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The Scientist-Practitioner-Advocate Model: Addressing Contemporary Training Needs for Social Justice Advocacy

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Expanding on ideas originally proposed by Fassinger and O'Brien (2000), we describe the scientist-practitioner-advocate model for doctoral training in professional psychology, designed to more effectively meet the needs of clients whose presenting problems are rooted in a sociocultural context of oppression and unjust distribution of resources and opportunities. This alternative training model incorporates social justice advocacy, thereby equipping graduates to address social contexts implicated in clients' suffering instead of only the symptoms manifest in a treatment hour. The tripartite model capitalizes on synergies between the new advocate role and the traditional researcher role (e.g., social action research designed to promote change), and between the advocate role and practitioner role (e.g., consciousness raising, public persuasion, and empowerment). At the intersection of all 3 domains is a new type of practicum in social justice advocacy, supported by training in intergroup dialogue facilitation. We describe proposed knowledge, skills, and attitude components of the advocate role, together with a 10-credit curriculum adopted by the University of Tennessee, Counseling Psychology Program. In 2009, this program was the first to be accredited by the American Psychological Association with a scientist-practitioner-advocate training model. Practical challenges in implementation are described. Finally, we discuss implications for course development, student selection, and evaluation of training outcomes.

Keywords: critical consciousness, doctoral training models, intergroup dialogue, social justice, Scientist-Practitioner-Advocate

The scientist-practitioner training model has received widespread support since its adoption at the 1951 Northwestern Conference (Belar & Perry, 1992; Rodolfa, Kaslow, Stewart, Kelin, & Baker, 2005), but it has also been a focus of controversy. For example, Meehl (1971) held that training students to produce research was not necessary to develop well-informed, scholarly, and critical consumers of research, who are skilled in the application of psychological science. Frank (1984) argued that producing research is incompatible with most students' interests and abilities. In contrast, Gelso (2006) asserted that programs must do more to engage the interests of practice-oriented students, by emphasizing aspects of research training environments that have been empirically demonstrated as effective for students with practice interests (Mallinckrodt & Gelso, 2002; Mallinckrodt, Gelso, & Royalty, 1990). Thus, the bulk of criticism in the first 50 years following the Northwestern Conference, and all alternatives to scientist-practitioner training that emerged during this period—for example, the practitioner-scholar model (Ellis, 1992; Korman, 1974), and the clinical scientist training model (McFall, 2012)—can be described as variations in the relative emphasis on research versus practice training. In contrast, the focus of this article is on a critical analysis of graduate training that is orthogonal to the science versus practice dimension. From this perspective no combination of these two traditional domains is entirely adequate. A third domain, social justice advocacy, is necessary to meet the demands of contemporary graduate training. In the remainder of this article, we (a) summarize the rationale for a scientist-practitioner-advocate (SPA) training model; (b) describe how the advocate component

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Resources describing the Scientist-Practitioner-Advocate training model are available at the program website: http://psychology.utk.edu/gradstudy/counseling/spa_model.shtml

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interacts synergistically to strengthen the scientist and practitioner components; (c) briefly describe our process of curriculum development, which identified specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and value facets of social justice advocacy to incorporate in training; (d) provide an overview of the curriculum we designed to deliver these components, including how students' mastery is assessed; and (e) discuss our experience with implementing the model, selecting students, and evaluating training outcomes.

A Case for SPA Training

The foundation for revising doctoral training at the University of Tennessee's Counseling Psychology Program in 2007 was Fassinger and O'Brien's (2000) call for SPA training. This call was framed as a recommendation for counselors to better meet the career development needs of college women. The essence of their argument was that sociocultural processes, such as gender role stereotypes, and the ways that college career development services are structured to benefit men:

> [Place] women at a disadvantage (relative to men) in the educational system, the workplace, and the family . . . Thus, vocational counseling focused solely on helping individual women cope with their own untenable circumstances, without an explicit analysis and articulation of the sociocultural factors that create those circumstances, in effect supports the status quo and ignores the need for sweeping social change . . . Women's vocational problems are problems of context: therefore, only solutions . . . that recognize and incorporate elements of contextual change will be truly effective. (p. 256)

Fassinger and O'Brien pointed out the limitations of interventions focused only on individual clients and instead called for graduate training that augments the scientist-practitioner model with skills in prevention and advocacy to address the contextual factors that are the source of individual clients' distress.

