

# Psychology Department

## Undergraduate Program

Program Review  
2002 - 2003 Academic year

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## Executive Summary

The undergraduate major in psychology is part of the Psychology Department that offers a Masters degree in counseling and an APA accredited Psy. D. Degree in Clinical-Community Psychology. One-third to one-half of the courses are taught by part-time faculty. The current major includes 50-51 units, with a pending proposal to change it to 55 units. The number of majors among the on-campus traditional undergraduates has remained relatively stable around 110, but the number of adult students has declined noticeably. About half the majors are first generation college students and their ethnic diversity reflects the larger traditional age undergraduate student body. Majors in Psychology receive academic advising from full-time faculty. The average class size is around 17.

The learning outcomes for psychology majors include knowledge and skills in theory, research and application, awareness of diversity issues, augmented by good advisement, and career preparation.

The assessment procedures included a senior exit survey, alumni survey, grade distributions, focus groups, faculty interviews, course evaluations, analysis of syllabi, and curriculum comparisons with other colleges. The findings suggest the following:

1. Majors seem to acquire a fairly good foundation in the theories and principles of psychology, but there is no performance measure in place to specifically test areas of strengths and weaknesses.
2. Majors report satisfaction with acquiring skills for consuming scientific information, and applying the scientific method to the study of human behavior.
3. There appears to be a need to rethink the sequencing of research related courses among the faculty and the students.
4. Students and faculty seem to have mixed feelings about the nature, content and process of the internship course.
5. Seniors and alumni value their preparation and learning about diversity issues, but more courses in the major need to explicitly cover diversity issues.
6. Majors appear to be satisfied with their academic advisement and faculty, and large numbers appear to be going to graduate school. However, more attention to career planning is needed.
7. Transfer students needs don't seem to be met adequately in terms of transition and advisement.

Recommendations for action include:

1. Develop performance indicators of learning outcomes for outgoing seniors in the areas of theory, research and practice.
2. Modify the internship experience to better meet the needs of psychology majors.
3. Rethink the research sequence.
4. Incorporate diversity in more psychology courses.
5. Provide more direct and better academic and career advisement to traditional and non-traditional age students.
6. Revise course outlines to reflect the current syllabi and course objectives.

## I. Program Mission

The mission of the psychology program is to prepare undergraduate students for their academic, professional, and personal futures by providing them with a well-balanced undergraduate education in psychology covering theory, research and practice.

## II. Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

Psychology majors will

- a. Acquire a foundation in the principles and theories of psychology
- b. Demonstrate basic skills in consuming scientific information,
- c. Applying the scientific method in the study of human behavior
- d. Obtain practical experience at an internship setting
- e. Develop awareness of diversity issues in the field of psychology
- f. Receive good program and career related advising
- g. Obtain employment in related fields and attend graduate school

## III. Program Description

### A. Organization

The undergraduate program is in the Department of Psychology and offers a Bachelor's of Science degree in psychology. There are two other programs in the Department: a) Master's program in Counseling with over 100 active students with specializations in Marriage Family Therapy, Higher Education Counseling, or General Counseling; and b) Doctor of Psychology degree in Clinical-Community psychology with over 50 active students. Each program has a program chair who reports to the Department Chair. The Department is part of the Behavioral Sciences Division but functions autonomously, and the Department chair reports directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Psychology major is offered at two off campus centers: Athens, Greece, and at Point Magu, Ventura. These centers are not included in the current review process. However, the current review process includes the majors in the Campus Accelerated Program for Adults (CAPA) as an integral part of the on campus traditional undergraduate program.

## B. Faculty

The Department of Psychology has 10 full-time faculty, the majority of whom teach in more than one program. During the 2002-2003 academic year, of the 59 courses (all levels) taught in the Department by full-time faculty, 24 (41%) were at the undergraduate level. Eight out of ten faculty taught at the undergraduate level (See appendix A). Also, four of the full-time faculty are assigned to serve as the undergraduate home program faculty, regardless of programs in which they teach. This group meets to conduct the business of the undergraduate program.

