ACADEMIC PROGRAM SELF EVALUATION

Program Name: BS degree in PSYCHOLOGY
Program Coordinator: Linda L. Brannon, Ph.D.
Department: Psychology
College: Education
Date of Review: Completed December, 2008

Executive Summary

The Department of Psychology has utilized the Academic Program Self-Evaluation process to highlight areas for improvement as well as to identify what we are doing well. We believe our strengths fall in the areas of curriculum revision and improvements, faculty-student relationships, advising, faculty credentials, and teaching effectiveness. Our current concerns involve faculty shortage, over-reliance on part-time instructors to cover for the shortage in full-time positions, lack of availability of information about our program (e.g., website, brochures), and the lack of information about our graduates once they leave our program (e.g., follow-up or employer surveys).

During this process, we have already implemented some changes to improve on our areas of concern. For example, we initiated an exit survey for graduates in 2006, and beginning in the Summer of 2008 we made a more concerted effort to ensure graduates completed these surveys. As such, we expect the data from these surveys to drastically increase in 2009 and will use those data to improve our program as needed. Additionally, in 2008 we improved the advising process, ensuring that current and new professors have up-to-date training and the skills they need to be more effective advisors. We also began to receive feedback on advising surveys given to students in late 2008, and we anticipate utilizing those data in 2009 to improve the advising process.

Our significant redesign of the BS curriculum in 2007 and 2008 appears to be preparing our students better for future careers and/or graduate study in Psychology. We implemented and began to assess our capstone course – PSYC 499 – in 2007 and 2008, and preliminary results from students taking that course indicate it is a successful endeavor and is providing students with a wonderful senior-year experience. We were especially pleased to find that every student who took PSYC 499 in the Fall, 2008 semester scored at or above the national average on the Major Field Test in Psychology.

We began in 2007 and 2008 to collect extensive data from students enrolled in General Education courses (PSYC 101, 310, 311) and Writing Enriched courses (PSYC 101, 305, 404, 427, 428, and 499). Data from these courses are already being utilized to improve classroom activities and assessment in the Fall, 2008 semester and beyond. Additionally, data collected for our Master Plan each spring reveals strengths and weaknesses in our PSYC curriculum that are now allowing us to make programmatic and course changes to improve student outcomes on the five major goals selected for our BS program.
It is our goal that the combination of these efforts – Master Plan revisions, General Education and Writing Enriched assessments, and this APR – will allow the Psychology Department to monitor the progress of its students and to make plans for program improvement as needed. The faculty in our department are whole-heartedly committed to the university’s stated mission of “Excellence with a Personal Touch” – and it shows in our teaching performance, graduation rates, retention figures, and anecdotal evidence.

**Program Mission**

Mission: The purpose of the Department of Psychology in offering the Bachelor of Science degree is fivefold:
1) to prepare students to enter the work force or to pursue additional training leading to professional careers
2) to teach basic content in the field of psychology, including a wide base of course material
3) to familiarize undergraduate students with the process of critical thinking used in the scientific method as applied to psychology
4) to teach undergraduate students the skills to conduct research in psychology
5) to familiarize undergraduate students with the profession of psychology and the requirements for entry into professional training.

**Program Goals**

The purpose of the Psychology Department follows the mission of McNeese State University, which is to provide a wide range of baccalaureate and carefully selected graduate curricula, distinguished by academic excellence. The undergraduate Program in Psychology specifically supports the Institutional Goals of developing critical thinking, communicating effectively, understanding the global community, and encouraging undergraduate research.

The Psychology Department has established 5 goals related to the program mission and included in our annual Master Plan report for the BS degree. These goals are as follows:

1) Graduates will apply critical thinking in academic and professional environments.
2) Graduates will formulate and express ideas effectively through oral, written, and/or technological communications in academic and professional environments.
3) Graduates will analyze the global community to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.
4) Graduates will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, and classic as well as contemporary empirical findings in psychology.
5) Graduates will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology.

