

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A PROFESSION: A  
DISCUSSION OF PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION  
AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF VOLUNTEER  
SERVICES PROGRAMS

Prepared for the Association for Administ-  
ration of Volunteer Services  
BY: Sarah Jane Rehnborg, CAVS - Jan. 1979

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Introduction

As individuals, we face "predictable crises" throughout our adult lives (Sheehy, 1976). Similarly, the professions and the professional associations to which we belong, also face predictable, development crises throughout the maturation process. Malcolm S. Knowles (1973) suggests that a field of social practice passes through six developmental phases as the professional body of knowledge and practical experience in the field accumulates. Furthermore, he acknowledges that movement through the six stages need not be sequential. In some cases, the profession may complete the cycle in a rapid, superficial manner once, only to return to the beginning of the process initiating more methodical growth and development.

The administration of volunteer services programs represents an emerging professional group cognizant of its struggle to develop an identity and to establish guidelines for its practice. This paper will review the phases of the professional development of the field of administration of

volunteer services programs largely (but not entirely) through the growth and development of one professional organization, the Association for Administration of Volunteer Services (AAVS). Special emphasis will be placed on Knowles third stage of development, that of "Standard-Setting" and the certification of practitioners. Generic issues involved in the certification of professional groups will be carefully delineated and discussed. A recommended approach to the certification of administrators of volunteer services programs will conclude this discussion.

## CHAPTER I

### PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A PROFESSION

Implicit in the adoption of Knowles 'Six Phases' of the development of a field of social practice is the acceptance of the field of administration of volunteer services program as a legitimate field of social practice. The Living Webster Encyclopedia Dictionary (1975) defines 'social' as "Pertaining to society, relating to man living in society or to the public as an aggregate body" (p. 920). Webster's definition of 'practice' is "to carry out in action, esp. to carry out or perform habitually or usually, as: Practice what you preach" (p. 747). Taken together, social practice suggests an habitual action relating to man living in society. The activity of volunteers, or persons "who enter into any service or undertakes anything of his own free will" (Kellerman, ed., 1975, p. 1112) is a well documented, habitual, phenomenon (Ellis & Noyes, 1978; Schindler-Rainman & Lippitt, 1975). It is the administration, or the act of managing, volunteers that has only more recently come to the forefront of this habitual, historical, social practice. The act of administering a volunteer services program is the act of guiding, directing and managing workforces that are unpaid, rather than paid, in service to

others.

### Phase I Definition of Field

The awareness of a new kind of practice that is somehow different from other, more established fields is the first stage of the development of a profession. Members within the field identify with one/another and attempt to define the terminology which describes themselves and differentiates them from other fields of practice. Research characteristic of this phase includes surveys, census studies and case reports (Knowles, 1973).

It was this implicit recognition of difference which prompted the first meeting of a group of administrators of volunteer services programs within the fields of mental health/mental retardation in 1958. The meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of American Psychiatric Association in Kansas City, Missouri. Twenty-two volunteer directors representing twelve states met

a) to explore methods of establishing channels of communication for interstate exchange of information regarding volunteer services in mental hospitals (and)

b) to decide whether the group wished to set a pattern of meeting periodically under the auspices of one of the national health or welfare organizations. (Minutes, 1958)

In 1961 a constitution and bylaws were adopted forming the American Association of Volunteer Services Coordinators (AAVSC) (Buckley, 1970). At the annual meeting of AAVSC in 1969 the association broadened its membership to include administrators of volunteer services programs in settings

other than the mental health field with the accompanying recognition

that there is a definite need at this time for one effective national organization which would represent all the individuals who are currently employed for the purposes of directing or coordinating the services of volunteers. (AAVSC, 1969)

In 1975, the association again broadened its scope. To incorporate its now international membership, AAVSC became the Association for Administration of Volunteer Services and adopted for its purpose

to promote volunteer services administration as a profession; to provide the exchange of knowledge and experience in the creative use of volunteer services; and to promote professional education and development. (AAVS, 1975, p. 3)

The ranks of active membership were expanded to include non-salaried, as well as salaried administrators, retired persons and educators and researchers in the field of volunteer administration. Along with the changing purpose and scope of the association was the changing dues structure from an annual membership charge of thirty-five dollars per active member to fifty dollars per active member.

Just as definitional issues of a professional association have evolved over a twenty year period, so has the descriptive research charting the development of a new professional group evolved over two decades. A census study in 1974 commissioned by ACTION, the federal agency serving as the U.S. Government's branch to volunteerism, documented that 37 million Americans over the age of eighteen were volunteering at the time of survey conducted by the Census Bu-

reau. Based on the census survey of 1974, Wolozin (1975) estimated the monetary value of volunteer services contributed by Americans to more than \$33.9 billion. The National Information Center on Volunteerism (NICOV) estimated more than 45,000 persons were practicing administrators of volunteer services programs and drew a demographic profile of the administrator. The average administrator of a volunteer services program

is a 36 year old, white woman employed by the human services area of health and hospitals . . . . (who) has completed 16 years of education, . . . . (and has) been a leader of volunteers for just over seven years.  
(Gowdey, Cooper & Scheier, 1976, p. 11)

David Horton Smith (1972, 1973), founder of the Association of Voluntary Action Research and Sociologist at Boston College has significantly advanced the field through prolific writing of a definitional, conceptual and typological nature. Smith's delineation between voluntarism and volunteerism are widely acknowledged in the field. Similarly, The Council of National Organizations has advanced similar knowledge through its publication of selected articles in 1966 entitled The Government of Associations (Glaser & Sills).

#### Phase II Differentiation of the Field

In the second phase of development, the profession focuses on "Differentiation of the Field," a process closely connected to and dependent on phase I. In the process of differentiation the field gains security in its self-identity and seeks to define and clarify how it differs from

other fields of social practice. Concern is directed to establishing the unique needs and special resources it offers (Knowles, 1973). Research in this phase focuses on comparative studies emphasizing exploration of boundaries and the documentation of approaches unique to the field (Knowles, 1973).

The bylaws changes with AAVS were both an exercise in defining the field of professional practice and differentiating the field from other types of professional practice. Bylaws revision accompanied by chaos, and cries of distress by the voting constituency, may appear to outside observers as the 'last act of a dying organization--the revision of the book of rules.' Seen from the context of Knowles' developmental phases, however, the same disruption is more appropriately viewed as an adolescent profession in 'search of an identity.'

The act of refining professional boundaries within AAVS is analogous to the trend of centralization/decentralization of many service delivery agencies. Centralization enables the iron hand of administrative control to oversee all phases of program operation, but usually brings with it the cries of insensitivity and poor delivery of service. The latter concern will sometimes move those in control to share the base of power and decentralize the service operation. The same phenomenon operates within the emerging professional association. Initial tight control and exclusionary membership practices has given way to more in-

clusive representation of all types of professionals committed to the growth of volunteer services administration. Hence the change in membership regulations from initially accepting only the paid administrator of mental health/mental retardation volunteer services programs, to the gradual acceptance of paid and nonpaid administrators of volunteer services programs in all settings, as well as the researcher and educator committed to the development of the emerging professional group. Less exclusionary membership practices symbolize the fields growing security in its own identity and mission.

Concomitant with the new membership practices, is the professional association's attention to defining services needed by members of the emerging profession. AAVS changed its membership brochure by identifying the needs voiced by the professional and indicating how these needs could be met through affiliation. The need for information is addressed through the publications available to the member; the need for professional standards through certification available to the member; and the need for legislative input through involvement in the Public Policy Committee (Membership Brochure, 1978).

The developing research needs for comparative studies and unique approaches to professional problems is apparent in a cursory review of the titles of articles in the professional publications. Comparative studies include articles examining volunteerism in other countries: "Volun-

teering In Israel"; "Towards a Canadian Policy on Volunteerism"; "Australia: The Impressions of a Friend"; the examination of volunteerism in varying socio-economic settings: "Citizen Participation in Rural Community Development"; "Instrumental and Expressive Voluntary Organizations Among Black West Indian Immigrants in New York"; and attitudinal comparisons studies: "MSW Attitudes Toward Direct Service Volunteers"; "The Youthful Volunteer in the Seventies: A Tarnished Vision" (all titles taken from issues of Volunteer Administration, 1977, 1978; and The Journal of Voluntary Action Research, 1976-1978). Special approaches to problems germane to the field of volunteer services administration are demonstrated by the titles of articles appearing in Volunteer Administration in 1977 and 1978: "Administration of the Volunteer Teacher"; "A Primer on Insurance for Volunteers"; and "The Application of Cost-Benefit Analysis to Volunteer Programs".

### Phase III Standard-Setting

Standard-Setting is identified as the third stage of the development of an emerging field of social practice. As the field becomes more clearly defined and differentiated from other fields, problems of control and standards assume new importance. Training institutions, evaluative criteria, standards of practice and certification of practitioners characterize professional concerns at this point. Research focuses on the need for normative-descriptive studies, clar-

ification of standards, evaluative studies, and the improvement of measurement tools and methodology (Knowles, 1973).

The concern for standards was inaugurated early in the history of AAVS. With a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) several meetings and workshops were held between 1960 and 1963 "to explore the possibilities and means with regard to certification" (Buckley, 1970, p. 1). The first actual certification program for administrators of volunteer services programs came in 1967. To be eligible for certification, an administrator was to hold a bachelors degree and to have ten years of experience with volunteers in a supervisory capacity. 216 persons either met the standards or were "grandparented" into the ranks of the certified at the first review meeting in 1967. Numerous changes have since been made in the certification plan. It is a testimony to Knowles' observation that the development process of a profession is spiratical in nature, as the topic of certification of administrators will be covered in considerable depth later in this paper.

The problems of professional control, training institutions and standards of practice are central to much of the current attention focused on the field. Funded by the Lilly Endowment, the Alliance for Volunteerism was established in 1975 to convene representatives from more than twenty national associations involved in voluntary action to collaborate on concerns germane to the field. Task forces were assembled in the areas of education and stan-

dards. Emanating from the Standards Task Force, the Association of Volunteer Bureaus produced Standards and Guidelines for the Field of Volunteers (Jacobson, 1977). The Education Task Force produced a grant proposal focusing on the need to educate other professional groups about volunteerism and the effective involvement of volunteers. Funding has recently become available to enact the proposal within the higher education system in California. In addition, more than seventy colleges and universities now offer courses and seminars for administrators of volunteer services program (NIVOC, 1976).

Accountability of program functions and measurement tools are being refined by practitioners in the field. NICOV developed and has distributed the Basic Feedback System, a tool to measure agency receptivity to volunteers and monitor volunteer services programs within an organization. The problem of staff resistance to volunteers has been examined by Woog (1978) through an attitudinal survey instrument. Cost-effectiveness is another area receiving considerable recent attention.

