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THE LICENSURE MOVEMENT, IMPLICATIONS
FOR PROFESSIONALIZATION
OF MONTANA COUNSELORS

by

ADRIENNE BIONDICH

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

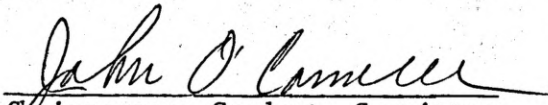
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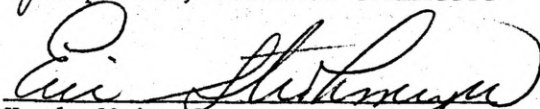
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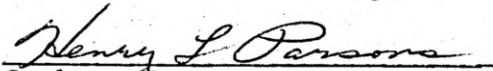
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to conduct a needs assessment to determine the precedence of a given attitude existing in Montana towards licensure of counselors. The survey sought to determine the pros and cons for proceeding with the pursuit of licensure as the most effective means for professionalization of counselors in Montana and to examine the level of understanding of the issues related to licensure as well as to identify and contact target groups within the state to obtain a collective response as a basis for accurate conclusions, recommendations, and course of action to be determined.

The population surveyed was divided into five groups. These groups included counselor educators, counselors in private practice, school counselors (K-12), post-secondary counselors (vo-tech, community college, and college/university), and counselors who work in mental health centers and other state agencies.

The data were collected by means of a questionnaire, which received a total return rate of 75%. The respondents were predominantly male, holding at least a masters degree or higher. Two-thirds of the respondents had over five years of experience in the field and professional memberships and certificates or licenses held were varied. The data were analyzed descriptively.

Answers to the major questions of this study concluded that: (a) agency counselors ranked themselves as demonstrating the highest level of understanding regarding licensure while school counselors ranked themselves lowest; (b) the general attitude towards counselor licensure indicated that licensure seems to be a viable means of increasing professionalization of counselors, but that counseling would survive if licensing were not achieved; (c) certification through some type of legislation was ranked the number one, preferred alternative for professionalization in Montana, while an autonomous counselor licensure board was ranked three; (d) the masters level of education was the overwhelming response for the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice. There was a general consensus among the respondents that something needs to be done regarding the professionalization of counselors in Montana. Recommendations were made for providing more licensure information and education as well as a need for counselors to take a definite professional stand, to adopt specific policies and procedures, and to initiate and lobby for licensure legislation.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Despite a lack of credible visibility in the public's eyes, counseling has emerged as a unique social service and its growth is being manifested in the direction of professionalization. Even though counseling's professional existence has been placed in the hands of others due to its lack of legal status, it has responded by demonstrating a willingness, ability, and need to regulate its own house.

Thus, the licensure movement has strong implications for the professionalization of counselors. The movement itself is premised on this need for a unique and separate identity. The licensure movement has become a trend that has gained momentum from major pressures existing outside as well as within the counseling profession.

Most external pressures are derived from State Boards of Examiners in Psychology. Many counselors have been issued cease and desist orders by State Boards because they have been found to be in violation of the state's psychology licensure law (APGA, 1978). The Board's action in many states has been based on a definition of the practice of psychology which includes the kinds of activities most counselors as well as other helping professionals perform (APGA, 1978). The Boards have also denied individuals trained outside Psychology Departments the right to take the state licensure examination (APGA, 1978).

Another related external pressure emanated from a document entitled "Standards for the Providers of Psychological Services"

(Standards for the Providers, 1974). Just who are these "providers of psychological services"? This catch-all phrase presumably includes any unregulated group or individual that has not achieved a professional identity. These standards place counselors in this nebulous category and so too subject them to external controls. Standards such as these reiterate a need for some form of legislative recognition or legal status in the counseling profession.

Still another external pressure manifested itself in January, 1978. The Council for the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology changed one of its criteria for membership. Its application form originally required a doctorate degree from a regionally accredited university, but changed its criteria to requiring "a doctorate degree in psychology from a regionally accredited educational institution" (APGA, 1978, p. 29f). And, late in 1976, the Veterans Administration began to require all VA employed psychologists to be licensed by State Boards of Psychology (APGA, 1978). Finally, in 1977, the Department of HEW issued a report that called for national certification of health professionals as well as national standards for professional training, thus possibly excluding the counseling profession from federal programs (APGA, 1978). These external pressures alone substantiate adoption of a rationale in favor of licensure for counselors, but the trend toward licensing brings into focus an internal dilemma.

There still is no consensus among the counseling profession itself as to the definition of counseling. "For more than 25 years counselors and educators have been attempting to define counseling within the fields of psychology and guidance" (Carroll, Halligan & Griggs, 1977, p. 577). And, there appears to be a general failing to implement standards for the preparation of counselors at the masters and doctoral levels in counselor training programs (APGA, 1978).

During the period from 1975-1977 approximately 20 states were involved in legal grievance procedures regarding counseling professionals (APGA, 1978). As a result of court decision in numerous cases, counseling was legally defined as a separate and unique profession. To date, the state of Virginia has passed the only professional counselor licensure law. Virginia created a Behavioral Science Board with separate sub-boards for counselors, psychologists, and social workers (APGA, 1978). Ohio, Texas, and Alabama have had strong licensure efforts in progress. Utah, Arkansas, and Idaho have just initiated attempts toward licensure action. In essence, counselors currently have no national registry, roster or other forms of identity which would give them a national visibility and hold them out to the public as true professionals.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to assess the attitudes, status, and needs of a selected group of Montana counselors, counselor educators, and other related helping professionals regarding licensure in the state of Montana during October, 1978.

Need and Purpose for the Study

In 1975 the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) endorsed a position for licensure and established a commission to deal with licensure problems and issues. The APGA Licensure Commission has a basic responsibility to assist all 50 states in the development of licensure procedures. The commission outlines specific suggested procedures for initiating licensure and guidelines for organizational action in the licensure process (APGA, 1978). A copy of Virginia's law along with these suggested procedures as well as model bills from Alabama and Ohio are included in APGA's "Licensure Committee Action Packet," 1978. The state of Virginia followed these procedures and among the preliminary steps outlined, the commission states:

Survey attitudes and feelings of own professional body to which licensing is a concern and goal.

Explore actions, needs, etc., of allied professional groups and paraprofessional counseling groups (APGA, 1978, p. 4).

The purpose of this study was to conduct a needs assessment to determine the precedence of a given attitude existing in Montana toward licensure of counselors. This survey sought to determine the pros and

cons for proceeding with the pursuit of licensure as the most effective means of professionalization for counselors in Montana and to examine the level of understanding of the issues related to licensure as well as to identify and contact target groups within the state to obtain a collective response from which accurate conclusions, recommendations, and course of action could be determined.

Questions to be Answered

1. How do respondents rate themselves in terms of their level of understanding regarding licensure?
2. Which group demonstrated the highest overall level of knowledge when compared to the six groups identified?
3. What is the general attitude towards counselor licensure assessed from the respondents surveyed?
4. What is the preferred alternative for professionalization ranked by the respondents?
5. What is the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice indicated by the respondents?
6. What does the collection of specific demographic data reveal?
7. What are the summarized, group opinions of counselor educators, private counselors, school counselors, post-secondary counselors, and agency counselors to open-ended questions regarding: (a) major issues concerning licensure of counselors in Montana; and (b) action to take now?

Procedure

An instrument (Appendix B) was constructed containing questions about the level of the respondents' understanding of the issues and topics related to licensure, their attitude towards licensure, their ranked preference of alternatives for professionalization and their brief opinions to open-ended questions regarding licensure. The questionnaire also asked for related demographic data. The survey was mailed with a cover letter (Appendix A) to counselor educators in the state of Montana, counselors in private practice, school counselors (K-12), post-secondary school counselors (vo-tech, community college, and college/university), and counselors who work in mental health centers and other state agencies. Upon receipt of the returned instrument, an analysis of the data was made as explained in Chapter 3.

Public forums were to be conducted in late November, 1978, in each of the four following Montana cities: Great Falls, Missoula, Helena, and Billings. The public forum format would have served basically to increase the level of understanding with regard to licensure. The forums would have been used to explain the primary purposes, processes, alternatives, and effects of the current licensure movement. They would also have helped to expose and explore reasons for and behind conflicting opinions among outside interest groups toward

licensure of counselors and would have further helped to identify their needs and relative group power.

Limitations

Due to the extensive nature of the topic, two major limitations restricted this study.

1. Due to monetary considerations the population was narrowed to five groups.

2. In an attempt to minimize the threat and to maximize the percentage of returns, the questionnaire was divided into short but concentrated areas of concern.

3. This study was further limited by the unsuspected postponement of the public forums on counselor licensure (Appendix C).

Delimitations

1. This study was delimited by the fact that no coding was utilized in order to guarantee absolute anonymity.

2. No follow-up questionnaire was sent and no study of non-respondents was made.

Definition of Terms

Regulation--"rules or policy prescribed by a superior or governing body (generally the state) as to the actions of those under its control" (Lindenberg, Granum, Cottingham, Swanson, & Sweeney, 1977, mimeo, p. 6).

