

Appendix B: Guidelines for Psychological Consultants

B.1 Qualifications

A psychological consultant must:

1. be registered as an approved psychological consultant with the director for candidacy,
2. conduct a psychological evaluation consistent with the theological purposes and goals of the ELCA candidacy process,
3. be sensitive to issues of race, language, gender, age, and ethnicity and use appropriate tools for evaluation,
4. provide the Candidacy Committee with recommendations regarding an applicant's current psychological/emotional state and specific issues for further attention or conversation,
5. provide an applicant with an assessment of personal strengths and areas for growth, including a candid evaluation of psychological/emotional health, and
6. at a minimum use the assessment instruments recommended by the ELCA Domestic Mission unit.

B.2 The Interview and Assessment

A psychological consultant conducts a comprehensive assessment with an applicant, including testing instruments and a personal interview. The evaluation shall be conducted in keeping with accepted standards for psychological evaluations.

Every assessment should evaluate an applicant's ego strength, self-awareness, self-concept, physical health, family health history, relational systems issues, interpersonal skills, personal and professional priorities/values, emotional intelligence, psychological health, personal qualities (including potential for leadership), as well as any perceived deficiencies that might disqualify or impede a person from beginning candidacy. Clinicians are invited to recommend other psychological and/or vocational instruments that may be especially appropriate for the ELCA candidacy process. They may also use additional assessment tools requested by a Candidacy Committee.

At a minimum, psychological consultants will use the following instruments:

1. Personality instruments
 - a. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2 or the MMPI-2-RF)
 - b. Another personality assessment of the consultant's choice, such as the California Personality Inventory (revised) Meyer-Salovy Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), The Sixteen Personality Factor, Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI), Profiles of Ministry, or any other valid and commonly used instrument
2. Vocational inventories, such as the Strong Campbell Vocational Interest Inventory (or another valid inventory)
3. IQ and cognitive functioning assessments, such as the Shipley-Hartford Institute of Living Scale, Concept Mastery Test (Terman), or Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale- Revised (should be administered only if a psychological consultant doubts an applicant's intellectual capacity for graduate-level work)
4. Culturally sensitive and/or alternative language instruments and professional resources as appropriate, (e.g., the Spanish language version of the MBTI and/or consultation with a culturally sensitive psychologist).

Note: Where major language or cultural barriers exist, the Candidacy Committee may contact the Domestic Mission unit for further guidance and assistance.

Because a psychological evaluation is critically important for both an applicant and the Candidacy Committee, an applicant should not be rushed during the testing and interview process. As noted earlier, it is especially important that a psychological consultant explain fully the evaluation results that will be summarized in a written report, especially any areas for further growth or development.

After sharing the results of an evaluation with an applicant, a psychological consultant provides a written summary and secures an informed written release of information for both the Candidacy Committee and the ELCA seminary where the applicant has applied for admission. The report will then be sent to the Candidacy Committee for use in the entrance decision and to the ELCA seminary named on the release of information form. The report becomes part of the confidential candidacy files maintained by the seminary and by the Candidacy Committee. An additional written release of information from an applicant should be obtained before the report can be shared beyond the Candidacy Committee and the seminary of admission.

A psychological consultant may make recommendations for counseling, treatment, or other services. Such recommendations should be thoroughly and sensitively discussed with an applicant during the evaluation feedback session. The Candidacy Committee has the responsibility to decide whether the recommended counseling/therapy should be completed prior to granting entrance. If a Candidacy Committee recommends counseling/therapy, it should not be with the consultant who provided the evaluation.

B.3 Reporting to A Candidacy Committee

In the summary report the psychological consultant provides the following information:

1. personal identity/level of self-awareness and self-concept
2. quality of past and present family relationships
3. sense of vision or imaginative ability
4. intellectual capacity
5. integrity
6. emotional maturity and coping ability/durability
7. motivation for religious service
8. empathy and affective expression
9. interpersonal relationship skills
10. any history of misconduct related to employment
11. any history of deviant and pathological maladaptation
12. any history of medical and psychiatric illness
13. any history of substance abuse or addictions
14. flexibility
15. leadership style
16. assets and liabilities relating to leadership roles in the ELCA, as described in the documents of this church provided to the psychological consultant
17. personal and professional values/priorities.