

**THE AMERICAN BALINT SOCIETY**  
**Principles, Requirements and**  
**Guidelines for hosting the**  
**BALINT LEADERSHIP TRAINING INTENSIVE**  
Approved by ABS Council, January 11, 2010

INTRODUCTION

- Since 1993, the American Balint Society (ABS) has conducted Balint Leadership Training Intensives (“Balint Intensives”). The Balint Intensive provides an opportunity for Balint seminar leaders to convene and support each other's work, as well as a venue in which new and experienced leaders may learn and enhance leadership skills. The effective organization of these workshops is central to the ongoing life of the American Balint Society (ABS) and to the improved, consistent quality of Balint seminars, wherever they are convened.
- Balint Intensives are held at hosting institutions, in a collaborative arrangement with the American Balint Society. To ensure the continued quality of Intensives, the ABS has created this document of principles, requirements and guidelines.
- Since 2000, Balint Intensives have also been the venue for an important step for individuals pursuing credentialing by the ABS as a Balint group leader. In a “Credentialing Intensive,” a candidate is evaluated by faculty and peers on leadership strengths and abilities. For additional requirements and guidelines for Credentialing Intensives, please refer to the ABS document, “Organization & Procedures of Credentialing Intensives” (3/18/03), by Alan Johnson and Laurel Milberg.

PRINCIPLES:

1. To make Balint Intensives as accessible as possible, the ABS hosts two Intensives a year, in different parts of the United States.
2. Although Balint work in this country is traditionally associated with Family Medicine residency programs, ABS Intensives are open to all clinicians, medical and psychotherapeutic, as well as other professionals such as clergy and attorneys who have professional relationships with clients, who are planning to lead Balint groups or who are already doing so.
3. Most of the learning at an Intensive takes place in small Balint group seminars and the debriefing led by the faculty. These individual groups have fixed memberships throughout the course of the Intensive, and meet several times each day. This promotes learning and supports individual risk taking.
4. The Intensive also includes some large-group sessions. Large-group meals and social times provide bonding and networking opportunities. Providing one or two large-group meals a day helps to build a sense of community. However, some meals taken separately during free time allow participants to get away from the intense learning environment and explore regional points of interest.

REQUIREMENTS: To conduct a Balint Leadership Training Intensive under the auspices and

good name of the American Balint Society, the following elements are required:

1. Procedural

- a. When first desiring to host a Balint Intensive, the potential host will contact the Coordinator of Intensives of the American Balint Society to discuss the date and location of the Intensive. Ideally, this contact should be at least one year in advance of the proposed Intensive. The Coordinator of Intensives will supply the host with this document and an Intensive Practical Guide (planning templates, sample budgets, timelines, etc.).
  - i. Relative roles:
    - a) Coordinator of Intensives – person designated by the American Balint Society to ensure that intensives meet the principles and requirements of an Intensive; protects the fiscal and liability interests of the ABS and provides technical assistance to the host.
    - b) Host – person who designs and executes a learning experience that is in keeping with the goals and objectives of the American Balint Society, and is responsible to ensure a successful intensive training experience.
- b. The Coordinator of Intensives will also help the potential host determine the best weekend for the proposed Intensive, to avoid conflict with other events competing for the same audience. As the ABS is a national and multi-disciplinary organization, there are multiple organizational schedules to be coordinated.
- c. With guidance from the Coordinator of Intensives, the host will prepare a proposal for the Intensive, which the Coordinator of Intensives will present to the American Balint Society Council. At minimum, that proposal must include: specific dates and location, a general description of program schedule and content, identification of the host and whether other institutions are involved and to what extent, and a proposed budget on the required template. Other documents may be requested by the Coordinator of Intensives or by the ABS Council.
- d. Once the ABS Council has approved the proposal, the Intensive will be posted on the American Balint Society web page and may be advertised on Balint-L. Approval implies the consent of the Society to use its name to advertise the Intensive. The Society will also supply an updated mailing list for publicity purposes.
- e. A detailed presentation of both the brochure and the Intensive program must be sent to the Coordinator of Intensives no later than six months before the event. The Coordinator of Intensives must approve the final brochure before it goes to press.
- f. It is the responsibility of the hosting organization to arrange and provide Continuing Education credit for the Balint Intensive.
- g. Video review is an excellent method for teaching, discussing and critiquing leadership interventions. For this reason, small-group video review is an expected component of the Intensive.
- h. Following the Intensive, the host must supply to the Coordinator of Intensives a final financial accounting of the Intensive, a copy of the syllabus, the final registration list, a list of participants in each small group, evaluations of the

faculty and a summary of the participants' evaluations forms for the ABS records. A final accounting should also be sent to the President and the Treasurer of the American Balint Society.

