
**Certified *C*onsultant,
Association
for the
Advancement
of
Applied *S*port *P*sychology**

Questions and Answers

Certified Consultant, *AAASP*

The Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP) promotes the development of research, theory, and intervention in sport psychology. AAASP is concerned with ethical and professional issues related to the development of sport psychology and with the provision of consulting services in sport, exercise, and physical activity settings. Based on this mission, AAASP has defined appropriate educational standards and professional experiences for sport psychology consultants and developed a procedure for recognizing individuals who meet these qualifications.

What is the Objective of Certification?

Certification is a process by which agencies and associations grant recognition to individuals who have attained specified qualifications. The goal of certification by AAASP is to strengthen the effectiveness of sport psychology by giving recognition to those individuals who have fulfilled prescribed standards of education and professional training. In addition, the certification process provides an element of quality control, which allows consumers (clients) to evaluate the practitioner before hiring.

How is the Role of the CC, AAASP Defined?

AAASP confers qualified candidates with the title “*Certified Consultant, Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology*” (*Certified Consultant, AAASP*). This title represents recognition by AAASP of the attainment of a professional level of knowledge and experience in the subareas of applied sport psychology: intervention/performance enhancement, health/exercise psychology, and social psychology. The application of this knowledge is an educational process involving the communication of skills and knowledges of sport psychology to participants at all levels of sports, exercise, and physical activity.

The role of the *Certified Consultant, AAASP* includes:

- ◆ Provide information regarding the role of psychological factors in sport, exercise, and physical activity to individuals, groups, and organizations.
 - ◆ Teach participants to develop specific cognitive, behavioral, psycho-social, and affective skills for application in sport, exercise, and physical activity contexts. Such instruction or performance enhancement techniques may focus, for example, on goal-setting, concentration, imagery, moral reasoning, or group cohesion.
 - ◆ Help participants within sport, exercise, and physical activity settings to understand, assess, and control relevant psychological factors such as arousal, anxiety, audience effects, and decision-making skills.
 - ◆ Disseminate information to organizations and groups that focus on sport, exercise, and physical activity regarding topics such as communication, team cohesion, adherence to exercise and physical activity regimens, motivation, as well as program development and evaluation.
-

Due to other specialized training, some individuals may possess coaching expertise and/or knowledge of the analysis and treatment of psychopathology, but these two areas are *not* within the role definition of AAASP certification. Moreover, a certified consultant must have additional training experiences and/or certification to provide such services as the treatment of substance abuse (i.e., alcoholism, chemical dependencies); eating disorders and obesity; marital and family therapy; billing third party insurance carriers for treatment that requires psychological/psychiatric diagnosis; and, use of commercially available psychological tests that are restricted in their distribution to licensed mental health professionals.

Why is the Title “CC, AAASP” Used Instead of “Certified Sport Psychologist”?

The title was endorsed by the Certification Committee, AAASP Executive Board Members, and Fellows of AAASP. If AAASP certifies individuals as sport psychologists or sport psychology consultants, the organization will be in violation of state licensing laws.

What Title Can Be Used on Business Cards?

Individuals should identify themselves as Certified Consultants, *AAASP*. The term “psychologist” is protected under the law in every state in the United States and province in Canada; hence, individuals who use the title “psychologist” or any derivation of the word “psychology” must be licensed. Individuals who have met the licensing criteria for their state, have specialized training in sport and exercise science, and related supervised experiences, can call themselves sport psychologists or sport psychology consultants.

Specific individuals may be exempt from licensure requirements and thus qualified to call themselves sport psychology consultants. In

particular, university or college faculty members and their graduate students, as well as employees of university or athletic counseling centers who have training in sport and exercise science may use this title under certain conditions. Individuals who are fulfilling their university responsibilities associated with teaching, research, or service in the subdiscipline of sport psychology may refer to themselves as sport psychology consultants. When individuals step outside the boundaries of their academic role and/or university functions to provide service for a fee, if they are not licensed as a psychologist, they should refer to themselves as “*Certified Consultants, AAASP.*” For ultimate protection, individuals should check with the licensing bureau in their state for clarification on the use of the title sport psychologist or sport psychology consultant.

Why Should Individuals be Certified?

AAASP certification documents that individuals have appropriate educational backgrounds and training to deliver services and consult with clients. AAASP and its membership strive to maintain high standards of professional conduct while rendering consulting services, conducting research, and educating future professionals. There are several benefits from a certification program:

Accountability. The certification program verifies that individuals have met specific criteria through their educational training and professional experiences. These standards provide sport administrators, coaches, athletes, psychologists, other exercise and health care professionals, attorneys, the media, and the public with guidelines by which they may select qualified sport psychology professionals to render services.

Recognition. Certification means that each individual certified as a consultant has the option to be listed in a directory of accredited specialists. The *Certified Consultant, AAASP* Directory is made available to all amateur and professional sport organizations, college athletic departments

and other professional groups. In addition, AAASP certified consultants who also belong to the American Psychological Association (APA) may apply to the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) if they want to be members of the Sport Psychology Registry.

Credibility. The certification process affords credibility through the rigorous peer review process established by AAASP.

Professional Preparation. By specifying what is considered to be appropriate preparation of sport psychology professionals, the AAASP certification criteria provide colleges and universities with guidelines regarding programs, courses, and practicum experiences in the field of sport psychology.

Public Awareness. Certification serves to raise awareness and understanding about sport psychology for all members of the sport community and the public at large

What are the Requirements for Certification?