To our knowledge, Fassinger and O'Brien (2000) were the first to explicitly call for a SPA training model. Although their appeal was focused on improving the effectiveness of vocational counseling, primarily for women, the same arguments are equally powerful and persuasive for training students to serve any population whose presenting problems stem, even in part, from unjust social systems of privilege and oppression. *Privilege* refers to unearned advantages accrued by individuals based solely on their perceived membership in social identity groups (e.g., White people, males, heterosexuals), which confer dominance to members of these groups (McIntosh, 2007). Conversely, *oppression* refers to interpersonal and institutional forms of prejudice and discrimination that disempower, disadvantage, and restrict the personal development and self-determination of targeted individuals (Bell, 2010), based solely on their perceived membership in certain social identity groups (e.g., people of color; gender and sexual minorities). Privilege and oppression are pervasive forces that create unjust, hierarchical social systems that disproportionately benefit some, while restricting others (Bell, 2010; McIntosh, 2007). A large and growing body of literature has documented the negative impact that oppression has on health and well-being for a wide range of populations (cf. Katz-Wise & Hyde, 2012; Lee & Ahn, 2011, 2012, 2013; Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009).

Thus, in the years since Fassinger and O'Brien (2000) first argued for SPA training, their call has been extended to cover all of professional practice. Drawing from feminist and multicultural frameworks, counseling psychologists are urged to expand their roles to incorporate social justice advocacy as part of a basic commitment to multicultural competence (Goodman et al., 2004; Vera & Speight, 2003). Chapters in the *Handbook of Social Justice in Counseling Psychology* describe how social justice perspectives can be infused into a graduate curriculum (Talleyrand, Chung, & Bemak, 2006; Toporek & McNally, 2006). A focus on social context in psychological treatment is, of course, not a new concept. Within the field of counseling psychology, it can be traced back at least as far as Frank Parsons' vocational guidance work and advocacy for low socioeconomic status clients (Gelso & Fretz, 2001). An implicit focus on social justice is evident throughout the field's history (Fouad, Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006), but the call for increased attention to social justice is not limited to counseling psychology. For example, social justice, liberation, and well-being have long been central themes in community psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). There have also been interdisciplinary calls for increased social justice training in predoctoral internships (Burnes & Manese, 2008), clinical supervision (Hernandez, 2008; Smith, 2009), and practicum (Burnes & Singh, 2010; Lewis, 2010); and in a special section of this journal dedicated to social justice training (Toporek & Vaughn, 2010). The National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (2007) identified developmental competencies levels for graduate students that include, "the ability to reflect on and responsibly use one's own experiences of power, oppression, and privilege in professional roles to promote social justice [and the] . . . courage and willingness to address power, oppression, and privilege in multiple professional roles" (p. 27).

Calls like these served as a guiding framework when our faculty met in 2007 to undertake a thorough curriculum revision. We believe that students who are trained as practitioners only to provide treatment inside the therapy room, or who are trained as researchers only to study therapy processes and outcomes, are not fully prepared. Because the presenting symptoms of many clients represent their manifestly understandable and predictable reactions to oppression and economic injustice, to address only their symptoms while ignoring the sociocultural context is to maintain the status quo of injustice and oppression (Fassinger & O'Brien, 2000; Vera & Speight, 2003). From this perspective, for example, treating only the anxiety symptoms of a female client who faces constant worry about how to pay for rent, food, childcare, or health care is not acceptable professional practice. The revision of our curriculum was prompted by a deeply troubling sense of the logical and ethical contradictions in training students only to address symptoms of injustice, while leaving graduates poorly equipped to address the systems of oppression that lead to clients' symptoms. In 2012, the version of the SPA training model described here received the American Psychological Association (APA) Board of Educational Affairs/Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology award for Innovative Practices in Graduate Education (Wojcik, 2012). At the award ceremony the innovation was described as the difference between helping a person forced to stand in the rain attempt to dry off with a towel versus providing her with a raincoat, while investigating access to raincoats and advocating policies that produce their more equitable distribution.

Thus, contemporary, comprehensive graduate training must prepare students to intervene at both individual and systemic levels to effectively serve clients (Goodman et al., 2004; Vera & Speight,

2003). Moreover, interventions across these levels must use the skills of social justice advocacy (Fassinger & O'Brien, 2000; Toporek & Vaughn, 2010). We believe that this training is best operationalized in the tripartite, SPA training model described in the next section.