#### Phase IV Technological Refinement

The "Technological Refinement" of the field resulting from research uncovering weak spots and unsatisfactory practices in the field is the fourth phase of development. To increase the understanding of the effects of practices in the field, research focuses on experimental case studies

(Knowles, 1973).

Although less adequately developed than previous stages, administrators are beginning to critically analyze accepted forms of practice with an eye toward refinement and improvement. As with other professional fields, however, negative findings are less frequently proclaimed or widely publicized. Public demand for accountability and increasingly scarce financial resources available to public service agencies will likely encourage more investigations enhancing the quality and efficacy of volunteer services programs.

An excellent analysis of the effectiveness of training programs for volunteers was conducted by the National School Volunteer Program supported by a grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Williams, 1974). Project Upswing identified volunteer tutors and matched each tutor with a child entering the first grade who had been identified as needing individualized assistance to remediate a potential learning problem. In an attempt to answer the question 'Does a training program for volunteers improve their effectiveness as tutors?', volunteers were assigned either randomly or by preference to the group of trained volunteers or to the group of untrained volunteers. With fifty volunteers in each group, the trained volunteer group received forty hours of preservice and inservice instruction. The untrained group received no formal instruction beyond the a three-to-five hour orientation to Project Upswing and to school policy. The evaluators of the

study concluded at the end of the first year of the project "that the kind of training given to the trained group of volunteers . . . . did nothing to promote more effective tutoring" (Williams, 1974, p. 29). However, the project report was careful not to conclude that training was purposeless. Volunteers indicated a strong need for support and guidance and the trained group felt greater confidence in their ability to tutor than did the nontrained group. Furthermore, the attrition rate among the untrained group was twenty-two percent higher than among the trained group of volunteers. Training appeared to increase the level of volunteer confidence, commitment to the project, and ability to seek out supervision and assistance when necessary. As a result of the study, it was recommended that training should be shifted to a predominately in-service experience and should be directly related to specific problem-solving techniques. Additional research of this nature is desperately needed within the profession of volunteer services administration.

#### Phase V Respectability and Justification

The need for status and esteem, as a field gains stability from the advances made in previous stages, marks this developmental phase. Research is essentially historical in nature, with field-evaluative studies demonstrating the effectiveness of accumulated knowledge. Biographical studies highlighting the achievement of noted pioneers in

the field emerge (Knowles, 1973).

The most notable achievements in this phase, are the advent of several new books. By the People (Ellis and Noyes, 1978) represents the first attempt at a comprehensive history of the volunteer movement in the United States. Volunteerism at the Crossroads (Manser and Cass, 1976) provides a more abbreviated historical overview prior to a thorough discussion of the forces impinging on and shaping the future of voluntary action. The Gentle Legions (Carter, 1961) offers a biographical depiction of Clara Booth and others, in their struggle to establish the Red Cross through volunteer efforts. The success of four professional journals in the field (Volunteer Administration, Voluntary Action Leadership, Journal of Voluntary Action Research (JVAR), and Synergist) have also served to enhance its growing respectability as a profession.

#### Phase VI Understanding of the Dynamics of the Field

"Understanding of the Dynamics of the Field" is Knowles' (1973) sixth and final stage in the evolution of a field of social practice. This stage occurs when a field has become established, gains recognition and is held in esteem. Understanding the internal and external forces effecting its development are emphasized. Research at this stage is characterized by institutional studies focusing on the functional elements of the field; designs for more effective organization; factors contributing to resistance to change; significant environmental, social and political issues; and new di-

rections for growth.

Recent social occurrences have nearly catapulted the field of volunteer services administration into the sixth phase. Most notably the citizen tax revolt, symbolized by the Proposition 13 movement, and the womens movement have placed volunteer activity in the limelight of current events. Countering these external forces are the internal struggles raised by issues such as stipended volunteers; volunteer work, in lieu of sentencing, for first time offenders of nonviolent crimes; corporate release time volunteering raising the question of who is the volunteer, the corporation or the individual; the renewed focus on the volunteer advocate; tax credit or tax deduction for volunteer service; and the concept of the professional volunteer. Responding to these and similar issues is often met by resistance on the part of some, more established administrators. Serious questions of definition are raised, sending the field hurriedly back to Phase I to reexamine its foundations and to establish new areas of practice within the profession.

In its attempt to understand changing dynamics, AAVS is focusing on a new approach to annual meetings with heavy emphasis on the discussion of current issues and the formation of professional responses to issues. A renewed focus on education of the administrator recommends the development of practitioners with historical understanding of the field and vision to shape its future (Naylor, 1973). The interchange between administrators and academicians, facilitated

through collaborative meetings, encourages exchange of knowledge. Articles in professional journals reflect the challenge facing the field: "Organizational Structure and Implications for Volunteer Program Outcome"; "Alternative Futures for Voluntary Agencies in Social Welfare"; and "The Director of Volunteers as a Change Agent" (titles taken from JVAR, 1977 and Volunteer Administration, 1977).

In spite of Knowles' careful delineation of Phases, the developmental process is overlapping as well as contiguous. Changes in one phase have rippling effects influencing other stages and requiring continuous reorganization and analysis of the field. Perhaps it is because of the challenges facing the field of administration of volunteer services that so much focus currently centers on the standards necessary to insure the competent performance of the practitioner. Or perhaps the focus on standards results from a renewed cycle of professional development. The Long Range Planning Study of AAVS (Rehnborg, 1977), and the volume of mail received by the AAVS Certification Committee from both members and non-members of the association, points to the interest and concern of the practitioner in the certification process.

## CHAPTER II

### CREDENTIALING THE PROFESSIONAL

One of the most powerful tools of any organized group in attaining and maintaining the professional status of its members, is the act of certification or licensure (Eboch, 1969). Certification is

the process by which a nongovernmental agency or association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association. (HEW, 1977, p. 4)

Registration is a term often used interchangeably with certification and most frequently connotes the actual listing of names in a register by an agency or association, if an individual has achieved certain standards or completed a specified training program (Roemer, 1974). Accreditation is another term intertwined with the concepts of certification and registration. In some professional groups, persons graduating from accredited educational programs are considered certified. Accreditation is also a voluntary mechanism applied to educational institutions or programs whereby

an agency or organization (unfortunately a multiplicity of agencies and organizations) recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined qualifications or standards. (Roemer, 1974, p. 26)

Certification differs from licensure. Licensure is considered the

process by which an agency of government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon findings that the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency necessary to ensure that the public health, safety, and welfare will be reasonably protected. (HEW, 1977, p. 4)

Voluntary licensure laws, by contrast, do not forbid the professional practice of the unlicensed, but do restrict the non-licensed professional from using certain titles or insignias (Roemer, 1974). Certification, licensure, registration and accreditation are all considered forms of credentialing. Credentialing is the generic term referring to "the formal recognition of professional or technical competence" (HEW, 1977, p. 4).

Essentially a voluntary practice, certification relies upon the professional's choice to subject his or her credentials and experience to the review of a body of professional peers. The lack of certification credentials does not usually prevent professionals from practicing their chosen occupation. Licensure however, is most frequently a non-voluntary act, required by an act of a state legislature. In cases where licensing is mandatory, as in many fields of medical practice, the non-licensed individual is prevented from engaging in his/her chosen occupation. In situations where licensing is voluntary, sometimes called governmental certification, less stringent restrictions effect the professional lives of the non-licensed individual (Roemer, 1974). Because of the legal ramification of licensure procedures, much of the literature in the field of credentialing

professionals groups, revolves around this practice. Professional groups interested in the credentialing of practitioners through certification channels should be cognizant of issues facing licensure. Many of the legal, political and social ramifications inherent in licensure are applicable to the more voluntary practice of certification, if not in degree, at least in intent and by implication. Therefore, issues pertaining to licensure as well as certification will be reviewed and related to a proposed program for the certification of administrators of volunteer services programs.

#### The Trend Toward Credentialing

The past quarter century alone, has witnessed the doubling of the number of professions, skilled trades and semi-skilled jobs that workers may not enter until they have demonstrated competence to the satisfaction of some state regulatory agency. Today there are nearly 2,800 statutory provisions requiring occupational licensing (Mackin, 1976). Growth in certification programs parallels the proliferation in licensure. In the field of management consulting alone, Ernst and Ernst (1976) documented and studied thirty-one certification programs each offering a credential to this specialized occupational practice. Several theories have been proposed explaining the rapid growth of the credentialing phenomenon.

The need to protect the public from incompetent practitioners and the desire to implement uniform standards of

job performance leads the arguments for the credentialing of professionals (Eboch, 1969; HEW, 1977; Roemer, 1974; Shimberg, 1977; Shimberg, Esser and Kruger, 1973). More specifically, Grad (1974) suggests that credentialing serves two basic purposes:

to protect the public against-improperly trained and poorly equipped professionals or would-be professionals and practitioners . . . .; (and) to protect the members of professional groups against improper and undue interference in professional activities by people who are not properly trained. (p. 39)

Grad goes on to suggest that credentialing, and licensure in particular, provides an "economic corner" on the market for certain professional groups thereby securing a competitive advantage for the members of the professional group. No empirical data is cited to support the later contention, nor has the author been successful in locating such data either in the literature or through contact with several professional credentialing organizations.

The transition from a goods-producing to a service-producing economy provides another rationale for the boom in certification practices (Rockhill, 1976). In 1940, the distribution between the goods-producing and service-producing sectors was about evenly divided. By 1980, however, an estimated sixty-eight percent of the labor force will be employed in the service sector. Rockhill cites Daniel Bell's Post Industrial Society and Gartner and Reisman's The Service Society and the Consumer Vanguard in suggesting that our increased dependence upon services will shape the ethos of the 'service

society'. As opposed to inspecting the quality of the produced material goods, society will demand a quality check on the delivery of services and on those whose job it is to disperse the services. In the service society the quality and quantity of services and amenities will be the yardstick of the standard of living, much as the quality and quantity of goods has served as the measure of living standards in the industrial society. The 'Good Housekeeping' seal of approval will be transferred from the goods produced to the deliverer of services requested.

Professional obsolescence, or the time period during which the academic knowledge and the professional competence of a graduating professional decreases its original strength and potency by fifty percent, provides a persuasive argument for professional credentialing (Lindsay, Morrison and Kelley, 1974). In 1940, the half life of the professional competence of a graduating engineer was approximately twelve years, today it is less than five years. Reduction in professional efficiency due to rapidly changing and expanding information, and the documented reticence of practicing professionals to voluntarily stay abreast of current developments in their field of practice, has further encouraged the trend toward professional credentialing and the mandatory continuing professional education of some certified and licensed practitioners.

