



# American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy

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## CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES FOR NON-MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

### Overview

J. L. Moreno, M.D., believed that "a truly therapeutic procedure can have for its objective no less than the whole of [hu]mankind." In keeping with his philosophy and teachings, the theory and practice of psychodrama, sociometry and group processes have been applied across a wide range of professions and professional settings. In order to accommodate those individuals who desire to practice psychodrama, sociometry and group processes within professions and professional settings other than mental health, the Board has created an alternative track for individuals wishing to become certified psychodramatists.

### Training to Meet the Needs of the Trainee

It is the duty and responsibility of the primary and secondary trainers (TEPs) to design a training curriculum that will provide the theory and practice skills necessary to meet a trainee's field of interest. In particular, the supervised practicum should be focused on the areas in which the trainee intends to practice (e.g. education, law, organizational development, theater arts, criminal justice, etc.) and the supervision should be tailored to that setting. The supervision component must include education on the limits of professional competency and the ethical duty to practice only in those areas in which the trainee is qualified.

### Five Key Foundational Areas

The American Board of Examiners strongly believes that regardless of an individual's background or professional education each certified psychodramatist must have a basic foundation in five key foundational mental health areas: Human Growth and Development; Theories of Personality, Abnormal Behavior (Psychopathology); Methods of Psychotherapy; and Social Systems (e.g., Family Therapy, Organizational Behavior, etc.). These areas are required so that all certified psychodramatists are aware of the normal developmental span of human beings, groups and organizations, and are able to discern when to refer to a mental health professional, so the powerful tools of psychodrama, sociodrama and sociometry are appropriately used within all settings.

These five key foundational areas provide a background for the professional psychodramatist to assess the strengths and vulnerabilities of the client and the settings in which psychodrama methods will be employed. The Board believes that education in these five key areas will mitigate against any potential harm being done by individuals who are not mental health professionals.

### Obtain the Five Key Foundational Areas

Individuals wishing to become certified psychodramatists may obtain these five key foundational areas through completion of undergraduate or graduate courses at accredited universities, training institutes and through independent studies offered by individuals qualified to teach these courses. Certified psychodramatists have taken these courses from college or university departments of psychology, social work, counseling, and mar-

riage and family therapy. Some non-mental health certified psychodramatists have attended classes at a college while others have taken a course through an on-line offering. Others have completed the requirement for a course in social systems by getting a certificate from a Marriage and Family Therapy Training Institute. (For examples of course titles that correspond with these key areas, see the listing below of "Alternative Titles for These Courses.") Note: No course or professional training may be counted toward more than one of the five foundational areas.

## **Pre Authorization Process**

No advance approval is required when these five courses are acquired through undergraduate or postgraduate (master's or above) courses offered by an accredited college or university.

It is not required, but strongly suggested, that an individual seeking to obtain the course area from a training institute or an individual instructor seek pre-authorization of the course and the instructor. Pre-Authorization is not required, but Pre-Authorization ensures that when the individual applies for certification there will be no road blocks created by the requirement for the five mental health courses.

Individuals seeking certification may request advance approval for courses provided by Training Institutes or individuals. The Admissions Committee of the Board meets three times per year (January, July and September). Materials must be submitted in the month prior to the Admissions Committee Meeting. Submitted materials should follow the "Sample Form for Independent Study." Individuals will be notified of the actions of the Admissions Committee within thirty (30) days of review of materials. There is no charge for this review.

## **General Guidelines for Independent Study**

Any qualified individual (including certified psychodramatists) may teach these areas of study provided the instructor has demonstrated competencies in that content area. Taking a graduate course in one of these areas is not a measure of competency in that area.

When taking an independent study course in one of the required content areas from an accredited university or college or from an Institute or Individual, the independent study must be offered for the same number of credits (course hours) as any regularly taught course in that content area (e.g., if Theories of Personality is normally a three credit course, then the independent study on Theories of Personality would have to be the equivalent of three credit hours). If the content area is not part of the regular curriculum then the university instructor has the freedom to designate the number of credit hours for the course.

