

WSU Five-Year Program Review  
Self-Study

Department/Program: Psychology

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Self-Study Team Chair: Eric Amsel

Self-Study Team Members: Aaron Ashley, Todd Baird, Lauren Fowler, Azenett Garza, Joe Horvat, Aubrey Jenkins, Teri Kay, Maria Parrilla de Kokal, Mindy Russell-Stamp, Matthew Schmolesky, and Leigh Shaw.

Contact Information:

Phone: 801.626.6247

Email: eamsel@weber.edu

## A. Brief Introductory Statement

The self-study explores the functioning of the department by examining department productivity, departmental costs, program goals, student success, learning outcomes, faculty achievement, and other measures. By all accounts and measures, the department is functioning exceptionally well. The success of the department is evidenced by increases in the productivity over the past five years (e.g., the number of student credit hours, majors, minors, etc.). One reason for the growth in departmental productivity is the substantial transformation in the department over the past six years, since the last regent review<sup>1</sup>. The department's transformation has included a revised mission statement (section B), overhaul of the curriculum and some courses (Section C), update in how student learning outcomes are assessed and new assessments of the program outcomes, with processes in place to assess individual department classes (Section D), new procedures for student academic and career advising (Section E), change in personnel and expectations about full-time and adjunct faculty roles (Section F), upgrades of faculties and finances (Section G), and expanding relations with external communities (Section H). The self-study reviews and evaluates these changes and explores other changes deemed necessary.

## B. Mission Statement

### PSYCHOLOGY MISSION STATEMENT

Through excellence in training in the science of psychology, the mission of the Department of Psychology at Weber State University is to facilitate students' career aspirations and academic goals in the context of an undergraduate, Liberal Arts University, and a department which values teaching and research.

Psychology first appeared in the curriculum of Weber Academy (which later became Weber State University) in 1892, with its role to enhance the skills of prospective schoolteachers<sup>2</sup>. Psychology became an autonomous department in the 1950s and quickly grew in size and popularity, constituting 4% of the total SCHs for the entire institution. Today, the Psychology Department remains an important part of the academic life of Weber State University and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The mission of the Psychology Department is consistent with the department's long tradition of valuing excellence in teaching. The mission statement was last reviewed and approved by the department in the spring of 2008. The statement centrally specifies undergraduates generally (not specifically majors) as those served by the Department and excellence in training students as the goal of the program. The word "training" was meant to convey an approach to our mission, which goes beyond mere classroom teaching to include student engagement in research, supervised Practicum, and related activities. In this sense, the

<sup>1</sup> Miller, R., Jones, L., Bird, J., & Heward, M (2006). *Program Review Evaluation Team Narrative Report*. <http://www.weber.edu/wsuiimages/psychology/Docs/Assessment/2006ProgramReview.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> May, M. J. (1988). From Mormon academy to four-year state college: Psychology at Weber State College. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 25-32.

department faculty members expect that students acquire not only discipline-specific content knowledge (i.e., definitions, theories, research findings), but also discipline-appropriate ways of thinking (i.e., the scientific attitudes and skills to analyze, interpret, and understand human behavior). Training in discipline-related content and ways of thinking are strongly believed to be effective in promoting students' career aspirations and academic goals, whether or not they continue in the discipline.

Additionally, the department recognizes its role within the university in providing training in the Liberal Arts tradition. This adds another level of responsibility to prepare students to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as responsible, ethical, and engaged citizens who can synthesize and integrate information and make informed decisions. The final feature of the mission statement addresses the influences of the departmental focus on teaching and research. This context emphasizes a consensus among the faculty of the value of teaching and research in the training of students. All faculty members are committed to the importance of student experiences inside and outside the classroom, including research, for them to effectively internalize the values and skills of an education in the discipline in the liberal arts tradition and to be well prepared for any career path, whether that is a job, professional school, or graduate school.

### C. Curriculum

Over the past 6 years, since the last regent's review, the psychology curriculum was overhauled to ensure its compliance with American Psychological Association standards for the undergraduate psychology curriculum<sup>3</sup> and for other pedagogical reasons. The overhaul involved rethinking the program goals, course offerings, and course requirements. The section reviews the APA-inspired program goals, the curriculum that was built around those goals, and the student learning outcomes they imply. Additionally, we outline how the program goals are instantiated in each core course in the curriculum.

#### C1. Program Goals

There are four overall program goals for the psychology department, which are an amalgamation of APA guidelines for the undergraduate curriculum. The APA proposed 10 curricular goals, 5 of which are consistent with the science and application of Psychology as a discipline, and another 5 consistent with a liberal arts education that may be facilitated by the discipline. APA characterized the 10 goals as *guidelines*, meaning that they are recommendations requiring assessment and refinement in the context of institutional and departmental resources and realities.

With limited resources and high student enrollments, there was a consensus that the department's ability to pursue each goal with equal vigor was unrealistic. Moreover, the faculty felt that goals should reflect departmental values about a unitary approach to training that integrates disciplinary and liberal arts outcomes. That is, in contrast to a department with distinct training tracks in the discipline, resulting in students graduating without a shared understanding

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<sup>3</sup> American Psychological Association. (2007). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf>.

of the discipline, the department is committed to training which results in a standardized knowledge base for all graduating majors.

To achieve this unitary approach to training, we sought to create program goals that integrate disciplinary and liberal arts goals specified by APA. The 10 APA goals were condensed into 4 by combining various goals together (e.g., combining APA goals of Values and Socio-Cultural and International Awareness; and Application and Career Planning/Personal Development) and splitting some goals into other ones (e.g., elements of the APA goal of Critical Thinking is in each of the program goals).

### **PROGRAM GOALS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

**Knowledge:** Students will understand psychology as a scientific discipline. Essential to this, students will understand a core set of statistical and methodological knowledge regarding how psychologists critically evaluate, creatively test, and scientifically defend psychological claims. They will also understand a core set of content knowledge addressing the biological, cognitive/behavioral, social/personality, and developmental aspects of behavior.

**Application:** Students will be able to critically apply psychological principles and research to society (e.g., to explain social issues, inform public policy, and/or solve social problems) understand themselves, and achieve career goals.

**Values/Ethics:** Students will share key beliefs, attitudes, and values adopted by scientific psychologists, which include (but are not limited to) skepticism and intellectual curiosity, respect for evidence, tolerance of ambiguity, respect for human diversity, and humility regarding the limits of their psychological knowledge and skills. Students will also grasp the spirit of the APA Code of Ethics, follow its guidelines, and recognize the necessity of ethical behavior in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology.

**Interpersonal Relations and Communication:** Students will exhibit skills to professionally communicate their understanding of terms, concepts, research, and theories of the discipline to others via written and oral formats. Students will also have interpersonal skills necessary to effectively collaborative in groups with others who hold diverse opinions, beliefs, and attitudes.

We attempted to create a limited number of integrated goals that were orthogonal to each other and broadly associated with a different mode of interaction between faculty and students. We arrived at 4 goals. The first goal is student acquisition of content knowledge of the discipline (**Knowledge**), which is largely realized through traditional, relatively impersonal, traditional instructional modes of interaction. The second goal is for students learning the use of their disciplinary knowledge to understand themselves, others, and real-life situations (**Application**). Such a goal involves modes of faculty-student interactions that promote reflective thinking in students, with higher levels of student self-disclosure, engagement, and assessments focusing on concrete situations. The third goal of student adoption of scientific and ethical values

(**Values/Ethics**) goes beyond mere instructional forms of interaction to faculty socializing students into the discipline by serving as models and mentors/tutors. The fourth goal of developing student skills for interpersonal interactions and communications (**Interpersonal Relations and Communication**) involves faculty serving as supervisors, facilitators, and directors of students who provide feedback, advice, comments, direction, and guidance.

## C2. Curriculum Structure and Courses

The Psychology Department prepares students to graduate with a Bachelors of Science degree, with or without honors and/or a teacher training certification. The BS degree program is highly structured, requiring a minimum of 36 credit hours, with 11 credit hours from select core general courses, 15 credit hours from a small range of core content courses, and 10 elective hours from a wide range of core, elective, and individualized instruction/experiential courses. Teaching majors are additionally required to take the Advanced General Psychology (PSY 4000) course. Students completing a BS degree can also complete requirements for Departmental Honors. Honors students must be accepted into the honors program (with a 3.5 GPA requirements) and complete a senior thesis as part of the Psychology major and one additional honors course.

Students are also able to partially complete a Bachelor of Integrated Studies through the psychology department. This degree program enables students to create an interdisciplinary curriculum. BIS students who include psychology in their interdisciplinary curriculum are required to take 18 credit hours, including all 11 credit hours defined by core general courses and 7 elective credit hours. They also complete a final senior project that integrates the disciplines represented in the student's curriculum.

The department also offers a minor in Psychology (regular minor or teaching minor). To complete the regular minor, students are required to take Introductory Psychology and an additional 15 credit hours. In the case of teaching minors, students are required to take the same requirements of the regular minor, but include the Advanced General Psychology (PSY 4000) course.

### C2.a Curriculum Revisions since the last Regents Review

The Psychology Department is constantly examining and revising its curriculum and course offerings. The period since the last review was a particularly active on both fronts. The department's adoption of new APA-inspired learning outcomes was a trigger for the reassessment of the curriculum. But a second trigger was data suggesting that students took many unique pathways through the old psychology curriculum. The curriculum had long been designed to be very flexible in order to allow students to take a more or less rigorous pathway to graduation. The curriculum was notably flexible in the breadth requirements, which required students selecting one or two courses from each of 4 areas (Biological, Experimental, Abnormal/Therapeutic, and Social/Developmental), with each area containing from 4 to 10 courses as options. The flexible curriculum design was part of a broader strategy to ensure high student enrollment in department courses by attracting both stronger and weaker students to the discipline.

