



# Society of Counseling Psychology

## Division 17, American Psychological Association

<http://www.div17.org>

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Dear Board Members,

On behalf of the Society of Counseling Psychology (SCP), Division 17 of the American Psychological Association, I am writing to strongly support the suggested corrections about the description for counseling psychology and the competency statements proposed by The APS College of Counselling Psychologists and the Association of Counselling Psychologists.

The SCP was founded as a division of the APA in 1946 to promote personal, educational, vocational, and group adjustment in a variety of settings. Currently, SCP has approximately 2000 members and brings together psychologists, students, and international and professional affiliates who are dedicated to promoting education and training, scientific investigation, practice, and diversity and public interest in professional psychology. SCP advocates for Counseling Psychology within the field of psychology and in the public sector.

On behalf of the executive board of the SCP, I believe that having a consistent description for counseling psychology with a focus on "competency" as well as knowledge is critical in developing international standards of training, research, practice, and our professional identity.

We applaud efforts of The APS College of Counselling Psychologists and Association of Counselling Psychologists and their proposals in these two areas:

1. Suggested corrections about the description for counseling psychology:  
*"Counselling psychologists use their knowledge and understanding of psychology, psychotherapy, and mental health to treat a wide range of psychological issues, problems, and mental health disorders. They provide assessment, formulation, diagnosis and psychotherapy for individuals, couples, families, and groups across the lifespan. They use evidence-based therapies and evidence based therapy relationships to assist clients to resolve mental health disorders or psychological problems and move toward greater psychological health. They research, evaluate, and develop new methods for improving psychological health and therapeutic interventions for psychological problems and disorders."*

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2. The revision of specialist skills for counseling psychologists to include specific competencies (and not simply knowledge) that relate to: (a) psychological assessment and measurement, (b) the diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders, and (c) intervention strategies that include couples counseling. We applaud the groups' efforts in revising the language and the inclusion of competencies. Actually, this revision is closely in line with the competency movement in professional psychology.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Cordially,

James W. Lichtenberg, PhD, ABPP  
President, Society of Counseling Psychology, Division 17 of the American  
Psychological Association