## 2. Financial

- a. Costs to registrants should be as consistent as possible among Intensives, although they may be increased slightly over time to allow for inflation. There should be a financial incentive for more than one registrant from the same program. Students, residents and fellows should also receive a tuition discount. Registrants must join the ABS at the current membership rate, if they are not already members. New membership dues paid in the spring will apply to the current year. New members who join for the Fall Intensive will be allowed to apply their dues to the following year. The Intensive host should verify membership status of all registrants with the ABS secretary.
- b. After the proposal is approved by the ABS Council, the Intensive host may apply to the ABS for a no-interest loan of "seed money," to finance advance publicity and other upfront costs. The maximum amount for this loan will be \$1500. Upon completion of the Intensive, the seed money will be repaid to the American Balint Society. Should the Intensive be held but run at a loss, repayment of the seed money to the ABS should be considered a payable debt by the hosting institution, as all other debts would be. Should there be an insufficient number of registrants to hold the Intensive, the Society may assume the loss up to but not exceeding the amount of the seed money provided, by forgiving this loan.
- c. Upon completion of a financially successful Intensive, at least 50% of the profit (income in excess of expenses) of the Intensive will be returned to the American Balint Society, to support the Society's ongoing work. This is in addition to repayment of the seed money.
- d. Special provisions may apply in situations where a third party (neither the hosting organization nor the ABS) plans and/or manages the Intensive. The host will not make any contracts or agreements of this nature without approval by the American Balint Society Council.
- e. The host should consult with the Coordinator of Intensives before making a decision to cancel or postpone an intensive.

## 3. Publicity

- a. The intensive publicity should include a save the date card, a web announcement and a brochure which shall be posted on the ABS website and available for mailing or emailing to the ABS listserv, mailing list, residency programs and others. A link to the website should be sent to all of the above lists.
  - i. The brochure will include specific wording, which can be found in the attachment to the Practical Guide.

## 4. Faculty

- a. Intensive faculty will include two ABS-credentialed Balint group leaders for each ongoing small group. There may be additional faculty at a Credentialing Intensive, for evaluation purposes. The Coordinator of Intensives must approve all

- faculty per guidelines and also is available to assist the host in selecting them.
- b. The following factors will be considered as the host and Coordinator make their decisions:
    - i. All faculty members must be credentialed Balint group leaders.
    - ii. Some faculty should represent the region in which the Intensive is held, and some should represent greater geographic diversity. (The ABS Council has approved up to \$1000 guarantee to help hosts provide a geographic diverse faculty.)
    - iii. Some faculty may be selected to allow credentialed Balint group leaders to complete some of the requirements toward approval as a Balint leadership supervisor.
    - iv. Attention should be given to creating gender balance and a professional balance of physicians and behavioral scientists.
    - v. Attention should also be given to integrating new leaders into the faculty, along with those who have more experience.
    - vi. Any faculty member who is selected to serve as an examiner of credentialing candidates will have supervisory status in the American Balint Society and will be approved by the Credentialing Coordinating Committee.
    - vii. Host will notify the ABS of the amount of reimbursement for the credentialing evaluator to be in parity with the other faculty reimbursement.

**GUIDELINES:** The following recommendations by the ABS are meant to serve as guidelines to hosting organizations.

1. General

- a. Three to four days for a Balint Intensive seems optimal, spanning a weekend to reduce airfares.
- b. Early advertising of an Intensive has been demonstrated to be crucial.
  - i. Save-the-date postcards or emails are recommended. Ideally they will be sent five to six months before the event.
  - ii. Brochures, printed or electronic, or links to the brochures and registration materials on the ABS website, should be sent or posted no less than four months before the Intensive.
  - iii. Advertising reminders on Balint-L may continue throughout this period.
- c. Publicity should include a registration cut off date, to allow the host to determine whether or not the Intensive will take place, and to free themselves from hotel and other financial commitments if the Intensive must be cancelled.
- d. An early registration date with a price discount is advisable.

2. Faculty

- a. Intensive faculty are not charged registration fees, nor do they receive honoraria. Room and board are provided, as well as at least part of their transportation costs.
- b. Each small-group faculty pair is encouraged to maintain some connection with members of their group after the Intensive.

*This revised document was approved by the Council of the American Balint Society on January 11, 2010, replacing the original version that was approved on January 10, 2005. It is founded on and replaces the “Structure of a Balint Leaders’ Intensive,” originally prepared for the American Balint Society by Alan H. Johnson PhD, et al., on November 22, 1996 and revised on 12/17/96, 4/25/97, 4/21/98, 1/12/01, 1/10/05, 6/12/06, and 12/11/06.*