

Ohlone College Program Review 2008-2009

PSYCHOLOGY

1. Program Description and Scope

Provide a brief narrative that describes the instructional program/discipline.

The mission of the Psychology Department at Ohlone College is to provide students with the educational experiences and academic environment that promote the mastery of discipline knowledge and methods, the ability to succeed in discipline-related undergraduate programs and careers, and the skills and dispositions needed for citizenship in our diverse culture and the world.

Describe how the program specifically serves students, faculty, staff, and/or the community.

The psychology department offers lower-division course-work for general education credit for A.A. and A.S. degrees, as well as for those transferring to the California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) systems. In addition, course-work is provided for students and community members seeking intellectual stimulation and personal development opportunities.

Courses offered in the psychology department focus on the scientific investigation of behavior and mental processes from a variety of different psychological perspectives. The college currently offers 11 courses, which is comparable to the number of offerings at other community colleges in the Bay Area. All of the courses are transferable to the CSU system and eight of the courses are also transferable to the UC system. Currently, the 11 courses offered and their transferability are:

<u>Course Number & Title</u>	<u>Transfer Status</u>
• (Psy-101) General Psychology	CSU & UC
• (Psy-102) Introduction to Experimental Psychology	CSU & UC
• (Psy-104) Murder in America	CSU
• (Psy-105) Child Development	CSU & UC
• (Psy-106) Adolescent Development	CSU & UC
• (Psy-108) A Survey of Human Development	CSU & UC
• (Psy-112) Social Psychology	CSU & UC
• (Psy-114) Introduction to Paraprofessional Counseling	CSU
• (Psy-115) Abnormal Psychology	CSU & UC
• (Psy-120) Biological Psychology	CSU & UC
• (Psy-139) Psychology in the Workplace	CSU

Describe how the program addresses current needs and applies current technologies.

We address current needs by utilizing up-to-date texts, in addition to classic materials from the field. All full-time faculty members use a variety of instructional technologies in the classroom, including Powerpoint and digital media. Additionally, the Psychology Department has begun offering online courses in General Psychology and Human Development in the last two years to meet the needs of our diverse students.

Since the last program review, the General Psychology (Psy-101) course has been offered as part of a learning community on three different occasions. Learning communities are just another way that the department strives to meet the diverse needs of our students. By creating an organized cohort group that take several classes together, it is hoped that students will gain greater support from other students and greater integration of diverse course materials from collaboration between faculty members.

In the Fall 2008 semester, the psychology club became affiliated with the prestigious Psi Beta Honor Society in Psychology. Sheldon Helms has been an active faculty advisor for the club for several years now and has helped to turn it into a very active and academic club. The club, this Spring 2009, for example, has organized Michael Shermer to come to speak at the college. A noted science writer and critical thinker, Shermer will not only attract attendees from the college, but also the community at large.

Discuss the impact of the program on the college and/or other programs.

The psychology program impacts the college in a number of ways. First, by drawing large numbers of students to take the courses we offer (over 1,800 per year average over from 2004-2008), we contribute greatly to weekly student contact hours. We manage this with a relatively small full-time (3) and part-time faculty and only a small budget for teaching materials.

In addition, we have a direct impact on other college programs by continuing to partner with other academic departments to enhance the learning experience. For example we have three courses that are cross-referenced in order to better suit the needs of students: *Murder in America* is cross-referenced with the Administration of Justice Department, *Paraprofessional Counseling* is cross-referenced with the Counseling Department, and *Psychology in the Workplace* is cross-referenced with the Business Administration Department.

Discuss the impact of the program on the community and the impact of the community on the program.

The psychology program impacts the community by making a variety of interesting courses available for residents to take. By taking our courses, residents are exposed to multicultural perspectives and are given the opportunity to further develop their academic and personal skills. By learning more about human behavior and practicing applying their learning to their own experiences, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves and of others.

The diversity of our community has inspired the program further incorporate a multicultural approach to the study of psychology and has encouraged the instructors to think more carefully about how we can help students develop basic skills in the contexts of our courses.