When taking a course from an accredited college or university the institution can assign any evaluation that is regularly and routinely used for their other classes (e.g., letter grades, pass/fail, or certificates of competency without either a qualitative or quantitative evaluation).

When taking an independent study from an individual, rather than an accredited college or university, the instructor must provide the following information: 1) name and qualifications of the Instructor; 2) Name of Student; 3) Required Bibliography; 4) Dates and Hours of Study [please note these dates and times should be equivalent to the same amount of days and hours of instruction required in a college or university course]; 5) methods of instruction; 6) methods of evaluation; and 7) a written evaluation of the student's competency. The goals and objectives for the independent study must clearly be stated prior to beginning the independent study. Each independent study must be taken separately. A sample Independent Study form is included at the end of this document.

For appropriate submission of these documents, download the "CP Non-Mental Health Education Verification" form from the CP Application checklist or the Site Map.

## ALTERNATIVE TITLES FOR THESE COURSES

### Human Growth and Development

*Examples of Course Titles:*

- Life Span Development
- Human Development & Family Studies
- Human Development & Social Intervention
- Child Development
- Adolescent Development
- Adult Development
- Life-Span Issues for the Older Adult
- Developmental Psychology

### Theories of Personality

*Examples of Course Titles:*

- Psychology of Personality
- Personality Theory
- Personality Psychology

### Abnormal Behavior (Psychopathology)

*Examples of Course Titles:*

- Psychopathology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Abnormal Behavior
- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning

### Methods of Psychotherapy

*Examples of Course Titles:*

- Principles & Techniques of Psychotherapy
- Counseling Theory & Methods
- Trauma Treatment & Recovery
- Counseling Specific Populations (Children, Adults, Senior Adults, LGBTQ Individuals, Addictions, others)
- Theory & Methods of Group Counseling/Psychotherapy
- Theory & Methods of Family Counseling/Psychotherapy

### Social Systems (e.g., Family Therapy, Organizational Behavior, etc.)

*Examples of Course Titles:*

- Family Counseling/Psychotherapy
- Family Systems
- Couple Counseling/Psychotherapy
- Organizational Psychology
- Organization Development
- Community Organization/Community Development Organizational Psychology

## **SAMPLE FORM FOR AN INDEPENDENT STUDY**

### **HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Independent Study Equivalent to a Three Hour Semester Course from a University

**Instructor:**

Ken Gorelick, M.D. Attached is a copy of my curriculum vitae to demonstrate that I have completed two graduate courses in this subject area and to demonstrate my competency to teach this course because I have taught this course for the Core Training Program at St. Elizabeths Hospital.

**Student:** Jane Doe, J.D.

**Curriculum:**

Attached is a copy of the required bibliography of professional articles and books for this independent study. This is the same bibliography that was used for the "Human Growth and Development" course in the Core Training Program at St. Elizabeths Hospital.

**Dates & Times of Instruction:**

Three hours every Tuesday evening for twelve weeks from September 2011 to December 2011. We met via live action video teleconferencing.

**Methods of Instruction:**

This was a one-on-one independent study. We discussed the articles and assigned books each week.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

We engaged in a discussion of the books and articles each week. We also discussed modifications in sociodramatic and psychodramatic practices for various human developmental stages. We discussed Moreno's theory of human growth and development and its relationship to other theories of human development. There were no exams. The student submitted a final 10-page paper on "Psychodramatic Applications for Geriatric Clients" that combined the student's interest in psychodrama and geriatrics.

**Final Evaluation:**

Ms. Doe has a basic awareness of human growth and development and modifications necessary in the psychodramatic methodology to work with individuals, and the knowledge to refer out or not to offer services when the individual has issues beyond the scope of practice of that psychodramatist.