

TO: Executive Board (EB), Society of Counseling Psychology (SCP)

FROM: Tania Israel and John Westefeld, Co-Chairs, Special Task Group
(STG) on Strategic Planning (SP)

DATE: December 17, 2018

RE: Final Report of the SCP Strategic Planning Committee

Introduction

This memo summarizes the activities conducted by the Society of Counseling Psychology STG on Strategic Planning and introduces the 2019-2021 SCP Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan can be found in Appendix A and consists of a Mission Statement, a Values Statement, a Vision for the Future, a Central Organizing Goal for the plan, and six strategic goals, with accompanying information about each goal. The reader also is referred to three additional appendices: Appendix B — "Diagnostic Report;" Appendix C — "Final Report from Consultants;" and Appendix D — "Integrative Professionalism Rubric."

History

The Strategic Planning STG was constituted during the summer of 2017 by 2017-18 SCP President Arpana Inman. The original chair of the STG was Rosie Bingham. However, when Rosie entered the APA presidential race, we, Tania Israel and John Westefeld, agreed to replace Rosie and serve as co-chairs. This report is submitted on behalf of the current members of the STG:

Tania Israel, STG Co-Chair, SCP Past-President
John Westefeld , STG Co-Chair, SCP Past-President
Ruth Fassinger, SCP President
Debbie Nolan, Executive Director, SCP
Tiffany O'Shaughnessy, Director, Member Interface Board
Yu-Wei Wang, International Section Past Co-Chair
Mary O'Leary Wiley, Past Vice-President for Professional Practice
Kerrie Wilkins-Yel, Website Manager
David Zelaya, 2016 Leadership Academy Faculty- Student Member

All STG members have been involved in SCP in a multiplicity of leadership roles beyond those listed above. Members of the STG also were selected for their capacity to offer diverse, broad, and informed perspectives on SCP activities and directions. The membership of the STG includes a student as well as early/mid/late career professionals.

Initial activities of the STG focused on hiring a consultant team to work with us on the overall strategic planning process. After distributing a request for qualifications, and a comprehensive review of voluminous materials that were submitted to the STG by national consulting firms, we conducted extensive interviews with five finalists. Ultimately, the STG hired Executive Service Corps (ESC) as our consultant, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. In December 2017 we began

working with ESC. This work included sending them documents related to SCP, its operations, past strategic plans, and its history; reviewing our website; and a series of conference calls wherein the STG shared with ESC additional background about SCP and what we were hoping to accomplish with this strategic planning process. Thus, there were very extensive discussions during this time about the overall goals of the strategic planning process. Important guiding principles to emerge from these discussions were:

1. Though, historically, strategic planning has been carried out a number of times by SCP, the process typically has been confined primarily to one Executive Board meeting—and the EB members were the people directly involved in the planning. It has been very important to the STG to make the current process a more comprehensive one, and to involve all members of SCP, counseling psychologists who are not members of SCP, and those who have left SCP. Historically, it also has been the case that strategic planning encompassed only one SCP presidential term. The current process already has transcended several terms, and is viewed as one that will continue over time as the plan is monitored, reviewed, and adjusted.
2. We endeavored to utilize consultants throughout the process. However, we also felt it important that we make final decisions about both process and content.
3. We very much wanted to generate a report that was comprehensive, realistic, user-friendly, and that would be contributory to SCP.
4. It was important for us to complete the process—i.e. deliver a report to the EB—by the 2019 mid-year EB meeting.

Commencing in fall, 2017 and continuing through winter, spring, and fall of 2018, we typically held hourly conference calls on a weekly basis. In addition, over this time period, the following activities were completed:

1. The STG met with ESC for an all-day retreat in Chicago on February 1, 2018. At this retreat, we worked to develop a mission statement, values statement, and vision statement, which were based on and were emerging from previous versions of SCP statements and would continue to be revised over time as we solicited feedback about them during our assessment process. We also planned for data collection. This data collection would take place through phone interviews and a survey to gather member input about a wide range of issues (see below)
2. Following the retreat, ESC interviewed by phone approximately 30 counseling psychologists (leaders, members, and non-members) for an hour each, asking them for their opinions about numerous topics related to SCP, including strengths, ways we could improve, and a wide variety of additional issues. These interviewees were selected to represent a cross section of counseling psychologists, and included graduate students, early career professionals, mid-career professionals, and professionals who were late-career/retired.
3. A comprehensive electronic survey was developed and sent to all members of SCP, as well as some former members who had left SCP. This survey again assessed opinions about a wide variety of topics related to SCP mission, initiatives, and services. More than 900 surveys were returned, representing a return rate of approximately 35% .

