

# Ohlone College Program Review 2004-2005

## PSYCHOLOGY

### 1. Program Description and Scope

The psychology program offers lower-division major field courses for psychology transfer students, general education credit for those transferring to the California State University or University of California systems, required courses to fulfill major requirements in two-year terminal programs, general education credit for A.A. and A.S. degrees, and courses for community members seeking intellectual stimulation and/or personal development.

All of the psychology courses have a common thread: the scientific investigation of behavioral and mental processes. Four courses have been added to the catalog since 2002: Social Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Murder in America and Biological Psychology. Other courses include: General Psychology, Introduction to Experimental Psychology, Child Development, Adolescent Development, A Survey of Human Development, Psychology of Human Relations, Introduction to Paraprofessional Development, and Psychology in the Workplace. All of the courses are transferable to the CSU system; six of the courses are also transferable to the UC system. The Department now has 12 courses. This is slightly above the average number of offerings at comparable community colleges, which range from 9 to 16 courses.

The psychology department has partnered with other academic departments to enhance the learning experience. Murder in America is cross referenced with the Administration of Justice Department, Paraprofessional Counseling is cross referenced with the counseling/personal development department, and Psychology in the Workplace is cross referenced with the Business Administration department. For the past two semesters, one Psy 101 class has partnered with the English department to form the "English in Psychology Learning Community." Both students and faculty claim the program a success.

Our full-time faculty has changed significantly over the past 7 years, from 3.5 faculty in 1998 to 1 in 1999, 2 in 2001, and now 3 in 2005. Tom McMahon joined the psychology department in 1997 after serving part-time since 1976. Sheldon Helms joined in 2001, and Sarah Cooper in the fall of 2005. The faculty has a renewed sense of excitement and opportunity for the future of the department. We have discussed the possibility of a biological psychology lab (or at least a partnership with the biology department) and are sensing a growing pressure to add a course titled "Introductory Statistics for Behavioral Sciences," which most psychology majors need before they transfer. The faculty members are united in their dedication to promote the scientific method in their courses and to provide appropriate rigor in their classes. Each of the faculty members has a specialty or expertise within the field of psychology.

One of the positive outcomes of writing this program review has been the discovery that three of our courses have yet to be classified for CSU and UC general

education or accepted for credit by the UC system. Two of the courses, Abnormal and Biological Psychology, were approved by the Ohlone Curriculum Committee in Spring, 2004. According to Mike Bowman, Articulation Officer, the courses are still in the university pipeline for approval. Social Psychology has been an active course for approximately three years, and will be submitted for classification in June, 2006. This translates into our students not receiving IGETC GE credit or UC transfer credit until the official designation. This is extremely important for our enrollment, since the vast majority of our students enroll in psychology classes for the purpose of satisfying a general education requirement. Many students will not enroll in a course unless it is accepted by UC. The following data was taken directly from the ASSIST Web site. After comparing our courses with numerous other community college psychology courses, I believe that Social and Abnormal Psychology should have the designation of "IGETC: 4-I CSU GE: D9" and Biological Psychology should have "IGETC: 5B CSU GE: B2, B3 & D9." The Department will follow up on this issue. The following data was copied from the ASSIST Web site.

==== Psychology 2005-06====

PSY 101	General Psychology	3
	IGETC: 4I CSU GE: D9 (CAN PSY 2)	
PSY 102	Introduction to Experimental Psychology	3
	IGETC: 4I CSU GE: D9	
PSY 104	Murder in America	3
	Same as: AJ 119 (Formerly "Murder in the U.S.A." prior to F05)	
PSY 105	Child Development	3
	IGETC: 4I CSU GE: D9	
PSY 106	Adolescent Development	3
	IGETC: 4I CSU GE: D9	
PSY 108	A Survey of Human Development	3
	IGETC: 4I CSU GE: D9	
PSY 110	Psychology of Human Relations	3
	CSU GE: D9	
PSY 112	Social Psychology	3
PSY 114	Introduction to Paraprofessional Counseling	3
	Same as: PD 114 CSU GE: E	
PSY 115	Abnormal Psychology	3
PSY 120	Biological Psychology	3
PSY 139	Psychology in the Workplace	3
	Same as: BA 139	
PSY 201	Special Projects	1
PSY 202	Special Projects	2
PSY 203	Special Projects	3

