

Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC): A Historical View

I. Background and Overview

The Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) was established in the mid-1980s as an umbrella forum through which all of the education and training groups within professional psychology could meet, communicate, and take action on areas of common interest. Overall, it appears that there has been good support for the general concept of and rationale for CCTC by its member councils (i.e., the education and training councils have recognized the need for such a system). Historically, however, attendance by member councils at CCTC meetings has been sporadic and participation uneven. For example, as recently as the late 1990s, it was the case that annual meetings might occur with only a few of the training councils represented. Complicating matters, even with larger attendance, meetings tended to consist primarily of lengthy reports by member councils of their respective plans and activities. Although useful at the level of information-sharing and relationship-building across the training councils, relatively little emphasis or effort was placed on either identifying areas of common interest or translating such interests into actionable plans or activities.

In the late 1990s, two events occurred which suggested that CCTC might be ready and able to assume a more deliberative and action-oriented approach. First, the following mission statement was developed and approved:

The mission of the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) is to provide a forum for communication among the doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral training associations in psychology. CCTC promotes discussion of professional education of psychologists, develops recommendations to be reviewed and possibly implemented by member organizations, encourages communication between CCTC members and associated organizations, and provides comment to the Board of Educational Affairs (BEA), the Committee on Accreditation (CoA), and other APA Boards and Committees on relevant issues.

As may be evident, this statement emphasized that the purpose and role of CCTC included, but was not limited to, establishing a forum through which the training councils could communicate with one another. In addition to this crucial function, CCTC was also to *promote discussion* of professional education, *develop recommendations* to be reviewed and implemented, and *encourage communication* and *provide comments* to and from key organizations, groups, and systems throughout the larger education and training community. This declaration of intent appears to recognize that without a system like CCTC, there is no clear mechanism through which the perspectives of all training councils could be heard and reflected in the various policies and processes that affected them.

Second, beginning in 1999, a series of “action-oriented” chairs assumed the helm of CCTC (Drs. Emil Rodolfa, Beverly Thorn, and Nadine Kaslow). With considerable support from the APA’s Education Directorate (which has funded CCTC from its inception), and Dr. Paul Nelson, Deputy Executive Director of the Education Directorate,

and a primary initiator of the CCTC in the mid-1980s (along with Dr. Nathan Perry and others on the Board of Educational Affairs), these CCTC chairs took three substantive steps: 1) expanded the membership of CCTC to include representative “members” of all relevant education and training groups as well as “liaisons” who might have a vested interest in the deliberations and activities of CCTC; 2) encouraged attendance at annual meetings by all member councils; and 3) began considering a range of issues of relevance to professional education and training in psychology that could and should be addressed by CCTC and its members. As a result of these efforts, the CCTC currently consists of 14 members (i.e., representatives of various education and training councils) and 6 liaisons (i.e., representatives of various groups and systems within and external to APA that would have an interest in CCTC activities) (see <http://www.psychtrainingcouncils.org/members.html>). Among other accomplishments over the past several years, it should be noted that deliberations on CCTC played an important role in explicating the rationale for the recent *Competencies 2002 Conference: Future Directions in Education and Credentialing in Professional Psychology* (see www.appic.org).

II. Structure

Regarding the structure of CCTC, there are no bylaws or other guidelines specifying issues of governance or attendant procedures. However, it appears that CCTC members have typically elected a chair to serve for a term of one or two calendar years; for the past three years, a secretary has also been elected to serve with the chair. Meetings of the CCTC occur on an annual basis under the auspices of, and with funding from, the Education Directorate; a second meeting of CCTC typically occurs in conjunction with the APA's annual meeting. Attendees have consisted of the chair or designated representative (chair-elect, past-chair) of each member council; terms of membership on CCTC appear to range from 1 to 3 years. Some training councils elect to bring more than one representative to CCTC meetings (e.g., a chair and chair-elect). However, the Education Directorate typically funds only one representative from each training council for the annual meeting. Perhaps reflecting the diversity of its members, CCTC has tended to function by consensus of those present; as such, individual members (as represented by the respective chairs of training councils) determine whether and to what degree they wish to participate in various CCTC initiatives.