Certification--a certificate attesting to or legally authenticizing and providing testimony to the fact that certain minimum standards have been met. Certificates are granted by some sort of regulatory agency and in some cases, a certificate is a license, although a certificate does not insure the quality of the service or product (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

Licensure--the power conferred upon persons by proper authority, to act in a particular way, practice in professions and to conduct certain trades.

Such authority is granted by a licensing board which has been established as an autonomous, regulatory agency through legislation. Professions which are licensed include medicine, dentistry, and psychology. The words License and Certificate are used interchangeably when talking about some groups such as plumbers and electricians. Licensing infers greater regulation than certification (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, pp. 6-7).

Registration--"the act of inserting one's name or having it inserted in an official written account or entry in a list or book regularly kept for preservation or for reference" (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, p. 7).

Registry--professionally, the registry serves to officially identify and recognize those persons who are qualified to perform a certain profession (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

Third Party Payments--

Reimbursements, monetary or otherwise, which are made by a person, company, or corporation for the delivery of services

to one of its clients or subscribers. The most common example is health insurance in which you and your doctor are first and second parties in the transaction and if you are insured for the medical services your insurance company is the third party. Providers of health services must be licensed (or in some other way be regulated) in order to qualify for third party payments (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, pp. 7-8).

"Grandfathering"

A colloquial term referring to a legal principle involved in the establishment of new regulations governing professions or trades. Persons established in a business or trade have a right to practice their profession and can not be legislated out of existence. A clause protecting individuals who are already serving as professionals is included in the legislative proposal to include them as automatically registered, certified, or licensed when such legislation is passed. In order for persons to be "grandfathered" they must identify themselves and present their credentials for being included under the new legislation within a given time period, generally one or two years (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, p. 8).

Psychologist--

The helping relationship typifies the major activity of clinical, counseling, and school psychologists. Historically, the classification and treatment of mental illness was the responsibility of psychiatrists. The need for psychologists arose when it was found that intelligence tests might be helpful in estimating what could be accomplished in psychiatric treatment (Shertzer & Stone, 1974, p. 12).

"Most state boards have moved to revise their statutes to restrict the definition of a psychologist to someone who has earned a Ph.D. in a Department of Psychology" (Gazda, 1977, p. 570).

Helping Professions--a broad range of job settings representing a variety of disciplines and titles that provide some type of counseling or human treatment service.

Behavior Science--"any science devoted to the study of human and lower animal behavior as it occurs in their respective environments; included are psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology" (Good, 1973, p. 517).

Clinical Psychology--

The largest area of specialization within psychology. Clinical psychology employs psychological knowledge and practice to help individuals cope with behavioral disorders and secure better adjustment and self-expression. Like his counterpart in psychiatry, the clinical psychologist performs diagnoses, treatment and prevention of emotional problems, but he does not use chemotherapy, shock therapy, or other medical methods (Shertzer & Stone, 1974, p. 12).

Counseling Psychology--

The application of the methods of general psychology to the study of individuals; overlaps extensively the field of clinical psychology; traditionally more concerned with vocational and educational psychological counseling than with therapeutic counseling; recently, the distinction has become less apparent; however, counseling psychologists are more often employed in schools, industries, and various community activities while clinical psychologists are professionally engaged in clinics and hospitals (Good, 1973, p. 457).

Professional Disclosure--a statement furnished to the client prior to performance of the service, including such information as name, business address and telephone number, philosophy of counseling,

formal education and training, competency areas, continuing education, fee schedule, and the name, address and telephone number of the state government agency regulating the practice of counseling (APGA, 1978).

Licensed Professional Counselor--

Any person who holds himself/herself out to the public by any title or description or services incorporating the words "licensed professional counselor"; and who offers to render professional counseling services to individuals, groups, organizations, corporations, institutions, government agencies or the general public for a fee, monetary or otherwise, implying that he/she is licensed and trained, experienced, or expert in counseling, and who holds a current, valid license to practice counseling (APGA, 1978, p. 19).

Practice of Counseling--

Rendering, offering to render, or supervising those who render to individuals, groups, organizations, corporations, institutions, government agencies or the general public any service involving the application of counseling procedures and other related areas of the behavioral sciences to help in learning how to solve problems or make decisions related to careers, personal growth, marriage, family, or other interpersonal or intrapersonal concerns (APGA, 1978, p. 20).

Summary

As a professional, the counselor exists as a competent and autonomous provider of mental health services. While licensure is ultimately important to the entire counseling profession, it is only one means of achieving a professional status. Licensure directly affects only a small percentage of counselors (APGA, 1978). There are potential alternatives such as a national registry which could have immediate benefits to more counselors while at the same time assisting the licensure movement.

Once existing opinions and attitudes toward licensure are assessed, Montana counselors can develop a firm position and an organizational pattern for legislative action towards licensure or an alternative means for achieving professionalization. There is, of course, an existing possibility that professionalization through any channel does not exist as a high priority issue for Montana counselors at this time.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

An increased demand for qualified helping professions has given impetus to the licensure movement in the field of Counseling Psychology. As this field emerged and grew into a unique and definite social service, the need for professionalization gained momentum.

This review of literature is devoted to an understanding of how and why the field of Counseling Psychology arrived at this need for professionalization and where this trend may lead. The first section of this chapter unfolds an historical perspective of the origin, development, and emerging professional identity of the Counseling Psychologist. Views on professionalization are reviewed covering the recent trend, problems, and rationale for licensure. And finally, dissenting views, alternatives, and recent developments and implications of the licensure movement are analyzed.

Historical Perspective

Origin, Development, and Emerging Professional Identity.

Counseling in the Twentieth Century is a concept that emerged from a philanthropic enterprise credited to Frank Parsons, founder and father of Vocational Guidance. During the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century, man's displacement due to rapid growth and change became obvious. Mass industrial expansion and shifting occupational patterns identified a new materialism and widened the gap between the poor and the rich. With this overwhelming capacity for growth and new

opportunities as well as demands for women's rights, social justice, and more and better schools, came an urban-industrial society that embodied a confused, directionless person (Davis, 1969).

The "Humanitarian" movement grew out of this industrial expansion as an attempt to answer some of the needs that man's mechanistic society could no longer meet. Frank Parsons, in developing the first systematic program of Vocational Guidance, which he called "organized common sense," took on the task of bringing school, child, employer, and learner closer together. This program of direction, "Vocational Guidance" as he defined it, means: "assisting young people in planning and carrying out their working careers with primary emphasis on choosing a vocation" (Davis, 1969, p. viii). Parson's program was a process of vocational orientation, individual analysis, and counseling (McGowan & Schmidt, 1962).

While Frank Parsons labeled this humanitarian process, the concept of Vocational Guidance began long before his time. The notion of aiding the individual during a time of need is rooted in antiquity. Primitive people felt overpowered and controlled by their environment. They attempted to explain life and the unknown through mysticism. Recent historical writers and thinkers tell us that mankind has at last achieved a rational perspective of self and of the world. Yet, this very emergence from superstition and confusion has only left new unknowns to unravel (Johnson, 1959).

Vocational Guidance is a concept and a process that is dealing with more than just occupational choice. The problem of self-direction is an implicit issue and Parsons conceived the first workable plan to deal with it and brought it into being when he established the Vocational Bureau in Boston in 1908 (Davis, 1969). This Bureau offered the first organized course for training counselors as well as the first course for counselors given to teachers (Davis, 1969).

The transition from Vocational Guidance to Counseling Psychology occurred suddenly, but not unexpectedly, in 1951 when the job of the Counseling Psychologist and the field of Counseling Psychology emerged. The terms were adopted at a special meeting called by the President of what was then called the Division of Counseling and Guidance of the American Psychological Association. The birth of these terms brought with it an awareness of the differences between this and related fields of applied psychology (McGowan & Schmidt, 1962). In 1952 the National Vocational Guidance Association merged with several other similar associations to form the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) which tacitly recognized the contributions made by Psychology to Guidance.

In reality, Counseling Psychology had its origin in three distinct movements (McGowan & Schmidt, 1962). The Vocational Guidance movement as conceived by Frank Parsons, the Psychometric movement which erupted as the European counterpart to Parsons when Alfred

Binet published his intelligence scale in Paris. This movement is simply a psychological theory of mental measurements. When the proponents of these two forces joined, individual differences in aptitudes and interests could be studied in relation to occupations, thus revitalizing the Vocational Guidance movement as well as giving it credibility. The third movement, the Psychoanalytic, deals with concepts of repression and anxiety and how they play an integral part in personality and emotional development and behavior.

As each movement communicated, it became apparent that a merger of all three orientations would eventuate. The impact of this unity created the field of Counseling Psychology and a shift from occupational guidance per se to counseling took place. Counseling Psychology includes Vocational Guidance, yet goes beyond it. It attempts to deal with the whole person rather than just a single aspect or dimension of him. It attempts to help the person in all the areas of his life where adjustment proves too difficult (McGowan & Schmidt, 1962). This merger of the Vocational, Psychometric, and the Psychoanalytic movements also changed the concept and image of the person doing the counseling. The counselor's role began with occupational guidance and evolved into that of the psychologist.