The Program relies on a number of adjunct faculty to cover its offerings. During the 2002 - 2003 academic year 14 adjunct faculty taught 23 (46%) of the total of 50 classes offered by the Department, including cross listed classes. Of the 35 non-cross listed classes, 6 adjunct faculty taught 11 (31%) classes. In the College of Arts and Sciences, overall about one-third of the classes are offered by adjunct faculty. It should be noted that only 6 of the 14 adjunct faculty have been teaching for the program more than three years. Their commitment continues to be welcomed (See Appendix D for names of course instructors).

## C. Courses

A major in psychology comprises of 50-51 semester units in the department including the completion of an empirical senior project and one semester of internship (See Appendix B for courses).

The Undergraduate Program faculty has proposed a 55 unit Psychology major (Appendix B) that increases the number of units of the following courses from 3 to 4 in response to an institution-wide call to consider offering more 4 unit courses:

312: Abnormal Psychology  
 315: Psychological Testing  
 327: Health Psychology  
 375: Community Psychology  
 400: History of Psychology  
 405: Brain and Behavior  
 407: Life-span development

This proposal will be considered for inclusion in the 2004 - 2005 ULV catalog by the whole Department in the Fall of 2003.

The analysis of the **syllabi** and course outlines (Appendix K) indicates that there is a need to upgrade the course outlines to better reflect the current status of the field and what are being covered in the classes. The courses in the major appear to be doing an adequate job of covering theories and concepts, research methods and real-world applications of psychology. In the basic competency area, the courses are also doing an adequate job of promoting skills in critical thinking, and writing. Areas that could be improved include coverage of ethical issues,

promotion of personal growth, information literacy, making presentations and multicultural issues.

#### D. Majors

Table 1 summarizes the trends of psychology majors over the past four years for all campuses. Appendix C presents information of all majors in the College of Arts and Sciences. Inspection of Appendix C shows that psychology

Table 1

*Enrollment and graduation trends in the psychology major* (Source: ULV fact book).

	Years							
	98-99		99-00		00-01		01-02	
	n	% of A & S	n	% of A & S	n	% of A & S	n	% of A & S
Majors	201	5.6	265	5.9	260	5.8	206	5.4
Degrees Conferred	59	7.1	62	7.0	65	7.3	75	8.1
New Traditional age Fresh	21	6.2	26	8.4	31	9.7	35	11.0

is the single largest major in the College of Arts and Sciences, produces the highest numbers of graduating seniors, and brings in the highest number of new first time freshmen. The next most popular majors include Criminology (3.2%), Movement and Sports Science (2.1%), and computer science (2.0%). Since the focus of this program review is the main campus, program enrollment trends are identified for the main campus students, including the traditional and CAPA programs, in Table 2. The trends show fairly steady number of majors and graduations except in 00-01 and 01-02, where the number of CAPA majors show a noticeable drop from the previous years.

Table 2.  
*Enrollment and graduation trends in the psychology major from the main campus only*  
 (Source: Enrollment Management).

	Years			
	98-99 n	99-00 n	00-01 n	01-02 n
<b>Traditional Age</b>				
Majors (Fall)	108	107	109	118
Degrees Conferred	22	21	19	26
<b>New Majors (Fall)</b>				
First Time Fresh	20	22	27	25
Transfer Fresh	11	8	7	9
<b>CAPA</b>				
Majors (Fall)	60	77	66	54
Degrees Conferred	20	12	14	34
New Majors (Fall)	14	18	5	14
<b>Combined Main Campus</b>				
Majors (Fall)	168	184	175	172
Degrees Conferred	42	33	33	60
New Majors (Fall)	45	48	39	48

When seniors were asked about when they decided to major in psychology in the senior exit survey (Appendix F), 53% said they decided before starting college, and 30% said they decided to major in psychology after taking several courses.

The **alumni survey** showed that over 50% identified themselves as first generation college students. The **senior exit** survey showed that 77% of the respondents were women, 31% identified themselves as European American, 24% Latino American, 10% African American, 7% Asian American, 10% of mixed ethnicity. No specific breakdown of all psychology majors is available at the time of this report. However, these percentages are not too far off from ULV's overall profile of its undergraduate program.