A Tripartite Model of Interlocking Strengths

Figure 1 depicts the training model adopted by the University of Tennessee's Counseling Psychology Program, in 2007, which led to reaccreditation in 2009. (The program had been continuously accredited since 1980 with a scientist-practitioner training model.) Our vision was to add the social justice advocate component without diminishing a strong commitment to the scientist and practitioner elements. We continue to place a very high value on the integration of science and practice. Training emphasizes competence in each of these two domains. Equally important, students are trained to use research skills to enhance the effectiveness of their practice, and to use their intervention skills to inform the research questions they pursue. Just as the roles of scientist and practitioner are mutually enhancing, we believe the role of advocate strengthens the application of both science and practice and is strengthened by the two traditional elements.

The intersection of practice and advocacy involves moving outside the treatment setting to facilitate change at an organizational or systemic level and to advocate for clients' needs with policymakers. Within treatment settings, the SPA model requires therapists to avoid replicating hierarchical or oppressive sociocultural dynamics. The model also calls for empowering clients, to help them find their own voices and develop the skills to advocate for themselves, if they choose to do so. The intersection of research and advocacy emphasizes rigorous research as one of the most effective tools for advocacy. For example, epidemiological studies can be a persuasive means of documenting social problems and suggesting possible solutions. Needs assessment, program development, and program evaluation serve as powerful means to help large numbers of clients and foster systemic social change. Advocacy goals can become the foundation for a systematic program of research. Thus, science becomes an act of advocacy in the best traditions of social action research (Lewin, 1948/1997). Fassinger and O'Brien (2000, pp. 263–264) argued for "abandoning the illusion of scientific detachment and objectivity that is a legacy from the positivist model of science . . . all professional activities (research, teaching, training, consultation, supervision) are political acts that have social consequences." We agree with this position, including the importance of always considering the political implications of research. However, our SPA model stresses the importance of rigorous methodology to minimize the impact of inevitable researcher biases. Acknowledgment of bias, and attempting to control it is especially important when planning research for the purpose of advocacy, because poorly controlled and poorly executed research is neither good science nor good advocacy.

Developing and Refining a Curriculum

Four key domains of competencies have been identified for psychological practice: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (Belar & Perry, 1992). Models of multicultural competencies further distinguish self-awareness as a critical component of the knowledge domain (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Thus, our key task for curriculum development was to identify aspects of these domains that graduates must acquire to serve as advocates for social justice. However, we could not proceed until we arrived at a consensus definition for the illusive construct of social justice; namely, what outcomes do we want graduates to achieve when we

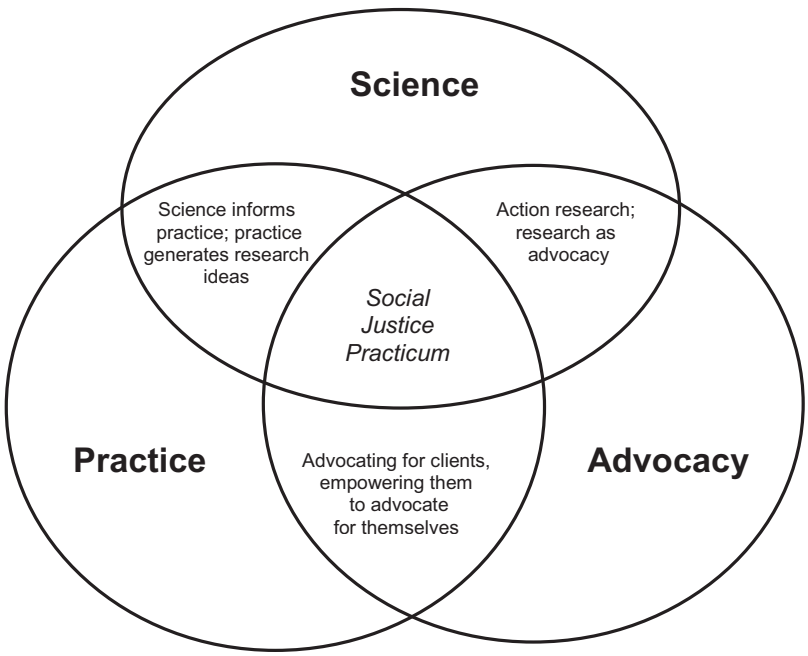

Figure 1. The Scientist-Practitioner-Advocate Training Model.

train them as advocates for social justice? Equity and liberty are at the core of most definitions of social justice (Speight & Vera, 2008). Bell (2010) defined *social justice* as the "full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (p. 21). Social justice requires the equitable distribution of advantages, opportunities, and resources (Fouad, Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006; O'Brien, 2001; Vera & Speight, 2003); as well as physical and psychological safety for all members of society (Bell, 2010). Thus, for our training program, we operationalized social justice advocacy as the professional activities that facilitate a more equitable distribution of risks, advantages, opportunities, and resources, together with full and equal participation by all members within a society.