2. Relationship to College Mission and Goals

Discuss how the program supports the college mission statement.

As a department, we believe in and strive to meet the mission of the college. As stated in the College's mission statement, we strive:

“...to serve the community by offering instruction for basic skills, career entry, university transfer, economic development, and personal enrichment for all who can benefit from our instruction in an environment where student learning success is highly valued, supported, and continually assessed.”

In order to accomplish this, the Department offers a variety of rigorous courses. We also value student success and look for innovative ways to improve student learning.

Discuss how the program supports one or more of the college core values.

Core Value 4: We maintain high standards in our constant pursuit of excellence.

The faculty in the psychology department value high standards of student excellence and teach our courses at a college transfer level. We have noted that a good number of students each semester who are enrolled in our courses, do not have the basic reading, writing, and study skills to be successful in our courses because they are so scholastically demanding. Each semester, we lose a number of students who do not pass our classes or have to drop due to their lack of preparedness. Having noted this, we make an effort to make contact with students who are not doing well. If we determine it is the case that their lack of skills are interfering with their ability to do well in the course, we recommend that they take such courses so that they might be more successful in our courses in the future.

Discuss how the program supports one or more of the college goals.

College Goal 2: Develop across the curriculum the Learning College Model, utilizing methods and technologies that hold the most promise for improving student course and program completion success rates.

The faculty in the psychology department utilize (and experiment with) methods and technologies that increase (or may potentially increase) student course and program completion success rates. For example, we all use PowerPoint as part of our class presentations. It offers the benefit of utilizing color and visual aids (like striking photographs) to enhance student learning. Additionally, we all use close-captioned video clip technologies to illustrate concepts. We all use electronic technologies, such as email to communicate with students, WebCT for online classes or web-enhancements, or blogs. General Psychology, in addition, has been taught on three different occasions as part of a learning community cohort and will participate in another one in the Fall 2009. In addition, we value real life applications of what students are learning in psychology and strive to do this through writing and through group work.

3. Program Student Learning Outcomes

Define expected student learning outcomes at the program level. (Recommend four to six.)

Ohlone College Psychology Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. Describe the major theoretical approaches, findings, and historical trends in psychology;
2. Apply psychological principles to personal, social, and cultural issues;
3. Demonstrate understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity through knowledge of behavioral principles from a cross-cultural perspective.
4. Utilize skeptical inquiry, critical thinking, and the scientific approach in understanding human behavior;
5. Demonstrate information competency and the ability to use computers and other technologies for academic research purposes;

Indicate the process used to determine the student learning outcomes. Program faculty *are encouraged* to work together to reach consensus when defining program student learning outcomes.

The student learning outcomes delineated under the previous heading were determined by the faculty. We discussed what we thought was important and compared our ideas with those set out by the

American Psychological Association (APA) for undergraduates of psychology and those set out by other institutions. By looking these, we were able to determine our five goals.

Indicate any rationale for maintaining or changing established outcomes.

The outcomes were updated to reflect more modern terminology and the beliefs of the faculty.

Map program outcomes to all related course outcomes and other learning experiences (i.e., project based learning or service learning). Common mapping techniques include tables or rubrics. Discuss how assignments, outcomes, and standards for sequenced courses relate to program success.

The following matrix is used to summarize the relationship between program components and program learning objectives:

Course	SLO I	SLO II	SLO III	SLO IV	SLO V
101	I, P, R	I, P, R	I	I, P, R	I, P
102				I, P, R	I, P, R
104		I		I, P	I
105	I, P	I, P	I	I, P, R	I, P
106	I, P	I, P	I	I, P, R	I, P
108	I, P	I, P	I	I, P, R	I, P
112	I, P, R	I, P, R	I	I	I, P
114		I	I, P		
115	I, P, R	I, P	I	I, P, R	I, P, R
120	I	I		I, P, R	I, P, R
139		I	I	I	

I = Introduced: Formally introduces the objective in the course.