Certification by AAASP requires membership in AAASP at the time of application and continued membership as long as certification is desired. Beyond this requirement, applicants must have a doctoral degree that is clearly related to sport psychology (e.g., psychology, exercise science, counseling) and meet the remaining 13 criteria listed in this brochure.

How to Apply for Certification?

Individuals must submit an application form, a current curriculum vita, copies of transcripts, and copies of supporting documentation along with an application fee to the Chair of the Certification Committee (*see address provided on the back of this brochure*).

How will Applications be Evaluated?

Certification will be conferred based upon the following three primary criteria: (a) course work; (b) supervised practica and other supervised experiences; and, (c) sustained involvement within the profession. After the Certification Committee reviews the applicant's file for certification, a 2/3 vote of approval by a quorum of the committee is necessary for certification to be conferred.

Will the Decision of the Certification Committee be Final?

If individuals are denied certification, the committee will provide them with feedback to enhance their qualifications to reapply in the future. Moreover, applicants may appeal the decision of the committee. Although it is not anticipated that there will be a need for many appeals, applicants will need to provide appropriate documentation to support their appeal.

What is the Fee Schedule?

There is an application fee and an annual fee for maintaining certification. These fees are used to defray operating costs incurred by AAASP that are associated with the certification process. Please note, the fee is not used to insure individual certified consultants. Hence, it is recommended that individuals obtain professional liability insurance.

What are the Important Dates for Certification?

Applications are reviewed tri-annually. Submission deadlines for applications are: February 1, June 1, and September 1.

What are the Criteria for AAASP Certification?

Completion of a doctoral degree from an institution of higher education accredited by one of the regional accrediting bodies recognized by the

Council of Postsecondary Accreditation. In Canada, an institution of higher education must be recognized as a member, in good standing, of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. Programs leading to a doctoral degree must include the equivalent of three full-time academic years of graduate study:

- two years of which are at the institution from which the doctoral degree is granted
- one year of which is in full-time residence at the institution from which the doctoral degree is granted

Applicants must have completed at least one course focusing on knowledge areas listed in Items 1 through 14. Unless otherwise indicated, course(s) may be at the undergraduate or graduate level with each course fulfilling one requirement.

1. Knowledge of scientific and professional ethics and standards. This requirement can be met by taking one course on these topics or by taking several courses in which these topics comprise parts of the courses or by completing other comparable experiences.
 2. Knowledge of the sport psychology subdisciplines of intervention/performance enhancement, health/exercise psychology, and social psychology as evidenced by three courses or two courses and one independent study in sport psychology (two of these courses must be taken at the graduate level).
 3. Knowledge of the biomechanical and/or physiological bases of sport (e.g., kinesiology, biomechanics, exercise physiology).
 4. Knowledge of the historical, philosophical, social or motor behavior bases of sport (e.g., motor learning/control, motor development, issues in sport/physical education, sociology, history and philosophy of sport/physical education).
-

-
6. Knowledge of psychopathology and its assessment (e.g., abnormal psychology, psychopathology).
 7. Training designed to foster basic skills in counseling (e.g., course work on basic intervention techniques in counseling, supervised practica in counseling, clinical, or industrial/organizational psychology).*
 8. Supervised experiences (at least 400 hours), with a qualified person (i.e., one who has an appropriate background in applied sport psychology), during which the individual receives training in the use of sport psychology principles and techniques (e.g., supervised practica in applied sport psychology in which the focus of the assessments and interventions are participants in sport, exercise, or physical activity). The documentation of the supervised experiences will include the submission of a letter (form supplied by AAASP) from the supervisor(s) of the applicant for certification. The supervised experience can be accrued either during the graduate program of study or as a post-doctoral experience.*
 9. Knowledge of skills and techniques within sport or exercise (e.g., supervised practica in applied sport psychology in which the focus of the assessments and interventions are participants in sport, exercise, or physical activity).
 10. Knowledge and skills in research design, statistics, and psychological assessment.*

At least two of the following four criteria must be met through educational experiences that focus on general psychological principles.

11. Knowledge of the biological bases of behavior (e.g., biomechanics/kinesiology, comparative psychology, exercise physiology, neuropsychology, physiological psychology, psychopharmacology, sensation).
-

-
12. Knowledge of the cognitive-affective bases of behavior (e.g., cognition, emotion, learning, memory, motivation, motor development, motor learning/control, perception, thinking).
 13. Knowledge of the social bases of behavior (e.g., cultural ethnic, and group processes, gender roles in sport, organizational and systems theory, social psychology, sociology of sport).
 14. Knowledge of individual behavior (e.g., developmental psychology, exercise behavior, health psychology, individual differences, personality theory).

**Graduate level only*

Once Certified, What is the Recertification Process?

Beginning in 1997, recertification will be conducted in five year cycles. During a five year cycle, recertification will require individuals to maintain and submit the following information :

1. Continuous AAASP membership.
 2. Payment of an annual certification fee.
 3. Documented attendance at a minimum of three conferences, at least one of which is the AAASP annual conference. The remaining two may be additional AAASP conferences or state, regional, and national conferences which include (although are not limited to) sport psychology content.
 4. Participation in (i.e., conducting or attending) a sport psychology workshop or course intended to advance knowledge or upgrade skills. The workshop must be comparable (at a minimum) in depth and intensity to a 6-hour AAASP Pre-conference Workshop.
-

*For more information and
application materials contact:*

AAASP Certification Chair

1991

Len Zaichowsky

Revised 1996

Linda Petlichkoff, Chair

AAASP Organization Outreach and Education
Committee