Although we can see how the Counseling Psychologist emerged historically, history does not clearly define or validate the counselor's role (Stefflre, 1964). The process of professionalization

begins here, with the need to validate the counselor's true role. This process of identification involves a kind of labeling which may be one very possible means to achieve professionalization (Stefflre, 1964). This very labeling has shifted from that of guidance worker to guidance counselor, to school counselor to psychological counselor to psychologist. The counselor has clearly been a "marginal man" (Stefflre, 1964). Is he a teacher with a new assignment, a clinical psychologist who has strayed, a sub-administrator or a prestigious clerical worker? Until we propose a clear image of what a counselor should be and do, we are not going to become a profession (Stefflre, 1964).

According to McGowan (1970), the problem it seems is one of a common identity. Just who is the counselor and what is his role? "There seems to be a lively little field here" (p. 920), people who are doing reasonably well financially, and those who do research and publish. But, on an 80% return, a survey found only one half who commonly identified themselves as Counseling Psychologists.

The identity of the counselor and his field has changed; it has gradually evolved into a much broader view (Parker, 1974). In the early 60's counseling was challenged "to give psychology away" (Parker, 1974, p. 349). Once we throw off the past shackles of holding exclusive rights to a set body of knowledge and procedures, new innovative techniques can emerge. Where Psychology alone was

formerly seen as the source of process, theory, and procedure in answering people's needs, this somewhat singular dependence upon Psychology has given way to a many-disciplined, multi-dimensional approach, which holds many promises for the field of Counseling (Johnson, 1959). However, some are less sure of Counseling as a viable field; as it changes it may become a dying field (Parker, 1974).

McGowan expresses a similar nonconfidence in Counseling Psychology as a progressing field. He sees it dying in the sense that "there remains a question of its academic identification if not its professional identification" (McGowan, 1970, p. 920). The field of Counseling can only be what we make it. There is a need for a collective personality unhampered by professional stereotypes (Johnson, 1959). The roots of professionalization lie in this very need for a collective personality, a common identity and an internal control. Since Counseling hasn't clearly been delineated by the profession itself, its present identity is left in the hands of the courts (Cottingham, 1978a).

Views on Professionalization

Recent Trend, Problems, and Rationale for Licensure. In a society where material values are dominant, it is easier to understand why professionals have been able to win and to maintain a certain prestige. "This prestige explains in part the yearnings of many

occupational groups (including Counseling) to become professionalized" (McCully, 1962, p. 681).

School counselors have failed to achieve professionalization because they have been under an assumption that by calling themselves and their work professional, they would become so (McCully, 1962). While some seem to think that there is no clear-cut dividing line that separates the professions from other occupations, others can specify complex characteristics that do distinguish the professions. And these distinguishing characteristics appear to be reflected by both the fee taking or independent professions as well as by the school counselor or public profession. The role of the school counselor and the field itself has too long mired in these kinds of ambiguities (McCully, 1962).

The recent trend is for counselors to propose establishing their own state boards if Psychology examining bodies fail to recognize non-psychology counselors as eligible candidates for licensing (Cottingham, 1975). In essence, the formulation and promulgation of selection and training standards for entry into occupations is the most crucial task of professionalization (McCully, 1962). "Every professional body has two key features central to its designation: a set of professional training standards and a code of ethics" (Dash, 1975, p. 222). The APGA has both, but guidelines are open to interpretation or can be totally ignored (Dash, 1975). Currently, although some

counselor preparation programs are APA approved, most are not officially accredited. And, without this accreditation, skills provided for trainees are not validated (Cottingham, 1978a).

"We can no longer afford to perpetuate the myth that the competence of a school counselor can be estimated satisfactorily by adding credits to his transcript" (McCully, 1962, p. 686). "Credentialing eventually must link program approval and counselor certification or licensure" (Cottingham, 1978a, p. 334). Now is the time for change and the demystification of Counseling. The hope is that this change will bring about a future cooperation rather than competition between Counseling and Psychology and that they will jointly use the data, skills, and knowledge gained to foster a "true professionalism" (Ivey, 1973, p. 113).

The trend then, towards professionalization began and has been accentuated by numerous changes: (a) a need for qualified helping professionals, (b) public demand for quality, (c) competency and accountability, and (d) the pending comprehensive national health legislation as well as freedom-of-choice-legislation. In addition to these, many specialty areas within the helping professions domain are trying to establish their own identity and receive recognition for the unique services they have to offer. Thus, public identification means recognition in terms of qualifications to render services to a client and to receive payment for these services (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

It is felt that counselors are concerned about licensing for two reasons (Lindenberg et al., 1977). The first reason is economic. Even though counselors are being prepared for work settings other than in the school system, they are losing out in both school and non-school jobs because there are supposedly more highly qualified people available (Lindenberg et al., 1977). That is, the "credentialed individual" is recognized as having those high qualifications. The second reason is social-political. There is restrictive legislation that prohibits counselors from private practice. Counselors need to increase their visibility in terms of legal status. They need to be identified as having credibility as school practitioners in the eyes of the public, which would qualify them for receiving payments for their services (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

One of the main problems is that many people in the helping professions or the mental health services, such as social workers and ministers, use the same kinds of skills and tools which are derived from the basic psychology discipline, but are used in different ways, conditions, and settings (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

Counseling psychology is identified primarily with mental health and life adjustment problems including such activities as: educational and vocational planning, parental planning and family adjustment of secondary school and college students as well as for veterans and other public groups (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, pp. 13-14).

Ironically, Psychology itself has long considered mental health service as part of its domain through several specialties. In the end, we are still no closer to a clear identity in terms of who or what the counselor is (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

The traditional purpose of licensing and certification is to protect the public from quackery (Lindenberg et al., 1977). Today, the problem is further magnified by the fact that each state determines the quality of services rendered to the public by the type of control it chooses to adopt, either registry, certification, or licensing. Psychiatry and medicine have a recognized priority over Psychology since they have had established licensing boards for quite some time. Presently, not even psychologists are recognized as reimburseable receivers of money from many insurance companies who pay for psychological therapy. Psychologists are still fighting for national recognition and an identity separate from psychiatry and medical doctors.

Three conditions propose difficulties for licensure control of counseling (Lindenberg et al., 1977).

1. Some type of counseling is provided in many of the helping professions.
2. Psychology, by initiating the first state legislation, pre-empted counseling from regulating many of the helping functions which it now carries out.

3. Counseling professionals come from diverse training programs that differ from traditional psychology departments in level of preparation and academic setting.

In conclusion, the rationale for passing licensing laws is twofold:

To identify individuals who are recognized as qualified to offer psychological services to the public and to define the services and responsibilities of the practitioner or psychologist, and thus protect the public against incompetent individuals (Lindenberg et al., 1977, mimeo, p. 15).

Dissenting Views. Dissenting opinions among counselors as well as external professional disagreement makes the issue of licensure a confusing political and emotional issue. The state of Virginia stood in the center of this dissent when it passed a counselor licensure law in the spring of 1976 (Code of Virginia, Chapter 28, S.54-923, 1976). The Virginia Board of Professional Counselors, functioning under the Virginia Board of Behavioral Science, will have the power to develop licensure qualifications, to establish examining committees, and to recommend individuals for licensing (Harris, 1977). The legislative code defines the professional counselor in terms of the certified counselor in various specialty areas and the practice of counseling per se (Code of Virginia, Chapter 28, S.54-923, 1976).

Opposition can be seen as twofold: economic and semantic. If counselors become licensed, they too may be eligible to receive third

party payments. Licensure of counselors then, poses a new, competitive client consumerism where it was once a prestigious privilege of medical doctors and psychiatrists alone. Also, much of the opposition is an outgrowth stemming from a semantic confusion, a lack of shared meanings (Forster, 1977). Due to a lack of legislation that defines counseling, "virtually everything that the counselor might do is covered by the APA model definitions" (Sweeney, 1975, p. 4). The American Psychological Association (APA) has no official definition of what a psychologist is or what the criteria are for training that is "primarily psychological in nature" (Cottingham, 1978a, p.334). However, most state boards have recently moved to revise their statutes to restrict the definition of a psychologist to someone who has earned a Ph.D. in a department of psychology (Gazda, 1977). Counseling Psychologists are being denied licensing based on judgments by these boards that Counseling Psychologists are not licensable or certifiable due to the department from which they obtained graduate training and/or the department from which they obtained graduate training and/or the specific doctoral degree held (Weeks, 1975).

Various interpretations by state psychology examination boards accounts for a lack of uniformity in standards as well as the inequalities felt by the Counseling Psychologist. Few if any of the state boards of examiners have developed clear policies which would allow those other than Psychology doctorates to take the written and

oral examinations (Cottingham, 1975). Yet, there is a general meeting of the minds between APGA and APA on licensing standards for doctoral counselors, but not for master's level professionals (Duricka, 1976). Such denials constitute an abridgement of the civil rights of the Counseling Psychologist, but the end result may be to lower the quality of psychological services available to the citizens of the state, a questionable victory for either side (Weeks, 1975).

In essence, "psychology is facing some internal dissension on the issue of recognition for the human services provider as equal in status with the laboratory based researcher" (Cottingham, 1978a, p. 331). And, there is further opposition because licensure is seen as a kind of bandwagon psychology which promotes the kind of club mentality that accounts for the ignorance towards national manpower shortages in areas where counselors would be qualified to fill those needs (Gross, 1977).