There had been changes to the curriculum over time, but the revision implemented in the past 6 years was a wholesale one that transformed the curriculum from a flexible one with many relatively undemanding classes, to a highly structured one with exclusively rigorous courses. The revision of the smorgasbord approach to the breadth requirement ensured that students would graduate with a shared and standardized knowledge base about the discipline. The result was a 15 credit hour core content requirement, which involved choices of no more than 2 courses from each of 5 content domains (Biological, Development, Abnormal, Experimental, and Social/Personality). The core content courses realize the department goal of a unitary approach to training which leads to students graduating with a standardized knowledge base<sup>4</sup>.

The critical review and revision of the curriculum also resulted in a departmental rethinking of faculty roles. The old curriculum, with its flexibility of courses, reflected assumptions about faculty roles that emphasized maximizing their time in the classroom. This came at the expense of individualized instructional activities between faculty and students (e.g., Projects and Research, Directed Readings, Practicum, and Senior Capstone courses), for which faculty received no incentive or compensation. Over the past six years, the department implemented a policy to compensate faculty for individualized work with students.

Although the curriculum as been tightened and now precludes any “easy” pathway to a degree, it also has no capstone requirement for students, despite the significance of such a course in the curriculum.<sup>5</sup> But with over 500 majors and about 60 graduating seniors, most faculty members felt that a senior capstone course based exclusively on individualized research would overwhelm faculty time and departmental resources. The possibility of adding a capstone requirement remains a topic of department discussions. One proposal we are now pursuing is to consider a range of capstone requirements, equated for key student learning outcomes, which would include individual instruction classes (Projects and Research, Practicum), advanced classes (History and Systems, Advanced General Psychology), or a series of required laboratory courses, which would allow students greater engagement in the discipline.

## C2.b. Course Additions since the last Regents Review

Over the past 6 years since the last regent review, there have been changes in the classes composing the curriculum. Classes have been created or reconfigured to better realize department goals based on feedback from student assessments and faculty feedback. For example, data addressing the pattern of student course selection point to them poorly understanding and managing how they academically prepare for career plans. They would not gain sufficient career information until senior year, and they lacked knowledge necessary to effectively prepare academically for preferred career options. To alleviate this problem, PSY 2010, Psychology as a Science and Profession<sup>6</sup>, was created. The course was designed to help

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<sup>4</sup> To see the entire curriculum, go to p. 4 of the student handbook  
<http://www.weber.edu/wsuiimages/psychology/Docs/Forms/AdvisingHandbook11-12.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Dunn, D.S., McCarthy, M., Baker, S., Halonen, J.S., & Hill, G. W, IV. (2007). Quality benchmarks in undergraduate psychology programs. *American Psychologist*, 62, 650-670.

<sup>6</sup> Amsel, E., & Kay, T. (2008). After Introductory Psychology: The next course preparing psychology freshmen and sophomores for undergraduate research. In R. L. Miller, R. F. Rycek, E. Balcetis, S. T. Barney, B. C. Beins, S. R.

student understand career opportunities, particularly in the helping professions, and develop skills to perform well in the major.

Another example of a course development based on student assessment data was the reconfiguration of PSY 1540, Psychology of Adjustment, which had not been taught in years until its resurrection in 2006. In a survey of graduating seniors over the past 15 years, over 40% of students reported being motivated to pursue personal growth through the psychology major. But the personal growth course options in the curriculum had dwindled. The counseling center was recruited to teach PSY 1540 as part of their commitment to university community outreach. The course was reconfigured to address positive psychology and the credit hours were increased for the course from 2 to 3 hours.

Two additional courses, PSY 3020, Child & Adolescent Psychopathology, and PSY 3605, Statistics Laboratory, are new courses created to address holes in or limitations of the Psychology curriculum. The PSY 3020 course covers the burgeoning material in the new field of developmental psychopathology<sup>7</sup>, which has found no other home in the curriculum. Statistics Lab (PSY 3605) is designed to promote application of statistical knowledge and promote SPSS skills that were found to be insufficiently addressed in the regular Psychological Statistics class. This class is now included as a core requirement?

Other classes in the curriculum were added to embrace psychology's role as a "hub science"<sup>8</sup>, meaning that it is a discipline that productively exchanges with many other disciplines. New courses in the curriculum have been added which connect psychology to Neuroscience, Criminal Justice, Athletic Training, and Linguistics. For example, the development of the Neuroscience Program by two faculty members in the psychology department has lead to the outsourcing of a series of biologically-oriented psychology class to the Neuroscience Program. NEUR 2050, Introduction to Neuroscience, was developed by the Neuroscience faculty and listed as a core content course in the Biological area. Also, Drugs and Behavior (PSY 3740) was reconfigured to better fit the Neuroscience program.

True to the "hub" characterization of the discipline, two new psychology courses are cross-listed ones that originated in other departments. Psychology and the Law (PSY 4900) originated in the Criminal Justice department and Psychology of Sport, Injury, and Rehabilitation (PSY 3200) originated in the Athletic Training program, and each is taught by trained psychologists who are faculty in those departments.

Two other long dormant classes were reactivated in the service of curricular goals of the department. For example PSY 4900 (Selected Topics in Psychology) has been reactivated after years of being ignored as a course that serves as a senior seminar. This seminar course offers seniors with a graduate school-like experience in which a topic is studied in depth and focused on the newest research in the field. Over the past 6 years, since the last regents' review, it has

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Burns, R. Smith, & M. E. Ware (Eds.), Developing, promoting, & sustaining the undergraduate research experience in psychology (pp. 10 - 14). Retrieved from <http://teachpsych.org/resources/e-books/ur2008/ur2008.php>.

<sup>7</sup> Cicchetti, D. (1984). The emergence of developmental psychopathology. *Child Development*, 55, 1-7.

<sup>8</sup> Cacioppo, J. T. (2007). Psychology is a hub science, *Observer*, 20, pp.5, 42.

been taught 12 times, including such topics as Adolescent Risk Taking, Health Psychology, Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience, Moral Development, Advanced Adolescent Psychology, Advanced Personality Theory, Stereotyping and Prejudice, Psychology of Language, and Adolescent Intervention and was taught by almost all the faculty members at least once. The second class, PSY 4990, Seminar, is a 1 credit course, which has been reactivated as a colloquium class on three occasions. This class, open to all students, exposes them and faculty alike to the range of research going on in the department, college, university, and broader academic community.

### C3. Curriculum Map

The curriculum map is an accounting of how program goals are instantiated in the curriculum. Pairs of faculty members who teach each general education, core general, core content, and high impact (research and service learning) courses compared and contrasted their classes in light of the program goals, the number of assessments dedicated to each program goal, and the weighting or importance of assessments in the calculation of final grade in the course. They then rated each course on a 1 (low) to 4 (high) scale, which indexes the emphasis given to each program goal in the class<sup>9</sup>.

#### C3.a. General Education Classes

Both Introductory Psychology (PSY 1010) and Interpersonal Relationships (PSY 2000) are General Education classes that must fulfill additional university-based general education goals which are assessed according to different student outcomes than those identified by the program<sup>10</sup>.

Course		Program Goals			
Number	Title	Knowledge	Application	Ethics/Values	Relations and Communication
Psy 1010	Introductory Psychology	4	3	2.5	2
Psy 2000	Interpersonal Relations	4	3	2	4

Note: Introductory Psychology is also a Core General course and is a prerequisite for most other courses in the curriculum.

Introductory Psychology and Interpersonal Relations are weighted most strongly on the **Knowledge** goal as most of the assessments and most highly weighted assessments address the content knowledge. **Interpersonal Relations & Communication** is also related strongly for PSY 2000, but less so for PSY 1010 because of the focus of the course. **Application** was highly rated in both courses, reflecting an emphasis to help students appreciate the real world

<sup>9</sup> For more details of the justifications of the ratings for any given class, go to the department assessment web site (<http://www.weber.edu/psychology/DepartmentalAssessment.html>) and click on the EOL curriculum map for the corresponding course number

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.weber.edu/psychology/DepartmentalAssessment.html>, click on General Education Reauthorization Documents.



implications of the material discussed in the classes. **Ethics/Values** remain important, but because of the enrollments and resources this goal is most challenging to achieve in these classes.

### C3.b. Core Content Classes

Course			Program Goals			
Area	Number	Title	Knowledge	Application	Ethics/Values	Interpersonal Relations and Communication
Area A	Psy 2730	Biological Psychology	4	4	2	3
	Neur 2050	Introduction Neuroscience				
Area B	Psy 3000	Child Psychology	4	3	2	2
	Psy 3140	Adolescent Psychology	4	3	2	2
Area C	Psy 3010	Abnormal Psychology	4	4	3	2
Area D	Psy 3250	Conditioning & Learning	4	4	3.5	3
	Psy 3500	Cognitive Psychology	4	3.5	2.5	3
Area E	Psy 3430	Theories of Personality	4	3	2	3
	Psy 3460	Social Psychology	4	4	4	4
<b>Note:</b> Psychology majors are required to take one course in each area.						

**Knowledge** is the most strongly weighted goal for core content courses, which are designed to ensure that students receive a common understanding of the breadth of the discipline. The next highest rated goal, **Application**, emphasizes the significance of the material for understanding a variety of real world phenomena. The final 2 goals, **Ethics/Values** and **Interpersonal Relations and Communication**, are each rated less highly because of the challenges in resources, time, and class size to emphasize these goals as well.

### C3.c. Core General Classes

Course		Program Goals			
Number	Title	Knowledge	Application	Ethics/Values	Relations and Communication
Psy 3600	Psychological Statistics	4	4	3.5	3.5
Psy 3605	Statistics Laboratory	2	4	3	3
Psy 3610	Research Methods	4	2.5	3.5	4
<b>NOTE:</b> Statistics is a prerequisite for Research Methods and Statistics Lab is a co-requisite for Research Methods.					