Many resources were useful in identifying specific educational objectives to meet this training goal, including descriptions of social justice training at other programs (Goodman et al., 2004; Talleyrand, Chung, & Bemak, 2006). Two resources were especially helpful for conceptualizing types and levels of advocacy skills: Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, and the social justice advocacy competencies of the American Counseling Association (Ratts, Toporek, Lewis, & American Counseling Association, 2010; Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009). Toporek et al. described the 2 × 3 matrix of advocacy skills shown in Figure 2 (see also Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003). The vertical dimension distinguishes between "acting with" one's clients as a consultant and collaborating advocate, versus "acting on behalf" to advocate without clients' direct participation. The horizontal dimension describes three widening concentric circles of "micro" to "macro" social ecology: (a) client/student, (b) community/school, and (c) public arena. Curriculum development began in 2007, but the process is (Ratts, Toporek, & Lewis, 2010; Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009) ongoing. Our continuing efforts to refine and revaluate the curriculum are guided by emerging research on the social justice training experiences of students (Beer, Spanierman, Greene, & Todd, 2012; Miller & Sendrowitz, 2011), the competency benchmarks for trainees in all APA practice specialties (Fouad et al., 2009), and the recent emergence of specialty competencies for counseling psychology that emphasize social justice and prevention (Juntunen & Jackson, 2013). The remainder of this section presents a sampling rather than a comprehensive list of the competencies we identified.

In terms of the knowledge domain, we believe that social justice advocacy requires a basic understanding of the causes and impacts of income inequality, health disparities, and inequitable educational opportunities; together with sexism, racism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression likely to affect clients. Knowledge about sources of bias in psychological assessment and diagnosis is also critical. Social justice advocates must draw upon foundational knowledge in psychology, for example, the social psychology literature on interpersonal perception, prejudice, and attitude change; as well as knowledge about the biological processes and consequences for human development of chronic stress, poor diet, and exposure to environmental toxins. Training in research design must include knowledge of epidemiological methods, participatory action research, needs assessment, and program evaluation. Although these knowledge components can be delivered by infusing content into courses already offered in many scientist-practitioner programs, we identified additional content from disciplines outside psychology that we believe is critical for social justice advocacy. This content draws upon critical multicultural education; political science; history (e.g., of social movements); rhetoric; sociological theory (e.g., critical race theory, feminist and queer theories, Marxism, social constructionism); and social work.

Following from multicultural and feminist principles, those who engage in social justice work are encouraged to engage in ongoing self-examination (Goodman et al., 2004). Consequently, we view self-awareness as an important part of the knowledge domain, which includes developing a critical awareness regarding one's

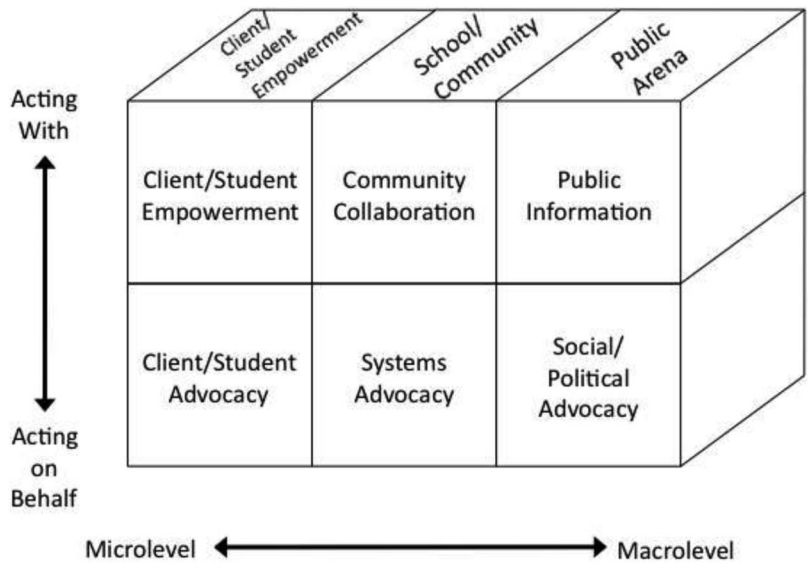

Figure 2. Social Justice Advocacy Competencies. Adapted from "Promoting Systemic Change through the ACA Advocacy Competencies" by Rebecca L. Toporek, Judith A. Lewis, and Hugh C. Crethar, 2009, *Journal of Counseling and Development, 87,* p. 267. Copyright 2009 by the John Wiley and Sons.