"There is a mystique that hides the unskilled but licensed and victimizes the skilled but unlicensed" (Gross, 1977, p. 587). Licensing also requires a rigid bureaucracy to maintain it whose rules become a substitute for sound judgment (Gross, 1977; Rogers, 1973). Licensing is seen as misleading in its promises as an attempt to determine the quality of service offered to the public (Gross, 1977). "Establishing a code of ethics does not guarantee a change in the ways counselors function" (Bancroft, 1971, p. 260). And, certification is

not equivalent to competence. There are as many certified charlatans and exploiters as there are uncertified. In short, because a person is credentialed does not guarantee competency nor does the existence of ethical standards and guidelines mean they will be followed (Rogers, 1973).

This semantic contradiction as well as philosophical and economic dissent prompted a study by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) and was conducted by Carroll and Halligan in 1976. This study was the first in-depth attempt to identify the most crucial licensing issues as well as a documentation of professional opinion within an association. The authors believe that the definition, practice and regulation of counseling will result from the conclusion of the licensure issued (Carroll, Griggs, & Halligan, 1977).

The authors obtained demographic data on 1,694 of ACES membership and found that a high percentage of return as well as a high percentage of respondents indicates that licensure is a major question of nationwide proportion. Of the respondents, 73.2% report that they are not licensed for private practice; 80.4% are interested in becoming licensed; 72.5% never applied for the licensing examination; and 25% of those who attempted to take the exam were refused. The study finds it apparent that some respondents are unfamiliar with their state laws since licensing legislation varies from state to

state. The authors recommend the development of a compendium of existing state licensure laws for further research.

What should the standards be when legislation permits counselor licensure? The responses show that 87.8% indicate that licensure should be granted on a broader scale; 45.4% indicate the masters level the lowest acceptable educational level for being licensed in private practice; 63.3% express a clear mandate for competency as the foremost criteria for professional licensure.

The prevailing sentiment indicates a need for obtaining "broader licensure legislation" (Carroll et al., 1977, p. 579). However, not all sentiments concur on the licensure issue. While licensure does not necessarily result in protection of the public from the incompetent, unethical practitioner, respondents feel that without state licensure, there are no standards. Licensure is also claimed to be a "one shot deal" (p. 579), which does not authorize continuing education. On the other hand, if delivery of mental health services is limited exclusively to psychologists, fewer people are available for competent service at a higher cost to the public.

Some respondents feel that supervised experience and level of competency should be emphasized rather than the use of professional training. Others stress the need to establish high standards--an unquestionable professional training--in order to insure delivery of quality services (Carroll et al., 1977). While the public needs

assurance that the counselor is in fact competent in a particular area, some respondents feel that a general body of knowledge and skills are all that is necessary to function as a counselor. They feel that designated specialties could become unmanageable and even detrimental to the development of the profession.

In conclusion, 90.8% of the respondents feel that a process should be initiated by ACES whereby Associations are actually involved in program approval of counselor training programs. "Respondents view the role of the professional organizations as assuming the initiative in changing legislation on licensing, insurance and grants" (Carroll et al., 1977, p. 580).

In another study, Krauskopf, Thorenson, and McAleer (1973) suggest that Counseling Psychology is a "lively, growing specialty" (p. 370), that is increasing in diverse training, skills, and goals. This study describes the gods of Counseling Psychology as a miscellaneous collection of "personality theorists, clinicians and psychiatrists, few of whom have any identification with the specialty of Counseling" (p. 370). Again the data reveal a lack of general cohesiveness in the field of Counseling.

In 1956 the APA Commission, aware of the overlap between the fields of Clinical and Counseling Psychology, suggested that the problem may be resolved by a simplification of the existing structure or a convergence of functions under a new and single banner (Brigante

Haefner & Woodson, 1962). The fact that the two specialties exist indicates areas of differentiation, despite a widely recognized blurring of these distinctions. The Brigante, Haefner & Woodson study, 1962, sought to determine those skills, activities, and functions of the specialties in which both fields shared similar or dissimilar perceptions. They found a considerable consensus among clinicians and counselors regarding definition and performance of clinicians' and counselors' roles. There is also consensus regarding characteristic behavior of both specialties which lends empirical support to the notion that the two specialties are overlapping as well as separate in certain ways (Brigante et al., 1962).

Thus, it seems that in all these attempted distinctions, the real differences between these two specialties exist in the minds of those who want differences to exist rather than in actual fact (Patterson, 1974).

Alternatives. Proposed alternatives have resulted from these dissenting viewpoints. The licensing movement is seen as a "bandwagon psychology" that is promoting itself as the only way to legitimize the field of Counseling (Gross, 1977). Some influential professionals in the field propose professional disclosure as an alternative to licensing (Gross, 1977; Rogers, 1973). Carl Rogers dares that counselors "rest their confidence in the quality and competence they have as persons, rather than in certificates they can

frame on their walls" (Rogers, 1973, p. 387). Rogers also suggests setting up the equivalent of a consumer protective service where complaints about a counselor's services would be audited and that individual's name would be made available to the public with a warning: "Let the buyer beware."

The American Personnel and Guidance Association lists four licensure options (APGA, 1977). They are as follows:

1. To secure inclusion within an existing board through legislative amendment.
2. To establish a behavior science board.
3. To establish an autonomous counselor licensure board.
4. To utilize alternative remedies through the court system.

In addition to these, there already exists eight means by which counselors can receive a form of credentialing without state or federal legislation. They are as follows:

1. AAMFC--The American Association for Marriage Family Counselors.
2. Rehabilitation counselors have established a national certification process.
3. AASEC--the American Association of Sex Educators and Counselors.
4. ITAA--the International Transactional Analysis Association.
5. A National Register.

6. The diplomate grants recognition within psychology for expertise in a specific area.

7. A plan proposed by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1976; a nonfederal system of credentialing for health manpower, including counselors (Sweeney & Witmer, 1977, p. 591).

8. AMACA--American Mental Health Counselors Association recently adopted a certification procedure approved by APGA.

Recent Developments and Implications

A focused attention on credentialing and licensure is due in part to the discrimination and unjust enforcement of licensure laws that have forced counselors to take legal action, which in itself has profound import for the movement towards professionalization (Sweeney & Witmer, 1977). In 1972 *Weldon v. Virginia State Board of Psychologists Examiners* legally documented counseling as a distinct profession for the first time. In 1975 *Ohio State Board of Psychology v. Cook*, the judge reaffirmed the rights of competent counselors by dismissing the charges. Two additional cases dealt with reversal of board actions. In Mississippi the Board was directed by the Court to license the person without examination due to the Board's inconsistent practices. In the District of Columbia the Board was directed to grandfather license a person who was previously denied. Grandfathering is a legal principle whereby incumbents in counseling

positions can be certified automatically. Currently, some 20 counseling professionals are involved in litigation with state boards of psychology, which appear to evolve their own policies and interpretations as guidelines (Cottingham, 1978a). Now 47 states have licensing or certification laws, and four states provide for control by psychological associations. Only Missouri does not require licenses for psychologists in private practice (Licenses Not at VA, 1977). And, only Virginia and California offer a state-approved counselor's license for qualified professionals who want to work in private practice (Duricka, 1976). To date, 25 states have adopted position statements in support of counselor licensure legislation; 20 states have developed draft bills for counselor licensure; 11 states have introduced various types of licensure bills in their legislatures during the past three years; seven states were successful in getting their bills passed by one house of their legislature; and Ohio and Alabama came desperately close in the recent legislative sessions (Brooks, 1978).

Many states have used the APA model in proposing and passing licensing legislation (Cottingham, 1975). However, in 1976 APGA's Commission on Licensure drafted and adopted a model bill to begin working on obtaining passage of a licensure law within their states. The bill is intended as a basic document which members may use as a reference for legislation (Model Licensing, 1976). It has been

pointed out that even though there is less than complete agreement on how present licensing laws or policies must be modified, there appears to be a consensus among several types of helping professionals which indicates that some broadening is needed (Cottingham & Swanson, 1976). The central issue stems from the fact that counselors cannot obtain legal recognition without their own licensing board and unless psychology licensing laws are broadened, an independent licensing board will be the only way counselors can obtain legal and professional identity.

In recent years, the federal government itself has taken in increased interest in occupational licensing, a definite change in policy from the traditional hands-off policy maintained towards occupational licensing (Mackin, 1976). This change is best seen in the rise of state licensing legislation. "There are now almost 2,800 statutory provisions that require occupational licensing" (Mackin, 1976, p. 507).

In July, 1970, any state seeking federal funds under the Medicaid Act was required for the first time to have a licensing law for nursing home administrators (Mackin, 1976). On July 5, 1974, U.S. Senate Bill S. 3585 provided that the federal government develop and establish national standards for licensing of physicians and dentists and prepare appropriate examinations (Mackin, 1976). The U.S. Department of Labor is the most involved federal agency; "it is mainly

interested in licensing as a barrier to a flexible labor market" (Mackin, 1976, p. 507). The Federal Trade Commission has become involved with the self-regulation tendency of licensing boards as a possible restraint on trade. And the antitrust division of the Department of Justice is questioning the monopolistic practices of some state psychology boards (Cottingham, 1978a). The HEW, in turn, is concerned with licensing tests and educational requisites; "it has documented use of competency-based tests in licensing of allied health professions" (Mackin, 1976, p. 510). Future federal reimbursement from HEW will be contingent upon an agency employing counselors who meet federal licensing standards (Cottingham, 1978a).