The Psychology Department has instituted a number of assessments in a variety of courses to measure student learning outcomes for these goals. Table 1 illustrates those assessments for each of the five goals for all courses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSYC Course</th>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Goal #2</th>
<th>Goal #3</th>
<th>Goal #4</th>
<th>Goal #5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 304/404</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Appropriate use &amp; citation of internet/library database searches; Written term paper</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Assessment of major concepts relating to theories in psychology</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 305</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Written laboratory report</td>
<td></td>
<td>Class exam assessing major learning theories</td>
<td>Laboratory report of a research demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 310/311</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Embedded exam questions relating to diversity</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 427</td>
<td>Embedded exam questions assessing application of knowledge of research methods and design</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Written research proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 428</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Written research report</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Written research report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 431</td>
<td>Analysis and diagnosis of case studies</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Embedded exam questions relating to diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 461</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Class assignment pertaining to the topics of prejudice and discrimination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 471</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Written section of final exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Class exam assessing basic concepts in physiology pertaining to psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 499</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Several written assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual presentations of classic studies in psychology; Major Field Test scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional Mission Reference

The purpose of the Psychology Department follows the mission of McNeese State University, which is to provide a wide range of baccalaureate and carefully selected graduate curricula, distinguished by academic excellence. The undergraduate Program in Psychology specifically supports the Institutional Goals of developing critical thinking, communicating effectively, understanding the global community, and encouraging undergraduate research.

Institutional Goals Supported

As described in the Master Plan, the Psychology Department supports four Institutional Goals:

1) Development of Critical Thinking Skills
   - As described in Table 1, the Psychology Department currently assesses students’ critical thinking skills via:
     o application-oriented exam questions in PSYC 427
     o analysis and diagnosis of case studies in PSYC 431

2) Effective Oral and/or Written Communication Skills
   - As described in Table 1, the Psychology Department collects data on students’ abilities to express ideas through oral, written, and/or technological communications in several courses. These assessments include:
     o PSYC 304/404 – term paper; use and citation of internet/library database sources
     o PSYC 305 – laboratory report
     o PSYC 428 – research report
     o PSYC 471 – written section of final exam
     o PSYC 499 – numerous essay assignments and an oral presentation

3) Understanding of the Global Community
   - As described in Table 1, the Psychology Department assesses student learning outcomes related to understanding of the global community in relation to topics of diversity, including:
     o PSYC 310/311 and 431 – embedded exam questions
     o PSYC 461 – a written assignment on the topics of prejudice & discrimination

4) Encouragement of Undergraduate Research
   - The Psychology Department has several initiatives in place to encourage undergraduate student involvement in research.
     o All psychology majors must complete two courses in research methodology and earn a grade of “C” or better prior to graduation; these courses are taught as a sequence in which students must complete independent and/or group research projects beginning with the initial conception of a research hypothesis and then carrying out data collection and analysis,
followed by the writing of research reports.

- Students taking PSYC 101 become familiar with Psychology Department research opportunities and also receive extra credit (optional) for participating as research subjects. These opportunities are offered every time PSYC 101 is taught throughout the year. Students also learn about research methods, psychological data, and research ethics as part of the PSYC 101 curriculum.
- Undergraduate psychology majors are allowed to participate independently in faculty-sponsored research programs. While this is not a requirement of our program, students often choose to take PSYC 399 as one of their psychology electives – this course provides 3 hours credit for planning and/or conducting research projects under faculty supervision. In the academic year spanning June 2007 to May 2008, 33 undergraduate students took and completed PSYC 399.

**SWOT Analysis:**

**Strengths:**
1. Size of program
2. High levels of student interest in program
3. Advising
4. Updated curriculum: 2008-2009 catalog changes
5. Graduates entering graduate school
6. Involvement of all faculty in effective teaching, advising, and research/scholarly activities.

**Weaknesses:**
1. Recruitment Efforts
2. Lack of Departmental Website & Brochures
3. Exit Surveys and Follow-up Surveys of Graduates

**Opportunities:**
1. New Gen Ed components – implementation and assessment tracking
2. New QEP initiatives – implementation and assessment tracking
3. Job placement and graduate school applicants

**Threats:**
1. Recruitment of new faculty
2. Overuse of graduate assistants and visiting lecturers for undergraduate courses due to faculty shortage

**Admission Requirements**
- There are no admission requirements for this program beyond the university’s admissions requirements.
• Students transferring coursework from outside the University are first evaluated by the Registrar’s office for transferability of coursework. The program coordinator also evaluates transcripts and makes the final determination regarding transfer coursework for each incoming student (in conjunction with the department head). The program coordinator serves as the advisor for ALL transfer students, at least initially. Courses are transferred based on the merits of those courses and the universities at which they were completed. The Registrar’s office is consulted as needed when transcripts or coursework are questionable.

