



## **CERTIFICATION DEMONSTRATION: INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS**

### **I. Format of Certification Demonstration**

#### **A. Outline and Handouts**

At least two weeks in advance of the certification demonstration, the applicant sends four (4) typed copies of a brief outline of the demonstration to the Certification Chair. The outline should include the applicant's area of practice (level of focus and major content area) as specified in the certification application, the main points of the demonstration, and the goals and objectives of the applicant's sociological practice. If handouts are to be included in the session, the applicant submits four (4) copies of each handout (including graphs, tables and charts) with the outline (See Section II.6).

#### **B. Formal Presentation**

The applicant will prepare and give a 45-50 minute formal presentation that demonstrates her/his competency as a sociological practitioner (clinical or applied) before an audience of peers, including Certification Reviewers selected by the Certification Committee. (See Section II for content guidelines).

#### **C. Question and Answer Period**

At the conclusion of the applicant's formal demonstration, the audience will be invited to interact with the applicant for up to (but not exceeding) 30 minutes, discussing his/her presentation, asking questions, and making suggestions. The applicant's responses to the comments will be considered part of the demonstration and will be evaluated on the same basis as the formal demonstration. The applicant is expected to take charge of the question and answer session and to conduct the give-and-take process.

#### **D. Clarification Process**

At the conclusion of the formal demonstration and question and answer period, the Certification Reviewers will meet privately with the applicant for further discussion and clarification.

#### **E. Certification Recommendation**

The Certification Reviewers will make a recommendation in writing to the Certification Committee. No decision about this rating will be given to the applicant at the time of the demonstration. The applicant will be informed in writing of the decision of the Certification Committee within one month.

of the certification demonstration date. If the Committee does not feel that certification is possible at that time, the applicant will be informed of the reasons for the negative decision, and will have the opportunity to reapply.

If the applicant reapplies within two years from the date of notification of the decision, the applicant need not pay an additional application fee. However, an additional certification demonstration fee will be assessed when the applicant is next scheduled for a certification demonstration. Updated materials may be submitted, if needed.

## **II. Content of Certification Demonstration**

### **A. Purpose**

The purpose of the certification demonstration is to validate with a committee of peers whether the applicant “knows” sociology, uses sociological theory and methods to effect positive social change, and is as an ethical practitioner.

### **B. Content and Style**

The applicant chooses the content and style of the demonstration, but there are some general guidelines which must be followed:

1. A professional demonstration about the applicant’s sociological practice is expected.
2. The demonstration must be in the area of specialization designated on the certification application and tied to both sociological knowledge and social change. As such, the applicant should demonstrate clearly her/his personal role in the area of specialization and provide an in-depth presentation of techniques or other methods which the applicant feels will communicate to the Certification Reviewers competence in sociological practice.
3. The demonstration should make explicit the theoretical and methodological approaches used in the applicant’s practice, and should show an awareness of multiple levels of focus (integration of the individual in society). Demonstrations tied to clinical practice must have an intervention focus that is grounded in social theory.
4. The applicant’s work should implicitly reflect the standard that is outlined in the Code of Ethics of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology.
5. Any materials to be used as handouts or audio-visual aids (including tables, graphs, and charts) should be duplicated (approximately 20 copies if the demonstration occurs at the annual meetings) and brought to the certification demonstration. If the applicant requires audio-visual equipment, s/he should inform the committee. It is usually possible for the AACS to provide the equipment, but this should be determined in advance.

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# Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology

## What Is Certification?

Certification is a designation awarded to experienced professional sociological practitioners after a process of evaluation by sociologists within AACCS. A certified member may then use a special designation as a Certified Sociological Practitioner (C.S.P.) in addition to his/her degree. To be certified, you must submit a portfolio representing your academic and practice background, current practice, and ethical positions. The portfolio must also include recommendations from people who know your work as a practitioner. A panel of three certified applied and clinical sociologists will review this material. If this panel agrees that the above factors would qualify you to gain this designation, you are invited to hold a certification demonstration at a professional meeting (e.g., AACCS meeting or ASA). A similar panel reviews your presentation. If the majority of the panel agrees that your presentation (along with the portfolio) demonstrates that you are qualified as an applied or clinical sociologist, you are awarded certification.

## Who Is Eligible?

Certification as an applied or clinical sociologist is open to persons with masters and doctoral degrees in sociology and also for those with interdisciplinary masters and doctorates whose course work and practice feature a strong sociological component.

## In What Areas May I Be Certified?

Applied and Clinical Sociologists practice on multiple levels of focus. Areas of specialization include international, national, intercommunity, community, organization, other groups, family and individuals. Major practice content areas include community development, conflict resolution, criminology/criminal justice, organizational development, gerontology, health, counseling, and social policy. Many sociologists have developed unique practices and the certification process can be accommodating within certain professional parameters. Your application,

applied or clinical experience, and certification demonstration must reflect the intervention areas that you specify.