own social identities and socialization, as well as how these identities situate one's self within hierarchical social systems of privilege and oppression. Self-awareness also includes continual examination of one's own biases and areas for further learning and growth in relation to multicultural issues. Participating in dialogues focused on social identities and social issues (Zúñiga, Nagda, Chesler, & Walker, 2007) can help in this self-examination and can also help identify one's "hot buttons" and emotional reactions when communicating with others about these issues.

The self-awareness component of knowledge overlaps with the domains of attitudes and values, particularly with respect to the professional "habits of mind" (Dyche & Epstein, 2011) we hoped to instill. For example, a critical professional value, drawing from multicultural and feminist perspectives, is an eagerness to actively engage in continued self-examination of one's biases, stereotypes, emotional reactions, and bases of privilege; as well as working to collaboratively share power with clients and give voice to those who have been silenced or suppressed (Goodman et al., 2004), rather than repeating the status quo of oppression. Another habit of mind is what Freire (2007) called "conscientizaçcão," or "critical consciousness," which includes the ability to "perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p. 35), a habit of focusing on the strengths of individuals and communities, and desire to help clients develop tools that promote autonomy and self-determination. Building upon critical consciousness, at multiple points throughout training we seek to develop in students a capacity to examine social context in thinking about clients' circumstances, together with a value for always weighing contextual factors and person–environment interactions in struggling to understand a client's experience.

In the skills domain, we identified components in each of the six cells of the Toporek et al. (2009) model shown in Figure 2. *Acting with individual clients* requires empowering them to find their own voice and develop tools of self-advocacy. *Acting with clients at the community level* requires students to develop a sequence of three skills deployed in collaboration with clients: (a) needs assessment, (b) systemic program development, and (c) program evaluation to address the identified needs. These skills also involve teaching clients tactics for community organization. For our students, *acting with clients in the public arena* involves skills to assist and empower groups of clients to "go public" with their concerns. For example, students might help clients develop a petition to circulate in their community or prepare a letter addressed to a lawmaker, public official, or newspaper editor. Students are prepared to share their knowledge of lobbying, fund raising, and how to influence public policy to assist clients in doing these activities for themselves. Moving to the lower half of Figure 2, *acting on behalf of clients* involves skills of persuasion through respectful dialogue, generally interacting with one individual at a time to benefit one particular client (e.g., persuading a hiring agent to interview a client with a disability). In contrast, *working on behalf of clients at a community level* and *working on behalf of clients in the public arena* involves the skills of community consciousness-raising through public speaking, political lobbying, community organization, and persuasion through print media. Students learn how social action research and epidemiological designs can be used in the service of advocacy. Important supportive skills that cut across all six cells of the Toporek et al. (2009) model include self-care and prevention of compassion fatigue.

In 2010, we included a new cluster of competencies in our continuing reappraisal of the curriculum. We concluded that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes/values in the emerging area of intergroup dialogue (IGD) would provide students with critical capacities that did not receive sufficient emphasis in the first iterations of the SPA model. Students enrolled at that time were quite enthusiastic about the addition, together with campus student affairs administrators and staff of the counseling center, which serves as our primary practicum site. Dialogue has been proposed as an effective means for addressing issues related to multiculturalism in group work (Chen, Thombs, & Costa, 2003). Dialogue also responds to recent calls for greater attention to social justice in group counseling (Burnes & Ross, 2010; Smith & Shin, 2008; Speight & Vera, 2008). IGD is a small group intervention that creates a space for sustained, face-to-face communication between individuals from social identity groups with a history of tension or conflict (e.g., people of color with White people; sexual minority people with heterosexual people) (Zúñiga et al., 2007). Dialogue is different from other forms of communication such as debate, in that it aims to develop mutual understanding of others, from their perspectives, rather than to "win" or persuade others that one's own perspective is the correct one (Bohm, 1996). The knowledge and awareness goals of IGD includes developing a critical consciousness about personal identities, social identities, and hierarchical social systems. The skills goals of IGD include building relationships and capacities for sustained communication across groups (i.e., communicating through conflict rather than disengaging or avoiding conflictual issues), together with skills for strengthening individual and collective capacities to promote social justice (Zúñiga et al., 2007).