A more fatalistic stance offers an additional rationale for credentialing. Man's basic propensity to reward

achievement, to categorize information and to classify and certify excellence is basic to his very nature. Therefore Mattran (1976) feels to resist such a basic human quality is tantamount to an exercise in futility. In the face of such an ontological view of mankind, Mattran recommends that the best of our collective knowledge should be employed to ensure the fairness and validity of the standards and measures selected to certify professional competence.

The author suggests another plausible rationale for the certification of professionals, particularly in an emerging field of practice. Persons engaged in the practice of a new profession frequently enter the field with highly variable educational backgrounds and with access to differential amounts of appropriate educational and continuing educational resources. A professional association representing the emerging professional has the opportunity to set standards for the emerging field based upon the best practices of its constituency. Basing a certification program on the best standards of practice currently known for the emerging profession offers the professional several opportunities. First, it directs the energies of the professional toward the attainment of education and experiences that will enhance his or her knowledge and ability within the field. Second, it will enhance the practice of the newly emerging professional group in the eyes of other professionals similarly engaged in standardizing and elevating their respective field of practice. And finally, it will serve to encourage

the newly emerging professional group to critically analyze their practice and to change practices found to be less than satisfactory. The Ernst and Ernst (1976) survey supports this general endorsement of certification and suggests that the process of certifying management consultants is meaningful:

Because certification indicates the attainment of at least a certain minimum level of accomplishment, because it provides the consultant with an incentive for self-development and improvement, and because clients look for some measure of such certification when engaging professional services. (p. 1)

Antagonists of the trend toward professional credentialing hold different views of the process. Rockhill (1976) maintains that the process is largely meaningless as it tends to discriminate along social status and racial lines rather than according to differences in levels of performance, skill or competence. Standards for certification are frequently based on educational levels, hours of continuing education, longevity of professional practice and membership in professional associations. Although competence is the stated outcome of such measures, technical knowledge is usually the only criteria on which examinations are based. Certification is considered a measure of a professional's "standard of perserverance" and unrelated to issues of service delivery of client interaction. Certificates should be awarded en masse or totally eliminated.

Wilson (1972) accuses professional credentialing practices as being more protective of the professional than

of the public who is supposedly being protected from the services of an incompetent, ergo non-credentialed, professional. An alternative to the practice of many employers, who rely heavily on hiring the credentialed applicant, would be to create performance criteria for job placement and growth. Similar concerns prompted the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to undertake a study in 1967 funded by the Manpower Administration of the United States Department of Labor to investigate "the impact of licensing practices on the availability and mobility of nonprofessional manpower in occupations where skill shortages existed" (Shimberg, et.al., 1973, p. 2). The dearth of relevant literature in the field, coupled with concerns about licensing tests accurately measuring relevant qualifications of practitioners, and the lack of provisions to insure the continued competence of licensed practitioners in a rapidly changing technological world, combined to encourage the study. The investigation was based on the premise that credentialing is an accepted commodity in the United States, but the uncritical growth of certification and licensing standards does not necessarily ensure the protection of the public, nor the competence of the practitioner. Shimberg, et.al.'s extensive study (though hardly exhaustive in a field characterized by such proliferation) reviewed the licensing practices in health occupations, construction trades, service occupations, and the transportation field of airplane mechanics, merchant marine officers and over the road drivers. Among

the concerns they addressed were the discriminatory effects of licensure; the criterion for licensing and related measures; legal ramifications; the inequitable relationship between training and competence; and the distinction between educational accreditation and licensure. This investigation will be discussed more fully in future sections of this report.

Clearly, the argument for and against certification and licensure will not resolve the efficacy or inefficiency of the practice. Kasper's (1977) critique of licensure practices cites an episode from the comic strip "The Wizard of Id" as reflecting the growing contemporary skepticism of current professional credentialing practices:

Rodney, the king's right-hand knight, drags a scruffy peasant before the throne and announces: 'We caught this fraud practicing medicine without a license!' The obviously puzzled king responds: 'So why bother me? Sell him a license.' (p. 167)

The motives or purposes for professional credentialing are the least serious of the challenges facing licensure and certification. Motives may change, purposes are easily rewritten, legislators can draft new statutes reconstituting licensing boards and changing regulatory directions. Rather, Kasper (1977) poses two more critical and basic questions:

First, even assuming that licensure's purpose is to protect the public, does the public need additional protection or are the normal range of consumer protections adequate? Second, if additional protection is required, is licensure the best means to that end? The first question strikes at the very reason for licensure's existence. The second challenges its effec-

tiveness. (p. 168)

Definitive answers to these questions within the context of this paper, would be presumptuous as experts in the field have been unable to resolve the dilemmas posed. However, through a review of the practices involved in the development of professional credentialing standards and an analysis of the implications of these standards, future directions for future study may evolve. Furthermore, an emerging professional field interested in credentialing practitioners such as the administration of volunteer services programs professionals, may benefit from the practices and experiences of older, more established professional fields.

#### The Development of Credentialing Standards and Related Implications

##### Licensure

No set methodology governs the development of the rules and regulations controlling the licensure or certification of professional groups. At best, the growth of professional credentialing can be characterized as "haphazard, uncoordinated and chaotic" (Shimberg, et.al., 1976, p. 1). Licensure, unlike certification, represents an extension of the 'police power of the state' (Roemer, 1974). The degree of specificity of the laws is variable according to the occupation and the state (Roemer, 1974; Shimberg, et.al., 1976). In some cases personal qualifications such as age, residence and citizenship are specified along with educational qualifications. Furthermore, licensing boards have frequently

had wide latitude in the interpretation of eligibility requirements, fee schedules, the preparation of qualifying examinations and scope of professional practice. Licensure in one state seldom guarantees reciprocity to practice the same occupation in any other state. Examination procedures often lag behind currently acceptable professional practices and standards, with little consideration given to assisting those for whom English is a second language. Examinations are frequently developed without assistance from experts in measurement and with little regard to standardization, validity or reliability. The relationship between licensing procedures and the actual professional competence to practice an occupation is weak to nonexistent (Shimberg, et.al., 1976).

Most licensing boards perform the dual role of establishing the qualifications for licensure and determining the qualifications and competence of the applicant. The same board also adjudicates disputes between the public and the members of the regulated group and between the disfranchised member and the group to which he/she wishes to belong. The common act of "grandparenting" early practitioners into the ranks of the credentialed, while demanding new or aspiring practitioners to meet more rigid entry requirements severely weakens the stance of the licensed occupational group claiming to protect the public from incompetent or ill-prepared practitioners. It also leads to the development of a cast system within the ranks of the licensed

of an occupational group. Decisions on matters facing licensure boards are frequently based on the implicit philosophy that 'what is good for the profession is also good for the community' without regard for the long range implications of these decisions. For example, licensing requirements frequently exert a significant impact on curriculum as well as cost and duration of training programs. Such educational ramifications have rippling effects including taxpayers' support to education and a reduced work force in a given field which in turn elevates cost for service (Shimberg, et.al., 1976).

Numerous criticism result from such loosely defined licensure practices. Not only does occupational licensure generate expensive operational costs in terms of administration and management, but it also retards the development of aspiring practitioners through the infrequency of administration of qualifying exams (Shimberg, et.al., 1976). The role of licensure boards in determining the scope of professional practice of a given occupation group increases occupation rigidity and restrains innovation (Kasper, 1977; Roemer, 1974). In line with this criticism, Kasper (1977) argues that "licensure frequently perpetuates a high-cost, overly standardized industry structure by defining acceptable practice so as to prevent the introduction of less-expensive technologies" (pp. 169, 170). In defense of this line of reasoning Kasper alludes to the sharply limited ability of charter airlines to compete with regularly sched-

uled airlines. The cogency of this criticism is magnified by the recent deregulation of the airlines by the Federal Aviation Administration and the resultant decrease in fares and increase in consumer air travel. Rigidity also occurs in the area of career mobility as not all states recognize the licenses of other states thus hampering the natural flow of a competitive job market. Liability concerns are also exacerbated as litigation threatens the professional who oversteps bounds of practice, particularly if harm results (Roemer, 1974).

Licensing laws have been attacked for their failure to live up to their raison d'état of protecting the public for two reasons. The assumption that improved services to clients results from education and licensure is an unwarranted conclusion (Kasper, 1977; Rockhill, 1978; Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

No evidence was found that there is a significant relationship between the number of hours of training pursued or the specific courses practitioners may have taken five or even ten years earlier and their ability to serve the public in a safe way. (Shimberg, et.al., 1973, p. 233)

Further weakening the foundations of licensure is the failure of many professional groups to require updating of the qualifications of the professional once licensed. Mandatory continuing professional education requirements emerged for some professional groups in the face of this criticism. The absence of any critical analysis of the supposed relationship between continuing education and

continued professional competence raises the possibility that latest addition to the defense of licensure practices may be equally ineffectual (HEW, 1977; Rockhill, 1976, 1978; Shimberg, 1977, Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

Referring specifically to the health care field, Kasper (1977) suggests that licensure practices may actually have harmful public consequences.

Since education to meet licensure standards is very costly, higher licensing standards tend to increase medical costs (and taxes), reduce the supply of doctors, and hence increase prices to consumers. This inevitably prevents some needy patients from obtaining physician services and thereby tends to lower the average quality of care for the population as a whole . . . . In short, consumers would benefit from a wider range of price and quality choices than licensure provides. (p. 169)

The adverse effects of licensure practices extends beyond the public. Some individuals seeking licensure suffer harmful consequences. Those excluded from the ranks of the licensed are forced into lower-preference occupations and there is strong evidence that such restrictions tend to fall disproportionately on minorities (Kasper, 1977; Mackin, 1976; Shimberg, et.al., 1973). The actual extent of discriminatory patterns in licensure exams is difficult to surmise. The difficulty is due in part to the laws of some states prohibiting the identification of individuals by race, color, sex or national origin and is also due to poor record keeping and inadequate information. Few associations report test scores for minority and non-minority groups separately (Shimberg, et.al., 1973). The ETS study (Shimberg, et.al., 1973) detected discriminatory patterns in the licensure prac-

tices of the occupational groups studied.

