



The International Association of Forensic Criminologists (IAFC)

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Re: Professional Certification and Revocation

In June of 2013, the IAFC passed the Criminal Profiler Professional Certification Act (CPPCA). It is the first and only independent certification available in the discipline of criminal profiling. It took us 14 years to develop the published scientific literature, and a viable program, before we could claim a consensus with respect to methodological soundness and a verifiable track record of competence. This is what must support such an effort.

The CPPCA is governed from within the IAFC by the Academy of Behavioral Profiling Board of Directors. There is an education requirement, a training requirement, an examination requirement, and an experience requirement. This ensures that certification is earned, not given away freely, or awarded for simply attending a course. Precluding any one of these requirements renders any related certification process meaningless.

As with all valid professional certifications, it can and will be revoked when there is evidence of professional misconduct. Certification is only revoked when there is a clear violation of the IAFC Code of Ethics. This action is not taken lightly, and would be expected when violations are repeated after a warning. Clearly, egregious (e.g., criminal) behavior would result in immediate revocation of certification.

The purpose of professional certification is to enhance the general standing of a field or profession and provide evidence to others of the professional expertise of the bearer. Members are required to adhere to a real code of ethics, and avoid negligence. Consequently, fraudulent or even criminal individuals will be identified. This means the process is working, and the profession is being protected. It is important to bear in mind that joining the IAFC is voluntary, and ALL members sign a pledge to behave ethically.

Having said this, the IAFC remains strong in its commitment to professionalize forensic criminology in Latin America and other regions around the world. We would therefore offer the following advice to those seeking instruction in criminal profiling - whatever the source. Ask of any professional organization, or instructor, whether or not they have ever:

1. Been forced to resign, or terminated, from government employment?
2. Been stripped of credentials (e.g., degrees, membership, certification)?
3. Received a degree from an accredited educational institution?
4. Been published on a relevant subject in a peer reviewed format?
5. Falsified their resume (e.g., education, training, experience, or affiliations)?
6. Actually written a criminal profile?
7. Worked real cases, or testified in court as an expert?

Sadly, we have found that many presenting themselves as teachers in forensic areas related to criminology fail on multiple points. We believe the profession must do better, and we will continue to work in that direction.

We hope our colleagues find this helpful.