The psychology department offers the college large enrollments (over 1,600 students per year) and a high WSCH (approximately 4,000) with a relatively small full-time (3) and part-time faculty (0.8) and only a small budget for teaching materials. In the process of teaching psychology in our community, residents are exposed to multicultural perspectives, skills and competencies, a deeper understanding of self, the process of inquiry, critical thinking and the ability to integrate principles into applications.

## **2. Relationship to College Mission and Goals**

The psychology department actively supports and implements eight of the nine different goals, objectives and strategies of the college:

1. GENERAL EDUCATION
  - a. To expose students to the field of social science and health and wellness through traditional classroom instruction (lecture, discussion, and demonstration), research projects, laboratory experiences, innovative multimedia, and nontraditional methods of instruction.
  - b. To provide students with the opportunity to learn about the world and cultural differences through participation in psychology club programs and lectures.
2. TRANSFER EDUCATION
  - a. To coordinate curriculum development through appropriate communication with high schools, other colleges, and universities.
  - b. To provide and articulate lower division and general education breadth courses that are comparable to courses required at both the California State University and the University of California.
3. CAREER EDUCATION
  - a. To develop and offer an Associate Degree and Certificates of Achievement in order to facilitate career and occupational advancement.
  - b. To develop working partnerships with local community agencies (Psy 114)
4. FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS
  - a. To offer students opportunities to improve their abilities in reading, writing and public speaking.
5. STUDENT LIFE/ACTIVITIES
  - a. To provide the opportunity for involvement in the psychology club where students are given the chance to plan and carry out events, raise funds and budget for activities.
6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
  - a. To provide a variety of instructional methods to meet individual learning styles.
7. LIFELONG LEARNING
  - a. To help students learn to access, evaluate, and use information from a variety of sources; these information competency skills are vital for success in education and the workplace.
8. COMMUNITY EDUCATION
  - a. To provide special interest classes, workshops and lectures.

### 3. Program Student Learning Outcomes

#### PROGRAM TEACHING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- A. Understand and appreciate cultural diversity through knowledge of behavioral principles from a cross cultural perspective.
- B. Develop critical thinking skills necessary to critically assess real world issues and the various perspectives on them.
- C. Evaluate scientific studies with an understanding of what constitutes a valid research method and publication source.
- D. Develop effective communication skills by reading primary and secondary source material, discussing course content and writing one or more papers.
- E. Understand some of the diverse assumptions and values that shape our experiences and/or attitudes of the world.
- F. Understand and be able to articulate the major psychological theories.

#### PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES

Student learning outcomes are assessed with a variety of measurement methods, which will often be unique to the instructor and course. They include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Objective exams
- B. Written papers
- C. Class presentations
- D. Class discussions

### 4. Student Success in Reaching Program Outcomes

There is a considerable difference between the retention rate and success rate of students. The retention rate shows the number of students who received an A,B,C,D,F,CR,NC. The success rate is much more limited: A,B,C,CR.

The Chancellor's office reported a slightly higher number of students enrolled than the Ohlone data. For example, the Chancellor's office reported 710 students for Fall, 2002, while the Ohlone data claimed 663 students.