For each training goal identified, we then constructed a course development matrix with three columns. The knowledge, skill, or attitude/value learning objective was listed first, followed by a column to indicate how the objective will be achieved, followed in the last column by how mastery of the objective will be assessed. For several learning objectives, the second column designated a specific course already in the required doctoral curriculum. In these cases, the design team focused on ensuring that the required content was included in that course, and that mastery of this content was adequately assessed. For example, social justice topics were infused in courses on diagnosis and treatment planning, multicultural counseling, assessment, and vocational psychology (e.g., examining sociocultural issues in career development, understanding the complexities of psychological and vocational assessment as they relate to fairness and bias, advocating for appropriate test usage within various organizations and systems). To develop skills for intervening at a systems level, students are required to take either a course in organizational psychology or a course in college teaching that develops their outreach presentation skills. Finally, a "capstone elective" must be taken outside the program. Courses in sociology, law, anthropology, economics, political science, ethnic/racial studies, cultural studies, or women's studies are encouraged to fulfill this requirement. However, after reconfiguring existing courses, a considerable number of learning objectives remained. To achieve these goals, we created the four new courses described in the next section.

Overview of the Specialized Curriculum

The first requirement in the specialized curriculum for social justice advocacy is a three-credit didactic practicum, "Advanced Group Methods: Intergroup Dialogue." This course is designed to build upon students' knowledge of group theory and skill in group facilitation, as well as knowledge, skills, and awareness of multicultural and social justice issues. Thus, prerequisites are a basic course in group dynamics and group therapy, a course in multicultural counseling, and at least one semester of practicum working with individual clients. After an initial 6 weeks of readings, didactic instruction, and experiential activities, graduate students cofacilitate an 8-week intergroup dialogue group of six to 10 undergraduate students enrolled in a multicultural psychology course offered in parallel with this graduate didactic practicum. For undergraduate students, the IGDs are intended to complement the more traditional didactic instruction that they receive in the larger multicultural psychology course, thus adding an important affective component to learning about often difficult and emotionally laden issues (e.g., experiences with privilege and oppression). The groups follow a four-stage model (Zúñiga et al., 2007) in which participants (a) work to build trusting relationships, (b) explore commonalities and differences in experiences based on social identities (e.g., experiences with privilege and oppression), (c) explore and dialogue about difficult "hot topics" related to identity on an institutional or systemic level (e.g., in an IGD on sexual orientation, participants might dialogue about same-sex marriage), and (d) prior to termination, engage in alliance building, and social action planning. Additional goals for doctoral students include building on an introspective analysis of one's own social identities and experiences with privilege and oppression. Thus, this course forms a bridge between our first graduate multicultural counseling seminar, and the Social Justice Practicum to follow, by extending the process of self-discovery and by deepening students' critical consciousness of the sociocultural context of identity-based group conflicts and social justice. Mastery is assessed through direct observation and supervision by the instructor as students cofacilitate the groups, as well as through ongoing critical reflection journals and a summative paper.

The second required course is the Social Justice Colloquium (SJC). The SJC is offered for one credit in spring semester and can be taken at the same time as Advanced Group Methods. The first goal of the colloquium is to introduce students to a range of social justice issues in our community, and to the human service agencies and community organizers who are attempting to address these issues. The roster of speakers each year is tailored to students' interests but typically includes representatives from agencies working to address homelessness, domestic violence, sexual assault, inequity in the criminal justice system, hunger and "food deserts," the needs of sexual minority youth, hate crimes, political refugee welfare and immigrant rights, and health disparities. Each speaker is asked to discuss the particular social injustice that is the focus of her or his agency, and to describe the ways in which the agency works with and for individuals from social identity groups who are the target of this injustice. Many of these agencies become placement sites for the Social Justice Practicum (SJP, described below). Thus, a second goal of this course is to bring students together with potential SJP sites and placement supervisors. By the conclusion of the summer semester following the colloquium, students and the two SJP faculty instructors negotiate a memorandum of understanding with a particular site that will serve as a student's year-long SJP placement, beginning at the start of the next academic year.