Occupational licensure has been challenged in the U.S. Supreme Court under the 5th and 14th Amendments of the Constitution, a broader interpretation of due process (Mackin, 1976). In short, occupational licensing is undergoing legal and social appraisal. While government control may be a useful protection for an unwary public, licensing imposes its own economic and social costs. "Occupational licensing can control people's subsistence by denying them the opportunity to practice an occupation" (Mackin, 1976, p. 511). Despite personal and professional experience, understanding, and empathy on the part of the counselor, there is still a need to pass a test. Perhaps licensing as a regulatory mechanism should be re-examined in this light.

In September, 1978, APGA and the U.S. Office of Education jointly sponsored a meeting on the "Status of Guidance and Counseling" (Guidance Futures Outlined, 1978). Counselors there were appealed to as "architects of a new direction" (Guidance Futures Outlined, 1978, p. 1). Where and if Counseling goes professionally is the counselor's decision per se. Carkhuff strongly reinforces this commitment or need to act on the part of the counselor in terms of militancy (Carkhuff, 1972). He defines militancy as total commitment to counseling, its future and growth as a profession.

Miller and Engin, 1976, see this commitment in light of the movement towards competency-based curriculums, out of which new certification standards and methods seems a logical development. They propose a carefully planned and implemented recertification process designed as a learning experience as much as an assessment technique. They see competency and action as two different things and therefore propose simulation and situational response tests as potential assessment of a counselor's behavior in preservice and inservice situations as well as a means to foster continual professional development and upgrade professional levels of practice.

Brammer and Springer, 1971, also see a need for a radical change in counselor education and certification. They see present certification systems as perpetuating an illusion of the counselor's competency as determined by courses taken, degrees earned, and years served.

They also advocate programs for counselors based upon behavioral criteria and objective performance standards. This again requires commitments to personal and professional growth.

Ivey and Leppaluoto (1975) reported that in 1973 the Vail Conference on professional psychology made strong implications that changes were imminent in considering the relationship between psychological models and counseling models. The conference disclosed that "training and practice in counseling and guidance are based heavily on conceptual frameworks developed by psychologists" (p. 747) and that the professional practice of the school counselor most closely resembles that of the clinical or community psychologist. The conference reiterated an early, affirmed endorsement, and now virtually gospel, by both clinical and counseling psychology for the "scientist-practitioner model" (p. 748), a model that dominates our training programs and closes off legitimate alternatives to it. And, the conference made recommendations that counselors free themselves from past association with "value neutrality, distance from the client and adjustment to existing social systems" (p. 751) that the words personnel and guidance have long implied. In the end, the Vail Conference stressed a need for awareness on the part of all professionals. Professionals need to own their value positions and to be aware of a potential for "psychological imperialism" (p. 749) by the untrained who feel they are so capable.

The change is in the wind and this change is more in terms of a revolution. The counseling profession as it is presently stereotyped cannot last and the very institution that produced it, namely education, is outdated (Lawton, 1971). Each counselor must accept his or her "brand of activism" (Lewis, Lewis, & Dworkin, 1971, p. 689) and stand up and be counted if counseling is to survive as a viable profession in this decade.

Counseling as a profession has matured to the point where its existence as a profession lies at a critical juncture. Will it control its own ranks or will its professional existence fall in the hands of others (Cottingham & Warner, 1978)? Presently, "counselors are at the mercy of state legislators who will determine what licensing and certification standards will be" (Duricka, 1976).

The APGA Licensure Commission has gradually changed its reactive position to an active one and so feels that we must not and cannot afford to lose the momentum toward licensure (Cottingham & Warner, 1978). The licensure movement may in fact facilitate a 25-year attempt to define Counseling as well as facilitate an overall failure to implement standards for the preparation of counselors at masters and doctoral levels. In essence, licensure would facilitate this process by writing standards approved by ASCA and ACES into licensing laws (Cottingham & Warner, 1978).

The power which is essential for getting counselor licensure can be created through a belief in the cause; effective leadership at state, regional and local levels; knowledge of the issues and provisions of licensure; organizational planning and coordination; a two-way communication and information system; and credibility with the legislators (Witmer, 1978, p. 4).

In May, 1978, Florida's licensure plan was nixed by their Governor in spite of overwhelming support (Florida Licensure Plan, 1978). The opposition came from Florida's medical profession and from the sunset provision of existing legislation. Sunset laws require state regulatory boards to prove their effectiveness or to cease functioning. State legislators are increasingly holding all regulatory boards more accountable through "Sunset Laws" (Cottingham, 1978a). A Montana Senator is researching the feasibility of legislation to replace the new sunset process. His idea is to replace the sunset law with a bill setting up a single board for all professions, or two boards, one to oversee the health care professions and one to oversee the trade professions (Sunset Author Plans New Bill, 1978).

While the definition of psychologist was expanded in current legislation to include clinical, counseling, and industrial and school psychologists, it also changed one of the licensing criterion from a doctorate in psychology to a doctorate "in a program that is primarily psychological in nature" (Florida Licensure Plan, 1978, p. 3).

The American Association of State Psychology Boards (AASPB)

adopted a resolution at its annual meeting stating that:

Persons with educational preparation in counseling psychology seeking licensure as psychologists should be prepared to demonstrate that their education and training meet criteria for generic standards recommended by the committee (Duricka, 1977, p. 1).

However, as of December, 1978, there has been a change in APA policy (Cottingham, 1978b). This change establishes a basis for the credentialing of a generic psychologist whereas state psychology boards previously gave preference in admission to licensure examinations to those graduates from APA-approved programs. As of yet, this academic foundation--the generic credentialing of psychologists through program designation--has not been established. Since there has never been an explicit definition, either legally or professionally, for programs that are "primarily psychological in nature," nor a universal criteria for interpretation of this key expression, the implications of a system for defining and designating doctorate level education programs that are "primarily psychological in nature" is powerful (Cottingham, 1978b).

Thus the question of identifying training "primarily psychological in nature" may be decided more by the universities and the APA National Commission on Education and Credentialing in Psychology than by the courts or state boards of psychology (Cottingham, 1978b, p. 6).

Summary

The historical development of Vocational Guidance has resulted in the emergence of a unique and definite social service, the field of Counseling Psychology. However, the functions or role of this occupation must be identified before it can be professionalized. Research indicates that the growth of this occupation is being manifested in the direction of professionalization which necessitates a definite stand, a shared, developmental strategy as well as a consensus of nomenclature.

While differences of opinion among counselors and other professionals reveals multiple effects of licensure, they also propose numerous, possible alternatives to it. Finally, recent legal developments imply that if licensure is deemed the best way to achieve professionalization, then professional allegiance towards it must be reflected in the action that will modify present policies.

Chapter 3

Procedures

Introduction

The problem of this study was to assess the attitudes, status, and needs of a selected group of Montana counselors, counselor educators, and other related helping professionals regarding licensure in the state of Montana during October, 1978.

This chapter, then, presents the procedures and methodologies that were used to conduct this study. Included will be a discussion of the procedures as they pertain to the population and the method of organizing, collecting, and analyzing the data. A description of the categories used in the development and organization of the questionnaire will also be presented.

Population Description

The population surveyed was divided into five groups. These groups included counselor educators, counselors in private practice, school counselors (K-12), post-secondary counselors (vo-tech, community college, and college/university), and counselors who work in mental health centers and other state agencies. It was also necessary to identify a sixth group as unclassified when compiling the analysis. Specific names and addresses were identified through various directories available from professional groups and from Mountain Bell.

The Investigation

For the purpose of organizing and developing the questionnaire, four separate sections were considered: Part 1, Licensure: Personal Assessment of Understanding Level, adopted from the ASCA survey, May, 1977. This section was incorporated to assess the levels in which counselors understand the licensure process, content, and issues. Part 2, Attitude Toward Licensure, measured attitudes and feelings as they related to 18 statements on licensure. Part 3, Alternatives for Professionalization, asked the respondents to rank nine alternatives that they might consider for changing the professional status of counselors. Included in this section were three open-ended questions regarding licensure, which requested brief, opinionated responses. Part 4, Demographic Data, asked for the educational and professional background of the respondents. A sample copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Method of Collecting Data

The data in this study were collected by means of a questionnaire. A cover letter introduced the study and was attached along with a return, addressed, stamped envelope. In order to guarantee absolute anonymity, no coding procedure was utilized, which means no follow-up questionnaire was sent. A sample copy of the cover letter is included in Appendix A.

The Montana representative to the APGA Commission on Counselor Licensure as well as a counselor educator at Montana State University (MSU) determined the content validity of the questionnaire. Content validity was also based on items coming from the literature which met with the above experts' approvals. This study also exhibited validity due to the support and interest of professional counselor educators on the MSU campus as well as the recommendation for a study of this kind made by the APGA (1978).