For the Psychological Statistics and Research Methods class, **Knowledge** is weighted most strongly, reflecting the importance of the information students are learning in the class. Research Methods also strongly emphasizes **Interpersonal Relations and Communication**, largely because students work in groups, make oral presentations, and complete a research project, which is written using APA style. Psychological Statistics and Statistics Lab most strongly weight **Application** as students in both classes learn how to apply statistical principles to actual data. **Ethics/Values** are highly weighted in all of these core general courses, as they are critical in understanding and adopting the beliefs, values, and attitudes of psychological scientists. More than any other core course in the curriculum, students in these classes are apprentices who are learning the discipline in small and intimate classes. To ensure class environments that promote opportunities for the forms of interaction necessary to inculcate students with scientific beliefs, attitudes, and values, enrollments in Psychological Statistics and Statistics Lab are limited to 20 and 25 respectively, and to 15 in Research Methods.

### C3.d. High Impact Courses

Course		Program Goals			
Number	Title	Knowledge	Application	Ethics/Values	Relations and Communication
Psy 4380	Practicum	2	4	4	2
Psy 4800	Projects and Research	4	3.5	3	3.5
Psy 4830	Directed Readings	4	3.5	3	3.5
Psy 4910	Senior Capstone Research	4	3.5	4	3.5
<b>Note:</b> These courses are not required for Majors, although many junior and senior students enroll in them (see Table 1). These courses may also become the core of a senior capstone requirement.					

The research-oriented high impact courses (PSY 4800, 4830, and 4910) most strongly weight **Knowledge**, which in these courses corresponds to knowledge of the research domain under study. Both **Applications** and **Interpersonal Relations and Communication** are also strongly weighted. The latter goal reflects the demand that students interact with their supervisor and employ professional ways of formally and informally communicating their work with their supervisor and others. The former goal emphasizes students' use of their background knowledge in the discipline to critically evaluate existing and/or creatively produce new knowledge of the research domain. Finally and also relatively highly weighted in the research course, is the **Ethics/Values** goal which reflects students not only knowing, but also acting consistent with the beliefs, attitudes, and values of psychological science, including the importance of following APA ethical rules in treating participants.

Practicum highlights the importance of **Application** and **Ethics/Values** goals as students use their general background, and specific knowledge of the issues addressed in Practicum, to understand and act in the field as a quasi-professional who recognize their

roles and professional responsibilities. The other goals are deemphasized in order to focus on **Application** and **Ethics/Values**.

## **D. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment**

This section presents completed and planned studies assessing program goals, and the specific translation of program goals into learning outcomes and assessments for each general education, core, and high impact course in the curriculum. A summary of Evidence of Learning forms is available on the department's Assessment Web Site.

### **D1. Evidence of Learning: Program Outcomes**

Associated with each of the 10 APA recommended program goals were a series of recommended program learning outcomes. Just as the program goals were condensed for use in the department, so were the learning outcomes. Two condensed learning outcomes were defined for each program goal on the basis of the APA document. The program goals, measureable learning outcomes, measurement devices which have (and will be) used for assessment, the relevant findings and their interpretation, and the resulting actions are outlined below and summarized on the department's Assessment Web Site<sup>11</sup>.

#### **D1.a. Student Learning Outcomes and Evidence of Learning for Knowledge**

##### **The Learning Outcomes Associated with the Program Goal of Knowledge**

1.1. Characterize the nature of the science of psychology and grasp the foundations of the science for consuming and producing psychological claims.

*Students will be able to generally characterize psychology as a science, distinguishing its statistical and research methods with those of other disciplines, specifically describing the strengths and limits of different statistical and research methods, and the validity of conclusions derived from the empirical studies when consuming or producing psychological claims.*

1.2. Demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and synthesis of the breadth and depth of psychological science.

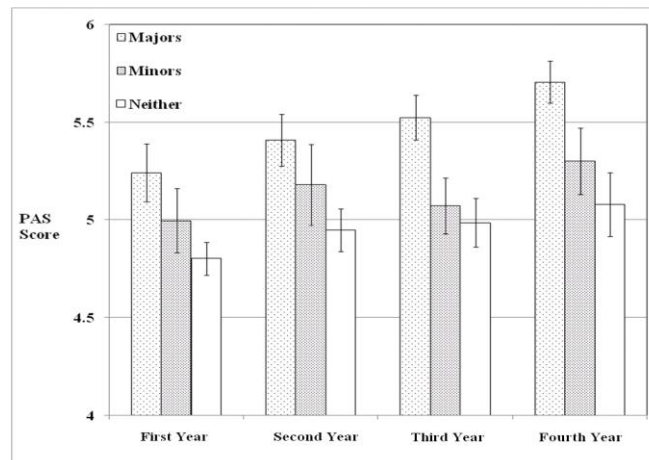
*Students will be able to demonstrate theory and research representing different content areas (biological, developmental, abnormal, experimental, and individual differences) and approaches (e.g., behavioral, biological, cognitive, evolutionary, humanistic, psychodynamic, and socio-cultural) of the discipline and appreciate the interactions at the different levels of analysis synthesizing them into a comprehensive and multifaceted bio-psycho-social explanations human nature.*

<sup>11</sup> To see the summary go to <http://www.weber.edu/psychology/DepartmentalAssessment.html> and click on Evidence of Student Learning: Program

Two learning outcomes are associated with the program goal of **Knowledge**. Student outcome 1.1 focuses on students learning the scientific foundation of the discipline, including its methodological and statistical basis. All faculty members discuss scientific foundations of the discipline in each lower-division and upper-division core and general education course (see class assessment below). In lower-division general education and core courses attention is paid to differences between empirical and non-empirical knowledge, and the nature of the importance of scientific method in psychology. In more advanced, upper-division core courses, students are taught the strengths and weaknesses of various designs relevant to course content. But students receive specialized knowledge of research in the Research Methods (PSY 3610) class in which a broad range of research designs are compared, contrasted, and critiqued in depth (see student learning outcomes for PSY 3610 below). Furthermore, the value of research is emphasized in various senior courses including Projects and Research (PSY 4800), Directed Readings (PSY 4830), and Selected Topics in Psychology (PSY 4900).

One general assessment of Weber State University psychology's students understanding of psychology as a science was performed for the 2007-2008 assessment and was recently published<sup>12</sup>. The study explores WSU Psychology students' performance on the Psychology as Science (PAS) questionnaire<sup>13</sup>, which assesses the beliefs, values, and attitudes associated with adopting scientific psychology. The questionnaire was given to students (N = 438) in classes across the curriculum, with students coded by year in college and majors status. The data revealed linear increases from freshman to senior year in students' scores, suggesting that the department is having an impact on students' core beliefs (see student outcome 3.1 for more detail).

**Figure 1: PAS scores by Year in School and Major Status**

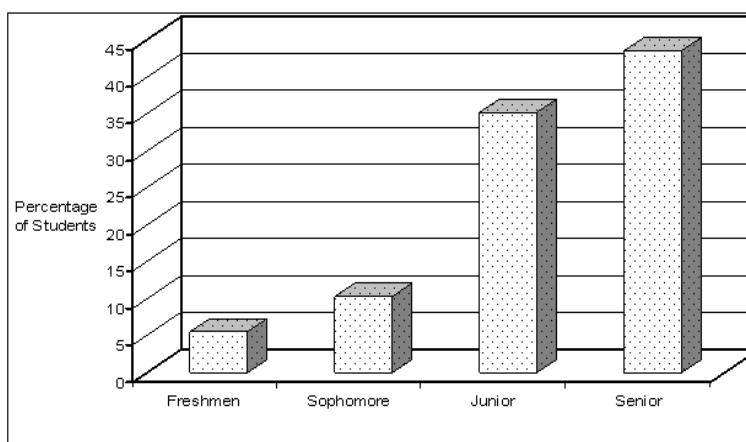


<sup>12</sup> Amsel, E., Baird, T., Ashley, A. (2011). Misconceptions and conceptual change in undergraduate students learning psychology. *Psychology Learning and Teaching*, 10, 3-10.

<sup>13</sup> Friedrich, J. (1996). Assessing students' perceptions of psychology as a science. Validation of a self-report measure. *Teaching of Psychology*, 23, 6-13.

To more directly test students' grasp of the discipline as scientific<sup>14</sup>, their knowledge of science was tested by the TIPS test<sup>15</sup>, which is a standardized assessment of statistical and research design skills. The test was given to students from a range of classes in the curriculum (N= 350), but the final sample was limited to majors, minors, and undeclared students who expressed an interest in becoming majors or minors in psychology (N=114). The students' TIPS performance was analyzed by year in college, controlling for Age, Sex, and GPA. Overall, there were substantial changes in student TIPS scores by student status. To better understand the impact of training on psychology students' performance, the distribution of those scoring in the top third on the TIPS test were examined by year in college, again controlling for Age, Sex, and GPA. The data show that most who scored in the top third on the test were juniors or seniors (Figure 2), suggesting that competence in methodological reasoning increases dramatically during junior year.

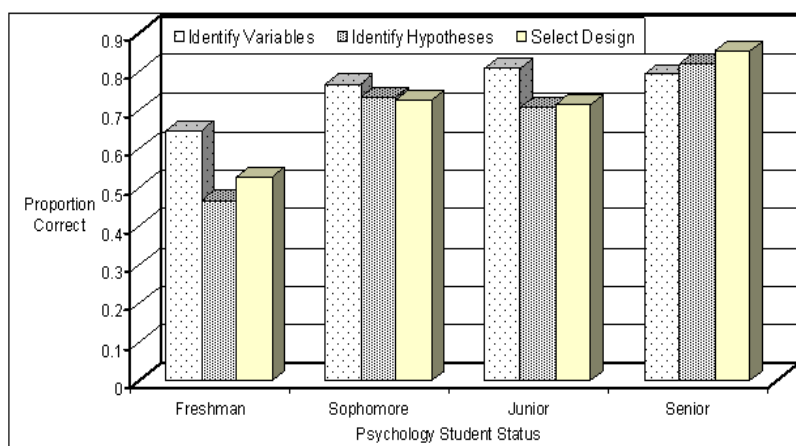
**Figure 2: The Percentage of Psychology Students Scoring in the Top Third on the TIPS Test by Student Status.**



It appears that the strides taken by juniors and seniors in their statistical and methodological reasoning may be due to them consolidating three specific methodological reasoning skills. The three (Identifying independent, dependent, and extraneous variables, articulating appropriate hypotheses, and designing effective tests of particular hypotheses) were strongly correlated with the others and acquired as early as sophomore year (Figure 3). These skills are often repeated in lower level courses, but perhaps only fully consolidated during the Statistics and Research Methods course sequence typically beginning junior year and ending in senior year. The data pointed to the importance of this course sequence and the value of strengthening it with a Statistics Lab, which was added in 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Amsel, E., Kay, T., Riding, R., & Tang, C. (2006, April). The development of scientific and ethical reasoning among psychology majors. Poster presented at RMPA, Park City, UT.