• Advanced placement credits are handling through the Scholarships & Testing office, and we accept credits through advanced placement based upon their recommendations once the credit(s) appear(s) on the students’ transcripts.

• No credit is awarded to students for experiences other than traditional instruction.

Recruitment Strategies

The Psychology Department recruits undergraduate students via:

• Participation in university recruiting initiatives, such as Howdy Rowdy Week and Cowboy Q&A
• Information tables placed at regional Psychology conferences (e.g., Southwestern Psychological Association)
• Handouts/brochures describing the field of Psychology
• Increased publicity for faculty research and scholarly activities (e.g., MSU Program for the Treatment of Problem Gambling; McNeese Autism Project)
• Quick response to individuals seeking information about our degrees and programs
• Department head meetings with prospective students, as requested by the Office of Enrollment Information

Advising

• Students beginning the BS degree in Psychology are first advised within the Division of Basic Studies. Upon eligibility to enter the students’ stated major of psychology, each student is assigned to an advisor within the Department. An initial meeting, often during the first registration period, involves developing a degree plan and discussion of coursework remaining.

• Instructors turn in advising logs each year in the spring semester as part of their APR process, as well as providing written descriptions of their advising activities. These reports are utilized to determine APR rankings and to identify faculty members who may need additional training and guidance.

• Instructors attend mandatory training sessions as needed to update their advising skills.

• The department head and administrative assistant monitor students’ folders to assure appropriate and regular advising does occur and to evaluate degree plans for progress and updated courses and grades.

• The department head and the BS program coordinator review all degree plans prior to graduation to ensure appropriate progress and to identify advising and course requirement deficiencies and develop appropriate solutions.
Retention Initiatives

The Psychology Department is fully committed to efforts to increase student retention amongst psychology majors. The Department Head served on a recent university-wide retention committee and brought those initiatives into the Psychology Department, as well as several measures that were already in place. Current retention efforts focus on:

- Close monitoring of student progress via academic advising
- Early detection of students with academic problems and remedial efforts as needed
- Faculty teaching effectiveness, with high SEI ratings relatively to university averages
- Course offerings that appeal to a variety of students, with several upper level electives offered each semester so students can maintain full-time course loads and make progress toward their degrees

Retention efforts have been relatively successful in recent years, as indicated by the following data (Hurricane Rita rates from 05-06 have been deleted):

- 2003-2004: PSYC = 76.0% (MSU = 68.3%)
- 2004-2005: PSYC = 72.0% (MSU = 67.1%)
- 2006-2007: PSYC = 73.1% (MSU = 64.3%)

Course Sequencing

- Courses are evaluated each semester to determine enrollment needs; that is, courses that are too large or fill too quickly are often offered in larger numbers in subsequent semesters
- It is our goal that All REQUIRED courses (e.g., PSYC 101, 304/404, 310/311, 431, 427, 428, 471, 499) be offered at least twice per year (spring and fall), and at least 3 of these courses are offered each summer. Electives are offered at least once per year (e.g., PSYC 440, 451, 454, 480).
- Courses with unusually large enrollments (e.g., PSYC 101, 233, 310, 431) are offered at varied times, such as both daytime and evening sections.
- It is our goal to offer some PSYC courses in alternative formats, such as web-based courses. Thus far we have offered PSYC 101, 431, and 451 completely online in 2008.
- There are no prerequisite courses for the BS degree in psychology.

Curriculum Analysis

The curriculum analysis should answer, at minimum, the following questions:

- What are the student learning outcomes of the program? What competencies should the student have achieved after completing the program?
  - Student learning outcomes are clearly listed in every course syllabus
  - Students graduating from the BS Program in Psychology have met the student learning outcomes outlined in course syllabi for all
required PSYC courses. These student learning outcomes are outlined in Table 2 for each course.

- What are the general education course requirements for the program? What competencies should the student have achieved after completing the general education course requirements?
  