### E. Course Enrollments

Psychology courses listed in Appendix B are offered at least once each academic year. Some courses are offered every semester, several of which have multiple sections, such as, Introductory Psychology, Statistics, Data Analysis, Research Methods, Internship, and Senior Project. Several of the core courses are cross-

listed as Behavioral Science courses, and could include students from Sociology, Criminology and Anthropology.

Appendix D shows the 2002 - 2003 schedule of classes for Fall, January and Spring semesters with faculty and enrollments for each. Classes cross-listed with BHV, SOC or ANTH are identified with asterisks. The mean enrollment across all 50 classes is 17.2 (Range: 3 - 29). For Non-cross-listed classes (n = 35) the mean enrollment is 17.1 (Range: 3 - 29). For cross-listed classes only (n = 15) the mean enrollment is 17.5 (Range: 6 - 27). Of all the 50 classes 11 (22%) of the classes have enrollments of less than 10. Of all the 35 non-cross-listed classes 6 (17%) of the classes have enrollments of less than 10. According to 2000 - 2001 estimates of the Executive Vice Presidents office, the enrollment in a class should reach 14 to meet both direct and indirect costs for 4 semester unit courses.

#### F. Advising

Only full-time faculty advise traditional age undergraduate students. According to the Student Advisement Office during the 2002 - 2003 academic year, 8 faculty members, including one department associate, had students assigned to them for advisement. Appendix E shows the faculty advisors and their advisees. The number of advisees assigned to faculty range from 2 - 22. By virtue of the advisement process in the College of Arts and Sciences, there are psychology majors who are not advised by psychology faculty: Their number totaled 18 for the 2002-2003 academic year. Therefore, the advisee list does not represent the total number of majors in the program.

## **IV. Assessment Procedures**

The following procedures were used to assess learning outcomes.

#### A. Senior Exit survey

The opinions of 30 psychology majors were surveyed from the last two years while they were enrolled in Senior Project classes. Appendix F shows a copy of the survey. It covers areas of satisfaction with various aspects of the program including theory courses, internship and senior project, self-report learning outcomes, advising, course offerings, and future plans. Recommendations for program improvement were also requested.

#### B. Grade Distributions

Grade distributions of courses during the 2002 - 2003 academic year were examined (See Appendix G). The frequency and percentage of grades were aggregated across multiple section or offerings of the course during the year.



### C. Alumni Survey

Alumni who graduated from ULV with a major in Psychology in the last five years were surveyed on-line. About 381 graduates were contacted by mail and asked to respond to the alumni on-line survey. Appendix H shows a copy of the ULV on-line alumni survey, as well as the portion specifically prepared for psychology majors. The survey asked students to assess what they learned while at ULV, how well they compared with their peers in terms of what they had learned, employment history, and future plans.

### D. Focus Groups

Two focus groups were conducted composed of traditional age and CAPA students. Appendix I shows the questions used to facilitate the groups and summary of the responses. They generally deal with identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Psychology Program.

### E. Faculty input on research sequence

Faculty who taught the courses in the research sequence, composed of statistics, data analysis, research methods, and senior projects, were interviewed to identify strengths and weaknesses, and generate ideas for program improvement.

### F. Student input on the internship class

Student input was obtained by doing a content analysis of student comments on course evaluations. Also, a face-to-face discussion was conducted with students in an internship class in the absence of the instructor.

### G. Curriculum comparison

The curriculum of the psychology major was compared with three private and two public universities in the area. Appendix J shows the comparison schools and their course offerings.

### G. Syllabus review

Recent syllabi and course outlines were reviewed for each of the courses in the psychology major to identify different areas of competency and the degree to which they were covered. Appendix K shows the matrix of courses, competencies and the degree to which they were covered.

## V. Findings

### A. Learning Outcome: Psychology students will acquire a foundation in the principles and theories of psychology

Responses from 30 seniors on the **senior exit survey** (Appendix F) are summarized below regarding the background they received in their major.