P = Practiced: Consistently practices

R = Reinforced: Applied the objective to reinforce it.

Design at least one assessment strategy for each student learning outcome. Additionally, identify assessment data to be considered.

We have decided to assess SLO #4 during this program review. To do so, we have created a number of questions that will be administered in the first three weeks of the course and again in the last three weeks of the course. See Appendix A.

4. Assessment of Student Success in Reaching Program Outcomes

Assess student level of achievement for expected learning outcomes using stated assessment strategies and data.

Previous learning outcomes have been judged in terms of retention rates and completion rates and these data have been useful in tracking these particular trends. (See Appendix B and C.)

In addition to considering retention rates and completion rates type of assessment we are now going to start the process of instituting more specific methods of assessing our SLOs. For this program review, we have determined an assessment technique for assessing SLO #4 as described above for General Psychology (which we all teach).

Analyze changes in students' ability to meet stated outcomes, Identify trends and provide possible contextual explanations for these changes.

Since this is the first time we have instituted this type of SLO assessment strategy, we do not now have data related to this to analyze. We will have such data at the time of the next program review.

In terms of FTES, we have seen a general increases in FTES over the four year period. This could be due to the variety of courses that we offer, which appeal to many students and community members. It could also be that the enrollments are growing or that the economic changes have encouraged people to go back to school to further develop their skills and make themselves more marketable for jobs.

In terms of retention rates and completion rates, over the period from 2004 to 2008, we have seen variability of 4%. In our view, this is a minor variation and likely has to do more with external circumstances (economic, personal, etc.) than the activities of us in the department.

Analyze discrepancies between outcomes and performance levels.

Since this is the first time we have instituted this type of SLO assessment strategy, we do not now have data related to this to analyze. We will have such data at the time of the next program review.

5. Planning and implementing changes to improve learning

Considering assessment results, determine strengths to be continued and areas for improvement (opportunities for innovation).

As expressed in the previous program review, the department is greatly concerned by the number of students entering the community colleges who are underprepared from college-level coursework. We have noted that many of our students have limited reading, writing, motivation, and study skills. As we all know, we must deal with these basic skills issues before our student success rates can reach their full potentials.

We are delighted that the college is working on basic skills and we are doing our part to increase student basic skills by continuing to teach study skills in our courses and working to motivate our students toward success. We eagerly follow the college's innovation in this area and continue seeking innovative ways that we can further contribute to student basic skills and classroom success.

For areas needing improvement, state specific plans including outcomes measured and a time frame for implementation. For example, describe any revisions in pedagogy, facilities, etc. that are needed to improve student success in reaching program learning outcomes.

Some of the facilities do have an impact on student learning and classroom instruction. For example, some of our courses, like General Psychology and Human Development, tend to be very large. Large courses produce certain limitations in terms of discussions and personal student attention. Large classrooms tend to be set up in such a way that it can be very difficult to utilize certain teaching methods. For instance, in rooms with stadium seating it can be very difficult to have students work in groups, while on the other hand, large classes in non-stadium rooms make it difficult to hear students questions and difficult to see student's faces. We know it is not realistic to change the size of some of these courses, since we can certainly fill large courses; however it is important to point out some of their limitations. Classroom design can also produce limitations in teaching and learning opportunities.

Clearly list any additional resources needed.

No additional resources are specifically needed right now. In the future, if the program continues to grow, we may need to hire a new faculty member.

For each resource requested, discuss the potential impact on student learning, program success, and how it relates back to the college vision, mission, values, and/or goals.

No additional resources are specifically needed.

6. Describe Review and Dissemination Team* Involvement

List each team members name and title.

1. Sarah Cooper—Full-time faculty since 2005.
2. Sheldon Helms—Full-time faculty since 2001.
3. Heather McCarty—Full-time history faculty since 2006.
4. Mikelyn Stacey—Dean of Social Sciences and many other things.

Appendix A: SLO Assessment Questions

Above all else, scientists are skeptics. Which of the following describes the skeptics' approach to scientific investigation?