<sup>15</sup> Dillashaw, F.G. & Okey, J.R. (1980). Test of the integrated science process skills for secondary science students. *Science Education*, 64, 601-608.

**Figure 3: Average Percent Correct of Psychology Students on Selective TIPS subtests.**

Confirming the assessment findings, most graduating majors (74%) from 2010 and 2011 rated their research abilities (to design studies, collect, data, and analyze results) as having improved “a lot” due to experiences in the psychology department, with all students suggesting that those skills has at least shown “some” improvement. The average rating of improvements of research skills due to experiences in the department was high ( $M = 4.73$ ) on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale.

Moreover, the expectation that improved research skills would help them improve their skills in critical reading, writing, and thinking was confirmed. Graduating seniors rated themselves as having improved their Critical Thinking, defined as ability to think through problems and develop one’s own ideas and perspectives on psychological issues ( $M = 4.59$ ), Reading Comprehension, defined as grasping the material one reads ( $M = 4.44$ ), and written communication, defined as expressing yourself on paper ( $M = 4.44$ ). There were positive and mostly significant relations between self-reports of the improvements of methodological reasoning and improvements in writing ( $r = .56, p < .01$ ) and reading ( $r = .38, p = .05$ ) and thinking ( $r = .35, p = .08$ ) in the discipline.

The data are interpreted as strong, but incomplete, evidence of students learning about the scientific foundation of the discipline and forms of critical activities it supports in students as writers, readers, and thinkers. However, missing is evidence of students’ specific methodological knowledge, which is available in the assessment of Research Methods (PSY 3610). Future research will explore graduating seniors’ knowledge of methodological and statistical knowledge using the 140 item ETS Psychology exam<sup>16</sup>, which will allow for an assessment of the national standing of our graduates specifically on statistical and methodological knowledge.

Student learning outcome 1.2 addresses their understanding and synthesis of the domains of and approaches to scientific psychology. These outcomes are assessed most directly in the core courses in which they are taught. Each domain and approach is introduced in Introductory Psychology (required for the major), and further explored in the required core content courses. A variety of courses address the synthesis of the approaches and domains. For example, the developmental, abnormal, experimental, and social/personality core courses address the

<sup>16</sup> For more information see <http://www.ets.org/mft/about/content/psychology>.

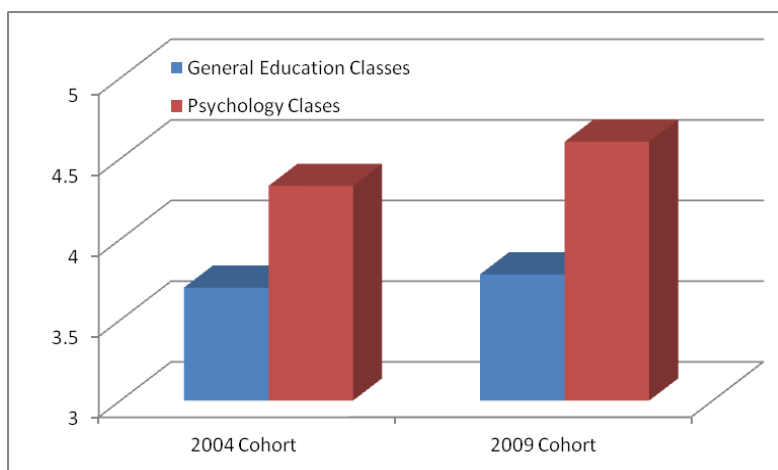
integrative bio-psycho-social model of human nature, as do such advanced courses as Senior Seminar, Projects and Research, Practicum, History and Systems, and Advanced General.

There has not yet been any systematic program-level assessment of students' understanding and synthesis of the domains of and approaches to scientific psychology. We are planning to use the ETS exam to assess graduating seniors' learning of such domains and approaches in psychology as Memory and Cognition, Perception/Sensation/Physiology, Developmental, Clinical/Abnormal, and Social. The plan is to collect ETS test performance among the seniors graduating in winter 2011, spring 2012, and winter 2012. Such data are standardized and will allow a clear picture of the content knowledge of our graduating seniors. We eagerly await the collection of such data so we will know how WSU students fair.

As the core and advanced courses constitute the heart of the undergraduate curriculum, students' general reactions to the courses seems relevant to consider for this assessment. Notably, graduating seniors over the past 12 years<sup>17</sup> ( $N = 263$ ) who completed an extensive questionnaire were grouped into two cohorts, those who graduated prior to 2007 ( $N = 135$ ,  $M = 2004$ , and designated as the 2004 cohort), and in 2008 or later ( $N = 128$ ,  $M = 2009$ , and designated as the 2009 cohort), during which time many of the recent course and curriculum changes took place. The students rated the academic standards of the department on scale from poor (1) to excellent (5). Overall ratings of academic standards ( $M = 4.35$ ) were high and there were no difference between the groups.

The students additionally rated their satisfaction with their psychological and general education classes on a scale from definitively unsatisfied (1) to definitively satisfied (5). Students rated themselves as more satisfied with Psychology ( $M = 4.47$ ) than General Education ( $M = 3.74$ ) classes, and more satisfied in the 2009 cohort ( $M = 4.19$ ) than the 2004 ( $M = 4.02$ ) one. There was also an interaction effect, reflecting the increase in satisfaction only with psychology classes between the cohorts (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Satisfaction Ratings by Classes by Cohort**



<sup>17</sup> A 12-year-old graduating senior questionnaire had a series of questions relevant to most, but not all, learning outcomes of the program goals. New questions were added in 2010. However, the older assessment contains many relevant questions to assess students' perceptions of the nature and quality of their academic experience.

Graduating seniors' positive average ratings for satisfaction with and standards of their psychology courses paralleled their positive ratings for being prepared for graduate school ( $M = 4.48$ ) and willingness to repeat the major, if choosing a major again ( $M = 4.24$ ). Moreover, all these ratings are inter-correlated even after removing variance associated with Gender, Overall GPA, and Psychology GPA (see Table 1), suggesting that these questions tap a common underlying variable, which we call *Educational Quality*.

**Table 1: Partial Correlation Coefficients for Graduating Seniors' Assessments of Educational Quality, Controlling for Gender and University and Departmental GPA.**

	Satisfaction with Psychology Major	Choose Psychology Major Again	Preparation for Graduate School
Choose Psychology	.33**		
Preparation for Grad School	.38**	.24*	
Academic Standards	.58**	.36**	.35**

Note:  $DF = 170$ ,  $* = p < .01$ ,  $** = p < .001$

The Educational Quality variable was created by the extraction of the only factor that emerges in a factor analysis of the four ratings. The variable accounted for 53% of the variance, and each student was assigned a score based on the item loadings on the factor, with an overall mean of the Educational Quality of 0.00. A positive score on the variable represents students' perception that their psychology education was above average in quality. That is, they perceive their education as having high standards which effectively prepares them for graduate school, and about which they are so satisfied that they would repeat it if making a choice of a major again. A negative score reflects a below average perception of their psychology education. The data show a trend towards higher Educational Quality scores among the 2009 ( $M = .11$ ) than the 2004 cohort ( $M = -.11$ ),  $t(247) = 1.68$ ,  $p = .09$ .

Together these findings suggest that over the past 12 years, graduating seniors think that they are receiving rigorous training in their psychology major, which has high standards and prepare them well for graduate school. They have no regret about their investment in the psychology major, as they would choose the same major if they had to do it all over again. Throughout the rest of this analysis, the composite Educational Quality variable will be correlated with students' perceptions of their acquisition of other targeted skills and abilities. These correlations assess whether students' perceptions of their acquisition of other skills and abilities contributes to their perception of the overall satisfaction with their education.

The finding that students' satisfaction with psychology courses was related to them judging the courses as having high standards was the basis for the curriculum revisions we undertook. The data were interpreted as students being more satisfied with their educational experience when challenged by more rigorous coursework. So we proceeded to ratchet-up the rigor of the courses, first by removing easier classes from the curriculum, and later by increasing



the requirements (e.g., Statistics Lab). Further increases in the rigor of the curriculum are pending as the department works out the details of a new capstone requirement.

### **D1.b. Student Learning Outcomes and Evidence of Learning for Application**

#### **The Learning Outcomes Associated with the Program Goal of Application**

- 2.1. Students will be able to transfer their knowledge of psychological science to understanding and improving society.

*Student will be able to describe the ways that psychological science has applications to social issues, processes, and domains (mental health, law, military, business, and education) and demonstrate ways that disciplinary knowledge can be used to inform social policy, solve social problems and improve human functioning.*

- 2.2. Students will be able to transfer their knowledge of psychological science to understanding and improving themselves and planning their future.

*Students will be able to use knowledge of psychology science to promote their personal development and career planning by both gaining insight into their behavior, mental processes, interests, and talents and developing self-management, and self-assessment strategies necessary to reach their personal and professional goals*

Two learning outcomes are associated with the program goal of **Application**. Student outcome 2.1 focuses on students learning how psychological knowledge can be used to understand and solve social issues. Applications of theory and research are often a topic of discussion in particular classes and are addressed in the individual class assessments. A general focus on the application of psychology is found in the required Introductory Psychology (PSY 1010) class. Many of the clinically-oriented classes such as Psychology of Adjustment and Growth (PSY 1540), Interpersonal Relationships (PSY 2000), Abnormal Psychology (PSY 3010), and Child and Adolescent Psychopathology (PSY 3020), highlight the importance of the discipline for understanding and improving mental health and interpersonal relations. Legal and Educational and Business applications of psychology are often topics in Social Psychology (PSY 3460), Conditioning and Learning (PSY 3250), and Cognition PSY 3500). Further explorations of the applications of psychology occur in advanced courses such as Projects and Research (PSY 4800), Directed Readings (PSY 4830), and Selected Topics in Psychology (PSY 4900). But actual hands-on applications of the discipline to clinical and educational settings are the direct focus of Practicum (PSY 4380), which is becoming a designated *Community Service Learning* course through the WSU Community Involvement Center.