Congress placed the responsibility for implementing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which declared discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin unlawful, in the hands of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) in the Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The guidelines subsequently developed were intended for the typical employment situation which is considerable different from the licensing situation. Whereas the typical employer hires a group of persons and may obtain feedback on their performance, the licensing board certifies the individual who then may work for various employers in widely scattered locations. The task of validating a licensing exam is indeed formidable. Considerable variation exists between the work place and the work task of each licensed employee. Establishing the content-validity of an examination may satisfy an enforcement agency. However, the licensure board would likely experience great difficulty in verifying the derivation of test items from careful job analysis applicable to all classes of workers within a given occupational field. This task would prove to be one of herculean proportion considering the haphazard development of most licensure requirements (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

Because licensure is frequently a prerequisite to employment in numerous occupational areas, the potential implications of EEOC and OFCC guidelines to licensure practices

may be more real than imagined. The most significant case reported thus far is Griggs V. Duke Power Company, 1971 (Huff, 1974). This landmark court decision placed the burden of proof of the validity of tests used to determine job eligibility on the employer. Tests which are found to be unrelated to actual job performance, and in fact, discriminate against a group because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin were declared unconstitutional and in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEOC of 1972. The court pointed out that tests had to be job-related and that credentials should not become "matters of reality." Not only is an occupational license a credential required by some employers, but licensing boards themselves often require credentials such as college diplomas as necessary prerequisites. Shimberg, et.al. (1973) addresses this concern.

It could be that the courts may someday declare that alternatives to institutional certification--such as demonstrated competency on the job or on a proficiency test--must be accepted in lieu of stipulated amounts of formal training. (p. 206)

It should be remembered that in no way does the Act preclude the uses of tests and measuring procedures, nor recommend that less qualified candidates be preferred over better qualified individuals; rather it is the person in the job which must be measured, not the person in the abstract (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

Another important court decision in litigation at the time of publication of the ETS study (Shimberg, et.al., 1973) pertains to the licensure of school supervisory per-

sonnel such as principals and assistant principals. The Southern District Court of New York (1971) found that the examinations being used by the Board of Examiners of the City of New York were discriminating "significantly and substantially" against Puerto Rican and black applicants. A survey of the examinations taken revealed that white applicants received passing grades at a rate of one and one half times the rate of black and Puerto Rican applicants, and on one exam used for the position of assistant principal, white candidates passed at twice the rate of the specified minority group. Furthermore only 1.4 percent of the principals and 7.2 percent of the assistant principals in New York schools at the time of the investigation were black or Puerto Rican. These percentages were found to be far below the next four largest school systems in the United States for the same positions for similar minority candidates. The court ordered that the Board assume the burden of proving the justification of the content and predictive validity of the items on the examination. The court's decision went on to say that

the end examination procedure leaves open the question of whether the white candidates are being favored albeit unconsciously by the committee of examination assistants who have been entirely or predominantly white. (Chance and Mercado V. The Board of Examiners, 1971)

Such a direct indictment of the examination of a licensing board holds ramifications for licensure practices everywhere.

A further challenge to occupational credentialing has been waged from the perspective of the Fifth and Four-

teenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution (Mackin, 1976). Collectively these amendments state that no person may be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. A broad interpretation of the due process of law clause was raised by a group of licensed optometrists in the case of Gibson V. Berryhill, 1973 when charges were brought against the optometrists by the Alabama Board of Optometry. The plaintiffs argued they would be deprived of their license and therefore deprived of their right to practice their profession if censured by a board that "was biased and could not provide them with a fair and impartial hearing in conformity with due process of law", (as quoted in Mackin, 1976, p. 510). Although the Supreme Court returned the case to a lower court, it recognized the bias of the Board and the fact that it could not constitutionally proceed against the optometrists. The Court's willingness to review occupational licensing situations and the reality that many licensing boards and certification agencies are composed of practitioners from within the field they are regulating, marks the significance of this case. Broad application of the principles involved is limited by the cursory review accorded the case and the specialized nature of the situation in question.

Consistent with the direction of the legal proceedings discussed, is the report of the Carnegie Commission, Less Time, More Options (1971). While not directly addressing the certification functions of professional associations,

the report argues for a reduced emphasis on credentialing through formal education, and a greater emphasis on competency based opportunities in the employment world. The Commission suggests that formal education and work experiences should be fluid and interchangeable with a focus on total growth rather than the current practices which tend to encourage career immobility. Roemer (1974) seconds this trend, while encouraging educational programs to provide multiple entry points for professionals 'stepping out' of the work world to enhance their skills in academia.

A further challenge to licensure and professional credentialing is the allegation that "licensure is essentially a static response to a dynamic process" (Kasper, 1977, p. 170). The legislative and professional 'shackles' on the licensure process hinders the acceptance and inclusion of new developments within professional groups controlled by licensure processes. Roemer (1974) counters this argument with a more positive perspective. She suggests that trends in licensure and certification may "open the door to advances in education" (p. 33) and in fact contribute to the adoption of new forms of professional practice introduced by professional associations and advanced through formal educational channels.

Within the field of health care alone, the proliferation of new occupational groups seeking and obtaining State licensure and the general controversy surrounding licensure practices and regulations, prompted the Department of Health,

Education and Welfare (HEW) in 1971, and again in 1973, to urge states and health occupations to recognize a moratorium on any new legislation that would license a health role or occupation. The moratorium was called because

. . . . studies showed that state licensure of the health occupations had evolved into a system of varying requirements, responsibilities, and controls that tends, in many instances, to impede effective utilization of health personnel, to inhibit geographic and career mobility, and to foster variable licensure standards and procedures in different regions of the country. Furthermore, licensing agencies often tend to emphasize formal education and other requirements for entry into a profession but devote much less attention to assuring the continued competence of those who are licensed. In some cases, the involvement of professional associations in the activities of licensure boards raises questions about the independence and objectivity of the boards. Other studies have confirmed in this regard that formal disciplinary procedures available to boards are not often used except in cases of blatant misconduct. (HEW, 1977, pp. 4, 5)

The recommendations of the Public Health Service (PHS) emanating from the investigation conducted during the moratorium will be discussed in a later section of this report.

#### Certification and Recertification

No greater amount of consistency is evident in the certification of professionals than is found in licensing practices. Technically, certification is a voluntary practice whereby a nongovernmental agency or professional association grants recognition to an individual meeting certain predetermined qualifications. However, the term certification also applies to some form of voluntary licensure administered by state boards. The certification of teachers and certification of public accountants falls within this cate-

gory. To minimize confusion this discussion of certification focuses on the voluntary practice of credentialing professionals through nongovernmental channels.

Ambiguity often surrounds the process of professional certification as it is frequently considered synonymous with the completion of an educational program (Rockhill, 1976; Roemer, 1974). Magnifying the complexity of the problem is the difficulty in verifying uniform standards between various educational programs (Roemer, 1974). Furthermore, there is no greater guarantee that formal education insures the development of competent practitioner, to any greater or lesser extent, than does the satisfactory completion of a professional certification program. The fusion of certification with schooling has "led to the substitution of years of schooling completed for the assessment of difference in expertise" (Rockhill, 1976, p. 10).

Similar circuitous logic is encountered in the requirements of hours of continuing education for certification or the retention of certified status. Although considerable effort is often expended to insure the quality of course content and responsible sponsorship, "there has been no comparable emphasis to find out whether those who take the courses have learned anything" (Shimberg, 1977, p. 158). The policy of mandating some aspects of preparatory education and most continuing professional education rests upon the assumption that education, competence and accountability can be equated. The fact that

education may only partially contribute to competence, and competence be only one component in accountability doesn't matter; a mandatory educational policy assumes that accountability is dependent upon education. Though we may know this isn't true, if we act as though it is, we operate from the same fallacy that underlies the use of formal schooling as a selection device for the world of work. Rather than a means to competency, education becomes the end; alternative ways of developing competence and accountability are looked to less and less. (Rockhill, 1978, p. 4, emphasis added)

While competency measures and performance evaluations are recommended alternatives to mandatory educational requirements, they too, are wrought with problems of development and administration. Because it is difficult to identify which competencies are reflective of the reality of the work situation and can be taught, the movement has received negative reaction. The pragmatic realities of the situation are that while continuing education may have limited proven validity, it is nevertheless easily formulated and administered on a wide scale (Rockhill, 1978). Rockhill (1978) concludes her article In Opposition to Mandatory Continuing Professional Education with a call for

voluntary, decentralized learning experiences in a wide variety of settings, maximum learner control, a comprehensive approach to personal as well as professional learning needs, accessibility for all, applicability to individual situations, and participatory planning in designing learning experiences which are wanted and needed by the intended recipient. (p. 25)

Periodic self-assessment and reassessment of professional knowledge and educational needs has been initiated with some success by the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) in its program of recertification of physicians. Not only does the program, as practiced by ABIM, assure anonymity, but it

also provides critical diagnostic feedback for the practitioner (Shimberg, 1977).

As with licensure, the criteria for certification employed by many professional credentialing associations have been strongly criticized (Rockhill, 1976; Roemer, 1974). Not only are the criteria highly variable between professional groups, but the requirements frequently allow no substitution of work experience for educational experience (Roemer, 1974). The Ernst and Ernst (1976) study of the certification programs of thirty-one professional associations credentialing management consultants verifies the former criticism but not the latter.

In many cases the amounts of education and experience required varied; that is, added experience could substitute for some education, and added education could substitute for some experience. (p. 5)

The written examinations required for credentialing are often very amateur instruments and when used alone do not constitute adequate review of the professional's skill and knowledge (Roemer, 1974). Furthermore, examination instruments used over time by the same professional group are seldom uniformly difficult. Ernst and Ernst (1976) attempted to investigate this criticism, but found that many credentialing bodies would not release examinations for outside analysis. Often overshadowed by the education and experience qualifications of certification programs, are qualifications stimulating membership in professional associations, age, character and in some instances, U.S. citizenship.

At the outset, professional associations awarded certification to certain individuals not required to either sit for the organizations examination or to fulfill other extant requirements. The practice of 'grandparenting' some individuals into the ranks of the certified serves as a way to launch a new program with a relatively large body of certificate holders. However, the perspective candidate will regard the program even more skeptically than usual when there are two classes of certified individuals; those who 'earned' their certification and those who 'fell into' it. This practice only exacerbates the problem of attracting new recruits who are already the most critical about the certification program (Ernst and Ernst, 1976). Acknowledging the benefits of this dubious practice, Ernst and Ernst (1976) suggest that

. . . if grandfathering gets a program started, and the program can keep going, all of the 'grandfathers' eventually will be deceased or retired. It might be considered a long-term temporary problem. (p. 4)

The Ernst and Ernst study further places the practice of 'grandparenting' into perspective with the acknowledgement that "a certification program's age should give some indication of its reputation because no program will live unless it constantly attracts new recruits" (p. 3). Incidentally, it is worth noting, that of the programs surveyed in their study, the smallest number of certificate holders belong to one of the oldest programs. The Casualty Actuarial Society awarded its first certificate in 1914 and claimed only 299

certified members in January of 1976.