"Received a strong background in"	% Strongly Agree	% Agree
1. Theoretical information	27	63
2. Ethical issues	30	57
3. Multicultural perspective	23	57
4. Hands on experience	21	46
5. Psychological research	47	40

Around 80 percent of the seniors were satisfied in the general background they received but only about two-thirds seem to be satisfied with hands on experience.

Among the 23 alumni who responded to the **alumni on-line survey**, 26% felt that they were as well prepared as their peers, and 48% felt they were better prepared than their peers.

The **syllabus analysis** (Appendix K) indicated that psychology courses did a good job of covering major concepts and theoretical perspectives in the discipline. However, only about one-third of the courses do an adequate job of covering ethical and multicultural issues. Compared to other colleges (Appendix J), the ULV curriculum was very comparable in terms of basic foundational courses as well as specialty or elective course.

Inspecting the **distribution of grades** across all courses showed that 41% of all grades are A's and 38% are B's. The distribution of grades in the eight more heavily theory based courses is shown below. The mean percentage of A's is 48 with a range of 37% -63%, and the mean percentage of B's is 31 with range of 19% - 48%.

Theory Based Courses	%A's	%B's
215: Personality Theory	60	20
303: Learning and Behavior Change	37	46
306: Cognitive Psychology	38	25
308: Social Psychology	50	22
312: Abnormal Psychology	46	38
405: Brain and Behavior	44	48
407: Life-Span Development	42	31
409: Multicultural Psychology	63	19
Mean	48%	31%

Generally speaking, grade distributions are often used to monitor grade inflation, and fairly so. However, they can also be looked at as performance measures and indicators of mastery of content, as faculty prefers to see them. The extent to which grades can be considered as indicators of mastery, the grades in the theory based course indicated that over 70% of the students were mastering the contents of these courses at the above average levels.

**In summary,,** the self-report measures, grade distributions and course syllabi suggest that students are acquiring a fairly good foundation of theories and principles in psychology. However, at this time there are no direct performance indicators to assess specific areas of strengths and weakness.

### **B. Learning Outcome: Psychology student will demonstrate basic skills in consuming scientific information**

The content analysis of **course syllabi** (Appendix K) indicated that 11 of the courses (48%) describe adequate level of activities that promote skills to review and use relevant research literature in the area (Information Literacy). Five course syllabi (22%) appear to be lacking in this area, and 7 course syllabi (30%) indicate poor level of activities promoting skills to consume scientific information. Some of this lack may be explained partially by the nature of the courses.

**In the senior exit survey** (Appendix F) students were asked if the senior project class helped them understand published literature, conceptualize statistics, interpret results, and draw conclusions. Over 90% of seniors in the survey agreed or strongly agreed that their senior project class provided them with these skills.

The **alumni survey** (Appendix H) asked graduates from the last five years to indicate the quality of preparation they received in doing research in term of finding information, quantitative and qualitative reasoning, and how well their skills compared to their peers from other institutions. Over 90% of alumni responded that the quality of their research skills in terms of finding information were good (35%) or excellent (61%), and that compared to their peers, they were equally prepared (39%) or better prepared (52%). Concerning quantitative skills, over 80% indicated that their training at ULV was good (30%) or excellent (52%), and that they were equally (52%) or better (48%) prepared. The endorsement of qualitative skills were very comparable to that of quantitative skills.

Inspection of **grade distributions** showed that in the statistics course (Psy 305) 41% obtained A's, and 45% obtained B's. In the research methods course (Psy 390) 30% obtained A's, and 41% obtained B's.

**In summary,** grades together with self-report indicators of the quality of training and coverage of material in courses suggest that a good majority of students are acquiring skills that lead to being intelligent consumers of scientific information in the field. Direct performance measures of such skills are missing at this time. More courses could be explicit in their syllabi in the coverage of such skills if indeed they are part of the coursework.

### **C. Learning Outcome: Psychology students will apply the scientific method in the study of human behavior by conducting original research**

Students are required to conduct original research in their senior project classes. It involves conducting a literature review, developing and testing hypotheses, writing the project up in APA style, and making an oral presentation to peers and faculty. Also, students may be involved in conducting research as part of other courses. The courses that include the research sequence are the following: Statistics, Research Methods, Data Analysis, and Senior Project.