4. Based on the results of the Chicago meeting, the phone calls, the survey, and a review of SCP materials, ESC wrote and delivered to us a Diagnostic Report (see Appendix B). The STG then spent extensive time reviewing and discussing the Diagnostic Report.
5. The STG next began to plan an all-day retreat to take place at APA the day before the August 2018 SCP EB meeting. We identified SCP members who were likely to be involved in implementing the strategic plan, including incoming and outgoing EB members, committee chairs, section chairs, and others involved in SCP leadership roles – a group of approximately 50 people. The goal was to have a large, informed group extensively involved in the planning process, with ample opportunities to provide input and ideas concerning SCP.

The majority of the day-long retreat was organized into five work groups: **Inclusion and Engagement**, focusing on recruitment, retention, engagement, and inclusion of a diverse SCP membership; **Counseling Psychology Leadership**, emphasizing the provision and support of viable, rewarding leadership paths, activities, and involvement of SCP members; **Advocacy**, dealing with articulating a set of coherent, viable guiding principles and pathways for counseling psychologists to engage in advocacy in their various professional roles; **Integrative Professionalism**, focusing on articulating a viable, usable model of professional life that integrates scholarship, practice, education/training, and advocacy; and **Communication**, emphasizing the creation and maintenance of a variety of effective mechanisms for SCP communication both internally and externally. The STG spent extensive time developing the names and foci of these workgroups.

The retreat produced usable products and engaged many voices and perspectives. The work groups developed planning goals and objectives, based on: (1) issues identified in the diagnostic report; (2) their own ideas, and (3) ideas generated throughout the group discussions that day. We believe that, in addition to the retreat outcomes, the actual process of meeting all day in a retreat format, with extensive time for discussion, in and of itself was valuable to those who attended, to SCP, and to the articulation of the final strategic plan.

The work groups continued to meet via phone/skype following APA, with the goal of developing a final list of goals, objectives, and action plans for SCP, including a timeline and who would be responsible for the action steps. The Integrative Professionalism Workgroup developed a rubric (Appendix D) as a tool to help evaluate the extent to which aspects of the field of counseling psychology (e.g., conference proposals, manuscripts, composition of groups) reflect an integrative mindset.

At APA convention, the STG also held a townhall meeting to provide an additional opportunity for SCP members to share their feedback on the strategic planning process, as well as ask questions. The townhall was held August 10, and more than 50 individuals attended. We also invited feedback from SCP members during the annual business meeting at the convention. All of this feedback ultimately was incorporated into the plan. It has been our goal from the outset to be as inclusive as possible throughout this process.

In the early fall of 2018, the reports from each work group were submitted to the STG. In addition, a final report from ESC was submitted to the STG (see Appendix C). After receiving the work group drafts, the STG worked assiduously to eliminate duplication and overlap, to

synthesize the work of the groups, and, ultimately, to generate a plan around each area. This analysis resulted in six strategic goals, which constitute the bulk of the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is organized around six strategic goals. The plan articulates objectives, action steps, and suggests responsible parties, dates, and resources needed to accomplish the action steps.

The Strategic Plan presented in this report is conceived of as a 3-5 year plan. It is our view that strategic plans by nature are living, dynamic documents, and that SCP and its leadership will most likely modify/adapt this plan as time unfolds. We also believe that it might be additive for SCP to establish a new STG in approximately 3-4 years both to assess the current plan as well as draft an updated plan, perhaps utilizing some of the mechanisms built into the current plan. It is also very important to note that a Strategic Plan is designed to be “strategic” – that is, it is incisive, and does not address every single aspect of a complex organization. Rather, it is aimed at focusing on the most significant challenges facing an organization, and the opportunities available to the organization for addressing those challenges and enhancing its functioning most effectively. Thus, the emphasis of this strategic plan is on pivotal areas of concern for our members that were identified in the survey, the phone interviews, the retreat, or all three. Many aspects of SCP as an organization were not highlighted by members as areas of primary concern, and thus do not appear in the strategic plan. However, because a strategic plan is designed to be a living document, the mechanisms to provide continual assessment are built in, and different foci will emerge over time as some concerns are addressed and others arise.

The plan that follows represents the results of our work. Again, it is important to note that the information in the plan is based on multiple data sources (i.e., phone interviews, survey, diagnostic report, retreat, town hall at APA, consultation with ESC, as well as many hours of discussion, clarification, modification, and consolidation by the STG). The plan is organized around six strategic goals, as well as objectives, action steps, responsible parties, dates, and necessary resources, all of which are subject to additional review and possible modification by current SCP governance, which has the responsibility to ensure implementation of the strategic plan. These six strategic goals are:

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: INCREASE SCP MEMBERSHIP, FOCUSING ESPECIALLY ON PRACTITIONERS, INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS, AND STUDENTS TRANSITIONING TO ECP STATUS

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ENGAGE SCP MEMBERS IN ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE BENEFIT AND ENHANCE CONNECTION

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: ELEVATE IMPACT OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF SCP

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: FOSTER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, INVOLVEMENT, AND SUCCESS OF SCP MEMBERS

STRATEGIC GOAL 6: SUPPORT COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGISTS' ADVOCACY TO PROMOTE CLIENT AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

It is again important to note that additional data/information can be found in the appendices, which should be carefully reviewed by the EB and others who are involved in implementing the Strategic Plan.