The SJP is a two-semester, six-credit, didactic practicum sequence with the primary goal of integrating the scientist, practitioner, and advocate elements of our training model. Across the two semesters, SJP students are required to spend one half day per week working with their practicum site. Although they might work on a very limited basis with individual clients, providing traditional individual or group counseling must not be the primary focus. Instead, students are required to engage in activities that foster change at an institutional or systemic level. The two semesters of SJP provide the primary means of gaining advocacy skills from each of the six cells in the Toporek et al. (2009) model shown in Figure 2. Mastery is assessed through these assignments that require students to apply new skills: (a) a personal theory of social justice and orientation toward advocacy paper; (b) a social consciousness raising presentation to a lay audience, after critique and rehearsal presentation before classmates; (c) a letter or op-ed piece for possible submission to a local newspaper to advocate for a social issue; (d) a client empowerment project whose goal is to help "give voice" collaboratively to a client (or clients) whose personal narrative has been suppressed; and (e) a paper on the social change strategies and political tactics of a particular community organizer or social change leader (e.g., Harvey Milk, Evelyn Hooker, A. Philip Randolph, Diane Nash, Gloria Steinem). The core of SJP, and the assignment that requires the most sustained student effort is a three-step project consisting of (a) needs assessment, (b) program/intervention development, and (c) program evaluation. Mastery of these three elements is assessed through a single integrated portfolio that describes the needs assessment, program/intervention, and program evaluation. Together with all SJP assignments, this portfolio is preserved by our program for future students who may decide to advance the project. Syllabi for these courses are available from the authors upon request.

Implications for Student Selection and Matriculation

Adopting the SPA training model required modification of admission and selection procedures. A new application essay asks for student interests and experiences in social justice advocacy. To ensure students are informed consumers, they are asked to carefully review and agree to the program's statement of training values prior to accepting an offer of admission. Perhaps the biggest impact is that the new curriculum has added 10 credits to a program that was already quite demanding. Students entering with no previous graduate coursework are now required to complete 126 semester credits, which generally requires 5 years of on-campus study. Fortunately, our department has been able to financially support all students who stay on campus for a fifth year—although this is by no means guaranteed. Students do not accrue many client contact hours in the SJP, although they do gain experience in outreach and prevention activities. Because it is not difficult to acquire more than 500 direct service hours in the second through fourth year of our program, Advanced Group Methods, SJC, and SJP are not an impediment to internship—quite the contrary. We have anecdotal evidence that the skills of inter-

group dialogue, multicultural consultation, and social justice advocacy have given our students a competitive advantage at internships high on their match list.

Compromises have been necessary to teach these 10 new credits and cover other graduate requirements with only five and a half full-time graduate teaching faculty. For example, two general course requirements in assessment are offered only once every 2 years to free up teaching resources. The one credit SJC has been taught is an overload, and it has been necessary for the two faculty members who teach the SJP in successive semesters to frequently sit in on each others' courses to coordinate instruction. However, these are not perceived as onerous requirements. Our faculty believes the curriculum revisions improved our existing courses, and that the benefits of adopting the SPA model far outweigh the increased effort. The new curriculum is very rewarding to teach, and the new training model aligns better with our personal values. In the first 4 years after adoption of the SPA model, applications to the program increased by 240%. The proportion of international and U.S. ethnic/racial minority students admitted has increased, as well as the number of students who bring many other forms of diversity.

SPA model training requires heightened attention to professional ethics, particularly with regard to clarifying multiple relationships and potential conflicts of interest in advocacy. The additional requirements of social justice advocacy training also increase the number of dimensions of competency a student must demonstrate. All students are evaluated each year and provided with written narrative feedback that includes their performance in the three domains of research, practice, and advocacy—although the latter usually does not figure as a prominent part of evaluation until the last two years on campus. At times, we, like all programs, are faced with a situation where a student's performance is deemed substandard and remediation or termination from the program is indicated. As with any APA-accredited training program, we strive to provide clear and consistent feedback regarding students' performance and progress, as well as a remedial plan that allows students appropriate opportunities to return to good academic standing.

Adopting the SPA model poses some general challenges at the program and institutional levels. The model requires that faculty aspire to "walk the talk" of social justice by aligning our actions with our values in all of our policies and interactions with students and others. As we empower students and they grow in critical consciousness, it is understandable that their critiques focus occasionally on our program itself and its wider institutional environment, for example, the lack of faculty benefits for same sex partners. On these occasions we feel heightened pride and respect for our students, as they act upon their values and use the advocacy skills we have helped them develop. We aspire to view their critiques as gifts (Edwards, 2008). We grow to become better faculty because of the students' advocacy, and for many of us this is one of the greatest satisfactions of adopting the SPA training model. In addition, although ours is a counseling psychology program, we see similar advantages, and no greater challenges, for any APA accredited clinical or school psychology program in adopting the SPA training model. Regardless of specialty, SPA training does require a strong and broad commitment to multicultural training, and access to faculty and courses that can provide the necessary emphasis on social context and critical consciousness training.