In the **senior exit survey** (Appendix F) seniors were asked to indicate if they received a strong background in psychological research. Of those who responded 87% agreed (40%) or strongly agreed (47%) that they received a strong background in conducting psychological research. In response to specific questions about the senior project class, over 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the experience provided them with the abilities to (a) Formulate research questions, (b) Analyze computer data, (c) Interpret results and draw conclusions, (d) Use APA format, and (e) make oral presentation about research to peers. Open-ended comments about what they found valuable in the course focused on learning how to do research and the guidance they received from instructors. However, some students appeared to be dissatisfied with their advisors, and the inadequacy of the time required to complete the project within 10 weeks (CAPA) or a semester.

The Psychology portion of the **alumni survey**, completed by 16 individuals, indicated that 88% were satisfied (32%) or very satisfied (56%) with the research skills (searching the literature and conducting studies) they received at ULV. Moreover, 88% indicated that they were utilizing the research skills they acquired as psychology undergraduates at ULV to a great extent (44%) or somewhat (44%).

Every year several student projects are presented at regional and national conferences, such as the Western Psychological Association, Undergraduate Research Conference at University of California, Riverside, and Pacific Sociological Association. Several of the projects have also been published. The following are papers and publications of student projects with faculty as co-authors:

#### **Examples of recent publications**

Der-karabetian, A, & Ruiz, Y. (1997). Affective bicultural and global-human identity scales for Mexican-American adolescents. *Psychological Reports, 80*, 1027-1039.

Der-Karabetian, A., Stephenson, K. & Poggi, T. (1996). Environmental risk perception, activism and world-mindedness among samples of British and U.S. college students. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 83, 4561-462.

#### Examples of Papers and Posters

Carson, S., Konrad, K., chuilli, P., & Gamst, G. (1997, April). *Verbal response modes and conversation memory: Individual versus joint recall*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Der-karabetian, A., Davila, A. G., Hibbs, S., Montgomery, Y., Murillo, R. & Nag, P. (1999, May). *Factors that contribute to college success for different ethnic groups*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting Irvine, CA.

Der-Karabetian, A., & Rodriques, C. G. (2002, April). *Individualism-collectivism, environmental risk perception, and environmental activism in the U.S. and Argentina*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Irvine, CA.

Flamenco, K. M. (2003, May). *The effect of divorce among Latino young adults*. Paper presented at the New Directions Undergraduate Research Conference, University of California, Riverside, CA.

Helmer, J. R. C. (2003, May). *Attitude toward Hip Hop and Ska music by European American and African American male college students under different listening conditions*. Paper presented at the New Directions Undergraduate Research Conference, University of California, Riverside, CA.

Layton, M., & Gamst, G. (1999, May). *Previous romantic involvement and friendship satisfaction*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Irvine, CA.

Lim, G. Pujol, L. S., & Gamst, G. (1997, April). *Technology and cognition: A field experiment*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Rademaker, K. (2003, May). *The effectiveness of training for parents of disabled children*. Paper presented at the New Directions Undergraduate Research Conference, University of California, Riverside, CA.

Renshaw, J. E., Kline, K. A., & Gamst, G. (1997, April). *Long term memory retrieval operations in a work environment*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Barajas, R., & Perieto-Bayard, M. (1998, April). *The role of pet attachment as a source of social support with latch-key children*. Paper presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, Albuquerque, NM.

Webb, K. R., & Prieto-Bayard, M. (1996, April). *Gender differences on perceived seriousness of crime and severity of punishment*. Paper presented at the Western Psychological Association Meeting, San Jose, CA.