#### RETENTION RATE (Ohlone Psychology)

Semester	Year	Students Enrolled	Retention	Percentage
Fall	2000	656	550	83.8
Spring	2001	684	604	88.3
Fall	2001	677	497	73.4
Spring	2002	652	471	72.2
Fall	2002	710	549	77.3
Spring	2003	692	563	81.3

Fall	2003	726	569	78.3
Spring	2004	741	592	79.9
Fall	2004	701	598	85.3
Spring	2005	707	546	77.2
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>694.6</b>	<b>553.9</b>	<b>79.7</b>

To better understand the retention rate of the psychology department, we used additional data from the Chancellor's office that allowed us to use two more years (2000 to 2002) of data. The retention rate for the year 2000-2001 averaged 86%. The following year it declined to a 4-year low: 72.6%. It fluctuated around 79% for the following two years, and then hit 81% during the 2004-2005 academic year. The average was 79.7% for the five-year period. The overall social science division was very similar.

#### SUCCESS RATE (Ohlone Psychology)

Semester	Year	Students Enrolled	Retention	Percentage
Fall	2000	656	403	61.4
Spring	2001	684	508	74.2
Fall	2001	677	377	55.7
Spring	2002	652	358	54.9
Fall	2002	710	437	61.5
Spring	2003	692	464	67
Fall	2003	726	472	65
Spring	2004	741	475	64
Fall	2004	701	461	65.7
Spring	2005	707	444	62.8
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>694.6</b>	<b>439.9</b>	<b>63.22</b>

Source: Chancellor's Office Data Mart, Dec. 2005

The Department needs to take a close look at the numbers reporting student success. It is obvious that we should strive harder to increase our student success rate of 63.2%. We have no explanation for the 12.8% difference between the Fall and Spring Semesters during the year 2000-2001. The faculty believes that having three full-time instructors in the department beginning with Fall, 2005 will provide continuity and help us move toward higher success rates.

Other observations pertaining to assessment of student success and department statistics:

1. The percent of hours taught by part-time faculty increased by 34.7% during the 2004-2005 academic year. This occurred because Tom McMahon was on sabbatical during this time.
2. FTES has remained fairly stable.
3. FTES during Spring Semesters was down by 16.1%. We have no explanation for this or the lower FTES rates in Spring Semesters compared to Fall Semesters.
4. There was a 27% increase in WSCH over the past three years (WSCH Fall day and Fall evening percentages were added together).
5. Class retention was up 13.4%.

Besides the quantitative data and empirical evidence showing student success in the psychology department, the faculty believes that this report would not be complete without anecdotal evidence presented by students. At the end of each semester, faculty receive a number of complimentary notes and emails from students stating their appreciation for the course material and how it will benefit them in their upper-division and graduate studies, their career and personal life. Many also express their appreciation for the instructors teaching methodology.

## **5. Review of the Teaching Learning Process**

This program review has so far focused on what instructors can do to improve the success rates of their students. Although important, an even more significant element is how prepared students are when they walk into our classrooms for the first time. At this moment, no matter what teaching modality we use, how entertaining the lecture, how exciting the course material, how motivating we can be, and how much effort we put forth for their success, the deck is stacked against us. Many of the students sitting in our classes the first day, perhaps even the majority, - -

1. cannot read at the college level.
2. cannot write at the college level
3. have no concept about what it takes to be successful in college.
4. have never been taught good study habits and skills
5. are first generation college students.
6. are working full-time and taking 12 or more units.

7. want to succeed, but are unwilling (or too busy) to put forth the effort.

Until we deal with these basic issues, we will have a difficult time raising the success rate of our students. There was a time when students could not enter a class unless they had a qualifying score on the English Placement Test. There was a time when more students were encouraged to enroll in study skills classes. There was a time when a pre-enrollment orientation session included a motivational talk, a primer on study skills and individual counseling. Enticing incentives should be offered to any student who enrolls in a study skills course. This topic deserves more time, effort, insight and creativity.

As a department, we will continue to teach study skills in our courses and motivate our students toward success. We believe our learning outcomes are appropriate. We believe the diversity of our faculty offers many different approaches, styles and specialties for our students. We are poised to take the department to new heights now that we have a full contingent of full-time faculty.