One new question asked of recent (2010-2011) graduating seniors in the revised graduating senior questionnaire concerned whether they believed that their experiences in the Psychology Department promoted an ability to apply psychological knowledge, defined as the ability to find real world relevance of theory and research. Students' average ratings were high ( $M = 4.56$ ) on a scale from not at all (1) to a lot (5). Moreover, their application ratings were

positively correlated with the composite Educational Quality variable,  $r = .60$ ,  $N = 17$ ,  $p < .01$ , independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA.

These findings were interpreted as evidence that students value learning how to apply psychological theory and research to real world social issues. Further evidence of student outcomes for this goal in future assessments will address *how* students have used psychological theory to understand and improve society in their classes or other departmental activities. Faculty members will also be encouraged to seek *Community Service Learning* course designation for the classes that promote student work in the community.

Student outcome 2.2 focuses on students learning the ways in which psychological knowledge can be used to promote their personal development and career planning. Personal development is a topic only briefly covered in Introductory Psychology (PSY 1010). However, elements of personal development, such as understanding one's own behavior, mental processes, mechanisms of self-management, motivations, and development, are covered in core requirements such as Biopsychology (PSY 2730), Child Psychology (PSY 3000), Psychology of Adolescence (PSY 3140), Conditioning and Learning (PSY 3250), Cognition (PSY 3500), Social Psychology (PSY 3460) and Theories of Personality (PSY 3430). Furthermore, self improvement is a topic of such elective classes as Interpersonal Relationships (PSY 2000) and the Psychology of Adjustment and Growth (PSY 1450). Drawing out the implications of theory and research for personal growth is a challenge often requiring more innovative teaching strategies (e.g., group work) and assessments (e.g. personal journals or reflections).

Career Planning is a central part of the advising activities in the department (see section E). Required classes that address students' career plans include Introductory Psychology (PSY 1010) and other classes that expose students to applications of psychology in the professional activities of teachers, researchers, therapists, and others. Such classes include Abnormal Psychology (PSY 3010), Biopsychology (PSY 2730), Child Psychology (PSY 3000), Psychology of Adolescence (PSY 3140), Social Psychology (PSY 3460), and Cognition (PSY 3500). Career planning is also discussed extensively in Psychology as a Science and Profession (PSY 2010).

One question asked of recent (2010-2011) graduating seniors concerned whether they believed that the Psychology Department helped promote their career preparation (defined as preparation for graduate school or a job). Again the same 5-point scale was used ranging from not at all (1) to a lot (5). The Career Planning question was answered positively but less so than other questions ( $M = 3.96$ ), although responses to the question were positively correlated with the Educational Quality variable ( $r = .69$ ,  $N = 17$ ,  $p < .01$ ), independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA.

These findings were interpreted as partial evidence that students value career planning aspects of their experience as psychology majors. This comes as no surprise, as 59% of graduating seniors over the past 12 years identified career planning as one goal of them majoring in psychology. Future assessments will address personal growth in the graduating seniors' questionnaire and document the effectiveness of classes and other activities that focus on personal growth and career planning outcomes. The department could expand its career planning activities, which now include preparation for graduate school meetings and a career fair (see Section E). Other activities could focus on job hunting tactics, resume writing, and the interview process. Personal growth classes can be highlighted for interested students to pursue.

### D1.c. Student Learning Outcomes and Evidence of Learning for Values and Ethics

#### The Learning Outcomes Associated with the Program Goal of Values/Ethics

3.1. Students will understand and adopt key attitudes beliefs, values, and responsibilities consistent with being a student of psychological science

*Students will make strides in adopting key beliefs (e.g., monism, determinism), attitudes (skepticism and intellectual curiosity, tolerance of ambiguity) and values (humility regarding their knowledge and skills of being a student of psychological science).*

3.2. Students will understand and uphold the ethical standards which guides their interpersonal, professional and scientific behavior

*Students will learn and behave in a manner consistent with the APA ethical code regarding their research, professional, and interpersonal activities*

Two learning outcomes are associated with the program goal of **Values/Ethics**. Student outcome 3.1 focuses on psychology majors adopting ways of thinking and acting associated with being a student of psychological science. This focus on actually changing student assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values to be consistent with scientific psychology highlights processes of socialization of students into the culture of the discipline. In this account, faculty serve as socializing agents who model, tutor, and mentor students to think and behave in disciplinary-appropriate ways.

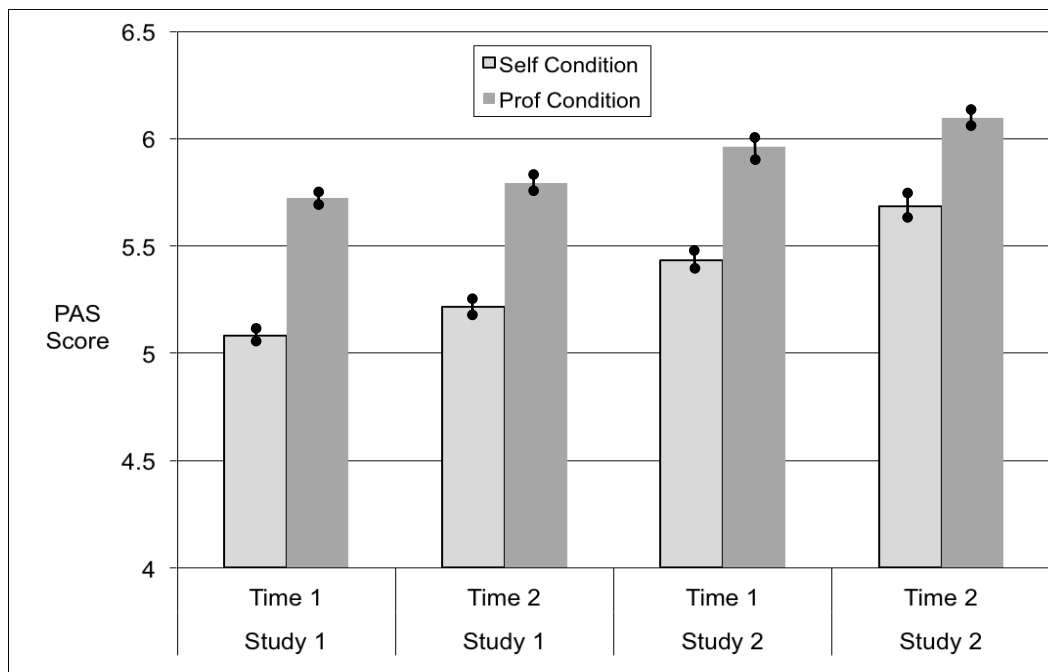
Evidence of faculty serving as role models comes from research on WSU psychology students' adoption of the beliefs, attitudes, and values of scientific psychology. One study demonstrated that psychology students in Introductory Psychology classes recognize that their instructors (regular fulltime faculty members) adopt the beliefs, values, and attitudes of scientific psychology as measured by the Psychology as Science (PAS) questionnaire more strongly than they do<sup>18</sup>. In a follow-up study, students in Introductory Psychology and research-oriented classes were asked to complete the PAS from their own and their Professor's perspective at the beginning and end of the semester<sup>19</sup>. Students in both type of classes had higher PAS scores in the Professor than the Self condition, and there was modest change during the semester in Self PAS scores (see Figure 5). The change in Self PAS scores was positively related to higher Professor PAS scores at the end of the semester, when controlling for initial Professor PAS scores and other variables. The findings suggest the importance of faculty members serving as models about how they think about the discipline. The implications of the findings have been discussed among faculty members about the importance of them serving as role models for

<sup>18</sup> Amsel, E., Johnston, A., Alvarado, E., Kettering, J., Rankin, L., & Ward, M. (2009). The effect of perspective on misconceptions in psychology: A test of conceptual change theory. *The Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 36, 289-296.

<sup>19</sup> Amsel, E., Baird, T., Ashley, A., & Johnston, A. (submitted). Conceptual change in psychology students' acceptance of the scientific foundation of the discipline. *Teaching of Psychology*.

students' adopting the beliefs, attitudes, and values of the discipline inside and outside the classroom.

**Figure 5: PAS scores by Perspective and Time for Students in Introductory Psychology (Study 1) and research-oriented classes (Study 2).**



The role of faculty as mentors and tutors goes beyond their classroom activities to include individualized instruction of students outside the classroom in all manners of contexts. Psychology faculty members have been encouraged and supported over the past several years to mentor and tutor students in individualized instruction classes. In these classes, faculty members supervise students in professionally related activities such as Projects and Research, Directed Readings, or Practicum. If faculty members can serve as intellectual role models when acting as classroom instructors, it is a good bet that they can be more effective in the role of a mentor/tutor.

Departmental policies supporting faculty's mentoring and tutoring students in individualized instruction courses are relatively new, having been a recommendation of the last regent's review (See section J). Prior to the policy, only a subset of faculty members participated in supervising students in individual instruction courses, but now all do so. Also, the number of students enrolled in such classes has shot up dramatically in the past decade as faculty have earned compensation for and embraced their role as mentors and tutors (see Table 2, and see section F for an extensive discussion for means of support for faculty serving as mentors and tutors).