  - The General Education course requirements for students obtaining the BS degree in Psychology match those listed in the MSU Catalog for all bachelor’s degrees offered at McNeese. The General Education competencies are listed below, along with the courses found on the BS degree in Psychology which meet these competencies:

    1. Communicate effectively in written English (ENGL 101; ENGL 102; BIOL 102; HIST 101 or 102; HIST 201 or 202)
    2. Communicate effectively in oral English (SPCH 201 or 205)
    3. Read with comprehension (ENGL 101; ENGL 102; HIST 101 or 102)
    4. Reason abstractly and think critically (ENGL 102)
    5. Understand numerical data and statistics (MATH 113 and 130 or 170 and 175; STAT 231)
    6. Understand the scientific method (BIOL 101; BIOL 102; PSYC 101)
    7. Be familiar with key technologies and informational applications (CPST or CSCI elective)
    8. Learn independently (ENGL 102)
    9. Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity
    10. Develop a personal value system while retaining a tolerance for others (FFND 101; HIST 101 or 102; HIST 201 or 202; PSYC 101; PSYC 310 or 311)
    11. Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts (Fine Arts elective)
    12. Understand the American political system and economic system (HIST 201 or 202)

- How are general education competencies measured and assessed (e.g. CAAP test)?
  
  - Three Psychology courses are currently listed as satisfying requirements for General Education competencies: PSYC 101, 310, and 311.
  
  - In each of these courses, general education competencies are assessed via embedded exam questions, with results tallied by each instructor and reported to the Department Head at the end of each fall and spring semester.
  
  - Plans are in the works to add written assignments to assess general education competencies

- How are major course competencies measured and assessed (e.g. standardized tests, major field assessments, capstone experiences, portfolios, etc)?
  
  - Students must complete our undergraduate capstone course (PSYC 499) prior to graduation and must earn a grade of “C” or better. This course provides multiple opportunities for assessment of major course competencies, including a practice test of the GRE Psychology Subject Exam and the Major Field Test in Psychology
  
  - 30% of students’ grades in PSYC 499 is based upon students’ performance on the Major Field Test, which students take just before final exams.
10% of students’ grades are determined by demonstrated improvement on a pre- and post-course assessment using practice tests from the Psychology Subject GRE.

Additional assessments in PSYC 499 include development of a resume, in-class quizzes, written assignments, and an oral presentation.

Who are the key players involved in the student assessment process?
- All instructors in the Department of Psychology are actively involved in the student assessment process. The Program Coordinator works closely with the Department Head to determine assessment needs, and these needs are communicated to all instructors teaching PSYC courses in which assessment data are needed. Assessment data are collected every semester for all relevant courses, and those data are transmitted to the Program Coordinator and/or Department Head as needed (i.e., for preparation of master plans, UAPR’s, and General Education Competencies Reports).
- The Program Coordinator provides each faculty member with a detailed list (in writing) stating which data are needed for which students on a semester-by-semester basis, as well as instructions for how and when to submit those data. The Department Head ensures compliance with these requests and assists the Program Coordinator with the data analysis process as needed.

Do the major course syllabi identify expected student learning outcomes?
- Every Psychology course has a standardized syllabus, and these syllabi are turned in to the Department Head during the first week of classes every semester. New instructors are notified of syllabus requirements and are provided a sample syllabus prior to the start of the semester.
- Syllabi contain, at a minimum, the following components:
  - Name, contact information, and offices hours of instructor
  - Course description (as seen in the catalog)
  - Indicators for General Education or Writing Enriched courses
  - Student Learning Outcomes
  - Methods for Assessment Student Learning Outcomes
  - Topics to be covered in the course
  - Methods for grade determination

Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) Support
- The Psychology Department has implemented the University’s QEP for writing emphasis throughout its curriculum. The Department has always been committed to the importance of effective writing for all students. Recent QEP initiatives in the Department include:
  - Designation of numerous courses as “writing enriched”, including PSYC 101, PSYC 304/404, 305, 427, 428, and 499
  - The QEP committee designated Fall 2008 as the semester for implementation of the writing program. However, the Psychology Department began implementing writing assignments in writing-enriched courses in the Fall of 2007, with further expansion of those efforts in Spring 2008.
  - The Department has modified a recommended assessment rubric (see attached) to more adequately meet the needs of psychology students, and the full inclusion of this rubric in all writing-enriched courses took place in the Fall of 2008.
**Student Data**

Table 4 provides summary data for the Psychology BS Program from 2003-2004 through 2007-2008. Where appropriate, summer statistics are collapsed with the following academic year (e.g., Summer 2004 included in 2004-2005 data).

