, there was agreement that psychological assessment is a core competency, but consensus was difficult to achieve about specific components of this competency domain. Concordance about the specifics is critical before the field can develop training and assessment models. In addition, more effort is needed in determining the overlap in knowledge, skills, and attitudes across competency areas, as well as in specifying which knowledge, skills, and attitudes are expected at which developmental level. Such an articulation would allow for more efficient and integrated training models. Finally, it behooves us to identify crosscutting competencies integral to conceptualizing each competency area.

Training

Psychology training programs have developed more rigorous methods for training some competencies than others. Historically, educators have developed strategies for training scientific foundations, intervention, psychological assessment, and ethics. More recently, training methods have been developed and implemented related to multicultural competency and other forms of diversity (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002). More attention needs to be given to training in supervision, professional development, consultation, advocacy and public policy, and other new and emerging competency domains. Training differs considerably based upon the model and objectives of the program, the substantive areas of study, and the competency requirements for licensure in a particular jurisdiction.
Programs vary markedly on the extent to which their training efforts target knowledge, skills, and attitudes in each core competency domain.

Training methods used to enhance competency in one area need to be evaluated as potential methods for training in other competency areas. For example, in ethics training, we often use a problem-based learning model in which practical ethical dilemmas are presented to identify strengths and weaknesses in students’ ethical reasoning and decision-making so that difficulties can be addressed by implementing remediation plans and/or changes in training approaches (Pelsma & Borgers, 1986). Such problem-based training could be developed better and implemented for teaching other competency domains (McBurney, 1995). In addition, generalization of competencies across domains needs more attention. Work on training for capability, not just competency, highlights the importance of the extent to which psychologists can adapt to change, generate new knowledge, and continue to improve their performance (Fraser & Greenhalgh, 2001; Halpern, 1998). Thus, it is important to identify when generalization occurs and potential barriers to generalization. Just as psychologists need to adapt to change, the profession must respond to changes in our knowledge and the marketplace and re-evaluate the competencies necessary for professional practice. Therefore, attention to the evolution of psychology is needed.

Developmental factors must be taken into account for effective training in the core competency domains. The extent to which individuals should have exposure, experience, and expertise for each competency domain at each level of training should be determined (Roberts et al., 1998). We need to go beyond identifying threshold levels of competence for licensure and specialty certification to defining threshold levels of competency for readiness to start practicum, internship readiness, internship completion, and the awarding of the doctoral degree. Such identification will guide the development of training experiences and will model for students how to navigate the process of becoming competent psychologists. Such identification also will help us to determine those students and psychologists with competence problems and develop appropriate remediation efforts (Forrest, Elman, Gizara, & Vacha-Haase, 1999) to ensure that they achieve an acceptable level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the competency domains in question.

Assessment

The assessment of competence traditionally has focused almost exclusively on knowledge. Evaluating skills and attitudes requires novel training and assessment methods. For example, standardized patients (Colliver, Swartz, Robbs, & Cohen, 1999; Margolis, de Champlain, & Klass, 1998) and 360-degree evaluations (Yammarino & Atwater, 1997) used by other professions should be considered. More attention needs to be given to the assessment of capabilities (Fraser & Greenhalgh, 2001). We need to ascertain whose performance is consistent with a threshold level of competence and whose performance merits the distinction of capability in a particular competency domain.

Competence requires enhanced self-assessment methods (Belar et al., 2001). The profession needs to develop useful models for self-assessment and train students and professionals in self-assessment methods to insure their use throughout the professional life span. Some research has shown that self-assessment may not line up with other assessment methods. For example, in the individual and cultural-diversity domain, research reveals that there is no significant relation between trainees’ self-assessment and either others’ ratings of their multicultural competence (Constantine & Ladany, 2000; Worthington, Mobley, Franks, & Tan, 2000) or other measures of multicultural competence, such
as case conceptualization ability (Ladany, Inman, Constantine, & Hofheinz, 1997). Attention to these discrepancies is needed in the diversity domain, as well as in other competency domains.

**General Recommendations**

One lesson to be learned from this conference was the enormous benefit in bringing people together from various constituent groups that might not ordinarily communicate with one another. Drawing on the knowledge generated in other fields, such as medicine and education, also is essential. Sharing of ideas had a synergistic effect in fostering both inclusiveness and the quality of ideas generated. The integration activity enhanced this process and is recommended for future conferences.

Collaborative efforts and sharing of best practices is encouraged, both within and among constituent groups and across settings. This can be accomplished using vehicles such as CCTC, American Psychological Association’s Board of Educational Affairs, Educational Leadership Conference, Committee on Accreditation, CCOPP, Psychology Executive Roundtable, and other joint meetings. An information infrastructure is critical to advancing the identification, training, and assessment of competence in professional psychology. For the work of this conference to continue, it is critical that multiple and diverse constituency groups work together to struggle with the challenging and vexing questions that remain. As we make progress, we will be better able to communicate to the public and to policy makers the contributions that professional psychologists can make.

**References**