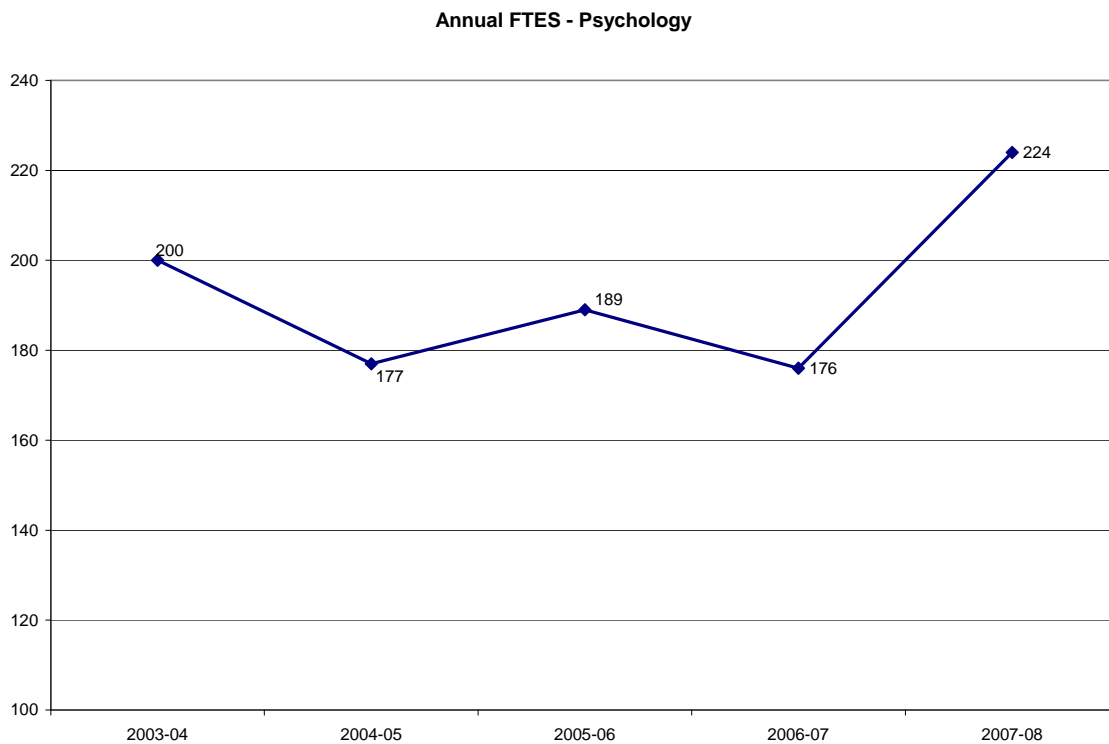
- a. Scientists do not question the conclusions of other researchers after enough research has been conducted.
- b. Scientists only believe things that other scientists agree with.
- c. Scientists apply the null hypothesis, tentatively accepting conclusions only after careful examination of the evidence.
- d. Scientists investigate topics only to prove what they already think about human behavior.

Which of the following is NOT part of the experimental method?

- a. Assuming that one's findings provide absolute proof.
- b. Randomly selecting a sample from the population.
- c. Collecting data and drawing conclusions from the evidence.

- d. Randomly assigning each member of the sample into groups.
Dr. Minnow recently conducted a survey of white, middle-class, male college students. Which of the following populations would her results best apply to?
- a. White males.
 - b. All college students.
 - c. White, middle-class, male college students.
 - d. None of the above.

Appendix B: Annual FTES in Psychology



Total college FTES: 8437, representing a 4.8% gain over 2006-07 and an 8.0% gain over the previous four year average.

Scale for this discipline: 100-240

Contextual comments: 2007-08 FTES represents a 38.6% gain over 2006-07 and a 20.8% gain over the previous four year average.

Appendix C: Instructional Basic Program/Discipline Review Data

Data has not previously been collected, but will be collected starting in the Fall 2009.