The renewal requirements for most certification programs have been attached as "self-serving" and inadequate to insure the competence of the practitioner, the reputed raison d'etat of the practice (Roemer, 1974; Rockhill, 1976). Continued membership in the association sponsoring the certification program frequently constitutes the only requirement for recertification. However, skepticism greets the practice of mandating continuing professional education, as well as the general educational requirements necessary for initial certification. Education does not necessarily equal competence or accountability. Rockhill (1976) extends her argument contending that

(the) most basic criticism of certification is that it defines legitimate learning . . . and who is eligible to learn. As continuing education becomes the established means of recertification, there is no reason to believe it will not suffer the same ills as the rest of education. (pp. 11, 12)

Adult educators in continuing education programs will be called upon to be the "gatekeepers" of the professions. Through admissions policies, attendance requirements, required course content and failure systems, continuing education will become an extension of the mandatory educational system disregarding the educational needs and learning styles of an adult constituency. The adult educator will be faced with the task of policing the professions should such a system follow to its logical conclusions. And because certification requirements emphasize technical knowledge and tech-

nical knowledge is most easily disseminated through the formal classroom setting, the "service orientation (which) is at the heart of what it means to be a professional" will continue to be ignored (Rockhill, 1976, p. 13). Ethical codes, without specified performance criteria, will continue to be relied upon to specify effective client service.

Once certified, it becomes difficult not only to maintain accurate records of the certificate holders, but it also becomes nearly impossible to revoke a certificate. Keeping up with the holders of a particular certificate is a much different matter than issuing the initial certificate. Holders move, change jobs and enter other fields without notifying the professional association awarding the credential. Many associations have minimal or no renewal requirements magnifying the record keeping nightmare (Ernst and Ernst, 1976). However, a trend appears to be emerging in renewal requirements. Two approaches to this problem are either a modest annual renewal fees coupled with continuing education requirements; or substantial renewal fees of seventy dollars to one hundred fifty dollars, as for the Fellows of the Casualty Actuarial Society and the Certified Management Consultants respectively, and no continuing education requirements (Ernst and Ernst, 1976). The latter practice in particular tends to lend credence to the accusation that "certification serves . . . to define social class status" (Rockhill, 1976, p. 8).

Most organizations will revoke a certificate once

granted if false information is given in application; if the holder is found in severe violation of a code of ethics; or if the holder commits a felony. Yet even in these events, how does an association revoke a piece of paper, or guarantee that the disciplined recipients do not continue to represent themselves as certified to an unknowing public? To avoid this potential problem, the Certified Manufacturing Engineers have instituted a program whereby all certificates contain an expiration date, and a new certificate is issued every three years if the holder attains certain prescribed recertification requirements (Ernst and Ernst, 1976).

Just as there is no systematic method of determining the requirements for certification among professional groups, there is also no systematic policy regarding fees for certification. The cost for participating in certification programs varied considerably in the groups surveyed by Ernst and Ernst (1976) from a low of twenty dollars for Certified Managers of Patient Accounts to a high of seven hundred dollars for the Chartered Life Underwriters. Most fees appear to be related to the administration of certifying examinations. Four different types of fee structures were identified.

1. a one-time registration or matriculation fee,
2. an annual fee payable as long as the candidate is in the program and remains uncertified,
3. an examination fee for each part for taking the examination the first time, and
4. an examination fee for each part for taking repeat

sittings of all or parts of the examination. (Ernst and Ernst, 1976, p. 9, numbers added)

Fees covered costs of examination preparation, publication, grading, administration of the exams, and all other administrative costs of program operation.

Through the course of her investigation, the author identified one certification program that appeared especially well developed. Over a ten year period, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) engineered a well documented, carefully planned and thoughtfully executed certification plan. The program applied to three classifications of workers in this field: the Information Specialist; Communication Specialist; and the Development Specialist. A thorough task analysis of the functions performed by professionals in the field of educational media preceded the delineation of competencies necessary in each job classification. The analysis identified the eight major functions of media specialists and the skills needed by the professionals within each functional area according to classification. The functional areas identified were organization management, personnel management, research-theory, design, production, evaluation-selection, support-supply, utilization-dissemination, and human relations. Because the functional areas of work responsibilities are synonymous across classifications, the professional in the field is assured both horizontal and vertical career lattice options through professional self development. The competency-based

certification system presents professional guidelines for the state educational boards actually implementing the certification program (Galey, 1978; Prigge, 1973, 1974; Wallington, 1972).

In unison with effort to develop a sound certification plan, AECT launched a multifaceted effort promoting the profession of educational media specialists at the same time it analyzed the potential ramifications of a certification program. A filmstrip featured media technology as a viable career option; a directory of available degree programs and job opportunities was developed; and committees were formed to analyze various components of the role of the professional in educational media technology vis-a-vis other professionals in the field of education (Eboch, 1969; Milkman, 1970). The final draft of certification guidelines are not as yet complete. The methodology employed in the development of this total program is well documented in the trade journal Audiovisual Instruction and provides valuable information to other professional groups developing certification programs.

#### Recommendations for Reform

The criticism raised about credentialing practices are indeed awesome. If the author were an ostrich, she would bury her head beneath the piles of index cards accumulated in the course of this investigation and turn to other areas of academic pursuit! However, such a luxury (cop-

out?) is not available, nor advisable. Perhaps it is Mattran's (1976) deceptively simplistic defense of credentialing that provides the impetus to continue. He raises two questions and offers answers for each.

Do we try to change society so that the orientation to credentialing no longer exists, or, Do we live with the scorecard in adult education?

The answer to the first question is easy: We cannot; so don't even bother. Human beings will continue to be human beings . . . .

In answer to the second question, it would seem that there is little choice: credentialing is going to be with us in one form or another; so we as adult educators ought to make the best of it by ensuring that certification required of practitioners has substance enough to assure those whom we serve that our services are truly of professional calibre. It does not really matter how we go about credentialing--competency based, earned academic credits, diplomas--as long as the effect of this effort encourages and rewards excellence. (p. 306)

The second response is equally applicable to professional associations credentialing practitioners and to licensure boards. It is in the spirit of searching for reasonable responses to an imperfect situation in an imperfect world that this discourse continues.

Leading the list of recommendations for the reform of professional credentialing is the revision of tests and the call for improved measures of professional competence (Mackin, 1976; Rockhill, 1976; Roemer, 1974; Shimberg, 1977; Shimberg, et.al., 1973). Not surprisingly, the ETS study (Shimberg, et.al., 1973) characterized current testing procedures as "the most glaring weakness in the present system of occupational licensing" (p. 212). An analysis of jobs,

occupation by occupation, isolating critical elements of work performance is primary to identify which skills need to be tested for. Then, it is important to develop test items and to pilot test items for validity and reliability. Assistance should be made available to candidates for whom English is a second language, as well as to the candidate not achieving a passing score after taking the examination. Schools, community groups and professional associations should assist candidates preparing for examination (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

Licensing boards should receive assistance in upgrading examinations and maintaining accurate records that may identify discriminatory testing results (HEW, 1977). Other administrative refinements in testing procedures recommended include: broader information dissemination; publicizing testing regulations and content covered in the tests; more testing locations and more frequent testing dates; and more accurate record keeping procedures (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

An extension of interest in developing more valid, reliable and meaningful measures was the interest in proficiency and equivalency examinations. Attention needs to be focused on the ability of the individual to do the job rather than on the way in which the individual acquires the skills (HEW, 1977; Mackin, 1976; Rockhill, 1976; Roemer, 1974; Shimberg, 1977; Shimberg, et.al., 1976; Wilson, 1972). Sliding scales allowing unequal and variable weight between

formal education and work experience would be recognized in lieu of the frequently rigid current requirements. A focus on performance oriented job analysis and competency based assessment tools emanated from the arguments for proficiency and equivalency measures. Defining competence, occupation by occupation, "definitely holds the key to future progress in this field" (Shimberg, 1977, p. 161). And yet despite the accolades for the alternative approach, Rockhill (1978) reminds us that "competency-based education continues to be elusive" (p. 22) and in need of much additional study prior to launching effective programs.

Two further, seemingly unrelated trends, evolved from the discussion of improved testing procedures. Barring the effective improvement of test measures Mackin (1976) and to a lesser extent Roemer (1974) recommend the abolition of licensing and certifying examinations in lieu of strengthening and standardizing prelicensing training. Professional associations are encouraged to exercise greater control over training schools and programs. The resulting effect would be that graduates of certain programs would automatically be allowed to practice their occupation. This suggestion seems, to the author, to be evading the more fundamental issues and to merely be transferring the burden of justification of current practices onto the formal educational system. Accreditating agencies are faced with problems similar to those of licensing and certifying boards (Roemer, 1974). Furthermore, no appreciably greater assurance of valid test

measures is guaranteed if administered periodically by institutions of formal education.

The second trend also recommends the abolition of rigid licensure requirements, but this time in lieu of placing the burden for professional competence on the individual practitioner and an educated public. Rockhill (1978, 1976) argues persuasively for a voluntary, open learning policy, particularly as it would apply to the continuing competence of professionals. Such a policy would encourage maximum learner control; allow for intrinsic motivation for further education rather than extrinsically mandated participation; and encourage learner participation in the design and execution of further study. Adding a slightly different twist to this approach is Kasper's (1977) interest in assessing the "output" of service rather than the "input" of professional training. For example, in health related professions, the criteria of measurement would be the number of healthy patients discharged from medical care, as opposed to the credentials of attending professionals. He suggests that the current practice is tantamount to "licensing tires and carburetors but not cars" (p. 171). Both authors realize that such alternatives to traditional licensure would require some social adjustments. Educational institutions would need to focus their attention on educating the consumer to critically analyze the services delivered. Both recommendations of abolition of licensing examinations would require greater linkage between professional associations and educa-

tional institutions (Mackin, 1976; Rockhill, 1976; Roemer, 1974).

Professional credentialing claims to protect the public from the incompetent aspiring professional. It is therefore equally important that the public be protected from the incompetent practicing, credentialed professional. The Public Health Service (HEW, 1977) succinctly captures the calls for reform in the renewal of certification and licensure advocated by Rockhill (1976, 1978), Shimberg (1977), ETS (Shimberg, et.al., 1973), and Kasper (1977).

Certification organizations, licensure boards, and professional associations should adopt requirements and procedures that will assure the continued competence of health personnel. Additional studies of the best mechanisms to assure continued competence should be supported on a high-priority basis . . . .