**TABLE 4: Summary Data for the BS Degree in Psychology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Time Freshman (FTF); Fall only</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTF Retention to 2\textsuperscript{nd} year</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Graduates</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average UG Class Size (Overall)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Class Size (Lower Level; Fall only)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>73.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Class Size (Upper Level; Fall only)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average GPA of Completers</td>
<td>2.714</td>
<td>3.133</td>
<td>3.089</td>
<td>3.058</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing Percentages in PSYC courses</td>
<td>80.46%</td>
<td>82.83%</td>
<td>80.61%</td>
<td>80.47%</td>
<td>81.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FACULTY**

**Full-Time Faculty**

There are currently 8 full-time faculty positions in the Department of Psychology. One faculty member retired in May, 2008, and a search is underway to find a replacement for that 8\textsuperscript{th} position. Full-time faculty in the Psychology Department must have a doctoral degree in psychology. Current faculty members are included in Table 5, along with their most recent SEI scores (2007 averages), and summaries of recent scholarly activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Member</th>
<th>2007 SEI average</th>
<th>UG Courses Taught</th>
<th>Scholarly Activities &amp; Professional Development</th>
<th>University Service</th>
<th>Community Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Denise Arellano, Assistant Professor (new hire Aug. 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 101, PSYC 427, PSYC 428</td>
<td>5 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 5 conferences attended; 6 study guides authored</td>
<td>Grade Appeals Committee; Faculty Search Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Carl Bartling, Professor</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 321, PSYC 427, PSYC 428, PSYC 480</td>
<td>20 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 5 conferences attended; 4 scholarly publications; 1 grant funded for $2,500</td>
<td>BCoE Professional Development Committee; Departmental IRB Committee; Sponsor of Psi Chi;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Linda Brannon, Professor, BS Program Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 101, PSYC 304, PSYC 440, PSYC 454, PSYC 471, PSYC 499</td>
<td>Author or co-author for 3 nationally and internationally recognized textbooks;</td>
<td>Departmental IRB Committee Chair; Departmental Admissions &amp; Retention Committee (Chair);</td>
<td>Louisiana Governor’s Program for Gifted Children; Banner’s Program;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Lawrence Dilks, Associate Professor (retired May, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 101, PSYC 389, PSYC 399</td>
<td>74 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 8 scholarly publications; 14 grants funded at over $150,000</td>
<td>BCoE Technology Committee Chair;</td>
<td>Boys’/Girls’ Village; Robinswood; St. Patrick’s Hospital; Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Jan Disney, Professor</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 431, PSYC 451</td>
<td>4 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 5 conferences attended; 3 books/manuals authored</td>
<td>Departmental Admissions &amp; Retention Committee; Grade Appeals Committee; BCoE UG Curriculum Committee; School Counseling Advisory Committee;</td>
<td>Director of Kay Dore Counseling Clinic; CACREP Accreditation Team Member; American Counseling Association Ethics Board; Collaborative Professionals of SWLA;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Dena Matzenbacher, Department Head, Associate Professor</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 101, PSYC 310, PSYC 431, PSYC 461</td>
<td>19 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 7 conferences attended; 2 invited addresses; 2</td>
<td>University Discipline Committee; University IRB Committee; Sponsor</td>
<td>Children’s Museum Board of Directors; Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dr. Cam Melville, Professor MA Program Coordinator Director of McNeese Autism Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarly Publications</th>
<th>Involvement in Grants Funded</th>
<th>Of Psi Chi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 304, PSYC 305, PSYC 389, PSYC 399, PSYC 447, PSYC 455</td>
<td>10 presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; 2 scholarly publications; 3 conferences attended; 7 grants funded at a total of $650,249; 4 books/manuals published/authored</td>
<td>Department Admissions &amp; Retention Committee; BCoE Grants Committee; Departmental Search Committee Chair (x2); Sponsor of LouABA Student Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dr. Charles Robertson, Assistant Professor (new hire, August 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring 2008</th>
<th>PSYC 101</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>PSYC 101</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Department College of Education Technology Committee | Office of Mental Health; Office for Addictive Disorders; Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office; President of Louisiana Association for Behavior Analysis (LouABA); |

