



**american board**  
**of professional psychology**

September 17, 2015

Sverre Leonhard Nielsen

Email: SverreLeonhard@psykologforeningen.no

Re: International Project on Competence in Psychology (IPCP)  
Third IPCP Progress Report, June 2015

Dear Dr. Nielsen:

The mission of the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) is to protect consumers through the examination and certification of psychologists who demonstrate competence in approved specialty areas in professional psychology. ABPP has considerable interest in the establishment, assessment, and maintenance of competent professional psychology practice. Thus, we are very interested in this IPCP initiative and its international scope.

After you distributed the June 2015 Third IPCP Progress Report with a request for comments, ABPP President Randy Otto developed an ABPP task force for the purpose of developing a response. Subsequently, the committee solicited comments from our trustees. Our task force, comprised of Michael Tansy (Chair), Joel Frost, Christina Pietz, Jack O'Regan, and Jeanne Galvin reviewed and distributed the IPCP reports you provided us in 2015, including the June 2015 report. We also sent these documents to the ABPP trustees, and we asked the trustees to provide comments on these documents, specifically the June 2015 report. We informed the trustees that we would organize a formal reply that would represent ABPP as a whole. Below is our reply.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to support the IPCP's efforts to promote the development of a global agreement on identifying the benchmark competences that define international professional psychology. While all professions are defined by uniform practice standards, we recognize the variety of settings in which professional psychologists practice and the diverse populations we serve. We also respect a degree of difference and flexibility in the day-to-day practice of competent individual psychologists. ABPP promotes uniform competent professional psychology practice in North America, respecting the diversity within the scope of this broad set of professional psychologists. In assessing North American psychologists, we are routinely challenged in our efforts to flexibly and fairly evaluate the meaning of competent practice in diverse settings. ABPP respects your efforts to make competent professional psychology practice uniform internationally. We appreciate that the IPCP must set firm standards that reflect unparalleled diversity as the IPCP represents the entire universe of professional psychology practice, embracing the range of professional psychology practice worldwide.

As an early exercise to examine the commonalities between IPCP and ABPP standards, we offered our task force this table:

FOUNDATIONAL/ FUNCTIONAL	2011 ABPP COMEPTENCIES	2015 IPCP Code
Foundational	Relationships	ER1
Foundational	Individual and cultural diversity	WD1, WD2, WD3, WD4, WD5, WD6
Foundational	Ethical legal standards and policy	PE1, PE2, PE3
Foundational	Evidence-based practice	EP1, EP2, EP3, AP1, AP2, AP3
Foundational	Professionalism	AP1, AP2, AP3, ER1, ER2
Foundational	Reflective Practice/Self-Assessment/Self-Care	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4
Foundational	Scientific Knowledge and Methods	KN1, KN2, SK1, SK2
Foundational	Interdisciplinary systems	CO1, CO2, CO3
Functional	Assessment	PA1, PA2, PA3
Functional	Intervention	SG1, SG2, PI1, PI2, PI3, PI4, PI5, PI6
Functional	Consultation	AP4, AP5, AP6, WD5
Functional	Research/evaluation	
Functional	Supervision	
Functional	Teaching	
Functional	Management-Administration	
Functional	Advocacy	

From this table, it appears that the IPCP set standards in every ABPP foundational competency domain and in the core ABPP functional competencies areas (assessment, intervention and consultation). Based on this assessment, it appears that IPCP is very well aligned with the competencies ABPP expects of our board certified psychologists.

Some ABPP trustees commented that ABPP has more functional competencies than does IPCP, and others observed that IPCP adopted more narrow definitions of specific competencies than those adopted by ABPP. For example, there was some question as to why ethnicity was not

mentioned as an element of diversity inasmuch as ethnic variations and identities are ongoing sources of global conflict. However, overwhelmingly, trustees expressed their strong support for your efforts and the content of the June 2015 Third IPCP Progress Report.

Please include this letter in your final report and thank you for the opportunity to comment. ABPP is pleased to continue to support efforts professional psychology's efforts to establish, assess, and maintain competent professional psychology standards.

Sincerely,

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ABPP IPCP Task Force

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Joel Frost, EdD, ABPP

Christina Pietz, PhD, ABPP

Jack O'Regan, PhD, ABPP

Jeanne Galvin, JD