

Continuing Education Comments for NC MBTB

Thank you for seeking input from Structural Integrators for your discussions. The FSMTB's mission to "annex" all hands-on manual therapies as massage therapy and to regulate them as such has an impact on appropriate continuing education for all practitioners and their clients.

Basic training and certification precede continuing education. This provides the foundation for the practitioner's career path. The largest profession licensed under the NC MBTB are massage therapists. Our state also licenses practitioners in other disciplines with a Practice Act titled to reflect the diversity of manual therapies covered under the license. I state the obvious because it seems it is not so obvious.

Once a practitioner is licensed and is on their way to develop their business, build their professional skills and offer services to their communities they are expected to have basic skills in their field. Individual practitioners, their clients and their professional community are best served when the practitioner has opportunities to learn from experienced, well informed teachers *in their chosen profession*.

In my years of observing the NC Massage and Bodywork Therapy Licensing Board's public meetings and during two meetings with the Policy Committee, I've been surprised and saddened to witness the dismissive attitude toward the non-massage professions. The training required to become a practitioner as a structural integrator is longer than massage training. Following the time and investment made by the student, they are eager to get their NC MBT license. Unfortunately this becomes a prolonged process when they find their state expects them to test for a profession they didn't study and will not practice in order to get their license. This delays the applicant's time to begin practice by many months. Why not approve the SI Certification exam for SI trained applicants? To require an applicant to "pretend" to be something they are is inauthentic and misrepresents the practitioner. It does not protect the public.

The ethical integrity of an organization deciding to craft regulation policies covering diverse professions, schools and practitioners as if

they are all the same is clearly called into question. It is important to mention this since the NC Licensing Board is in a position of having to consider the potential conflict of interest between the NC Board's mission and the FSMTB's agenda.

Once the new therapist/practitioner is ready to develop their skills beyond entry level they should be allowed to follow their own professional path. How else does one grow their passion for their career? A practitioner will know their strengths and weaknesses as they work in the field. Continuing education options should be varied to allow them to develop as they are inclined.

Structural integration continuing education teachers (or any other CE teacher) should be determined competent to teach by their professional agencies. Who else can better determine their competency and course material?

Once a licensed therapist has been in practice for 10 (or 15) years and has taken 500 or more continuing education credits and maintained an ethical practice without incidents of reports to the Licensing Board, they should be allowed to accrue fewer hours or have a longer renewal cycle.

During my years of reporting many more hours of continuing education than the required numbers of the renewal cycle, I wished I could have put extra hours in the CE "Bank" for future withdrawal. I reported the hours with my license renewals because I earned them. When a therapist has worked in their field long enough, they find they know more about how to be successful in their work than the less experienced teachers. At a time a senior practitioner is reducing their client load the expense of more courses becomes a financial hardship.

With today's commuter systems assistance, "banking" additional CE's becomes possible. Please consider this change. The incentive for additional CE credits will have benefits to licensees and their clients. I have read Nancy Toner Weinberger's thoughtful document with excellent suggestions for the committee's consideration. Nancy's experience and commitment to improving the massage therapy and

bodywork therapy professions provides a sound basis for her recommendations. I endorse Nancy's suggestions.

Respectfully submitted on June 26,2014,

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