Instead of endorsing a single method such as continuing education, which itself is often unvalidated or of questionable relevance to continued competence, PHS urges that additional support be given to the development of more sophisticated approaches to continued competence which ultimately can be tied into a mandatory recertification or relicensure requirement. These approaches may include peer review through Professional Standards Review Organizations, reexamination, self-assessment techniques and supervisory assessments, as well as continuing education. (HEW, 1977, pp. 13, 17)

Shimberg (1977) expands upon the Public Health Service concept. Considerable emphasis is placed upon the self assessment program necessary for recertification with the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) discussed in an earlier section of this paper. One of the critical components of this approach is that it does not simply measure knowledge, but more importantly when to apply the knowledge

in differential situations. Now, under mandate from the federal government, peer review procedures for physicians are being sharpened. With these new approaches gaining prominence and acceptance, it is unlikely that continuing education will survive as the sole, or even the optimal method of maintaining competence. Furthermore, adult educators interested in maintaining a hold on the market of professionals returning to school will need to closely examine the delivery of this form of education. Professionals with a modicum of free time want continuing education packaged so that it can be absorbed in unique ways and accommodate individual living styles. Professionals want to be able to take advantage of continuing education at home, driving to the office, in the company of colleagues and alone. No matter what method is chosen to maintain competence, each approach has the burden of establishing its relationship to professional competence on the job and listing publicly any disclaimers of short comings.

In their concluding chapter "Strategies For Change" Shimberg, Esser and Kruger (1973) recommend other areas of reform for licensure boards, professional and trade associations, and federal and state government officials. The composition and operating procedures of licensing boards warrants close scrutiny and revision. Failure to make use of modern data-processing technology hampers administrative operations and deters more adequate record keeping. Long overdue research activities would be facilitated through

modern technology. Research should be concluded in test design with assistance from experts in this field. The financial base of most boards is tenuous. Income is frequently generated by the applicants fees, raising ethical questions and impeding the development of more sophisticated management practices.

The question of ethics extends beyond financing. When, for instance, is it admissible for a licensing official to accept gratuities from groups over which he/she has regulatory control? Can the same board that administers an examination also arbitrate a complaint from an unsuccessful applicant? Will applicants even raise complaints if they fear this "all-purpose" board may later penalize them for asking questions? If licensure is to protect the consumer, why are there not more (or in some cases, any) consumers on the board? A code of ethics, with illustrative situational examples, is essential to the judicious functioning of such committees.

The Public Health Service reiterates some of these concerns in its fourth recommendation to health related groups (HEW, 1977). The accountability and effectiveness of boards needs to be assured through the allocation of increased funding for resources including staff and legal assistance. Disciplinary procedures and responsibilities should be assigned higher priority. National examinations and standards need to be critically evaluated and revised as necessary. The membership on boards should be expanded

to include effective representation of consumers, and other related professional groups. Linkages with appropriate private and public concerns should be established to insure the planning, development and monitoring of relevant professional concerns. And finally, data must be collected and analyzed to formulate manpower policy and review occupational growth.

State governments play a very special role in licensure concern as legislative action is responsible for their very existence (Shimberg, et.al., 1973). State governments have the responsibility to review current practices and assure that boards are performing the job established by law, namely is the public health, safety and welfare being protected and how is this being assured. States should examine the criteria by which licensure boards are instituted and avoid the unnecessary proliferation of new licensed occupational groups (HEW, 1977). Licensure board practices should be carefully examined to assure that criteria for credentialing are legitimate and directly related to competencies necessary for job performance. The states should assume some responsibility for the equitable financial base and responsible administration of the boards, especially in the light of the purpose of boards to assure public safety. The state should establish guidelines for fair practice addressing the multiple role of judge, jury, investigator and prosecutor of boards, as well as the composition of boards. The various boards operating on a state level should be ex-

amined with an eye toward consolidating appropriate functions and maximizing fiscal efficiency (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

States should review the limitations on the geographic mobility of persons credentialed within respective commonwealths and work toward national standards allowing greater freedom of location. This concern logically addresses the composition of licensing examinations and enables the states to encourage competency based or performance-based measures. Other policy making bodies within the state governmental system should be queried in regards to the implications of state licensure practice. Particular attention given to licensure boards by EEOC commissions, and state departments of education, may insure greater adherence to nondiscrimination concerns and the development of related educational programs (Shimberg, et.al., 1973). As the licensure board represents the "police power of the state" so the states must exercise policing power over the boards. Likewise, professional and trade associations with strong vested interests in the function of licensing boards and with oft times considerable political clout, should be encouraged to think about change positively and creatively rather than remain ardent defenders of the status quo. Perhaps Rockhill's (1978, 1976) and Kasper's (1977) interest in consumer education could begin with the professional and trade associations as they learn new ways to view change!

The federal government's traditional "hands off"

policy in the area of professional credentialing has changed as a result of two recent developments. With the passage of Medicare and Medicaid legislation, the government now requires licensing and mandatory continuing professional education of nursing home administrators. The second development has been the request of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through the Public Health Service, to declare a moratorium or licensure legislation by the states in the health-related occupations. Other exceptions to this general policy have been occupations involving transportation and communications (Shimberg, et.al., 1973). Recommendations for the reform of professional credentialing explicate possible roles for the federal government (HEW, 1977; Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

A national information center for licensed occupations is urgently needed to disseminate and coordinate information. A clearinghouse would greatly aid the states in the formulation of policy and assist citizens attempting to understand the complex issues surrounding credentialing. Following the example set by the federal government in the operation of state employment service programs, the federal government might provide financial support to licensing agencies within states complying with certain federal guidelines. Such assistance might enhance the development of more reliable tests and encourage the dissemination of findings. Federal guidelines could be employed to insure that licensure not operate in such a way as to discriminate against minority

groups. Another approach conceivably effecting an antidiscrimination stance would be federal guidelines pertaining to apprenticeship training programs in licensed occupations, and standards for personnel in federally funded programs. Such federal intervention could assist in addressing the problems of interstate and intrastate mobility of licensed members of occupational groups by standardizing aspects of training and experience requirements as well as tentings (Shimberg, et.al., 1973).

National standards for certain selected occupational groups, established by the federal government, is a recommended area of further exploration (HEW, 1971; Shimberg, et.al., 1973). In the field of health care, this recommendation would assure the development of uniform standards, facilitate health care planning and third party reimbursement. In the construction trades, such a system would open up jobs for minorities currently thwarted by resistant unions. The Public Health Service also recommends a national, non-federal, certification commission in the allied health fields to encourage the development of improved evaluative criteria and policies; to assist the federal government in addressing credentialing practices; and to provide consultation and technical assistance to certification operations (HEW, 1977).

While most of the recommendations cited refer more specifically to licensure boards, the reforms have ramifications for other certifying bodies. Particular attention needs to be given to the composition and responsibilities of

the boards of directors or committees handling certification requirements and procedures. Interlocking and conflicting responsibilities should be avoided through the development of ethical codes and judicious operating procedures. Client representation should be assured, as it is the client who theoretically benefits from minimum standards of accepted professional practice. Examination procedures and qualifications for certification should receive the same careful scrutiny recommended for tests of licensure. Appropriate linkages between professional associations representing similar or complementary professions should be established and cultivated.

Likewise, licensure programs considering uniform national standards and examinations are encouraged to examine some of the more successful practices in certification. In many instances, certification programs developed by professional associations are implemented on a national, and sometimes international, scale. The methodology, administration and communication techniques of such certifying bodies may offer guidelines for national licensure standards developed for selected occupational groups.

The necessary and vital linkage between professional credentialing programs and institutions of higher education is clearly evident and equally challenging. Roemer (1974) suggests that the entire educational policy of professions should be critically analyzed and revamped. Greater breadth of undergraduate training would allow for future career mo-

bility and lateral options. Quality preparation may diminish the necessity for credentialing for entry into occupations. Appropriate equivalency measures would enhance the role of job-related experiences. Flexibility should be encouraged that would facilitate alterations between periods of work and periods of education. The world of scholarship should be integrated more closely with the world of practice. Examinations which reflect performance competence should be developed. More imaginative and meaningful approaches to continued qualifications should be devised in such a way that continuing education becomes an integral part of the professional's life without the dictates of mandatory participation. Shimberg, Esser and Kruger (1973) concur with some of Roemer's suggestion, arguing for the elimination of unnecessarily stringent experience requirements that, to date, have born no definitive relationship to the practice of the occupation.

The opportunity for innovation is clear. Thoughtful and critical consideration has been given to the role of education in the development and maintenance of professional competence. Definitive research is sorely needed that demonstrates the interface between the world of practice and the world of scholarship. The embryonic state of assessment measures opens avenues for further serious study. The controversy surrounding credentialing and education may serve to stimulate both educators and professionals to lend their talents to studies which will enhance the future of two separate, but highly interdependent, functions.

## CHAPTER III

### CERTIFICATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES PROGRAMS

#### Certification and Accreditation: The Current State of the Art

Planning for the first Certification program for administrators of volunteer services programs began in 1963 through the American Association of Volunteer Services Coordinators (AAVSC). At the conclusion of the first planning meeting, it was determined "that graduation from a four-year college should be one of the minimum requirements (with the proviso of a Grandfather clause to cover those already working as coordinators.)" (Buckley, 1970). The Planning Committee reported:

For the purpose of this report, CERTIFICATION is defined as recognition accorded to an individual who meets the standards or criteria established by a competent organization or association. The complete certification procedure includes three steps:

(1) establishment of the standards and criteria for measurement.

(2) review, inspection and evaluation of persons by competent authority, appointed or determined by the agency or association.

(3) publication of a listing of those individuals meeting the standards.

The purpose of certification is:

(1) to promote and maintain standards.

(2) to assist employing institutions and/or employers in locating fully accredited personnel for positions as coordinators of voluntary services.

(3) to provide information on the scope and quality of services that can be rendered.

(4) to upgrade volunteer services programs. (Buckley, 1970, p. 1)

The first Certification review process occurred in 1967, with 216 persons either meeting the established standards or being "grandparented" into the ranks of the credentialed.

Numerous changes in the certification standards evolved over the next ten year period. By 1978, certification standards were expanded to include educational attainment, and experience in the field, ranging from a high school diploma or G.E.D. and six years full time experience, to a graduate degree and one year full time experience or its equivalent (1,800 work hours). Both paid and nonpaid administrative experience in volunteerism was recognized. Applicants are required to document fifty-four hours of continuing education in volunteer administration for certification with a high school diploma, thirty-six hours for an associate degree and eighteen hours for bachelors and graduate degrees. In addition, the applicant is required to produce three letters of professional reference, document significant personal involvement in five "outstanding" community or facility projects related to volunteerism, and be a member of the Association for at least one year.

A committee of eight persons reviews each applica-

tion. A majority vote is necessary for recognition of certification. A twenty-five dollar fee is charged of each applicant. Applicants denied certification receive back twenty dollars of the fee, with an explanation of short comings in their qualifications. The rejected applicant is encouraged to upgrade his/her qualifications prior to a second review. No time allocation is stipulated for those applying a second time. Persons attaining the certification standards receive a Certificate of Certification, and are entitled to use the initials C.A.V.S. (Certified Administrator of Volunteer Services) after their name.