**Table 2: The enrollment of students in various individually supervised classes since the new compensation policy was introduced.**

Year	Projects & Research 2800/4800/4910	Directed Readings 4830	Practicum 4380/4390	TOTAL
05-06	29	27	12	78
06-07	34	20	17	71
07-08	37	23	18	78
08-09	32	16	10	58
09-10	36	20	21	77
10-11	20	28	24	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>424</b>

One notable consequence of more faculty members engaging in individualized instruction is that students form a closer and more significant tie with more faculty members. Over the past 12 years, graduating seniors have been asked to identify faculty members who have been particularly helpful in their experience in the psychology department. The number of faculty members identified has risen significantly from 3.7 in the 2004 cohort to 4.4 in the 2009 cohort,  $F(1, 256) = 11.04, p < .01$ . The number of faculty members identified is also positively correlated ( $r = .23, N = 163, p < .01$ ) to the composite Educational Quality variable (which measures students satisfaction and rigor of their educational experiences), independently of Gender, University GPA and Departmental GPA.

We have interpreted the present data as evidence of the importance of promoting individualized instruction courses to students, and the importance of compensating faculty for their work as mentors and tutors. Such courses will likely form the core of any future required capstone experience for the department. Future assessments will explore more carefully the impact of individualized instruction on students' adopting the beliefs, attitudes, and values of scientific psychology.

To assess goal 2.2, a 10-item Ethics Test, tapping such APA ethical principles as dual role relationships, was distributed to students in a variety of lower- and upper-division Psychology courses<sup>20</sup>. Freshmen ( $M = 7.0$  out of 10) had significantly lower Ethics scores than did Seniors ( $M = 7.54$ ),  $t(309) = 56.36, p < .001$ . However, because performance on the test was not attributed to the number of Psychology courses taken, it was concluded that students' experience in Psychology classes was likely not a source of change in students' ethics reasoning.

<sup>20</sup> Amsel, E., Kay, T., Riding, R., & Tang, C. (2006, April). The development of scientific and ethical reasoning among psychology majors. Poster presented at RMPA, Park City, UT

The lack of change in ethics reasoning is not due to faculty members' failure to regularly address ethical issues in a variety of ways in all of their courses. Faculty members discuss ethics in core courses as it relates to general psychology (PSY 1010), therapy (PSY 3010), medical research (PSY 2730), working with children (PSY 3000, 3140), animal research (PSY 3250), and deceptive research (PSY 3460). Additionally, many faculty members warn students about violating the Student and APA Ethical Code with regard to cheating or plagiarizing. In upper-division courses, the ethical responsibilities of psychologists are discussed in all biological- and psychotherapy-oriented courses. Students in Research Methods learn the APA ethics code with regard to treatment of research participants. Furthermore, all students working on a research project, either as part of or separately from the Research Methods (PSY 3610) class, must complete Informed Consent training before being allowed to submit IRB proposals for approval. Evidence suggests a 100% compliance rate.

The recently revised graduating senior questionnaire had one question added to it addressing the extent to which students' experiences in the Psychology Department promoted their ethical reasoning skills, defined as an ability to behave appropriately in professional and personal circumstances. Students rated it positively ( $M = 4.34$ ) on the 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale, and those ratings were positively correlated with the composite Educational Quality variable ( $r = .71, N = 17, p < .01$ ).

These data are interpreted as evidence of the impact of the training of ethic reasoning, and we are reevaluating the original questionnaire to see whether it was sensitive enough to pick up on students' own perception of their ethical reasoning development. However, there has remained a concern that the ethics training is dispersed across classes in the curriculum and not centrally focused. Ethical training is now a central part of PSY 2010, Psychology as a Science and Profession, but it remains an elective course in the curriculum.

#### **D1.d. Student Learning Outcomes and Evidence of Learning for Interpersonal Relations and Communication**

##### **The Learning Outcomes Associated with the Program Goal of Interpersonal Relations and Communication**

4.1. Students will acquire skills to communicate professionally to others in various formats following disciplinary practices and conventions (e.g., APA style)

*Students' written and oral, communication in formal and informal contexts will demonstrate an adequate level technical competence (grammar, structure, and style) and use of professional conventions (e.g., APA style and other professional conventions).*

4.2. Students' will demonstrate competence to work effectively with others

*Student will learn to effectively work with others which include demonstrating effective listening, communicating, and collaborating skills.*

Two student learning outcomes are associated with the program goal of **Interpersonal Relations and Communications**. Student outcome 4.1 focuses on psychology majors adopting

professional ways of communicating, and is related to the previous discussion of student socialization into the discipline. However, learning to communicate involves not only ways of thinking and behaving, but also technical skills often learned by a systematic process of providing feedback, advice, comments, direction, and guidance.

Although forms of professional communication are required in core content courses, many of these skills are honed in Research Methods (PSY 3610), which requires a formal APA style write up as a substantial part of the grade. This ensures that each graduating senior learns the discipline-appropriate ways of communicating in written and visual forms. Oral communication in the form of presentations is required in many required courses. Additionally, many of our students in Projects and Research, Directed Readings, Practicum, and Capstone Research Project are required to share their work in a quasi (departmental) or actual (conference) professional setting.

Graduating seniors over the past 12 years rated the extent to which their experiences in the Psychology Department promoted their oral and written communication. Students rated them positively ( $M$  Oral = 4.10,  $M$  Written = 4.38) on the 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale. The two ratings were positively correlated to each other ( $r = .26$ ,  $N = 166$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and each is positively correlated to the composite Educational Quality variable (Oral  $r = .19$ ,  $N = 166$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Written  $r = .17$ ,  $N = 166$ ,  $p < .05$ ), independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA. We interpret these data as evidence of student learning, which will be documented more systematically in class-related assessments of APA-style presentations and papers in Research Methods and related classes.

Student outcome 4.2 addresses psychology majors learning to relate well with others, particularly in the context of work groups. Interpersonal relations skills are taught directly in a general education elective class (Interpersonal Relationships, PSY 2000), but student groups are common in classes throughout the curriculum. Faculty student collaborations, often forgotten as a critical experience to form professional interpersonal relationship skills, is central in individual instruction courses.

Graduating seniors over the past 12 years rated the extent to which their experiences in the Psychology Department promoted their interpersonal relationships skills. Student ratings were positive ( $M = 4.29$ ) on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale, and they were positively correlated to the composite Educational Quality variable ( $r = .28$ ,  $N = 168$ ,  $p < .05$ ), independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA.

The data are interpreted as partial evidence of students improving their skills to work with others. The students' own perceptions need to be confirmed by additional evidence of successful learning from the students' learning outcome data in classes that promote interpersonal relations.

## **D2. EOL: General Education, Core Content, and High Impact or Community Service Courses**

The summary tables describing the instantiation of the program goals, their translation into specific student learning outcomes, and the associated course assessments designated to

measure the outcomes are available on the department assessment website<sup>21</sup>. The collection and analysis of the data will take place for each course over the next few years (see Section J.2). Pairs of faculty will track their students' performance and summarize the results and interpretations. These data will be used by the faculty members who teach the courses to make decisions about and refinements to their courses.

## E. Academic Advising

The Psychology Department engages in multiple forms of advising of majors and minors, including academic and career advising. In this section, we review newly created academic advisement procedures and report data of its effectiveness. The procedures were instituted after the 2005 Regent Review team's recommendation that the procedures at the time were inadequate. We also review the forms of formal and informal career advising and report data bearing on its quality.

### E.1 Academic Advising

In the past, the Psychology Department handled major and minor academic advising in a way similar to how the institution handles pre-major advising. Notably, despite the well acknowledged importance of advising, there has been a tradition of *not* requiring advising at Weber State University. Incoming freshmen at the institution are not required to attend advising sessions, but are given information, support, and access to an advisor should they request it. Academic advising in the Psychology Department for a long time was not required, but strongly recommended, with each faculty serving as an advisor to majors and minors as alphabetically designated.

Graduating seniors over the past 12 years<sup>22</sup> rated their satisfaction with their advising experience on a 1 to 5 scale. Students rated their advising experience moderately positively ( $M = 3.96$ ) on the 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale and their ratings correlated positively with the composite Educational Quality variable ( $r = .42$ ,  $N = 145$ ,  $p < .001$ ), independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA. We interpret these data as evidence that the quality of advising matters for students' experience of a quality education but that the scores, while positive, were not particularly high. This was also noted by the review team during the last regent's review, who commented on the limits of an advising process, citing it as less proactive than it should be<sup>23</sup>!

Since the last review, the Psychology Department worked with The Registrar's Office to add an additional graduation requirement for major and minor students, designated as the Psychology Program Declaration. Upon formally registering as a Psychology major or minor, students see an unchecked box next to the Psychology Program Declaration requirements in CatTracks, the university's student record program. Students are told when they declare psychology as a major or minor that to fulfill the requirement they must meet for 15 minutes

<sup>21</sup> Go to the department assessment web site (<http://www.weber.edu/psychology/DepartmentalAssessment.html>) and click on Evidence of Student Learning: Curriculum Map, Classes, Artifacts.

<sup>22</sup> The 2010-2011 graduating seniors were not asked this question, but a series of other questions about their advising experiences which are reported below.

<sup>23</sup> Miller, R., Jones, L., Bird, J., & Heward, M (2006). *Program Review Evaluation Team Narrative Report*. <http://www.weber.edu/wsuiimages/psychology/Docs/Assessment/2006ProgramReview.pdf>.



with the Department Advisor. The Department Advisor is a faculty member who receives a course reduction each semester to meet with students and to answer questions via email and phone. During the advising meeting, majors and minors learn about psychology requirements, discuss their career interests as they related to class section, and work with the advisor to plan their course sequence. With the advisor's help, the course sequence is entered as a plan into CatTracks, which, for some students, is the first time they learn about the functionality of the student records software.

The new departmental advisor is also responsible to create and regularly update the new Advisement Handbook<sup>24</sup> which replaces the newsletter which was prepared each year. Additionally, the advisor is responsible to direct updates of the all advising information on the web site. The department advisor also chairs the department Advising Committee in setting policies. Finally, the Departmental Advisor works with the College Advisor to ensure that students are on track to fulfill all department and university requirements for graduation.