Part-Time Faculty

Visiting Lecturers
- As of the Fall, 2008 semester, we regularly employ 6 visiting lecturers who teach a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses. Additional visiting lecturers are used on a rotating or as-needed basis. The following list provides their names, degrees earned, and courses they typically teach annually or semi-annually.
  - Burton Ashworth, MA (PSYC 101)
  - M. Catherine Bienvenu, MA (PSYC 101)
  - Amanda Creel, Ph.D. (PSYC 101, PSYC 461, PSYC 626)
  - George Kuffel, MA (PSYC 311)
  - Wade Marcantel, MA (PSYC 101, PSYC 211)
  - Mayance Mathieu, MA (PSYC 311)
  - Patrick Moreno, MA (PSYC 233)
- All VL’s are evaluated by the Department Head at least once per academic year (typically every semester) and these evaluations are kept on file in the office of the Department Head. Additionally, any VL obtaining a yearly SEI average lower than 4.0 is not rehired in future semesters.

Graduate Teaching Assistants
- As of the Fall, 2008 semester, we regularly employ 3 graduate teaching assistants to teach lower level courses after they have met the requirement of 18+ graduate hours in psychology and have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the discipline and attended
orientation and/or training sessions. The graduate assistants teaching for the Department of Psychology in the Fall, 2008 semester are listed below, along with the degree they are completing and the courses they are currently teaching.

- Ellen Maricle – M.Ed. in School Counseling (PSYC 211 and PSYC 310)
- Rachel White – MA in Psychology (PSYC 101)
- Kevin Yaudes – MA in Psychology (PSYC 101)

- All GTA’s are evaluated by the Department Head at least once per academic year (typically every semester) and these evaluations are kept on file in the office of the Department Head. Additionally, any GTA obtaining a yearly SEI average lower than 4.0 is not rehired in future semesters.

**Student Achievement**

We began utilizing an Exit Survey for program graduates in 2006 (see attached). This assessment asks students about their future plans (career, graduate school, etc.) and also asks them to rate how well they believe our program prepared them in various content areas.

Survey data were compiled for 15 students earning the BS degree between Spring, 2006 and Summer, 2008. Of these, ten students planned to enter graduate school in Psychology, one planned to enter law school, one had a psychology-related job, and one had a job lined up (outside the field of Psychology). The remaining two students left the question blank or indicated they did not yet know what they would do after graduation.

Students were asked to indicate their level of preparedness in 4 content/academic areas as well as critical thinking skills, openness to growth and learning, and awareness of one’s own strengths and weaknesses. For each area the students were asked to respond on a scale of 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent). The results from 14 students were as follows:

1. Research Methods (scientific method, statistics, experimental design, ethics) – average: 3.40
2. Appreciation & Understanding of Diversity (sensitivity, acceptance, awareness) – average: 3.67
3. Communication Skills (oral, written, APA writing style) – average: 3.33
4. Basic Knowledge in Psychology (history, theories, mental illness, human development, physiology, social psychology, and learning principles) – average: 3.53
5. Critical Thinking Skills – average: 3.54
6. Openness to Growth & Learning – average: 4.0
7. Awareness of Own Strengths & Weaknesses – average: 3.77

These survey results will be shared with full-time faculty members to determine whether or not course or assignment revisions are necessary. For example, the Psychology content areas listed in #4 can be considered individually to determine which courses students feel did or did not provide sufficient coverage and knowledge.
Graduating students were also asked open-ended questions regarding what changes they would suggest we make in our undergraduate program. Among the 15 students who completed the survey, only 7 (50%) made a suggestion. These suggestions generally included changing the curriculum in regard to non-Psychology classes; for example, students suggested eliminating BIOL 102 Lab, which we have already done. Faculty members will meet regularly to review these exit surveys and determine what changes should be made to our curriculum and courses.