To retain certification status, the individual must remain a member of the Association for Administration of Volunteer Services (AAVS--new name of AAVSC as of 1975) and pay an annual renewal fee of two dollars. Every five years, the Certified individual must document attendance at eighteen hours of continuing education in the field of volunteer services administration. By 1978, 415 persons had received Certification with AAVS, 165 remain actively certified.

Other certification and accreditation programs serve the field of volunteer services administrations; however, none is as broad in scope as the Certification available through AAVS. The Association of Volunteer Bureaus offers accreditation to volunteer bureaus and voluntary action center programs attaining certain minimum standards. In 1977, the Voluntary Action Center (VAC) in Akron, Ohio developed standards to certify volunteer programs served by the Summit

County bureau (Barr, 1978). The term certify is unappropriate for the type of program administered by the Akron VAC, as the actual function is one of accrediting programs, not certifying individuals. In spite of the semantics, however, the Akron certification program with an application fee of forty dollars for certifying an agency for a three year program was thoughtfully developed and has been well received by its community.

As with the Akron program, confusion in credentialing terminology is apparent in the Accreditation Program instituted by the North Dakota Association of Coordinators of Volunteer Services (hereafter COVS) in 1975. Persons who are members of COVS may apply for twenty-five dollars to be personally "accredited" by the association. Within ninety days after completing the initial application blank, the applicant meets with a consultant of COVS and designs an individualized contract delineating a plan for professional growth based on the educational needs of the applicant and the type of program coordinated. Quarterly communication with the three member accreditation panel is required during the time in which the applicant is fulfilling the accreditation contract. Sample contracts presented in the COVS Accreditation Manual indicate that at least a year is necessary to complete the educational requirements and materials the applicant must develop. A project report must be submitted to the Accreditation Panel demonstrating the completion of the contract. Within forty-five days after submis-

sion of the project report, the applicant and the applicant's consultant meet with the panel for final accreditation review. At that time, the applicant may be approved for accreditation with COVS or delayed pending additional contract work. Accreditation, once granted is good for a three year time span (Wetzel, 1975).

The author has no information pertaining to the actual implementation or success of the COVS accreditation program. The individualized learning contract allows for an individually relevant professional credentialing program and insures greater application of the credential to the individual's work responsibilities and work place. On a national scale, such a program would be prohibitively costly in terms of consultant availability and total program administration. Furthermore, it would be difficult to assure standardization of individual contracts without the development of a comprehensive set of minimum standards. However, this process does respond to many of criticisms in the credentialing debate discussed previously.

There is widespread interest among administrators of volunteer services programs in the credentialing of professionals. A testimony to this growing concern is evidenced by the large number of colleges and universities offering workshops and courses culminating in "certificates" for the participants (NICOV, 1976). The oldest academic certification program is offered by the University of Colorado in Boulder. Following completion of a number of correspondence

courses and attendance at workshops held on campus, the student is recognized as a certified administrator of volunteer services. Other institutions of higher education offering certification following attendance at a prescribed number of continuing education programs include the University of Delaware, Ohio State University, and the University of Connecticut.

The development and proliferation of such university affiliated certificate programs has prompted several responses on the part of professional associations and practitioners in the field. AAVS introduced a program to accredit educational programs granting attendees the right to apply attendance at such programs to the continuing education hours necessary for professional certification through the association. The American Society of Directors of Volunteer Services (ASDVS), the professional association of hospital volunteer directors, has indicated similar interest, but has not yet instituted an accreditation system. The advent of college and university involvement in the field has served to confuse an already cloudy situation. As yet, no professional association has clearly delineated what knowledge must be imparted in an educational program to qualify for comprehensive accreditation of an educational program.

Many practicing administrators admit confusion over the credentials issues and question which credential is most advantageous to professional development. Serving as Chairperson for the Certification Committee of AAVS, the author

receives an average of five inquiries weekly asking about certification with the association and questioning the proliferation of credentials in an emerging field. Correspondence has been received from the Institute for International Living, the Minnesota Zoological Society, ASDVS, cerebral palsy foundations, diocesan parish education committees, and numerous other agencies requesting guidance and information. In a long range planning survey conducted by AAVS in 1977, Certification received priority consideration by the twenty percent of the membership queried in the study (Rehnborg, 1977). A concern for uniform job related standards and some assurance that certification would correspond with professional competence, as opposed to educational or experiential attainment, was stressed by the survey respondents.

The recent public attention accorded volunteerism magnifies the need for uniform standards and measures in the field of volunteer services program administration. The attack on direct service volunteerism launched by the National Organization of Women (NOW) focused national attention on volunteer activity. Greater numbers of women returning to the work force and the supposed demise of persons volunteering was the subject on an article in Psychology Today (DeMott, 1977). The citizen tax revolt spearheaded by Howard Jarvis and Proposition 13 in California graphically portrays the public's resistance to finance and support social services. An inflationary economy exacerbates the situation and threatens federal cutbacks in dollars available

for service delivery programs. In each of these situations the need to better administer and more ably direct volunteer services is apparent. Volunteers have been called upon to be more professional and are demanding more challenging assignments (Strauss, 1973). The administrator of volunteer services, often a woman in her middle years who acquired the position from the ranks of being a volunteer, needs sophisticated management and human relations skills to harness and sustain the energy of persons receiving psychic, not monetary, remuneration for the services performed (Gowdey, 1976).

It is in the face of raising demands for volunteer involvement and the diminishing ability of the American public to finance needed service delivery, that the role of the volunteer services administrator gains importance. Corresponding clarity has not accompanied the growing recognition of the field, however. Persons have entered the ranks of volunteer services administration from widely divergent backgrounds (Gowdey, 1976). Agency administrators are unsure of the potential for volunteer utilization and even less clear about the support necessary from the parent agency to insure a quality program. And until more recently, no graduate or undergraduate program of study has been available to train persons for this position. The onus is on the professional association to offer guidance and direction to practitioners as they attempt to address the challenges facing the field. A professional certification program that clearly delineates minimum standards and directs personal

learning necessary to meet minimum standards of performance is one response to this situation.

Proposed Certification Program for  
Administrators of Volunteer Services  
Programs

Central to the development of a certification program is its purpose. Several goals are envisioned. A certification program for administrators of volunteer services programs would delineate and establish minimum standards for professional practice. To be meaningful, such standards would need to offer clearly defined examples of performance and measures by which the practitioner could judge his or her competence in each area. Standards would need to be closely connected with actual job-related functions. In areas where the practitioner found his/her skills to be below acceptable minimum standards, the certification program would need to recommend avenues for continuing professional development. The standards developed in a performance-based certification program could serve as a guide to educational institutions developing programs for the practitioner. Agencies developing volunteer services programs or hiring administrators could employ these standards in the development of job descriptions and they could serve as a guide to hiring practitioners. Standards would provide information on the scope and quality of potential volunteer service delivery. Certification would serve as an assessment tool for the practitioner concerned about providing quality service to

volunteers and the agency served.

Certification should not be contingent upon membership in any given professional association, nor should it dictate levels of prescribed educational attainment. It should restrict itself to job-related skill areas and provide measures for self-assessment and suggest avenues for professional development. Avenues for professional development may include private study, attendance at continuing education programs, professional meetings, consultation with experts or any means appropriate to the attainment of the standards. The certification program should be careful not to make claims for which it cannot demonstrate reasonable proof to substantiate the claim. For example, the certification program should not claim that only certified administrators are competent practitioners or that certification is the equivalent of competence. A thoughtfully developed, performance-based program may suggest that certified administrators have demonstrated certain abilities which are important to well managed volunteer services programs, but these abilities, in and of themselves, do not necessarily guarantee the certified administrator's ability to function equally well in all agencies utilizing volunteer service.

The certification committee/panel/board should be representative of the important constituencies in the field of volunteer services administration. Included on the board should be volunteers; representatives of various professional associations whose members may wish to be certified; repre-

representatives of related professional fields that benefit from or assist administrators such as educators or agency executives; experts in the field; as well as persons who have attained certification. The committee should be responsible for the development of minimum standards taking into account relevant literature in the field. With consultation from experts in performance-based measurement, criteria should be established for measuring the defined competence. The committee should be responsible for publicizing the certification program, for its administration and for reviewing applications for certifications. The committee should award certification to those meeting minimum standards. The committee should also establish criteria for the renewal or validation of certification for the already certified administrator. The committee should institute record keeping procedures that enable the committee to maintain contact with the certificate holder and to monitor any possible discriminatory effects of the program.

The committee should not serve as an arbitrator over disputes arising from situations where an individual does not attain certification. The committee should interpret its actions to persons not awarded certification, but should engage another group of persons to arbitrate and resolve disputes. The committee should delineate a code of ethical conduct for its members. Such a code might recommend that a committee person with supervisory responsibility over an applicant for certification may not review the applicant's

credentials nor pass on his/her certification. Standards for certification review ought to be clearly delineated with examples, made publicly available, and should be adhered to strictly. Standards should be flexible enough to reflect currently acceptable standards of practice and yet maintain a uniform level of difficulty.

Grandparenting should be avoided; however, some allowance should be made to facilitate a smooth transition in standards from an old program to a new program. Persons certified under a defunct system may be given a time period such as ten years to meet new standards and might apply at a reduced cost. The committee should be sensitive to the needs of persons for whom English is a second language, possibly providing bilingual consultation to such an applicant. The committee should also establish guidelines and procedures for the revocation of certification in instances where this may be necessary.

Where certification standards may serve as a guide to curriculum development for educational institutions, the certification committee should not operate as an accrediting body. Accreditation standards should be separately developed and independently administered. Graduation from an accredited educational program should not be sufficient, in and of itself, to qualify for professional certification. A performance-based certification program should demonstrate the performance of the practitioner on a paid or nonpaid job. Should the applicant qualify for certification based upon the

skills acquired through the nonpaid administration of a volunteer services program, no distinction should be made between this person, and the person demonstrating similar skills acquired through paid employment. Such a provision is essential to the integrity of a certification program in volunteer services administration.

The development of the performance-based measurement tool for a certification program in volunteer services administration constitutes the most arduous task confronting the certification committee. Several approaches could be employed to develop the tool. An analysis of existing job descriptions for administrators of volunteer services programs is perhaps the most obvious approach to this task. Because job descriptions are frequently vague, and generally all-inclusive, they would need careful interpretation to determine just what skills are necessary to perform the functions broadly delineated. It would necessitate the identification of tasks most frequently requested of the administrator. This approach, however, assumes that the writers of the job descriptions had knowledge of the full scope of potential volunteer utilization within the given agency. It also assumes that most administrators of volunteer services programs have job descriptions. Neither assumption is warranted, and therein lies the major weakness to this approach.