The new departmental advisor and the advising requirement allow us to track students and, for the first time, assess the retention rate of students declaring as a major or minor in the department. Over the past 5 semesters (Fall 2009 0 Fall 2011), every major and minor who signed up for advising ( $N = 510$ ,  $M = 102$  per semester) was tracked to determine whether they retained their psychology declaration. The retention rate was 83%, which we think reflects the broader satisfaction students have in the department. Finally, recent (2010-2011) graduating seniors were asked 5 new questions in the revised graduating senior questionnaire concerning their satisfaction with their academic advising. Participants answered each question on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale. The questions and mean ratings are in Table 3 and the data were interpreted as student satisfaction with the advising process.

**Table 3: Mean Responses of 2010-2011 Graduating Seniors' (N = 24) Satisfaction with their Advising Experience.**

Question		Mean
1	The Psychology Advisor helped me understand the graduation requirements for a Psychology Major/Minor.	4.67
2	The Psychology Advisor showed me useful resources in CatTracks.	4.32
3	The Psychology Advisor treated me with respect	4.76
4	The Psychology Advisor answered my questions	4.76
5	The Psychology Advisor directed me to those who could offer me career and graduate school advice.	4.33
Note: The ratings were made on a 1-5 scale.		

## E2. Career Advising

<sup>24</sup> Available on the departmental web site (<http://weber.edu/psychology>)

Although the Departmental Advisor does not perform career advising, question 5 shows that students were largely satisfied that the advisor directed them to resources to get such help. These resources include faculty members in and out of the department and university, departmental career-advising events, and university services.

As part of their mentoring and tutoring roles, Psychology faculty members often offer students career advice. Students get one-on-one help in all aspects of their job and graduate school applications from faculty who they know the best and who may have personal and professional contacts. For example, a number of students have found full-time jobs through their work in Practicum, or graduate school acceptance at schools from where faculty members have graduated or have colleagues. Faculty help with all aspects of students' career planning and preparation, from offering them a range of academic and professional career possibilities, giving them advice on their vitas or resumes, editing their personal statements or letters to employers, and writing letters of recommendation, among other things. Sometimes psychology department faculty will send students to other faculty in the university, or in other universities, who may be better suited to offer advice.

Many Psychology classes address career planning, but few specifically focus on it. One exception is PSY 2010, Psychology as a Science and Profession, in which students learn a great deal about career paths in the discipline, including the many ways to enter the helping professions. Discipline-related jobs are also a topic class, with a resume writing and interview session hosted by the university's Career Services office.

The department also engages in a range of activities and hosts a variety of events for students to prepare for careers.

1. Department prepares a Handbook which details information relevant for career advising. The information in the Handbook also is available on the Department of Psychology web site.
2. The Psychology Department hosts a social session (with pizza and soft drinks) yearly during which faculty members are introduced and questions about academic and career issues are addressed. The event attracts about 30 students.
3. Each fall and spring semester, Psi Chi, the Honor Society in Psychology, with support of the Psychology Department, hosts a lecture by faculty about getting into graduate school. Faculty members prepare a lecture, with handouts, discussing the various issues surrounding graduate school preparation, application, and success. When possible, Weber State University graduates who have gone on to graduate school are invited to be part of the discussion. These events attract approximately 30 students each semester.
4. Over the past two years, the Psychology Department has hosted a Graduate School Fair in which 5 local university programs which offer graduate programs in demand by our students are invited to spend time with students and formally present their programs. Over the past two years, invited programs have included Clinical Psychology (Idaho State University and University of Utah), Experimental Psychology (Idaho State University), Educational Psychology (University of Utah), Marriage and Family Therapy (Utah State University), Social Work (Brigham Young

University), Social Work (Brigham Young University), Professional School Counseling (Utah State University), and Forensic Psychology (University of Phoenix). The event attracts about 100 students each year.

Recent graduating seniors were asked about their satisfaction with the career planning support they experienced (defined as being prepared for graduate school or a job) in the revised graduating senior questionnaire. They rated their satisfaction on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot) scale and averaged a moderately positive response ( $M = 3.92$ ). Their ratings correlated positively with the composite Educational Quality variable ( $r = .67$ ,  $N = 15$ ,  $p < .01$ ), independently of Gender, University GPA, and Psychology GPA. Again, we interpret these data as evidence that the quality of career advising matters to students and their perception of having received a quality education. However, the scores were only moderately positive, suggesting that more can be done to improve career planning experiences of students.

### **E3. Past Changes and Future Recommendations**

The response of the department to reviewers' concerns about the laissez-faire academic advising process was to require academic advising for students as soon as they declare as Psychology majors or minors. Initial evidence suggests that the requiring academic advising has ensured a high level of retention of students in the department and high ratings of student satisfaction. Career advising needs to be improved. The department will consider various options over the next several years, including requiring PSY 2010 (like the University of Utah, Utah State University and other colleges in the USHE system), or a graduation preparation class (which will require the ETS exam and career preparation). Other options include adding more graduate school and job preparation opportunities sponsored by the department.

## **F. Faculty**

This section examines the not just the nature, background, and effectiveness of faculty, but also changes in the faculty roles and responsibilities in the department, particularly as tutors and mentors to students

### **F1. Faculty Demographic Information**

As documented in Appendix C, the full-time psychology faculty represented a diverse group of 11 full time faculty members<sup>25</sup>. Three faculty members are Full Professors, 3 are Associate Professors, 3 are Assistant Professors, and 2 are Lecturers. Of the 11 faculty members, 6 are tenured and 5 are untenured. The average years of service is over a decade ( $M = 11.27$  years), with a high standard deviation ( $sd = 7.12$  years) reflecting a healthy distribution of experience and age among the faculty. Gender is well balanced with 6 women and 5 men among department faculty, and there are a number of faculty members who are members of recognized minority groups. The faculty members reflect a broad cross-section of training in the discipline, with 2 Clinicians, 2 Developmental Psychologists, 2 Neuroscientists, 2 Social Psychologists, and

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<sup>25</sup> The department has 13 FTE faculty members but is down 2 FTE due to retirement. We are in the process of hiring a general experiential psychologist to begin Fall, 2012.

one each of a Cognitive Psychologist, School Psychologist, and Cross-Cultural/Developmental Psychologist. We are literally a Noah's Ark of psychology!

## **F2. Programmatic/Departmental Teaching Standards**

Although there are no formal departmental teaching standards<sup>26</sup>, there is long tradition and culture of teaching excellence in the department. Moreover, there is now a strong departmental consensus regarding the nature of quality teaching. Years of informal and formal discussions have resulted in broad acceptance of three shared pedagogical values<sup>27</sup>. The first is the value is to challenge students in rigorous courses, which highlights the scientific nature of the discipline. Having rigorous scientific content is implicated as faculty members set course goals (learning about the evidence relevant to the topic), prepare and revise lectures (appealing to evidence justifying claims made in class), and select textbooks (selection of reading material which emphasizes the importance of evidence), and develop assessments (tests which highlight the scientific nature of the discipline).

The second shared pedagogical value is the expectation that faculty will serve as mentors and tutors to students. Faculty members serve formally as mentors and tutors to students by working one-on-one with them in supervised instruction classes, including Directed Readings, Projects and Research, Capstone Research Project, and Practicum. Over the past 6 years, all psychology faculty members have supervised students in research or practicum courses, generating 916 student credit hours. Faculty members also serve informally as mentors and tutors by being available to students during office hours, after class, and through all manners of new technologies. For the most part, faculty members make themselves available to students and the students feel extraordinarily connected to faculty members, as documented by the number of faculty students identify as helpful to them.

The third shared pedagogical value is that faculty members are focused on student academic success and achievement. Faculty members hold high standards for student achievement and treat students as capable of accomplishing more than what the students themselves generally believe for themselves. For example, it is widely established that students perform best and are most successful when they are thoroughly assessed. In lieu of standard assessments in psychology courses (midterm and final exams and a term paper), faculty members tend to assess students using a variety of assessments including exams, assignments, and other forms (quizzes, discussions, service projects, presentations, etc.). They do this despite the resulting workload as faculty members perform all their own grading (there are no Teaching Assistants).

These shared pedagogical values of creating a rigorous curriculum, serving as mentors and tutors, and promoting student success and achievements function as departmental teaching standards as they inform all aspects of faculty work with students. The values are widely

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<sup>26</sup> Of course there are college (tenure-related teaching standards) and university (promotion-related teaching standards) to which psychology faculty must conform.

<sup>27</sup> Section C.2 above documents the process of working through the curriculum out of which these pedagogical values emerged .

discussed in faculty development sessions (sessions which focus on teaching technologies, strategies, and content) and frequently chatted about in informal faculty interactions. Fidelity to pedagogical values is assessed at each level of faculty review (promotion, tenure, and merit). New faculty members and adjuncts are informed quickly about these pedagogical values by their socialization into the department.

It should come as no surprise that faculty members differ widely in how shared pedagogical values are instantiated in their classes. Such diversity in teaching styles is not simply defended on the basis of academic freedom, a right strongly protected in the department, but also embraced by all department members. The importance of having a diversity of approaches to teaching and supervising students is espoused in the departmental policy that each core required class in the curriculum is taught by at least two faculty members. This policy increases the likelihood that members of our student body will be taught by a faculty member with a pedagogical style that they find compatible.

### **F3. Faculty Qualifications**

All but one faculty member has a Ph.D., the terminal degree in the field, and that one has a M.A. with some doctoral-level course work (Parrilla). Three faculty members had full-time teaching appointments at other institutions prior to teaching at Weber State University (Amsel, Horvat, and Russell-Stamp). Three faculty members have completed post-doctoral research training (Amsel, Ashley, and Schmolesky). Two faculty members earned and have retained their clinical licenses (Baird and Kay).

