



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

2015 APA Board of Directors      October 16, 2015

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Dear Members of the American MENA Community,

Thank you for your thoughtful and proactive letter. The perspective presented in your letter is an important one and APA needs to address the points made within its own community and with society at large. We want you to know that we hear your message that APA has not sufficiently addressed the impact of racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia and their effects within the United States and elsewhere. As noted in the discussion meetings at the September Consolidated Meetings, it will be important to directly address Islamophobia, MENA leadership, and representation of MENA psychologists in APA programs, activities and discussion.

We want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the specific points in your letter and the associated actions implied. We agree that this is an opportunity for APA to more fully evolve into a "model of inclusivity and justice in the broader national and international communities." We also hope our joint efforts will unify diverse communities within APA around the goal of do no harm and "elevate our ethical standards and organizational structures to include checks and balances to ensure our actions are doing the most good." More specifically, we have issued a call for the APA Commission on Ethics Processes (attached) and have developed a matrix of subject matter expertise, setting, diversity of life experience/diversity and collaterals specific to subject matter. Race, ethnicity and religious diversity are included in the diversity matrix elements. Of course each nominee will bring many elements relevant to the matrix and the matrix will serve as a tool to maximize diversity in all areas.

We are working on a broader Conflict of Interest Policy to address organizational culture and structures more appropriately. We continue to identify and propose checks and balance initiatives that exemplify our explicit and implicit values in all that we do. We are pleased that the MENA working group established by the Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) is delving into the issues you raise and other issues of importance to MENA communities. This working group can propose specific recommendations and actions to CEMA and thus to the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI). The Board of Directors looks forward to receiving and discussing the report including its recommendations. As we go forward, we anticipate that CEMA and BAPPI will work to identify specific individuals who can serve as point persons for discussion and planning and your assistance with this would be appreciated.

The Diversity training topic for the February 2016 Council meeting has been selected and Council members are submitting recommendations for that training. It is currently titled Religious Tolerance and Discrimination with the specific example of Islamophobia. The

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topic will also be addressed at the Spring 2016 Consolidated meetings and can build upon the Council training. In addition, we have asked the Education Directorate to consider developing continuing education (CE) and classroom modules on Islamophobia and bias experienced by MENA, South Asian and Muslim communities.

APA is increasing communication messages in many venues on the progress of actions in response to the Independent Review Report. There is now a section on the APA Webpage "APA Moving Forward after the Independent Review" with September 25, 2015, as the latest post. As other actions are taken, documents and summaries will be posted there and sent to the Council, Division Officers, and other listservs as appropriate.

We truly value the concrete suggestions you have made and hope that representatives from the MENA community can be engaged in more explicit conversation and planning for APA activities. We also hope that continued dialogue and increased awareness will begin to address your concerns about voice and invisibility of the MENA communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry S. Anton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Barry S. Anton, PhD, ABPP  
President



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## APA COMMISSION ON ETHICS PROCESSES: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

**As one critical response to the Independent Review, APA is forming a Commission on Ethics Processes. We are inviting nominations of psychologists and non-psychologists to serve on this Commission.**

**The APA Council approved the establishment of a Commission to evaluate and recommend changes to APA's ethics processes (e.g., educative and adjudicative functions; potential conflicts in human rights considerations; assessment of current policies, practices and procedures of the Ethics Office). Further, the Commission will also be charged with benchmarking APA's Ethics Office processes with the ethics processes of other professional associations.**

**The Commission will be comprised of 12 members, including two co-chairs. Six of the members will be psychologists, including both members and non-members of APA. The remaining six members will come from related disciplines such as medicine, law, science, human rights, and bioethics.**

**The Commission is expected to begin its work in January, 2016 and conclude its work by May 31, 2016 in time for the APA Board and Council Leadership Team to review the findings and recommendations before the August 2016 Council meeting, during which time the report and recommendations will be presented to the Council. Commission members will be expected to participate in monthly conference calls and two face-to-face meetings in Washington DC. Travel expenses will be covered by APA.**

**Please nominate (or self-nominate) psychologists and non-psychologists who have substantial subject matter expertise in one or more of the following areas:**

- 1. Ethics experience (e.g., experience on a state licensing board, state or national ethics committee)**
- 2. Related professional ethics experience (e.g., teaching, publications)**
- 3. Ethics philosophy and pedagogy**
- 4. International ethics**
- 5. Science, bioethics, healthcare**
- 6. Legal issues and implications of ethical standards**

**Nominations of individuals who will enhance the diversity of the Commission are encouraged. Particular attention will be given to diversity in the areas of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and career stage (students, early career, mid-career, late career). Additionally, attention will be given to applicants with expertise in the areas of advocacy specific to Independent Review concerns such as human rights, investigation and/or adjudication, institutional review, group**

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dynamics, expert testimony, and impaired professionals. Finally, attention will be given to the diversity of Commission members' work settings (e.g., institutional practice, consulting, forensic practice, military experience, independent practice, Industrial/Organizational).

Individuals who self-nominate should provide the following materials:

- Letter indicating willingness to serve if appointed
- Brief statement of expertise and qualifications related to the criteria described above
- Current curriculum vitae.

If you are nominating another individual, please send full contact information for that individual to Katherine Nordal, Ph.D. ([knordal@apa.org](mailto:knordal@apa.org)) so that the individual can be contacted regarding information that needs to be submitted for the nominations process. Additional endorsements of nominees from other individuals or groups are not expected or encouraged.

Nominees' materials will be reviewed initially by a group composed of 3 members of the Ethics Subcommittee of the APA Board of Directors, 3 members of the Council Leadership Team, and the chair and vice-chair of the APA Ethics Committee. The group will be chaired by the Board Ethics Subcommittee chair. A final list of candidates will be submitted to the Board of Directors and the Council Leadership Team for selection and appointment to the Commission. The co-chairs of the Panel will be appointed by the 2015 APA President.

The deadline for applications is October 23, 2015. Application materials should be submitted to Katherine Nordal, PhD, the interim Executive Director for Ethics. Materials should be submitted electronically at [knordal@apa.org](mailto:knordal@apa.org). Please call (202) 336-5913 in the event of questions regarding the Panel or difficulties regarding email transmissions.

Please feel free to forward this call to those whom you believe might be interested in serving.