Appendix L shows the list of about 70 senior projects completed during the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 academic years by psychology students. Analysis of a random sample of senior projects by an outside consultant would provide a more detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

### Interviews with faculty teaching research sequence courses

**Interviews** were conducted with 6 different faculty who have taught research methods, data analysis and senior projects concerning their views about how the experience may be improved for students. Several common points emerged:

1. Proposals in the research methods courses are developed to different degrees. Some require a full literature review and proposal, others require a general idea with 5 or fewer references. It would help to develop uniform expectations about the nature and extent of the proposals coming out of the research methods courses.
2. Teach the data analysis concurrently with senior project. Perhaps it could be offered as a one unit "data analysis lab" connected to the senior project class. Students and faculty find that students need to relearn how to use SPSS for the analysis of their senior project data.
3. Provide special tutoring for writing literature reviews outside of the senior project class.
4. Consider the feasibility of a two-semester senior project class.
5. Design the research methods course such that students conduct experiments or do other empirical data collection and learn to write lab reports.

**In summary**, students seem to be satisfied with their research training and the opportunity to apply the scientific method to the study of human behavior. Many senior projects produced by students are of high enough quality to be presented at conferences or published. There appears to be a need to rethink the sequencing of the research-related courses, and identifying uniform expectations of research proposals.

### **D. Learning Outcome: Psychology students will obtain practical experience at an internship setting.**

Psychology students are required to take a one-semester internship course in their junior or senior years. The internship class meets once a week in a seminar format to process their experiences. They have to write daily journals, reflection statements, do a case study and have readings in the area of Human Services. Students need to complete a minimum of 96 hours at a placement site during a semester, preferably in increments of 8 hours per week. There are over 100 potential internship sites students can choose from. Information about each site is provided to students through a binder located in the department office. Students are expected to take the initiative to contact the sites and make

arrangement for their placements. Appendix M provides a sample of internship site with addresses, phone numbers and site supervisors. Out of the six comparison colleges only two others identified internship as a separate course. One other program included such experience as part of culminating experience.

The **senior exit survey** shows that 68% of seniors agree (46%) or strongly agree (22%) that they received a strong background in hands on experience / internship. More specifically, 90% agree (27%) or strongly agree (63%) that the internship class provided them with the ability to be comfortable in a professional setting. Also, 90% agree (48%) or strongly agree (42%) that the course provided them with the ability to transfer skills and knowledge in applied settings. In their comments they indicated that they valued learning about the field, learning from each other, learning new skills, and hands on aspect of the experience. They also expressed frustrations about scheduling the number of hours required. Several CAPA students did not see much benefit in the experience.

Over 90% of the **alumni** reported that the quality of their experience at ULV related to linking ideas to practice were good (39%) or excellent (57%). Also, all 100% felt that compared to their peers they were equally prepared (50%) or better prepared (50%) in their ability to link ideas to practice. However, none of the alumni who responded to the survey identified the internship course among the courses they valued most.

The **grade distribution** of all the sections offered between Fall 2002 and spring 2003 (Appendix G) showed that 65% of the students in the internship sections had received A's (55%) or A-'s (10%), and 16 % had received B+'s or B's, and 13% had received INC.

Analysis of the **course outline and the syllabi** ("Book") of the internship sections (Appendix K) from the 2002-2003 academic year showed adequate coverage of skill areas and concepts related to APA ethical principles, real-world applications of concepts, and personal growth. They also showed adequate coverage of general skill areas of critical thinking, writing, and making oral presentations. Areas that were lacking or poor so far as what was presented in the syllabi or the "Book" were theoretical perspectives, research methods, information literacy and multicultural and diversity issues.

**Course evaluations** were inspected from 10 different sections of the internship course between Fall 2001 and Fall 2002. The following areas/ themes of satisfaction, dissatisfaction and suggestions for change emerged:

#### Most Satisfactory

- Support from professors and peers
- Being challenged, working in the field, using knowledge enjoying site
- Sharing experiences, learning from others, discussions
- Gaining job related experience, career choices, foot-in-the-door for a job

### Least Satisfactory

- Class time drag on, same people talk, repetitious
- Boring work at site, sitting around, waste of money and time
- Too much paperwork (some valuable) unreasonable work load, unproductive paper work
- Poorly designed and organized class
- Too many hours on site
- Not much value to students with job experience