Method of Organizing Data

The data were presented under five topic headings and displayed with the use of tables. An additional section organized responses to two of the open-ended questions using a report method, which grouped the opinions under each of the five groups identified in the survey. A brief summation of these opinions followed. The table headings were as follows:

Table 1--Licensure: Personal Assessment of Understanding Level.

Table 2--Attitude Toward Licensure.

Table 3--Alternatives for Professionalization.

Table 4--Lowest Educational Level for Licensure in Private Practice.

Table 5--Demographic Data.

A summation and brief discussion is included for each table.

Questions to be Answered

Since the intent of this study was to provide a descriptive analysis regarding licensure in Montana, no statistical hypotheses were presented.

The specific questions to be answered in this study were:

1. How do respondents rate themselves in terms of their level of understanding regarding licensure?
2. Which group demonstrated the highest overall level of knowledge when compared to the six groups identified?
3. What is the general attitude towards counselor licensure assessed from the respondents surveyed?
4. What is the preferred alternative for professionalization ranked by the respondents?
5. What is the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice indicated by the respondents?
6. What does the collection of specific demographic data reveal?
7. What are the summarized, group opinions of counselor educators, private counselors, school counselors, post-secondary counselors, and agency counselors to open-ended questions regarding:
(a) major issues concerning licensure of counselors in Montana; and
(b) action to take now?

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed descriptively utilizing graphic techniques. The information was tallied, grouped, and examined in the categories explained in "Method of Organizing Data."

Averages, totals, percents, and ranks were used to analyze the responses and were presented in table form. A discussion of each table was included. Responses to two open-ended questions were reported by grouping the opinions under each of the five identified groups. A summation of these opinions followed. All in all, great care and professional judgment was taken in designing the instrument, administering, tabulating, and analyzing the results of this survey.

Summary

This chapter was devoted to a succinct description of the procedures followed in this study. The population was described as well as the organization and development of the questionnaire itself. The methods of collecting and organizing the data were also delineated. The specific questions to be answered in this study were also reviewed. And finally, the approach taken for analysis of the data was revealed and supported with the necessary precautions for accuracy taken into consideration.

Chapter 4

Findings and Interpretations

Introduction

Data were collected for this study by means of a questionnaire. There were 121 surveys mailed; 58 were returned through the mail and 33 surveys were distributed and completed at the Montana Personnel and Guidance Association (MPGA) Convention in Great Falls in October, for a total of 91 returned surveys. The total return rate for the survey was 75%.

The returns for each of the five groups were: (a) counselor educators, 12; (b) private counselors, 12; (c) school counselors, 22; (d) post-secondary counselors, 19; and (e) agency counselors, 17. Nine of the returned surveys were not completed sufficiently enough to be classified and were treated as a sixth and separate group in the tabulations.

The data were analyzed descriptively using tables. The information collected from two of the open-ended questions was summarized and listed under each of the five groups identified with a brief summation following these responses.

Therefore, the information collected was tallied, grouped, and examined under six categories. They are as follows:

1. Table 1--Licensure: Personal Assessment of Understanding Level.
2. Table 2--Attitude Toward Licensure.

3. Table 3--Alternatives for Professionalization.
4. Table 4--Lowest Educational Level for Licensure in Private Practice.
5. Table 5--Demographic Data.
6. Responses to Open-ended Question: (a) major issues concerning licensure of counselors in Montana, and (b) action to take now.

Findings and Interpretations

Respondents were asked to rate themselves in terms of their level of understanding regarding licensure. Table 1 shows the responses. The scale was in ascending order, a "1" indicating little or no understanding, to a "5" indicating full understanding. Two comparisons can be made. One is the difference in level of understanding between the 15 items and the other is the difference between the six groups. Item 10, "the effect of licensure upon the nature and availability of school counselor training," was rated the lowest with an average of 2.17. Item 1, "the primary purpose of licensure," was rated highest with an average rating of 3.83. In comparing the six groups, the agency counselors demonstrated the highest overall level of understanding with a score of 3.37 while school counselors with a score of 2.44 were the lowest.

Table 1
Licensure: Personal Assessment of Understanding Level

(adopted from ASCA survey, May, 1977)

Respond to the following by rating yourself from 1 to 5 in terms of your understanding of the issues and topics. The scale is in ascending order, a 1 indicating little or no understanding, to a 5 indicating full understanding of the issues related to the topic. Circle one number for each statement.

	Counselor Educators	Private Counselor	School Counselor	Post-Sec. Counselor	Agency Counselor	Unclassified	Average of Items
1. The primary purpose of licensure.	3.91	3.91	3.68	3.78	4.17	3.55	3.83
2. The interrelationship and/or conflict between existing psychological licensure and proposed counseling licensure.	3.16	3.25	2.56	2.94	3.35	3.66	3.15
3. The difference between licensure and certification	3.66	3.50	3.26	3.94	3.47	3.55	3.56
4. Third-party payments.	3.08	4.08	2.06	2.78	3.82	3.66	3.25
5. Registry.	3.16	3.72	2.25	2.78	3.13	3.55	3.10
6. The effect of the "Grandfather" clause upon currently practicing counselors.	4.00	3.66	3.06	3.15	3.52	3.88	3.55
7. The licensure examination process and its content.	2.08	3.00	1.80	2.21	3.17	3.00	2.59
8. Criteria for supervised experience to gain licensure.	2.83	3.25	2.40	2.47	3.35	2.88	2.86
9. Practitioners in counseling exempted from licensure.	2.50	2.50	1.35	2.42	3.47	2.00	2.37
10. The effect of licensure upon the nature and availability of school counselor training.	2.58	2.66	2.70	2.78	2.29	2.55	2.17

Table 1 (continued)

	Counselor Educators	Private Counselor	School Counselor	Post-Sec. Counselor	Agency Counselor	Unclassi- fied	Average of Items
11. Licensure differentiated by: extent of training, work setting and specialty area.	2.58	2.75	2.93	2.63	3.17	2.66	2.79
12. A single, state licensure Board for counseling vs. an umbrella-type Board for the Behavioral Sciences.	2.08	2.50	2.17	2.42	3.35	2.77	2.55
13. The interest groups for and against licensure for counseling, their needs and relative group power.	2.41	2.72	1.87	2.50	3.58	3.11	2.70
14. The licensure renewal provisions and requirements for continuing education.	2.33	3.08	2.29	2.31	3.17	2.88	2.68
15. Licensure extended to practitioners in public institutions and agencies.	2.16	3.16	2.23	2.21	3.58	3.55	2.82
AVERAGE OF GROUP	2.83	3.18	2.44	2.75	3.37	3.15	2.94
RANKING OF AVERAGE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	4	2	6	5	1	3	--

Table 2

Attitude Toward Licensure

	Counselor Educators	Private Counselors	School Counselors	Post-Sec. Counselors	Agency Counselors	Unclassi- fied	Totals	Percent
1. Do you feel that licensure is the most effective means for achieving professionalization of counselors in Montana?	Yes No	7 4	7 3	10 5	13 6	14 3	6 2	57 23
2. Do you feel that licensure defines the profession of counseling and that it regulates the use of the title "counselor"?	Yes No	6 6	5 4	17 1	15 4	7 10	6 3	56 28
3. Do you feel that licensure helps us to regulate our own profession?	Yes No	10 1	9 2	16 2	14 4	13 4	7 2	69 15
4. Do you feel that licensure protects the public's right to be served by qualified professionals?	Yes No	7 4	8 2	16 2	16 3	14 3	5 3	66 17
5. Do you feel that licensure protects the public's freedom of choice in choosing services?	Yes No	8 3	6 4	11 6	15 3	13 4	7 2	60 22
6. Do you feel that licensure provides an option for private practice?	Yes No	11 0	7 1	14 2	15 4	15 2	9 0	71 9
7. Do you feel that licensure increases our professional identity and autonomy?	Yes No	8 3	8 2	17 1	16 2	15 2	7 2	71 12
8. Do you feel that licensure holds individual practitioners accountable?	Yes No	7 4	8 2	12 4	14 3	13 3	6 2	60 18
9. Do you feel that licensure provides options for new work settings other than private practice?	Yes No	8 2	6 3	10 5	17 2	13 4	6 2	60 18

Attitudes toward counselor licensure were assessed by answering "yes" or "no" to the 18 statements in this section. In general, the responses indicated that licensure seems to be a viable and workable means of increasing the professionalization of counselors. But, the majority of counselors felt that counseling, as we now know it, would survive even if licensure was not achieved.

Table 3 shows the replies of the respondents when they were asked to rank the nine alternatives for professionalization. Certification through some type of legislation was ranked one, while an autonomous counselor licensure board was ranked three. No action was ranked lowest at nine. Both state and national registries were rated high, ranking two and four respectively.

Table 3

Alternatives for Professionalization

Rank order the following list of alternatives towards professionalization of counselors. Number one represents your highest preference, number nine represents your lowest preference.