One of the major challenges in formulating the Strategic Plan was to make it comprehensive, yet not so massive/complex that it was unrealistic in terms of completion. We have attempted to strike a balance here—a middle ground between a minimal plan and one so all-inclusive and so industrious that it is unrealistic in terms of implementation. However—we ultimately erred on the side of inclusiveness. We fully recognize that the EB will have to do some prioritizing concerning the plan, and some activities may need to be started at a later date than indicated, depending on the overall workload and focus of SCP leadership. A secondary challenge was to make the plan both specific as well as flexible --specific so that there are suggestions presented that are clear and understandable, yet also flexible enough to allow for malleability as the process unfolds. We hope that these objectives have been achieved.

Conclusion

Once the Executive Board reviews the plan and discusses it, changes may be made to the plan as the EB sees fit. The STG is open to consultation as the EB reviews the plan, should there be a need for explanation or discussion. President Ruth Fassinger has worked very closely with the STG, and she is in the dual position of working on the plan as well as having responsibility for implementing it. STG Co-Chair Tania Israel also will attend the 2019 mid-year EB meeting to answer questions and provide consultation.

On behalf of all STG members, we thank you for the opportunity to work on the Strategic Plan. Though it has taken a great deal of time and work, we feel very satisfied with and excited about the product. This STG has been a remarkable collection of people. Every member has worked very hard, stepped up when needed, and made major contributions. It has been an honor and a pleasure for us, Tania and John, to co-chair this STG.

We sincerely hope that this plan will be of value to SCP – not only now, but for years to come.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any questions or concerns.

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Appendix A – Strategic Plan

Appendix B – Diagnostic Report

Appendix C – Final Report from Consultants

Appendix D – Integrative Professionalism Rubric

Appendix A – SCP STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement

The Society of Counseling Psychology (SCP) cultivates a home for psychologists, students, and international and professional affiliates who share a commitment to a holistic psychological perspective that is strengths-based, person- and community-centered, systems-oriented, contextually aware, multiculturally inclusive, socially just, and integrative of vocational and lifespan issues. SCP promotes this perspective within the field of psychology and in the public sector through practice, research, education and training, advocacy, consultation, and leadership.

Values Statement

SCP is committed to:

1. Empowering people to improve their lives, reach their potential, and move toward self-actualization by building upon their strengths;
2. Promoting psychological functioning and resilience beyond ameliorating pathology by using effective psychological interventions that attend to development, prevention, vocation, and health across the lifespan;
3. Considering context, systems, and intersecting social identities in conceptualizing individuals, problems, and interventions;
4. Conducting psychological assessment that is clinically astute, culturally-sensitive, strengths-based, and contextualized;
5. Fostering theory and research that rely on diverse methods and approaches, are contextualized and culturally sensitive, and are recognized as a potential tool of social change;
6. Producing science that is informed by practice and practice that is informed by science;
7. Emphasizing effective education, training, mentoring, and supervision as fundamental to promoting the values and future of the profession;
8. Engaging in critical self-reflection to foster insight, growth, and well-being in ourselves and others;
9. Centering marginalized voices in respectful and intentional communication to achieve shared understandings and goals for the society and the profession;
10. Addressing systemic oppression and eliminating health disparities by engaging in social justice advocacy with individuals and communities that have been stigmatized, ostracized, marginalized, or ignored;
11. Developing and implementing research, practice, training, and policies that are culturally relevant and sensitive to the needs of international populations and organizations;
12. Modeling ethical understanding and decision making;
13. Engaging in and modeling leadership that is learning-focused, flexible and adaptive, collaborative, multiculturally inclusive, mentoring-attentive, contextually sensitive, and responsive to the needs of contemporary organizations and society.

Vision Statement

SCP envisions a world where all people and communities can live to their fullest potential and work together to promote peace, health, and thriving.

Central Organizing Goal for Strategic Plan:

To improve inclusion and engagement of all counseling psychology professionals so that we can contribute to the well-being of our profession and promote a more just and equitable society.

Strategic Goals

The Strategic Plan is organized around the six strategic goals listed below. The table that follows details objectives, action steps, and suggestions regarding responsible parties, dates, and resources needed to accomplish these goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: INCREASE SCP MEMBERSHIP, FOCUSING ESPECIALLY ON PRACTITIONERS, INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS, AND STUDENTS TRANSITIONING TO ECP STATUS

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ENGAGE SCP MEMBERS IN ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE BENEFIT AND ENHANCE CONNECTION

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