### Suggestions for Improvement

- Class could meet 3 or 4 times during semester, meet every other week
- Reduce number of hours
- Final project (Contribution to site) not helpful
- Fewer but more in-depth reports paperwork
- Smaller groups for discussions, give chance to more people to talk
- Make internship an alternative to senior project
- Make internship an elective
- Allow research oriented internships

Michelle Yount interviewed four **faculty members** about the internship class: Sharon Davis, Leticia Arellano, Ngoc Bui, and Harvel Lewis. Their comments are summarized in Appendix O. Several ideas have been suggested about improving the course:

- Separate the sections by discipline
- Mixing disciplines may have some advantages but are not spelled out
- Make research or teaching assistantship available to psychology students for internship experience. Not everyone is "human service" oriented
- Oversight of internship sites needs attention, including amount of supervision
- The process of securing a placement needs to be monitored and facilitated better
- The role of an internship coordinator may be valuable but must be thought out. Mixing levels (Masters and undergraduate) may not work well, especially for the undergraduates
- The instructor manual (The "Book") is really helpful, but needs occasional updating and needs to be shared with instructors in a timely manner

**In summary**, the feedback suggests that there are mixed feelings about the internship course. Seniors and alumni do see the value of this course. However, there are concerns about the appropriateness of the amount of paperwork and assignments involved, and the expected number of hours of time on site. The process of finding placement needs attention and oversight, as well as the appropriateness of the nature of tasks performed on site. Separating sections by disciplines should be explored. No performance or direct learning outcome measures, other than grades, are available for assessment. Supervisor evaluation of students, student self-evaluations, and student evaluations of sites are available, and should be aggregated on an ongoing basis for assessment purposes in the future. Explicit and systematic attention to diversity and multicultural issues is less than adequate in the course.



**E. Learning outcome: Psychology students will develop awareness of diversity issues in the field of psychology**

The **syllabi of courses** in the psychology major were examined (Appendix K) for the coverage of various competency areas including coverage of multicultural and diversity issues. Of the 23 courses only 7 (43%) appeared to have explicit and adequate coverage of multicultural issues. The coverage of such material was lacking in 3 courses and poor in the rest. The department introduced a new course entitled "Multicultural psychology" this year. This is a required course in the major, and so far 43 students have taken it with 61% of the students getting A's or A-'s.

The **senior exit survey** showed that 80% of seniors responding to the survey agree (57%) or strongly agree (23%) that they received a strong background in multicultural perspective in their major. Specifically relating to the internship course, nearly 90% agreed (42%) or strongly agreed (47%) that the course provided them with the ability to be comfortable in a culturally diverse setting. Also, 85% agreed (32%) or strongly agreed (53%) that the course provided them with the ability to feel competent in a culturally diverse setting.

In the **alumni survey** psychology graduates indicated that the quality of preparation they received at ULV in awareness of issues of cultural diversity was good (44%) or excellent (56%). Furthermore, in this respect 52% felt that compared to their peers from other universities they were equally well prepared, and 48% felt they were better prepared. Several open-ended comments mention the value of diversity-related courses, discussions and assignments.

Of the number of senior projects completed by psychology students during the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 academic years (Appendix L) 21 (30%) explicitly dealt with diversity issues related to ethnicity, religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

**In summary**, seniors and alumni seem to value their overall preparation and learning about diversity issues. Substantial numbers of senior project topics deal with diversity issues. It appears that more courses in the major need to explicitly cover issues of diversity in the field.

**E. Program Goal: Psychology students will receive good program and career related advising**

All undergraduate traditional-age students are expected to have full-time faculty as academic advisors. Academic advisors need to sign student registration forms for them to be registered. Students select or change their advisors and inform the

Academic Advising Office of such. Incoming students are usually assigned advisors depending on advisor availability.