	Counselor Educators				Unclassified				Rank
	Private Counselors	School Counselors	Post-Sec. Counselors	Agency Counselors	Average				
An autonomous counselor licensure Board	2.78	3.88	3.39	2.88	3.66	6.00	3.77	3	
National Registry	4.63	3.38	5.67	6.19	4.73	1.00	4.27	4	
State Registry	3.75	3.38	4.32	2.94	4.13	2.00	3.42	2	
Professional Disclosure	4.50	5.40	5.06	6.00	5.38	8.00	5.72	7	
Certification	2.91	3.00	2.70	3.61	3.24	3.00	3.08	1	
Inclusion within an existing Board through legislative amendment	5.33	5.43	5.06	5.63	5.07	5.00	5.21	6	
Behavioral Science Board	5.22	5.00	3.59	4.63	6.46	4.00	4.82	5	
Credentialing without state or federal legislation	6.00	6.13	5.24	6.38	5.53	7.00	6.05	8	
No Action	8.25	8.00	8.41	8.06	7.53	9.00	8.21	9	

Table 4

Lowest Educational Level for
Licensure in Private Practice

	Counselor Educators	Private Counselors	School Counselors	Post-Sec. Counselors	Agency Counselors	Unclassified	Totals
Bachelors	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
Masters	7	7	14	10	13	1	52
Masters +	2	1	4	2	0	0	9
Doctorate	2	2	2	0	2	1	9

Respondents were asked to indicate the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice. The masters level of education was the overwhelming response. Eighteen or 24% of the respondents felt that preparation beyond the masters level should be required.

Table 5
Demographic Data

		Counselor Educators	Private Counselors	School Counselors	Post-Sec. Counselors	Agency Counselors	Unclassified	Totals
1. Sex	Male	12	8	16	14	15	2	67
	Female	--	4	7	5	2	3	21
2. Work Setting (Total number for each group)		12	12	22	19	17	9	91
3. Educational Background								
Bachelor Degree		--	2	--	1	3	1	7
Masters Degree		2	5	21	11	8	2	49
Doctorate		10	5	1	7	6	--	29
4. Years In Field	0-1	--	--	1	--	1	1	3
	1-5	2	3	12	--	7	--	24
	6-10	2	2	6	10	3	--	23
	10+	8	6	2	9	6	2	33
5. Professional Memberships								
MPGA		7	2	11	7	1	--	28
APGA		7	2	4	12	3	1	29
MPA		2	5	1	1	2	--	11
APA		5	6	--	5	9	1	26
MEA		3	--	2	2	1	2	10
Other		2	7	14	7	3	--	33
6. Certificate or License Held								
None		6	4	1	5	6	1	23
Tchg. Cert.		4	--	17	9	1	1	32
Psychology Lic.		3	5	--	2	4	1	15
Sch. Psyc.		2	0	9	--	--	--	11
Other		--	2	0	4	4	--	10
7. Major Field Reported								
Counseling		1	--	11	3	4	--	19
Psychology		--	5	--	--	--	1	6
School Psychology		--	--	6	1	8	--	15
Other								
Ministry		--	1	--	--	--	--	1
Spanish		--	--	1	--	--	--	1
Voc. Rehab.		--	--	--	--	1	--	1
Rec. Therapy		--	--	--	--	1	--	1
Anthropology		--	--	--	--	1	--	1

A review of the demographic data revealed that 76% of the respondents who stated their sex were males. The males dominated in each category except for the unclassified group. All, with the exception of seven, have at least a masters degree or higher. Two-thirds of the respondents had over five years of experience in the field. Professional memberships and certificates or licenses held were varied.

It should be mentioned that the major field reported by the respondents in the demographic section of the survey is not a complete picture as this request was inadvertently left off the first group of surveys sent out. Approximately one-half of the respondents were not asked their major field of study. One must also keep in mind that not all respondents answer all questions. Therefore, totals in the different categories varied considerably.

Also, many counseling practitioners work in more than one setting. For example, some college counselors and counselor educators also conduct a private counseling practice on a part-time basis. But the results were tabulated for the primary work setting indicated on the survey.

Responses to Open-ended Questions

Major issues concerning licensure of counselors in Montana:

Counselor Educators

Ego, social status
 Development of role and function
 No way to put teeth in a bill to exclude and legally chase people out of the business who are phonies
 Clear definition of a counselor, adopt an existing state model, development of a board of examiners
 Determination of criteria
 Licensure statute and board, total MPGA and university unit support
 Differences in training for mental health vs. school counselors
 Supervision and internships for related jobs and field work
 Agreement as to requirements
 Precise competencies, support from existing counselors, financial aspect
 Programs, i.e., areas of specialization
 A person should be a qualified, certified counselor and there are a number of ways to be educated besides traditional universities

Private Counselors

Don't shut out effective counselors because they lack the established credits or degree
 Lack of concern among counselors
 Political power game
 Competency vs. qualifications
 Lack of guidelines for certification/licensure of professionals with degrees outside certain areas

School Counselors

Teaching certification should be unnecessary
 School psychology and counseling are vastly different
 Credibility of a masters level doing private practice
 Loss of control by school administrators and APA
 How to weed out the bad ones and to avoid "tenure" life licensure
 Opposition by clinical psychologists
 Cost to consumers
 Regulation of the system
 Standards suitable to all

Post-Secondary Counselors

Pseudo-intellectualism

Licensure won't do much except make the person feel he/she
is from a higher order

Relationship of counseling to psychology

Grandfather clause and third party payments

Political climate, expense, time

Agency CounselorsNeed a broader approach to credentialing or certifying
processes

Definition of a counselor

Counselor/client private relationships

Vested interests of presently licensed practitioners

These responses seemed to reiterate and specify the same overall issues and concerns that licensure as a whole poses for many states facing the need for professionalization of its counselors. Dissenting views as well as a rationale for licensure were again recounted as expressed earlier in Chapter 2, Review of Literature. While the responses to this question did not identify any new or overlooked concerns, they do give the reader a specific group perspective from which to judge a given opinion. In the end, responses which elicit an opinion merely point out and recapitulate the complexity of the issues concerning licensure in general as well as for counselors in Montana.

Action to take now:

Counselor Educators

None, dispersion of information, workshops

Study needed standards

Adopt a policy and procedure similar to Montana
psychologists

Put together a professional approach acceptable to the legislature
 Develop a task force from the State Department of Education
 Define skills relevant to counseling and be accountable

Private Counselors

Get a law
 Initiate licensure legislation
 Develop educational groups
 A uniting of counseling professionals, i.e., social workers, marriage and family counselors, and psychologists--protect the people, not our pocketbooks and egos
 Establish a board and elect members

School Counselors

Improve counselor education, train counselors to be counselors rather than pseudo-administrator
 Awareness
 Assess needs
 Counselor association should establish own criteria
 Coordinate efforts of associated human services
 Look at people who are doing it now

Post-Secondary Counselors

Meditation, prayer, reflection
 None
 Establish minimum level of academic preparation with required courses listed
 Define types of counselors
 Lobby for legislation

Agency Counselors

Set up own board of examiners
 Resolve issues
 Class action suit
 Better understanding of issues
 APCA and counselor educator should develop a licensure board acceptable to the state

According to these open-ended responses, there tends to be a general consensus among the five groups regarding the action to take now towards licensure and professionalization. This action is seen

in terms of a professional commitment and sound approach towards the development of the kinds of attitudes, standards, and tasks needed to unite counseling professionals. These respondents also see a need to educate, to adopt specific policies and procedures, and to initiate and lobby for licensure legislation.

Summary

Data were collected by means of a questionnaire which received a 75% return. The respondents were predominantly males holding at least a masters degree or higher. Two-thirds of the respondents had over five years of experience in the field. Professional memberships and certificates or licenses held were varied.

Agency counselors demonstrated the highest overall level of understanding when asked to rate themselves in terms of their level of understanding regarding licensure, while school counselors were lowest in comparing the six groups.

The overall attitude toward counselor licensure indicated that licensure seems to be a viable means of increasing the professionalization of counselors, but the majority felt that counseling would survive if licensure was not achieved.

Certification through some type of legislation was ranked as the number one alternative for professionalization while an autonomous counselor licensure board was ranked three. And finally, the masters

degree was the overwhelming response indicated as the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

This study has attempted to gain some insight into the implications of the licensure movement for the professionalization of Montana counselors. This study also attempted to ascertain a level of understanding regarding licensure as demonstrated by the five groups surveyed, an overall attitude toward the licensure movement, a preferred alternative for professionalization, and the lowest educational level acceptable by the majority of the respondents for licensure in private practice.

A review of literature was devoted to an understanding of how and why the field of Counseling Psychology arrived at this need for professionalization and where this trend may lead. An historical perspective of the origin, development, and emerging professional identity of the Counseling Psychologist gave an overview to the licensure issue itself. Opposing views as well as compliance and rationale for licensure were reviewed in order to unfold the emotional and political complexities of the professionalization issue. In addition, alternatives and recent developments and implications of the licensure movement were fully analyzed.

A four-sectioned questionnaire was devised and mailed to representative groups within Montana and was also distributed at the MPGA

Convention. A 75% return was realized. The data were compiled and then analyzed descriptively utilizing graphic techniques.

In conclusion, there existed a definite need to assess Montana's position within the national scope of the licensure movement. APGA strongly supports the licensure movement and recommended a study of this kind to initiate action towards licensure. While this study found that licensure was ranked as a third preferred alternative for professionalization, this survey nonetheless served as an initial step towards consciousness raising in this state towards the vital and imminent issue of professionalization of counselors.

