

Undergraduate Psychology Program Evaluation  
2005-2006

Recommendations and Time Table for Implementation

1. Develop performance indicators of learning outcomes for outgoing seniors:

The current assessment plan has the Department developing a Senior Exit Exam which is to be implemented by the 2006-2007 academic year.

A pilot Senior Exam in Psychology was created and 3 Senior Project classes sat for the Exam, May 2006. An analysis of the data for program change and possible revision of the Exam will take place over the Summer 2006.

2. Modify the internship experience to better meet the needs of psychology majors.

Drs. Valerie Jordan and Richard Rogers have taken the lead in implementing a number of changes to the Internship class beginning in the 2004-2005 academic year and continuing in the 2005-2006 academic year. Their report may follow.

In the 2005-2006 academic year, a proposal to expand internship and career services by compensating a faculty member to assume these tasks was rejected by the Department Chair and the Dean of Arts and Sciences. The suggestion to include these services within an Office of Internship and Career Services in concert with the Psychology Department's Graduate Programs was similarly rejected.

3. Rethink the research sequence.

In the 2004-2005 Academic Year, Dr. Ngoc Bui and Professor Jodie Lara implemented a number of changes to the research sequence including mandating prerequisites, altering specific course content and activities, and developing a skills-based approach to increasing student competence.

In the 2005-2006 Academic year, Statistics became a prerequisite for Research Methods and Research Methods became a prerequisite for Senior Thesis. Senior Project was changed to Senior Thesis to more aptly reflect its scientific basis.

Future discussions may involve the possibility of having the Undergraduate Psychology Program offer a Human Behavior Major as an alternative to the traditional Psychology Major. The design of this major would have the intent of meeting the needs of those students who would not be destined for graduate study. This major would include alternatives to the entire research sequence.

4. Incorporate diversity in more psychology courses.

Course Transformation grants were made available to Department faculty in the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 Academic Years for the purpose of increasing diversity in the psychology curriculum. In the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 academic years, faculty members revised all undergraduate Psychology Course Outlines.

Using the American Psychological Association Guidelines for Curriculum in Undergraduate Psychology Programs, individual faculty were to follow the Guideline's specific recommendations for the inclusion in course content of diversity issues. Principal responsibility for seeing the implementation of these recommendations remains unclear.

5. Provide more direct and better academic and career advisement to traditional and non-traditional age students.

Beginning in the 2004-2005 Academic Year, a number of changes have been implemented related to student advisement. Faculty members receive timely and accurate advisement lists and students are required to meet with their advisors prior to registration each term. For the purpose of advisement, Psychology Faculty Members were asked to declare their "home" program from among the Department's academic programs. It remains unclear which faculty are responsible to which program.

Psi Chi, the Department's chapter of the Psychology Honor Society, remains the principal venue for students to discover graduate and career options. Activities of Psi Chi focus on student academic and professional achievement.

At the end of the 2005-2006 academic year, in an effort to effect advisement efficiency, the role of Professor Jodie Lara in the advisement of undergraduate traditional and CAPA students was eliminated. It is unclear at this time how her duties and responsibilities will be distributed. CAPA may assume some of the advisement load.

6. Revise course outlines to reflect the current syllabi and course objectives.

Beginning in 2004-2005 and completed in 2005-2006 Academic Years, faculty members revised Psychology Course Outlines. Using the American Psychological Association Guidelines for Curriculum in Undergraduate Psychology Programs, individual faculty were to include the Guideline's specific recommendations when revising each course outline. The Psychology Department Chair supervised the process and took principal responsibility for ensuring the quality of the project's outcome.