According to the **senior exit survey** 93% indicated that they were very satisfied (43%) or satisfied (50%) about the availability of the faculty in the department. Also, about 80% indicated that they were very satisfied (30%) or satisfied (50%) with advisement. Concerning availability of courses, 93% indicated that they were very satisfied (33%) or satisfied (60%) with the variety of courses, and 83% indicated that they were very satisfied (20%) or satisfied (53%) with the scheduling of courses. In open-ended comments there were noticeable emphasis on faculty, both as advisors and teachers, and small classes as strengths of the department. However, concerns were expressed about access to some advisors, quality of some part-time professors, variety of courses, and scheduling of courses at overlapping times. Similar concerns were expressed in the focus group. Additionally, there was concern that transfer students do not get the attention they need in transitioning to ULV. Institution-wide about one-third of the traditional undergraduates tend to be transfers, and it may be safe to assume that is the case for psychology as well.

The **alumni survey** asked if they "...received advice and direction as an undergraduate concerning graduate and career opportunities in psychology." Only 38% of the responding alumni indicated that the advice they received were adequate (13%) or excellent (25%). There is room for improvement in this area.

The comments in the **focus group** indicated the need for more specific guidance about the requirements for graduation in psychology from ULV, as well as for requirements for attending graduate school. Some expressed the need to have clearer idea about the differences and implications of majoring in Behavioral Sciences and Psychology. There were also issues raised about the negative attitude towards students on the part of some faculty. There also appeared to be an interest in knowing more about licensing requirements for MFT or as Psychologist in the state of California to help set post graduate goals.

In **summary**, students seem to be generally satisfied with the advisement they receive from faculty, although there are some needs that are not being met adequately. More attention should be given to post graduate career planning, and to the needs of transfer students.

### **G. Program Goal: Psychology students will obtain employment in related fields and attend graduate school**

The **senior exit survey** indicated that 42% were seeking admission into a graduate program (38%) or had been accepted into one (4%). Another 31% indicated that they plan to begin graduate school after taking a year or two off.

The **alumni survey** indicated that 91% of the respondents did pursue further education, and 61% did so within six months after graduation. Among the alumni who responded, 39% indicated that they are currently employed in a job related to their major, and that over 60% found employment within six months

after graduation. Over, 90% indicated that the preparation they received at ULV for graduate or professional school was good (35%) or Excellent (57%). Also, over 75% indicated that the preparation they received at ULV for careers was good (65%) or excellent (13%). Compared to their peers over 70% felt they were better or equally well prepared than their peers for graduate school or for careers.

The results of the **career placement survey** (random sample) of 2002 graduates from the traditional undergraduate program yielded 14 psychology majors (Appendix P). Seven out of 9 respondents to the question about graduate schools indicated that they were attending graduate or professional school full-time. Eight out of 9 respondents to the question about preparation indicated that preparation they received at ULV for the working world was very good or good. Of those who were employed full-time, 20% were employed within the major and 30% outside the major. Seven individuals responded to a question about factors that helped them find jobs: Two mentioned extracurricular activities, 3 mentioned work experience, one mentioned internship and one mentioned academic major.

**In summary**, it appears that a substantial number of psychology majors are going on to graduate school, and are satisfied with their preparation. However, the numbers of those who are working in a related field seem to be low.

## **VI. Recommendations for Action**

1. Make a more explicit effort in the introductory psychology classes and the campus at large to present the psychology major as a good career path with a strong and unique positive image.
2. Consider de-cross-listing of core courses to enhance program identity.
3. Consider the proposed 55 unit major with increased number of 4 unit courses for inclusion in the 2004 - 2005 catalog.
4. Cultivate more adjunct faculty, and engage adjunct faculty more through in-service and training.
5. Develop performance measure besides grades to assess learning outcomes in the areas of theory, research and internship.
6. Identify uniform expectations of senior project proposals developed in the research methods classes, perhaps with more emphasis on psychological research rather than general social scientific research.
7. Consider offering the data analysis course concurrently to senior project, perhaps as a lab session with one unit.
8. Developing more variety of internship opportunities for psychology majors, including research related sites.

9. Incorporate diversity issues and perspectives in more psychology courses.
10. Provide more direct advisement concerning graduate school and career opportunities to seniors that identify clear professional goals.
11. Assist transfer majors with transition issues.
12. Revise all course outlines.