Future surveys will include follow-up assessments after students have graduated to determine their job search success rates. This has not been done in the past, mostly because a large number of our students enter graduate programs – often our own MA program. Anecdotal claims suggest all of our graduates obtain jobs or enter graduate school almost immediately upon graduation, and we need to devise a formal assessment to evaluate these claims.

Learning Resources

- Describe students’ use/need for accessing resources in the McNeese Library.
  - Several Psychology courses require students to conduct library research, either in person or through McNeese’s online databases. These courses include (but are not limited to): PSYC 304/404, 427, 428, and 499.

- Describe students’ use/need for accessing other resources, both on and off campus.
  - Students earning BS degrees in Psychology are required to maintain regular access to email and internet, both for the purposes of communication with faculty/classes and for research purposes. ALL Psychology courses require students to maintain a McNeese email account and to access Blackboard regularly. These requirements are described both in class and on course syllabi.

- Describe students’ use/need for utilizing laboratory facilities, specialized facilities, etc.
  - Beginning with the Fall, 2008 semester, all incoming undergraduate students will be required to complete PSYC 305 with a grade of “C” or better. This course requires students to work in our departmental animal laboratory, conducting successful demonstrations of learning procedures with laboratory animals. They are also required to feed and maintain the animal that is assigned to their care.

Technology

- Describe the types of technology that the program’s students and faculty use.
  - The majority of instructors in Psychology utilize Promethean boards in the classrooms for lectures, powerpoint presentations, and viewing of videos/DVD’s.
  - All instructors are required to maintain regular contact with students via email and Blackboard, and to maintain Blackboard accounts for all of their courses.

- Describe how the faculty uses technology to enhance student learning.
  - Faculty members are required to maintain regular email contact with students, and to keep all courses maintained and updated in Blackboard. All faculty members must post course syllabi in Blackboard no later than the first week of classes.
Most faculty members also utilize Blackboard to make announcements, post chapter outlines and assignments, set up discussion boards, and/or post grades. All faculty have received appropriate training to effectively utilize this technology.

- As described above, all PSYC classrooms have been updated with Promethean boards and computers. All instructors were provided necessary training on utilization of these technology implementations, and the majority of instructors now utilize this technology in their classes at least occasionally.
- Faculty members teaching courses on research methods utilize computer statistical software (e.g., SPSS) to teach students how to analyze research data. This is taught IN the classroom, utilizing the classroom computers and Promethean boards.

- Describe the use of the Internet to assist in teaching.
  - All faculty members maintain courses in Blackboard, which is internet-based.
  - The majority of faculty members assign students web-based assignments, such as research papers with internet sources or asking students to view educational websites as part of their course requirements.
  - Two faculty members have utilized Live Text for assigning and assessing essays submitted by students in Freshman Foundations during the Fall, 2008 semester.
  - Two faculty members have taught fully web-based courses between the Fall, 2007 and Fall, 2008 semesters.

- Describe the use of Blackboard technology to assist in instruction.
  - All faculty members are required to utilize Blackboard in each of their courses. Specifically, all instructors are required to post their syllabi and office hours in Blackboard.
  - The majority of our instructors (over 90%) also utilize Blackboard for one or more of the following activities:
    - Posting announcements
    - Posting assignments
    - Emailing students (and receiving email communication)
    - Distributing handouts and/or study guides
    - Managing discussion groups
    - Administering online quizzes or exams
    - Calculating and/or posting grade
  - It is the intent of the Department of Psychology to arrange additional training in Blackboard, particularly for part-time instructors who may not have received any training in Blackboard previously. It is also our intent to require each instructor to make Blackboard a more prominent part of each course he or she teaches.

Accreditation
There is no outside accrediting agency for the BS degree in Psychology.

Program Integrity

The McNeese catalog is updated once each year, and the Department Head makes necessary adjustments to the catalog descriptions of the BS degree in Psychology and all related courses.
Course syllabi are revised every semester and submitted to the Department Head for approval no later than the first week of classes. Syllabi must include updated student learning outcomes, indicators for General Education competencies and Writing Enrichment, and methods of assessment.

The Psychology Department set up a departmental website during the Fall, 2008 semester. This website includes accurate and up-to-date information about our degree programs, and it will soon include information regarding departmental goals, student learning objectives, current degree plans, and faculty research interests and contact information. The departmental website will be updated every semester.