As indicated above, although communication remains core to the CCTC's mission and purpose, the organization has begun to assume a much more proactive presence within the larger education and training community. For example, on the heels of *Competencies 2002*, CCTC established the “Student Competence Task Force” to examine issues of the nature and scope of student-trainee competence. Thus far, this task force has developed a document entitled *The Comprehensive Evaluation of Student-Trainee Competence in Professional Psychology Programs*, which essentially clarifies that “in addition to performance in coursework, seminars, scholarship, comprehensive examinations, and related program requirements, other aspects of professional development and functioning (e.g., cognitive, emotional, psychological, interpersonal, technical, and ethical) will also be evaluated” (see <http://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/cctcevaluation.pdf>; see also

<http://gradpsych.apags.org/jun04/competence.cfm>). Other recent activities and initiatives include, but are not limited to, development of a draft set of practicum guidelines through which the levels of competence are specified across a comprehensive set of domains; the need to follow up with a variety of diversity and multicultural initiatives within APA and perhaps develop additional source/case materials; a survey regarding the fees that programs do or do not assess students while on internship; another survey regarding the postdoctoral year in general and funding issues in particular; the question of internship supply and demand, and its impact on students and programs; the pros and cons of continuing to require the supervised postdoctoral year as a requirement for licensure; the possibility of establishing a “division of education and training” within APA; and the feasibility of a shared conference among CCTC member groups.

III. List of CCTC Chairs/Secretaries

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Secretary</u>
	Nate Perry, CUDCP	
1994-96	Sandy Pedersen, APPIC	
1996-98	Emil Rodolfa, ACCTA	
1998-2000	Bev Thorn, CUDCP	
2000-03	Nadine Kaslow, APPIC	
2003	Cynthia Baum, NCSPP	Jenny Cornish
2003-05	Emil Rodolfa, APPIC	Craig Shealy
2005-07	Ray Crossman, NCSPP	

IV. Purpose, Process, and Potential

The overall relevance and importance of CCTC was strongly affirmed by a 2003 workgroup examining the mission of CCTC. Of particular note, the fact that CCTC is a place where chairs of diverse associations can come together and “network” seemed to be of great significance. At the same time, as CCTC has developed the meetings have become more efficient, where less time is spent on oral reports of council activities (these reports were presented in written form and briefly overviewed orally) and more time spent on updating members on the progress of shared projects and/or deliberations about other activities in which CCTC might engage.

One key goal of the CCTC meetings and contact over the listserv is to what are the common issues among the members of CCTC. Along these lines, the notion that members have much more in common as training councils than originally thought has emerged. That is, although individual representatives might initially approach CCTC from a specific vantage point, and be sensitive to whether or not “their perspective” would be heard and welcomed, ultimately it seemed clear that the issues discussed converged around a number of themes that were of relevance to a majority of members, if not everyone; the concomitant idea that members had much to gain by speaking with a “common voice” has been a consistent theme as is the notion that what CCTC said was important to the psychological community (i.e., because of its broad and inclusive representation across the spectrum of education and training in professional psychology, CCTC had the potential for considerable influence regarding relevant actions, guidelines, recommendations, policies, and practices).

Over the years, the “voluntary” nature of CCTC has had substantial appeal to all members. That is, one of the benefits of CCTC is that it does not impose or mandate particular policies. Along these same lines, the idea that not all groups would be equivalently interested in the same topics was noted (i.e., this is the free market point that it was acceptable for different councils to gravitate toward issues of greatest concern). At the same time, CCTC members typically find a way to talk honestly and openly about all issues that are before CCTC (rather than avoiding them), but do so in a respectful manner. Ultimately, the advantages of coming together and speaking with a “common voice,” while also respecting and accommodating differences insofar as possible, is a consensus view regarding the ideal balance between these fundamental CCTC goals.

Leadership for CCTC is important. Energetic and conscientious individuals who are able to keep members on track and hold the group accountable (during and between meetings) but also respond skillfully to process issues (e.g., listening to and integrating a range of perspectives), appears to be particularly salient attributes of good CCTC leadership.

During recent years, CCTC has developed a strategy of having specific projects or tasks that could be addressed over a period of time (e.g., through committees). In this way, chairs would continue to join CCTC for a period of time, while working committees representative of CCTC membership would have the time and continuity necessary to complete various tasks.

Ultimately, CCTC has enormous potential to influence activity within the broader education and training community. In this regard, while CCTC should continue to “break bread” together, this Council has the ability to do much more to fulfill our potential as an organization.