

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 25, 1999

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 28, 1999

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 6, 1999

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 253**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Thomson**

February 1, 1999

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An act to amend Section 4980.41 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to licensing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 253, as amended, Thomson. Licensing.

Under existing law, all applicants for licensure as a marriage, family, and child counselor who are pursuing a master's or doctor's degree are required to complete certain coursework as part of their graduate studies, with specified exceptions.

This bill would require an applicant ~~pursuing a qualifying master's or doctor's degree~~, after January 1, 2001, to ~~include~~ *complete* coursework in psychological testing and psychopharmacology, as specified. The bill would also provide that these provisions in no way expand or restrict the scope of licensure of a marriage and family therapist.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 4980.41 of the Business and  
2 Professions Code is amended to read:

3 4980.41. All applicants for licensure shall complete the  
4 following coursework or training in order to be eligible to  
5 sit for the licensing examinations:

6 (a) A two semester or three quarter unit course in  
7 California law and professional ethics for marriage,  
8 family, and child counselors, which shall include, but not  
9 be limited to, the following areas of study:

10 (1) Contemporary professional ethics and statutory,  
11 regulatory, and decisional laws that delineate the  
12 profession’s scope of practice.

13 (2) The therapeutic, clinical, and practical  
14 considerations involved in the legal and ethical practice  
15 of marriage, family, and child counseling, including  
16 family law.

17 (3) The current legal patterns and trends in the  
18 mental health profession.

19 (4) The psychotherapist/patient privilege,  
20 confidentiality, the patient dangerous to self or others,  
21 and the treatment of minors with and without parental  
22 consent.

23 (5) A recognition and exploration of the relationship  
24 between a practitioner’s sense of self and human values  
25 and his or her professional behavior and ethics.

26 This course may be considered as part of the 48  
27 semester or 72 quarter unit requirements contained in  
28 Section 4980.40.

29 (b) A minimum of seven contact hours of training or  
30 coursework in child abuse assessment and reporting as  
31 specified in Section 28 or any regulations promulgated  
32 thereunder.

33 (c) A minimum of 10 contact hours of training or  
34 coursework in human sexuality as specified in Section 25,  
35 and any regulations promulgated thereunder. When  
36 coursework in a master’s or doctor’s degree program is  
37 acquired to satisfy this requirement, it shall be considered



1 as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement  
2 contained in Section 4980.40.

3 (d) Except for persons who began graduate study  
4 prior to January 1, 1986, a master's or doctor's degree  
5 qualifying for licensure shall include specific instruction  
6 in alcoholism and other chemical substance dependency  
7 as specified by regulation. When coursework in a master's  
8 or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy this  
9 requirement, it shall be considered as part of the 48  
10 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement contained in  
11 Section 4980.40.

12 (e) Except for persons who began graduate study  
13 prior to January 1, 1995, a master's or doctor's degree  
14 qualifying for licensure shall include coursework in  
15 spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and  
16 intervention. Coursework required under this  
17 subdivision may be satisfactory if taken either in  
18 fulfillment of other educational requirements for  
19 licensure or in a separate course. The requirement for  
20 coursework in spousal or partner abuse detection and  
21 treatment shall be satisfied by, and the board shall accept  
22 in satisfaction of the requirement, a certification from the  
23 chief academic officer of the educational institution from  
24 which the applicant graduated that the required  
25 coursework is included within the institution's required  
26 curriculum for graduation.

27 (f) Except for persons who began graduate study prior  
28 to January 1, 2001, ~~a master's or doctor's degree qualifying~~  
29 ~~for licensure shall include~~ *an applicant shall complete* a  
30 minimum of a two semester or three quarter unit survey  
31 course in psychological testing. *When coursework in a*  
32 *master's or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy*  
33 *this requirement, it may be considered as part of the 48*  
34 *semester or 72 quarter unit requirement of Section*  
35 *4980.40.*

36 (g) Except for persons who began graduate study  
37 prior to January 1, 2001, ~~a master's or doctor's degree~~  
38 ~~qualifying for licensure shall include~~ *an applicant shall*  
39 *complete* a minimum of a two semester or three quarter  
40 unit survey course in psychopharmacology. *When*



1 *coursework in a master's or doctor's degree program is*  
2 *acquired to satisfy this requirement, it may be considered*  
3 *as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement*  
4 *of Section 4980.40.*

5 (h) The requirements added by subdivisions (f) and  
6 (g) are intended to improve the educational  
7 qualifications for licensure in order to better prepare  
8 future licentiates for practice, and are not intended in any  
9 way to expand or restrict the scope of licensure for  
10 marriage and family therapists.

