AUGUST 2023 COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

APA's Council of Representatives held a hybrid meeting Aug. 2-3, with most Council members convening in person in Washington, D.C.

Need for Safe Work Environments for Adolescents

The Council adopted a Resolution on Developmental Risks and Opportunities in Adolescent Employment, urging employers to establish safe working environments and work hours for adolescent employees in the wake of recent reports of youth being injured or killed due to unsafe job conditions. The resolution passed 161-2, with 2 abstentions.

"APA calls on state and federal agency officials to increase enforcement of laws, regulations and penalties for industries and employers engaging in exploitative and detrimental youth labor practices that compromise the health, well-being and economic advancement of adolescents in the labor market," according to a resolution. "This includes modernizing and expanding hazardous occupation limits to better protect adolescents at work, increasing staffing of the [Department of Labor's] Wage and Hour Division to investigate child labor violations, and enforcing age verification."

The resolution also asks the field of psychology and policymakers to support increased research, monitoring, intervention, advocacy and policy to inform and guide safe labor practices for adolescents.

Equity and Inclusion in Student Admissions in Higher Education

In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling outlawing the consideration of race as a factor in college and university admissions, the Council adopted a policy statement reaffirming its support for equity and inclusion in higher education. The vote was 142-6 with 8 abstentions.

The resolution called for measures including "adversity scales" where colleges consider the adversity a student has overcome when selecting among qualified applicants, similar to the "socioeconomic disadvantage index" developed by the University of California, Davis, medical school.

The resolution also called for eliminating preferences for the wealthy, such as donors and children of alumni; targeting students at high schools that have a limited history of sending applicants to their school; paying full tuition in geographic areas for students with family incomes of $150,000 or less; establishing early college programs that allow high school students to take courses to earn college credit; and providing academic support and college admissions advice to high school students in low-income communities.

Mental Health Screening and Practice of Law

The Council adopted a policy opposing the use of mental health screening questions on character and fitness exams for licensure to practice law.

"[S]tatistical data reveal that there is no connection between bar application questions about mental health and attorney misconduct and that such questions have not been empirically shown to work as a successful screening tool for who can and cannot practice law in a competent manner," the resolution states.

The policy pledges that APA will work with the American Bar Association and state bar associations to remove questions regarding mental health diagnoses or treatment history from character and fitness questionnaires.

BEA Racial Disparities Task Force Report on Racism and Bias and Racial Disparities in PreK-12 Education

The Council voted 143-19 with 1 abstention to receive the report of the Board of Educational Affairs Racial Disparities Task Force, with the future addition of a foreword outlining the context and limitations of the report.

The report looks at racism and bias and their role in creating educational disparities; disparities at the intersection between race and disability; discipline disparities and school pathways to the juvenile justice system; and racial/ethnic mismatch between the educator workforce and school-age population. It also updates recommendations for research, practice and advocacy, and contains new recommendations for educator preparation.

BSA Task Force Report on Tenure and Promotion for Faculty of Color

The Council voted unanimously to receive the report of the Board of Scientific Affairs Report on Tenure and Promotion for Faculty of Color.

This report details systemic barriers and inequities that affect the evaluation of faculty of color under review for promotion and tenure in psychology programs. It also provides practical guidance and strategies for college and university administrators and external reviewers who will consider candidates for promotion and tenure in psychology departments with the understanding that dismantling systemic racism in psychological science has been identified as a guiding principle of APA.

Guidelines for Operational Psychology

The Council voted 107-55 with 4 abstentions to adopt the Guidelines for Operational Psychology as APA policy, with an expiration date of Dec. 31, 2028. These guidelines provide recommendations for psychologists engaged in operational support activities within the areas of national security, national defense and public safety.

The purpose of the guidelines is "to maintain and improve the quality of operational psychology services, standardize and enhance the professional delivery of such services, encourage the practice and continued development of operational psychology, and respect the applicable rights of persons affected by such services."

Amendments to Association Rules

- The Council voted 128-25 with 9 abstentions to add the chair of the Committee on Global Psychology and the chair of the Committee for the Advancement of General Applied Psychology to the Agenda Planning Group.
- It voted unanimously to change the eligibility criteria for serving on the Needs Assessment, Slating and Campaigns Committee (NASCC). Changes included reducing the waiting period after serving on APA's Board of Directors and Council prior to eligibility for NASCC from two years to one and removal of the restriction on simultaneous service between NASCC and elected positions with state/provincial/territorial associations or any divisions.
- Members voted 138-11 with 2 abstentions in favor of forwarding to membership for a vote an amendment to the APA Bylaws that would change the requirement for the number of candidates to be included on the president-elect ballot from five to up to five.
- Council approved (143-17 with 1 abstention) amendments to Association Rule 110-14 to clarify rules prohibiting simultaneous service on the Board of Directors and other elected or appointed APA positions.
- Council approved (120-36 with 3 abstentions) forwarding a proposed bylaw change that would require the Policy and Planning Board to formally consult and discuss with Council before proposing any amendments. The measure now goes to the full membership for a vote.

Presidential Citation and Raymond D. Fowler Award

APA President Thema Bryant, PhD, presented a Presidential Citation to the Committee on Women in Psychology on their 50th anniversary in recognition for the contributions to psychology.

Dr. Bryant also presented the Raymond D. Fowler Award to former APA president Sandra L. Shullman, PhD.