The Psychology Department is now in the process of designing a departmental brochure, which will be distributed to local and regional high schools and handed out to prospective students who visit campus or request information about our program(s).

**Licensing**

No licensures or certificates are available for students earning the BS degree in psychology.

**APR Results**

As a result of the APR process, numerous changes have already been made and more changes are planned in the near future.

- **Programmatic/Curriculum Changes**
  - Our BS curriculum has already been revised significantly based on the feedback of faculty and students both inside and outside the Department of psychology. For example,
    - BIOL 102 Lab has been deleted from the curriculum, based on advice from the Head of the Biology Department as well as students’ continual suggestions
    - FFND 101 has been added (Fall 2008) to allow Psychology majors to have earlier access to degree plan requirements, departmental policies, faculty advising, and other important aspects of majoring in Psychology
    - One of the non-Biology science electives was deleted so students could devote more time to PSYC courses
    - Two courses not previously required (PSYC 305 and PSYC 461) became required courses in 2008 – these courses were deemed by faculty and students to be beneficial in preparing them both for the Subject Test of the GRE and for graduate work in Psychology
- **Technological Changes**
  - The Department of Psychology is part of the Burton College of Education, which recently purchased and installed Promethean boards in all of the classrooms; many faculty members now use this technology to improve classroom instruction
  - Beginning in 2007 and continuing to the present, all faculty members now utilize Blackboard to post syllabi, communicate with students, assign essays and other homework, and calculate and post grades. Faculty use this technology to varying degrees, and we expect all faculty to become proficient at the use of Blackboard by 2009.
The majority of Psychology Department faculty now utilize the World Wide Web for instructional purposes; this may include web-based assignments, on-line surveys and other assessments, and exploration of evaluation and usage of on-line information in the many areas of psychology research.

**Assessment Techniques**
- Like many departments on campus, the Psychology Department began preparing annual Master Plans for the BS degree in May of 2006, began to assess General Education Competencies in the Fall of 2007, and Writing Enrichment Assessments in the Fall of 2008. These processes necessitate the collection and usage of various types of data from courses in our BS curriculum, including but not limited to:
  - Writing Enrichment rubrics and summary data for PSYC 101, 305, 404, 471, and 499
  - General Education competencies assessed via embedded exam questions in PSYC 101, 310, and 311
  - Assessment of students’ proficiencies in the areas of Critical Thinking (PSYC 427 and 431), Oral & Written Communication Skills (PSYC 101, 305, 404, 471, 499), Understanding of the Global Community (PSYC 310/311, 431, and 461), Understanding of Theoretical Perspectives and Major Concepts (PSYC 101, 305, 404, 471, and 499) and Undergraduate Research (PSYC 305, 427, and 428).

**Course Sequencing & Offerings**
- As mentioned above, the Psychology Department significantly revised the BS curriculum in 2007-2008 and these changes were the direct result of both the APR process and student/faculty feedback.
- Three faculty members are now qualified to teach fully online courses, and we have recently offered web-based versions of PSYC 101, PSYC 431, and PSYC 451; we have plans to add to these course offerings in the near future.
- Advisors and students are now better informed about course sequencing and we have implemented changes to course enrollment criteria. For example, we have initiated class restrictions for some of our more difficult courses so that students have a broader knowledge base in psychology prior to attempting these courses (e.g., PSYC 404).
- We have adjusted our course offerings based on 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 enrollment figures. We have also altered course offerings as a result of the programmatic changes described above. For example, we now offer PSYC 305 and 461 every semester, as these courses were previously only electives but are now requirements for graduation.

**Faculty Characteristics**
- We have made changes to faculty job descriptions in the past year to reflect the need for faculty who can teach certain courses in our curriculum (e.g., PSYC 310/311, 461) at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- We recently began a concerted effort to have more full-time faculty members teaching lower level courses (e.g., PSYC 101) and we expect to see an increase in these efforts in the near future.
- Faculty members who teach certain courses regularly have been assigned the task of developing student learning outcomes and assessment procedures that will better meet the goals of the department. In a few cases, this has meant changing who teaches which courses to ensure continuity of instruction and assessment across multiple sections and semesters.