Assessment of Student Outcomes

Since the 1996 revision of APA accreditation guidelines, there has been an increased focus on evaluating training outcomes commensurate with a program's stated training model (Belar, 2006). Therefore, it is incumbent on programs that adopt an SPA model to take special steps to evaluate outcomes of advocacy training, for current students as well as graduates. The program handbook describes four general learning objectives: (a) developing an understanding how the context of social problems impact the lives of individuals; (b) demonstrating skills in the methods of social action research and be able to use empirical skills as tools for advocacy and to promote social change; (c) developing effective interventions targeted at the level of institutions or systems, influencing public policy decisions, and evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions; and (d) learning to work with individual clients to help them make informed choices about the costs and benefits of engaging in advocacy for themselves.

Assessment of how well the program achieves these objectives is accomplished through multiple channels. First, in terms of short range data we have the final work products of SJP students, which require intensive application of their skills. Second, students in SJP complete weekly reflection papers about their developing understanding of the processes involved in social justice advocacy. These notes provide ongoing feedback for faculty about how adequately prepared students feel to perform at their SJP site. In the most recent SJP, students' weekly notes highlighted struggles with insufficient resources to accomplish their goals, the importance of communication, developing knowledge of power structures in their agency, developing knowledge about cultural groups through engagement, emotional issues (e.g., guilt at not being able to accomplish more, frustration with roadblocks encountered, anxiety about own skill level and engaging in the process of social justice work), and their development of awareness (e.g., of issues related to intersectionality, continued development of awareness of one's own privilege).

A second assessment channel was a 2012 anonymous survey. Of all currently enrolled students, 19 (61%) responded, providing 27 single-spaced pages of feedback in answer to 22 qualitative questions. In general, students were very satisfied with the social justice aspect of their training, including several who mentioned this was a key strength of the program that had attracted them to apply and accept an offer here. They also mentioned passion and commitment to social justice as a strength of the faculty. However, a question asking about "challenges and problems you believe need to be addressed" elicited comments that the social justice components of training: (a) need to be more integrated throughout the curriculum with applied opportunities earlier—not just the SJP; (b) contribute to a feeling of being overwhelmed with tasks and expectations that include teaching, research, and clinical practice in addition to social justice advocacy; and (c) are not universally valued or understood by all Psychology Department faculty.

A third source of evaluation information comes from program outputs. Among these, we note that the number of Master's theses and dissertations exploring social justice themes has increased dramatically, with an aspect of multiculturalism of social justice as

a central theme in over half of the student initiated research projects produced in the past four years. The internship match rate continues at 89.9% after adoption of the SPA model, with placements at a variety of internship settings including university counseling centers, VA hospitals, and military programs.

Finally, to aid assessment of student outcomes, we formally evaluate students on the competencies identified in both APA's Benchmark Evaluation System and the Counseling Psychology Benchmark Competencies. Students complete a self-assessment on these dimensions and faculty discuss and evaluate students' performance at yearly evaluation meetings. Beginning in fall 2013, program graduates now complete similar biannual surveys providing self-assessments of their competencies, along with information regarding licensure status, and employment and job duties. We are particularly interested in examining whether and how students who matriculated after our model change integrate social advocacy in their professional work relative to graduates who matriculated prior to 2008.

Conclusion

A focus on clients' sociocultural context is not new in APA accredited disciplines. However, there is a growing awareness that the traditional domains of research and practice are not sufficient to meet contemporary demands for graduates to be equipped not only to intervene and to study presenting problems at the level of individuals (or groups), but also at the level of social systems. The SPA model initially described by Fassinger and O'Brien (2000) and elaborated in the present article holds considerable promise for preparing psychologists to meet the needs of clients in a new century—one in which technology magnifies the impact of culture and social context on individual lives, and one in which disparities in distribution of income and opportunity have reached levels not seen since just prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s (Atkinson, Piketty, & Saez, 2011). We believe demand will build for this training from students and from a widening range of settings that will employ them. Experience with the SPA model in more programs, together with rigorous evaluation of training outcomes, will determine whether its promise will be realized.

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