Chapter 15. Professional Service Development and Membership in Professional Organizations

Professional Service Development

Within the profession, psychologists engage in a variety of service activities. These may include participating on committees in membership organizations and/or at place of employment, as well as serving as reviewers for submissions to conferences and journals. To develop professional service skills and experience, students participate in department or university committees each year. This requirement began with the Fall 2014 cohort.

Membership in Professional Organizations

Graduate students are offered “student affiliate” status in various professional organizations. There are numerous advantages to becoming a student member of professional organizations. Membership in these associations facilitates the development of professionalism, as well as affording students greater opportunity to make professional contacts. Further, early affiliation with other professional or academic psychologists exposes students to a much wider range of professional influences and interests than can be available within a single university training program. Most offer listservs that you can join, which then provide a wealth of information on a variety of topics specific to the concerns of students (i.e. internship sites and the AAPIC application, post-doc opportunities, conferences, student awards and funding opportunities). Further, membership in these organizations, and their appearance on your curriculum vita, demonstrates a commitment to the field and your future as a professional. All of these organizations have annual or biannual conferences at which student members pay lower registration fees. Most offer journal subscriptions at reduced rates to members.

The CUA program encourages students to become members of at least one professional organization.

There are a multitude of psychology-related organizations, ranging from the all-encompassing (e.g. American Psychological Association) to others that focus on a specific domain of psychology. Each of these organizations has its own dues, generally lower for students than for full members. The following provides a brief list of some organizations that are most likely to be of interest:

American Psychological Association (APA)

http://www.apa.org/
APA is the largest organization for psychologists. In addition to journals and a monthly newsletter, APA gives student members the opportunity to apply for dissertation awards and travel awards to its annual conference. Beyond becoming a student affiliate of APA, students may choose to join a more specialized group within the organization. Within the APA are Divisions that are divided according to specialty area within the field of psychology (e.g., Division 12: Society of Clinical Psychology). A complete list of the Divisions can be found at:

http://www.apa.org/about/division.html

In addition, the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) is the voice of student concerns within the APA.

http://www.apa.org/apags/

**Association for Psychological Science (APS)**

http://www.psychologicalscience.org/

APS is the other general national organization for psychology, dedicated to scientific psychology. Like APA, APS has awards for students for research and travel to the APS annual conference.

**Other psychology organizations**

**There are also local psychology organizations** within most states that have student memberships and offer student research awards.


**There are regional associations**, e.g., Eastern Psychological Association: [http://www.easternpsychological.org/](http://www.easternpsychological.org/).

**Smaller, more specialized organizations** that our students have joined in the past include:


Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology: https://www.clinicalchildpsychology.org/.

Society for Prevention Research (SPR): http://www.preventionresearch.org/


Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR): http://www.psychotherapyresearch.org


Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD): http://www.srcd.org