Conclusions

After analyzing responses to the questionnaire, answers to the major questions of this study were:

1. Item 1, "the primary purpose of licensure" was rated highest with an average rating of 3.83, a 5 indicating full understanding. Item 10, "the effect of licensure upon the nature and availability of school counselor training" was rated lowest with an average of 2.17.
2. Agency counselors ranked themselves as demonstrating the highest level of understanding regarding licensure when compared to the six groups identified.
3. The general attitude towards counselor licensure indicated that licensure seems to be a viable means of increasing

professionalization of counselors, but the respondents believed that the counseling profession would survive even if licensing were not achieved.

4. Certification through some type of legislation was ranked the number one preferred alternative for professionalization.

5. The masters degree was the overwhelming response for the lowest educational level acceptable for licensure in private practice.

6. The demographic data revealed that 76% of the respondents were males; all respondents, with the exception of seven, have at least a masters degree or higher; two-thirds of the respondents had over five years of experience in the field and professional memberships and certificates or licenses held were varied.

7. The summarized group opinions indicated that, while concerns varied depending upon with which group one identified, there tended to be a general consensus regarding the action to take now towards licensure and professionalization. This action is in terms of education, information, a need for counselors to take a professional stand, a need to adopt specific policies and procedures, and to initiate and lobby for licensure legislation.

In conclusion, there was a general consensus that something needs to be done regarding the professionalization of counselors in Montana. Licensure ranked high, but certification through legislation was the number one choice. Only the counselor educators and those counselors

in post-secondary settings ranked licensure as the top alternative. All groups indicated that no action would be the least desirable alternative.

Recommendations

The results of this study indicated a need for providing more information regarding licensure to the practitioners in the field. Even the counselor educators professed to a relatively low level of understanding regarding licensure. Also, counselors in settings where few or no certification procedures are currently required have the highest level of understanding regarding licensure. This seems to indicate that maybe they also have the greatest need for some sort of credentialing.

Education and information, then, is the first step recommended to upgrade the counseling profession. Informing counselors, legislators, and lay people about licensure would help in resolving some of the major concerns with regard to the professionalization process.

However, achieving licensure or some other means of professionalization will be a time-consuming and expensive venture. Even in the states where there has been a highly organized effort to gain licensure, progress has been painfully slow. A commitment is needed from all of those involved, a commitment to provide the needed resources to achieve the professional level that is desired by those in the counseling field, as well as a commitment to take a definite

professional stand, to adopt specific policies and procedures, and to initiate and lobby for licensure legislation.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Cover Letter

Montana Personnel and Guidance Association

October 6, 1978



Dear

The American and Montana Personnel and Guidance Associations are currently sponsoring a study of the counselor licensure issue in Montana. The purpose of this study is to assess the attitudes, status and needs regarding licensure in the state. This survey will assist in determining the pros and cons for proceeding with the pursuit of licensure as a means of professionalization for counselors in Montana.

As a part of this study, we need information and opinions representative of counselors, counselor educators, and other related helping professionals and therefore, we need to ask for your help.

Specifically, we would greatly appreciate your taking a few moments to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire to us as soon as possible. Your replies will be held in strict confidence and all responses will be reported only in group statistics. Results of this survey will be published in the MPCA "Newsletter" at a later date.

The questionnaire can be completed by following the simple, brief instructions. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please return the completed questionnaire by October 20.

As a means of informing and updating the professional counselors, legislators, public, and other interested parties, a series of informational presentations on licensure has tentatively been scheduled at several locations around the state. Dates for these programs are Tuesday, November 28 in Great Falls; Wednesday, November 29 in Missoula; Thursday, November 30 in Helena; and Tuesday, December 5 in Billings. You and your colleagues are invited to attend the presentation in your area.

Again, your cooperation is appreciated and most important to our study. We shall be grateful for your responses.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gady Van Soest, Montana Representative
APCA Licensure Commission

Miss Adrienne Biondich
Graduate Student, Counseling
Montana State University

Enclosure

Appendix BInstrument

1

LICENSURE: PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF UNDERSTANDING LEVEL (adopted from ASCA survey, May, 1977)

Respond to the following by rating yourself from 1 to 5 in terms of your understanding of the issues and topics. The scale is in ascending order, a 1 indicating little or no understanding, to a 5 indicating full understanding of the issues related to the topic. Circle one number for each statement.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. The primary purpose of licensure. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. The interrelationship and/or conflict between existing psychological licensure and proposed counseling licensure. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. The difference between licensure and certification. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Third-party payments. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Registry. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. The effect of the "Grandfather" clause upon currently practicing counselors. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. The licensure examination process and its content. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Criteria for supervised experience to gain licensure. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Practitioners in counseling exempted from licensure. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. The effect of licensure upon the nature and availability of school counselor training. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Licensure differentiated by: extent of training, work setting and specialty area. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. A single, state licensure Board for counseling vs. an umbrella-type Board for the Behavioral Sciences. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. The interest groups for and against licensure for counseling, their needs and relative group power. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. The licensure renewal provisions and requirements for continuing education. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. Licensure extended to practitioners in public institutions and agencies. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

ATTITUDE TOWARD LICENSURE

Circle YES or NO at the end of each statement.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you feel that licensure is the most effective means for achieving professionalization of counselors in Montana? | YES | NO |
| 2. Do you feel that licensure defines the profession of counseling and that it regulates the use of the title "counselor"? | YES | NO |
| 3. Do you feel that licensure helps us to regulate our own profession? | YES | NO |
| 4. Do you feel that licensure protects the public's right to be served by qualified professionals? | YES | NO |
| 5. Do you feel that licensure protects the public's freedom of choice in choosing services? | YES | NO |
| 6. Do you feel that licensure provides an option for private practice? | YES | NO |
| 7. Do you feel that licensure increases our professional identity and autonomy? | YES | NO |
| 8. Do you feel that licensure holds individual practitioners accountable? | YES | NO |
| 9. Do you feel that licensure provides options for new work settings other than private practice? | YES | NO |
| 10. Would you support annual renewal of a license or certificate? | YES | NO |
| 11. Do you feel that licensing Boards should grant general licenses for practice within the field of counseling? | YES | NO |
| 12. Do you feel that licensing Boards should establish requirements for licensing persons of special competency areas within the field of counseling? | YES | NO |
| 13. Potential alternatives to licensure have more immediate benefits to more counselors than licensure. | YES | NO |
| 14. Counselors should place their confidence in the quality and competence they have as persons rather than in certificates or licenses. | YES | NO |
| 15. Certification or licensure is not equivalent to competence. | YES | NO |
| 16. Licensing requires a rigid bureaucracy to maintain it, whose rules become a substitute for sound judgement. | YES | NO |
| 17. If counselors don't become licensed, the counseling profession, as we know it, may become extinct. | YES | NO |
| 18. Do you feel that the red tape and cost of becoming licensed is prohibitive? | YES | NO |

ALTERNATIVES FOR PROFESSIONALIZATION

Rank order the following list of alternatives towards professionalization of counselors. Number 1 represents your highest preference, number 9 represents your lowest preference.

- _____ an autonomous counselor licensure Board
- _____ national registry
- _____ state registry
- _____ professional disclosure
- _____ certification
- _____ secure inclusion within an existing Board through legislative amendment
- _____ establish a Behavioral Science Board
- _____ credentialing without state or federal legislation
- _____ no action with regard to professionalization

The following questions are open ended. Please give brief responses.

In your opinion, which is the lowest educational level acceptable for being licensed for private practice?

In your opinion, list the major issues concerning licensure of counselors in Montana.

List what actions you feel are needed now with regard to licensure of counselors in Montana.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Check the appropriate space on the line next to your response.

1. Sex:

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Work Setting: Indicate primary setting by marking a "1"; secondary setting, if applicable, by a "2".

- ☐ Elementary or secondary school
☐ State agency or institution
☐ Private practice
☐ College or university counselor
☐ Counselor educator
☐ Layperson
☐ Other (specify) _____

3. Educational Background:

- ☐ High school
☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Master's degree
☐ Doctorate Major _____

4. Number of years in counseling or related fields:

- ☐ None
☐ 0 - 1 year
☐ 1 - 5 years
☐ 6 - 10 years
☐ beyond 10 years

5. Professional Memberships:

- ☐ MPGA
☐ APGA
☐ MPA
☐ APA
☐ MEA ☐ Other (specify) _____

6. Certification or license currently held:

- ☐ None
☐ State teaching certificate
☐ Other (specify) _____

Appendix CMemo from the Montana Representative
to the APGA Licensure Committee

Montana Personnel and Guidance Association



November 22, 1978

To: MPGA Senate & Executive Board and Interested Others

From: Gardy Van Soest, MPGA President-Elect and Montana Representative to
the APGA Licensure Committee *SVS*

Re: Licensure Workshops

Due to several problems and time conflicts, the tentatively scheduled workshops on counselor licensure will be postponed indefinitely. I do hope to discuss licensure in depth at our next MPGA Senate meeting in January. If counselors, mental health workers or others in your area have any questions or concerns regarding licensure, please refer them to me. I would appreciate the circulation of this notice of cancellation and apologize for the late notice. Thank you.

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