

APA Council Meeting February 22-24, 2024

Town Halls

Both AP-LS Council representatives virtually attended several Council town halls during the last week of January. Town halls include presentations about new business items with Q&A.

Caucuses

Both AP-LS Council representatives virtually attended numerous Council caucuses on Thursday February 15 and Friday February 16. Each caucus focused on a specific area of interest. Margaret Bull Kovera serves as Chair of the General Applied Psychology and Psychologists (GAPP) Caucus, and Jen Groscup rotated in as Secretary of GAPP. Margaret Bull Kovera also serves as Chair of Coalition for Academic, Scientific, and Applied-Research Psychology.

Day 1

New Council member orientation program. Plenary presentations, including an update on the APA Strategic Plan and on new business items. After the last Council meeting but before this meeting, a new business item was introduced by the Association Jewish Psychologists (AJP). The resolution was for the Association of Jewish Psychologists (AJP) to be affiliated with APA as an Ethnic Minority Psychological Association, and for AJP to be afforded one voting representative serving on the Council of Representatives. At the plenary, the AJP announced that they would be postponing the resolution until the August meeting.

Day 2

APA President Dr. Cynthia de las Fuentes provided welcome remarks, and roll call was taken by Dr. Kathleen Brown. The Council Choir sang a song in Spanish in honor of Dr. de las Fuentes.

After opening remarks by Dr. de las Fuentes, new business proposals were addressed.

- It was moved to add a time-sensitive item to the agenda for discussion, a “Resolution on Combatting Misinformation and Promoting Psychological Science Literacy.” The motion passed.
- It was moved to add an item to the agenda for discussion, a “Resolution on Trauma Informed Recovery.” The motion did not pass.
- A group moved to propose adding discussion of a statement for APA to make in support of a global ceasefire to the agenda. There was an objection, requiring a 2/3 vote in support of the motion. The motion did not pass.
- There was no other new business or change of order.

Consent agenda: It was moved to remove the “2024 Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults” from the consent agenda and add it as an item for discussion to the main agenda. The item will be added to the agenda for Saturday.

Council passed the consent agenda, which contained the following items:

- Approval of the minutes from the August 2-3, 2023 Council Meeting
- Council Policy Manual: Extension of Guidelines

Parliamentary reminders, an update from APA CEO Dr. Arthur C. Evans Jr., and a financial update from APA Treasurer Dr. Michael Hendricks were presented. The open agenda followed.

Council considered a resolution entitled “Resolution Opposing Involuntary Individual Isolation of Youth in Juvenile Justice Settings.” This resolution suggests limits on the amount of time and the circumstances under which juveniles in justice settings can be put in solitary confinement. The Council members who spoke unanimously voiced their support for the motion, and there was one accepted friendly amendment to change the language in the proposal from “cognitive disabilities” to “neurodevelopmental disabilities.” The resolution passed. 98.1% yes; 1.3% no; .6% abstain.

The Keynote Speaker was Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse in the US Department of Human Services.

Council considered adopting the new APA/APASI Strategic Plan. The updated plan aligns with current EDI strategies, and it replaces the previous plan, approved in August 2019. Council must approve a new strategic plan every five years. Council members who spoke mostly expressed thanks to the plan makers for their hard work. One speaker moved to refer the plan back to the CEO to add more specificity about implementation. That motion was defeated. The APA/APASI strategic plan was approved. 92.9% yes; 3.2% no; 3.8% abstain.

Council considered a resolution entitled “Resolution to Support Parents with Disabilities.” The resolution calls upon psychology and policymakers to support increased psychological research, intervention, advocacy and policy development aimed at informing and shaping decisions related to parents with disabilities, and to reduce disparities and biases faced by this population. Council members who spoke on the resolution were supportive, and a minor language change for resources was suggested and added as a friendly amendment. The resolution passed. 99.4% yes; .6% no; 0% abstain.