### **What Does It Cost?**

You must be a member of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS). For certification, there is an application fee of \$200 and a demonstration fee of \$100. If you are certified, there is an annual \$20 certification maintenance fee. You must attend an AACS annual meeting before you present your certification demonstration.

### **Why Be Certified?**

Certification as an Applied or Clinical Sociologist indicates that your background, current practice, attitudes, ethics, and skills have been examined by certified professionals in your discipline. By awarding certification, AACS indicates that they believe you meet the standards of sociological practice as an applied or clinical sociologist. Certification may add to your credibility as a practitioner. It has helped some practitioners gain entrance to restrictive practice settings and to routes to reimbursement.

Certification indicates that you have met professional standards at a particular time. It is important to maintain and enhance your abilities by keeping up to date in your chosen areas of specialization. Moreover, the AACS code of ethics is an additional reassurance of proper behavior by certified sociological practitioners.

### **Certification Is Not Licensure.**

A state or commonwealth grants a license after successful passage of a bill in the legislature and signature of the governor. Gaining such passage usually requires a lobbying effort, a strong organization, supporters, powerful allies, and resources. Licenses are usually available in fields where it can be shown that unlicensed practitioners have the potential to do harm. Licensure can restrain use of titles, procedures, and employment. Over the years, there have been attempts to license sociologists, but none of these attempts have succeeded. Other licensed disciplines are usually opposed to licensure of others because of occupational pride and because they may believe it will limit their members' income.

Some practicing sociologists believe that a license in sociology would be economically beneficial, as managed care providers look for less expensive ways

to provide services. Several states look on certification as a step to licensure. On the other hand, some states are sunsetting licensure laws.

### **What Is Applied and Clinical Sociology?**

Applied and Clinical Sociologists use sociological interventions, which apply sociological perspectives to the analysis and design of interventions for positive change at any level of social organization from the micro to the macro. An applied or clinical sociologist has a strong background in social theory and the variety of sociological methods. This knowledge of theory and method is the basis of applied and clinical work. The orientation of applied and clinical sociology is both interdisciplinary and humanistic.

### **Further Information:**

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## **Requirements for Certification and Application Form**

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Practicing sociologists with either a Masters or Doctorate degree who have demonstrated competency in practice may apply for certification by the Association of Applied and Clinical Sociology.

### **Benefits of Certification:**

- Recognition of Work
- Repository for transcripts, letters of recommendation, portfolio
- Peer Review and Exposure

**Fees:**

The Application Fee is \$200 and is due with your completed application. The Portfolio Demonstration Fee is \$100 and is due at least 2 weeks prior to the Portfolio Demonstration. Membership in AACSB is required, along with an annual certification maintenance fee of \$20.

**Portfolio:**

The portfolio is a very important aspect of the application. It is your opportunity to describe your work in this field and demonstrate your sociological practice. May include, but is not limited, to:

- Description of Specialization (Required)
- Ethics/Theory/Method Statements (Required)
- Information about practice group/intervention/methods/skills required
- Articles
- Proposals
- Other documents

**Portfolio Demonstration:**

If your application and portfolio are approved you will be given the opportunity to present your portfolio for peer review at an AACSB meeting or another regional or national sociology meeting. Peer review for this demonstration is comparable to that provided for inclusion in a refereed professional journal.

## I. General Information

Application Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Business \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Area of Specialization

What is the major level of focus of your practice? Please select ONE.

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| _____ International  | _____ Large Group |
| _____ National       | _____ Small Group |
| _____ Intercommunity | _____ Family      |
| _____ Community      | _____ Individual  |
| _____ Organizational |                   |

What is the major content area of your practice? Please Select ONE.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Community Development
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conflict Intervention
- \_\_\_\_\_ Criminology/Criminal Justice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alcohol/Drug Counseling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organizational Development
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applied Social Research
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gerontology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Counseling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Policy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Education**

**Degree**

**Institution**

**Year**

**Field**

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#### IV. Work History / Description of Sociological Practice

**Applicants holding a Ph.D. should be able to show at least 1,500 hours or one year full time working as a practicing sociologist in the last 5 years. Applicants holding a M.A. or M.S. should be able to show at least 3,000 hours or two years full time working as a practicing sociologist in the last 5 years.**

1. From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per Month \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Sociological Practice \_\_\_\_\_

2. From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per Month \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Sociological Practice \_\_\_\_\_

3. From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per Month \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Sociological Practice \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Letters of Assessment or Reference**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Affirmation of Accuracy and Waiver**

I affirm that the statements in this application are true. I also affirm that I have not omitted from this application any related data within my knowledge or reasonable ability to learn.

I understand that the information I have provided in this application will be used by the Certification Committee to evaluate my application. If information provided here is not true, then my application will be denied. I further understand that if certification is granted on the basis of information that is later determined to be untrue, my certification will be immediately terminated.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Certification Checklist:**

1. Portfolio
2. Portfolio Demonstration Fee
3. Application Fees
4. Completed Application
5. Three Letters of Assessment
6. University Transcripts
7. Verification of Internship

Please direct all inquiries to:

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