Dear Colleagues...

“Competency to stand trial” is a legal expression referring to a defendant’s capacity to both comprehend as well as participate in criminal procedures related to the planning and execution of his or her defense. The current standard for competency to stand trial in the United States was determined in *Dusky v. United States* (1960), in which it was held: “It is not enough for the district judge to find the defendant oriented to time and place and some recollection of events, but that the test must be whether he has sufficient present ability to consult with his lawyer with a reasonable degree of rational understanding – and whether he has a rational as well as factual understanding of the proceedings against him.” *Drope v. Missouri* (1975) further established that a defendant must also be able to “assist in preparing his defense.” Ensuring an individual’s competence to stand trial is paramount to ensuring that individuals who do not comprehend the reasons behind a potential sanction or are unable to participate in their own defense are not penalized.

Despite the importance of staying up-to-date on the research literature concerning the evaluation of competency, this is a time-intensive endeavor, with such studies having been published in over 120 academic journals between 2000-2015. To aid practitioners, researchers, and policymakers in addressing this problem, we here at the Global Institute of Forensic Research (GIFR) have developed this comprehensive bibliography of all articles on the evaluation of competency published in 2014. It is our hope that by providing you with this resource that you will be able to use evidence-based practices to improve client outcomes, a hallmark of all GIFR’s products and services.

Kind Regards,

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Caitlin Kazmerski, MA is a fourth year PsyD student at the Florida School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University (FSPP). She received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Central Florida in 2007, her Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling from Rollins College in 2011, and her Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology from FSPP in 2014. Ms. Kazmerski’s primary areas of interest include evaluations for competency, violence risk, criminal responsibility, and malingering for offenders in and out of custody. Her clinical experience includes work with substance abuse and mentally ill offenders receiving court-mandated services, as well as clients housed in psychiatric hospitals and long-term residential treatment programs. Her enthusiasm for enhancing the lives of those involved in the criminal justice system and members of the community has resulted in her presenting her research at numerous national, state, and local conferences.
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