Council considered a resolution entitled “Resolution on the Secure Storage of Firearms and Lethal Means Safety Strategies to Prevent Suicides.” The resolution promotes secure firearm storage practices for preventing suicides. The resolution advocates for increased funding at federal, state and local levels to support initiatives aimed at preventing suicides through secure firearms storage and calls on psychologists, health care professionals, policymakers and the public to support efforts to implement evidence-based strategies to prevent suicides and

promote mental health and safety. Council members who spoke were generally in favor of secure firearms storage policies, but concern was expressed that the wording created guidelines for psychologists. The resolution was tabled for one day to make suggested revisions. When the revised resolution was considered on Saturday, it passed. 96.3% yes; 3.7% no; 0% abstain.

Council considered a \$25 reduction in the dues at year four through six of the dues ramp-up (\$149 to \$124) and a \$27 increase in the APA base member dues rate (\$247 to \$274). Due to some typos in the proposal, the vote was tabled until Saturday to correct the typos. When the vote was taken on Saturday, the dues increase passed. 87.7% yes; 10.3% no; 0% abstain. The change to the APA association rules required by the dues increase also passed. 92.9% yes; 7.1% no; 0% abstain.

Day 3

In the opening session, APA President Dr. Cynthia de las Fuertes commented on the Council meeting climate survey. Members reported being upset by the conversations on the listserv and in the caucuses leading up to the meeting. Dr. de las Fuentes will work on a solution. Dr. Arlene Noriega provided Council Leadership Team remarks. There was an update from the American Psychological Foundation.

Council remembered those APA members who had died since our last meeting.

Council considered a policy statement entitled “Policy Statement on Affirming Evidence-Based Inclusive Care for Transgender, Gender Diverse, and Nonbinary Individuals, Addressing Misinformation, and the Role of Psychological Practice and Science.” Council members who spoke were generally in favor of the motion, expressing concern that APA is considering such a policy statement later than other professional organizations. An unfriendly amendment to the language of the statement was proposed and did not pass. The main motion passed. 93.9% yes; 5.5% no; .6% abstain.

There was a Council discussion of AI. Presentations were made on various ways AI could affect psychological practice. There was discussion in breakout sessions. CE credits for the session were offered.

The Council considered recommendations from the Council Leadership Team on “Council Action Items.” Over the past year, the Council Effectiveness Implementation Oversight Task Force has moved to change Association rule 30-1.5 so that CLT would not be required to vet items for the Council agenda. In this motion, CLT proposed no change to Association rule 30-1.5, with CLT continuing to provide recommendations on items for Council. Based on CLT’s briefing from APA Legal Counsel on organizational best practices and feedback from the Council Town Hall, CLT recommended that a leadership group with fiduciary responsibility within Council (specifically CLT), should provide recommendations to Council on the agenda action items. CLT proposed to provide one of the following recommendations to move an item to final

form: approve, oppose, recommend the motion for final form and that it be placed on the Council meeting agenda. A robust discussion followed, with members expressing concern that the proposed process would deprive Council at large from considering important issues. Several unfriendly amendments were proposed and voted down. The main motion was approved.

The Council considered a resolution entitled “Combating Misinformation and Promoting Psychological Science Literacy.” The resolution recognizes that misinformation leads to mistrust and can pose a threat to public health. The policy commits APA to disseminate psychological science to address misinformation and to promote psychological science literacy. The resolution passed. 98.1% yes; .2% no; 0% abstain.

After being pulled from the consent agenda, the Council considered “Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults.” The guidelines focus greater attention on the strengths and needs of older adults, and work to develop workforce competency in working with this population. This revision addresses the increased use of technology and telehealth for the first time. Edits that were suggested when the item was removed from the consent agenda were incorporated. Adoption of the guidelines revision passed, with an expiration date of Dec. 31, 2034. 97.5% yes; 0% no; 2.5% abstain.

The Council discussed future meeting formats including whether to hold the February meeting entirely virtually and whether to remove the hybrid option from in-person meetings. The positive impact on climate change of providing a hybrid option for in-person meetings or fully virtual meetings was discussed. Increased accessibility provided by online options was discussed. The benefits of in-person meetings were also discussed. A nonbinding straw poll showed that a fully virtual February meeting was not popular, but having a hybrid option for in-person meetings was supported. The Council Leadership Team agreed to study the issue further.

The next APA Council meeting will be held August 6th and 7th 2024 in Seattle, WA.