Another feasible method involves a careful review of the literature in the field and standards that have already been developed. The skill areas most frequently discussed

could form the basis of the performance-based tool. The potential weakness inherent in this approach is that the standards established may be excessively ideal, grandiose and not reflective of the realities of the work place. Likewise a panel of "experts" in the field of volunteer services administration might be consulted in the development of the tool. These persons would delineate the skills necessary for adequate job performance and assist in outlining appropriate measures to judge performance. The same potential shortcomings, as in the literature and standards review approach, exist with this method.

A more costly and time consuming technique would be a job-analysis. A random sample of administrators of volunteer services programs could be identified according to some, predetermined criteria. After selection, a team of persons trained in job analysis would monitor the administration and actual functioning for a period of time and delineate the types of skills needed to perform in the work place. While this approach would present a truer picture of job performance, than that available through the analysis of job descriptions, it does not necessarily suggest the optimal performance measures. A "Hawthorn effect" may also distort findings. The financial and time costs in this approach makes it nearly prohibitive.

The literature/standards review, coupled with an analysis of job descriptions, represents a reasonable approach to the development of a performance-based certifica-

tion tool. The job descriptions would temper the idealized view of the position which often surfaces in literature and standards, while the literature review may expand the skills suggested in the job description. Because the job of administration of volunteer services is not the same across all agencies or types of programs, this joint approach would facilitate the identification of skill areas generic to most positions in the field. Within each functional area, related skills could be identified on a graduated basis from basic to more advanced levels of the skill. A category identified as "Other" would allow the administrator to identify and document skills essential to his/her position in volunteer services administration not itemized in other sections of the performance-based tool. Appendix A represents an abbreviated model of the proposed tool.

Critical to the development of the performance-based certification tool is the assessment methodology employed. Because all positions within volunteer services administration are not identical, allowance would need to be made for individualized responses to the tool. Each functional area would need to be weighted numerically with a predetermined total numerical score identified representing acceptable attainment for certification. Flexibility between functional area categories would allow persons to accumulate a differential number of points in each category. The sum total of the individual scores within each functional area would constitute the final certification score. For example, skills

in financial management are not uniform between positions in the administration of volunteer services programs. Some positions require only the monitoring of expenses within a department, other positions require considerable fund raising and sophisticated accounting acuity. After the documentation of some minimally acceptable knowledge in the area of financial management, neither person should be penalized for his/her respective degree of knowledge in the area. With flexible scoring, the person with considerable skill in financial areas should be allowed to accumulate additional points in this category creditable to the final passing score. The person with less financial acuity may focus his/her attention in other functional skills to accumulate the necessary total score.

The definition of functional skill areas and the documentation of the individual's skills within each area represents another phase of the assessment process. Functional skill areas would need to be carefully delineated and explicated. The certification program proposed is national in scope and would not allow the luxury of consultants assigned to each potential applicant. Consequently the tool would need to be clear and unambiguous for personal application. The documentation of attainment of the skills within each functional area presents the greatest obstacle in tool development. The portfolio approach to documenting prior learning pioneered by the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) offers a solution to this dilemma.

With some specification as to acceptable documentation and length of the portfolio, applicants could assemble documents substantiating skill acquisition. The portfolios would be critically analyzed by a panel of reviewers trained in portfolio evaluation. To insure feasibility of this approach, it would be essential to pilot this instrument on a trial basis.

This approach presents an obvious avenue to the maintenance of certification once the applicant has been certified. Assuming that the skill areas delineated within each functional area were extensive, and assuming that certification was dependent on a balance of skills between areas rather than expertise within any one given area, persons wishing to retain certification would be required, over time, to document areas not submitted in the initial review process. It is unlikely that any administrator would ever attain proficiency in all of the skills within each functional area for two reasons. First because the performance-based tool should be sufficiently detailed and strenuous as to minimize the occurrence of this situation. Second, because the tool should be modified to reflect changes in the field.

This approach to the certification of administrators of volunteer services programs has numerous advantages. It would provide a meaningful measure for the professional growth of the practitioner interested in career development, and professional identification through certification. Vol-

untary continuing education would be encouraged but not mandated according to some arbitrarily established number of hours of participation. The practitioner has the freedom to select the type of learning experience most conducive to his/her learning style. Through the identification and documentation of professional skills, the practitioner would gain a better understanding of his/her professional position. Skills identification would enhance career mobility. The profession of administration of volunteer services programs would also benefit from the certification process. Information would be readily available explicating the position, the scope of potential practice and minimum standards in the field. But most significantly, certification represents an attempt at establishing minimum standards for professional practice that would enhance the management and effective utilization of volunteer resources in addressing social service needs.

The emerging field of administration of volunteer services programs is in a unique position to be a pacesetter in the field of professional credentialing. The experiences of more established professions, and the shortcomings of their credentialing programs, serve as a springboard for newly emerging professional groups concerned about standards of practice. The dearth of educational programs on an undergraduate or graduate degree granting-level, allows volunteer services administrators to establish standards without significant ramifications effecting this powerful and im-

portant constituency. In fact, the establishment of certification standards may focus the direction for the development of sound educational curricula. The establishment of a performance-based measure, focusing on the competencies necessary to enhance the service delivery of volunteers, is a challenging and timely endeavor. As the American economy transfers from the production of goods orientation, to the consumption of services, no more fitting or appropriate professional group could be identified to lead the way, than the voluntary services professionals.



## Appendix A

<u>Functional Areas</u>	<u>Competencies</u>	<u>Methods to Document Competencies</u>
Program Direction:	Skills for:	
	12. Delegating and sharing responsibilities	
	13. Maintaining accountability	
	14. Communication: verbal	
	15. Communication: written	
	16. Other	

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### Marketing Your Product:

This area covers the recruitment of volunteers, brochure development, public speaking and working with the press, radio and TV.

#### Knowledge of:

1. Basic principles of marketing
2. Identification of publics within the agency and in the community
3. Identification of target populations
4. Understanding of the exchange of values with a target population

Appendix A

<u>Functional Areas</u>	<u>Competencies</u>	<u>Methods to Document Competencies</u>
Marketing Your Product:	Knowledge of:	
	5. Writing press releases	
	6. Writing public service announcements	
	7. Identifying appropriate radio or TV stations and the appropriate contact persons at each	
	8. Identifying appropriate community groups for public speaking engagements	
	9. Designing speech to meet the unique concerns of the community group	
	10. Delivery of public speech	
	11. Other	

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Other Functional areas may include:

Personnel Administration: interviewing volunteers, designing job descriptions, placing volunteers, promotion and job development, supervision, retention, recognition, orientation, and pre-and in-service education

## Appendix A

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Other Functional areas may include:

Financial Management: basic accounting and bookkeeping, budget development and monitoring; cost-effectiveness, fundraising and grantsmanship

Office Management and Record Keeping: establishing program procedures, delegation and monitoring of work; records and files; reporting; liability and insurance concerns

Internal and Community Relations: interpreting voluntarism to staff and community persons; working in consortia with other agencies; developing networks and assessing community concerns as they relate to your agency

Human Relations and People Management: understanding group process; running efficient and effective meetings; sensitivity to the needs of others, particularly special groups, i.e., older adults, minorities; working effectively with boards and advisory committees

Voluntary Action: understanding the historical traditions of volunteerism, particularly in relation to your agency; knowledge of legislation and public policy issues; the rights and responsibilities of volunteers; issues related to professionalism; trends

Other: this category may reflect the special concerns of the individual administrator. For example union negotiations; governmental regulations; involving the corporate sector; consultation-skills.

The functional areas identified, the knowledge suggested and the skills listed are meant to be suggestive of a potential performance-based assessment instrument. Considerable work is required for the full development of this tool, particularly in regards to documentation and measurement.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY COMPLETION:

On this survey questionnaire various competencies are listed that may or may not be important to you as a Volunteer Services Program Administrator/Director/Coordinator. Please read each item carefully and rate each item based on its importance to an Administrator/Director/Coordinator of a Volunteer Services Program in a position similar to yours. There are no right or wrong responses; some items may be important while others may not be important. Please rate each item by circling the appropriate number to the right of the item:

- 4 - Of Greatest Importance
- 3 - Very Important
- 2 - Moderately Important
- 1 - Of Little Importance
- 0 - Don't Know
- X - Not Applicable

Example: Performs procedures for governmental fund accounting. 4 3 (2) 1 0 X

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PROFESSIONAL DATA

Please check each item as it applies to you in your current position. Thank you.

1. Your specific job title: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Your present position:

- institutional setting (serve primarily residential clients, ie. hospitals)
- community based setting (serve clients living primarily in the community, ie. Red Cross, YMCA)
- volunteer clearinghouse (volunteer bureau, RSVP etc.)
- university setting
- state level coordinator
- other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Degree of responsibility:

- full responsibility for program, may have paid staff reporting to you.
- coordinating/assisting responsibility (report to director of volunteer program)
- volunteer coordination is one of several responsibilities.

4. Scope of responsibility:

- Number of paid persons reporting to you: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of volunteers in your total program: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of volunteers you directly supervise: \_\_\_\_\_
- Size of budget you administer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Person(s) to whom you report (title and indicate this persons position in the management/organizational hierarchy): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Number of years in present position: \_\_\_ less than 1 yr.; \_\_\_ 1 - 3 yrs.:  
\_\_\_ 4 - 7 yrs.: \_\_\_ 8 - 12 yrs.: \_\_\_ 13 or more years.

Professional Data (con't)

6. Number of years in volunteer services administration beyond your present position:  
\_\_\_\_ less than 1 year; \_\_\_\_ 1 - 3 yrs.; \_\_\_\_ 4 - 7 yrs.; \_\_\_\_ 8 - 12 yrs.;  
\_\_\_\_ 13 or more years.
7. Highest degree held: \_\_\_\_ High school; \_\_\_\_ GED; \_\_\_\_ Associates; \_\_\_\_ Bachelors;  
\_\_\_\_ Masters; \_\_\_\_ Doctoral; \_\_\_\_ Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_  
Major area of academic concentration:\_\_\_\_\_
8. Sex: \_\_\_\_ female; \_\_\_\_ male.
9. Age: \_\_\_\_ 20 - 27; \_\_\_\_ 28 - 35; \_\_\_\_ 36 - 42; \_\_\_\_ 43- 50; \_\_\_\_ 51 - 60; \_\_\_\_ over 60.
10. Are you currently Certified with AAVS? \_\_\_\_ yes; \_\_\_\_ no.
11. Professional development activities you have engaged in pertaining to volunteer services administration:  
\_\_\_\_ Continuing education courses/seminars  
\_\_\_\_ Local volunteer coordinator meetings (ie. DOVIAetc.)  
\_\_\_\_ State/regional professional meetings/conferences  
\_\_\_\_ National professional meetings/conferences  
\_\_\_\_ Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_