### **F4. Evidence of Effective Instruction**

Overall faculty effectiveness, as measured by student satisfaction, is quite high. Responses to the 4 questions composing the composite Educational Quality measure, described in section D, was positive (Satisfaction,  $M = 4.47$ , Academic Standards,  $M = 4.35$ , Preparation for Grad School,  $M = 4.48$ , and Willingness to Repeat Major,  $M = 4.24$ ). Moreover, the overall course evaluation ratings (on a 1–5 scale) average over the past 9 semesters was 4.58, which is also quite high. This average is also very consistent over the semesters (see Figure 5) despite a number of personnel changes and the maturation of full-time and adjunct faculty members.

**Figure 5: Mean Course Evaluation Scores (on a 1-5 scale) by Semester.**



Students' satisfaction with their educational experience in the Psychology Department is further evidenced by graduating seniors' identification of, on average, approximately 4 faculty members as being particularly helpful to their education, a rate reflecting many of the departmental pedagogical values. Also 2010-2011 graduating seniors' own narratives about their best (and worst) educational experiences in the department highlight the effectiveness of the faculty. The positive narratives were mostly (52%) about faculty (regular and adjuncts) whose classes students really enjoyed, as exemplified below:

*My best experience in Weber State Psychology department was the diversity of classes and teachers.*

*My educational experiences in the psychology department were finding a field of study that I genuinely enjoyed learning about. Almost every teacher that I have taken a course from in this department has enhanced my love for psychology.*

*Research Methods with Dr. \*\*\*\*\* was a class that truly challenged my critical thinking skills. I'm able to look at research differently because Dr. \*\*\*\*\* gave his students ways to challenge, evaluate, and apply things he taught. Thank Dr. \*\*\*\*\* ☺.*

*\*\*\*\*\*'s Biopsychology class was very fun.*

*I enjoyed classes instructed by \*\*\*\*\*. She has a great teaching ability and passion for what she does. She keeps students interested during class, which always helped me remember the material.*

*Dr. \*\*\*\*\*'s last semester/class; Test and Measures.*

*Abnormal Psychology with Dr. \*\*\*\*\*, Best class I have ever been in, learned the most.*

*\*\*\*\*\*, she is so encouraging as a professor and I learned so much from her. She's inspirational and probably one of the best professors I've ever had.*

The positive narratives were also about students' experience in individualized instruction (35%), exemplified by the following comments:

*The two psychology practicum's that I was involved in (Washington Terrace Elementary and Mount Ogden Junior High-math masters and Washington High School). I enjoyed my experience in working with the professors, other WSU students, the students at the school, and the faculty at the school.*

*My best experiences were in the research. I was given the chance to research, design my study, collect data, enter data, run statistics and write up my research project. I submitted the paper to the Psi Chi leadership conference, and RMPA, and was accepted to both. I plan to present at both.*

*Learning how to do research, and carrying out my own research idea and seeing the effects. The one to one mentoring with the professors with directed readings and research were my best learning experiences.*

*Conducting my own Independent Research Project. It was a wonderful opportunity to see what research is really like.*

The negative experiences also confirm the shared pedagogical values, as the comments often made reference to the rigor of the classes and challenges they posed to students (32%), as suggested by the following<sup>28</sup>.

*The best and worst was my Research class. I did a poor job in using theory and experimentation together, but I learned a great deal about how to research and how to analyze research that I have found. It was tough, but it was worth it.*

*Worst: I wouldn't really say I had any "horrible" experiences within the Psychology Department. Research Methods was a really tough class for me. Besides that, it was great.*

*Worst: ...Probably Research Methods, but just because it was so much work and such a challenge. Not because the class was bad.*

### **i. Regular Faculty**

The Psychology Department boasts faculty members who are among the most engaged and productive on campus, as evidenced by awards, honors, and acknowledgements showered upon them. The recognition includes three Crystal Crest award winners (the student-based awards), two Presidential Distinguished Professors (a monetary award open only to senior faculty members), an Endowed Professor (an overall outstanding faculty award from the university), a Lowe Award for Innovative Teaching winner (administration-based teaching award), a Hinckley Award winner (an overall outstanding faculty award from the university), a Last Lecture honoree (who was invited to give the annual last lecture), and a Carnegie/CASE Utah Professor of the Year. These honors have been awarded to 5 different faculty members (almost half the faculty).

The teaching expertise of the department faculty members has further been acknowledged by them being tapped in a variety of ways, including serving on the boards of directors of the National Conferences on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) and Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) organizations, founder and the present director of the national minority student honors society (Psi Alpha Omega), organizers and regular presenters of the Rocky Mountain Psychology Association teaching conference, and publishing widely in the field of teaching and learning in psychology. Within the university, Psychology faculty members are regularly invited to give presentations to other faculty, adjuncts, the university trustees, and the

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<sup>28</sup> Other negative complaints concerned faculty (regular faculty and adjuncts) teaching styles (25%) and situational concerns (43%) which included having to taking night courses, not taking practicum, etc.

university advisory council on such topics as the process of student learning, undergraduate research, student academic dishonesty, and service learning.

Additional evidence of the effectiveness of the regular faculty is the emergence of their roles as mentors and tutors and their embracing of such roles. Historically, faculty members in the department were required to maximize their time in the classroom, and few engaged in individualized instruction (supervising students in community service, Practicum, and Research). But as forms of individualized instruction have become valued by the institution, the discipline (see footnote 1), and the previous Regents Review team (see footnote 2), faculty members have been encouraged and compensated for such activities with students. The compensation package, based on WSU policy<sup>29</sup>, includes earning 3 credit hour course reductions for each 12 credit hours of individualized instruction they complete. This policy was initiated in 2005-2006 and, over the past six years, over 424 students have been enrolled in individualized research courses which have generated 915 credit hours. At that rate, about 76 course reductions could have been taken by faculty members, when in fact only 10 have been granted, due to concerns about class coverage. Thus, although faculty members are being compensated for work in individualized instruction, their rate of compensation remains below what they have earned. Despite this mismatch, they continue to eagerly engage in mentoring and tutoring roles.

## **ii. Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct FTEs over the past 5 years have stayed fairly stable at about 36% of total FTEs (See Appendix C). However, the adjunct category includes regular faculty teaching online courses for overload pay. Department policy ensures that regular faculty members have the right to teach overload classes, and they have chosen to teach online classes which, until recently, were more financially lucrative than teaching face-to-face classes. Regular faculty members who teach overload make up about half the adjunct FTEs (about 1,000 SCHs per year). The rest of the adjunct FTEs (approximately another 1000 SCHs per year) are made up of non-full-time adjuncts, who teach in any given semester as few as 7 and as many as 18 classes. Each adjunct typically teaches only one or two courses. The background of the adjuncts (see Appendix C) include emeritus faculty members from the department (Bancroft and Haslam), psychologists in the community (Flinders and Owen), our own graduates who have gone on in academia (Ashdown, Farnsworth, and Knapp), members of the counseling center (Adams, Alder, Helmbrecht, Hunter, Oreshnick, and Wood), other staff on campus (Chapman and Wilhelmson), and recent Ph.D. graduates seeking teaching experience (Marquit, Richards, and Weeks).

As per departmental policy, most of the adjuncts teach lower division courses (PSY 1010, 1540, 2000) and do so to students most of whom are unlikely to be majors or minors. The adjuncts generally teach at night, on weekends, at satellite campuses, or during the summer. However, because of retirements, sabbaticals, and leaves, there have been more and more adjuncts teaching multiple upper-division classes during the day at the Ogden campus. When we have hired new adjunct faculty members, they are selected after an assessment by the Credentials Committee, which reviews the candidates' vita and course evaluations. Preference is given to hire adjuncts who have taught courses for which they are being hired and for whom course evaluations exist. Once hired, adjuncts may receive visits by the chair and/or the members of the

<sup>29</sup> See PPM 4-6 A4 available at [http://www.weber.edu/ppm/Policies/4-6\\_FacWorkLoad.html](http://www.weber.edu/ppm/Policies/4-6_FacWorkLoad.html).



Credential Committee, and are expected to have student course evaluations collected in each of their classes. Adjuncts teaching multiple upper division courses also attend weekly meetings with the chair during their first semester. These meetings are opportunities for adjuncts to understand expectations, discuss teaching tactics and strategies, and to anticipate and resolve any problems. The adjuncts are also encouraged to attend the yearly university retreat for adjuncts.

Evidence of the teaching effectiveness of adjuncts has included the Credential Committee's review of each adjunct's teaching performance and course evaluations. The average teaching evaluation rating of the adjuncts over the past several academic semesters is 4.35, which, although lower than the overall teaching average of 4.57, remains positive. For the most part the teaching of the adjuncts is seen as effective. However, there have been stronger and weaker adjuncts, and in the case of weaker ones, a process of remediation is initiated including extra classroom visits by the chair and discussions with them about teaching different classes or teaching at different sites, until there is improvement or a *no rehire* decision is made. Two such no rehire decisions have been made over the past five years.

### **F5. Mentoring Activities**

This document has detailed the student mentoring activities of faculty members in sections C, D, and F.4.a. The focus of this section is the mentoring of faculty. New faculty members (including new full-time lecturers, tenure-track assistant professors, and adjunct faculty teaching multiple upper-division courses) are systematically mentored and provided with professional development opportunities. New full-time and tenure track faculty members are encouraged to select one or more mentors with whom to collaborate in all aspects of their professional development. The mentors may be selected in discussion with the chair so that the mentor would be a seasoned faculty member whose background will be relevant to the new faculty member. During their first semester, the new full-time, tenure track, and adjuncts teaching substantial loads meet with the chair to discuss their experiences and generally learn about departmental standards. In addition, the department chair has regular formal (see F.7) and informal discussions with all faculty members regarding their progress, needs, and ways of facilitating their professional development.

### **F.6 Diversity of Faculty**

The faculty include three minorities (two Latinas and a Native American) and a balance of male (N = 5) and female (N = 6) faculty. This gender and ethnic diversity of faculty reflects a change in the department which had been largely composed of white males as recently as a decade ago.

### **F.7 Ongoing Review and Professional Development**

The formal review process typically occurs through the tenure and promotion process. Tenure and promotion to Associate Professor occurs after 6 years and promotion to Full Professor in a subsequent 6 years. For tenure and promotion, the chair is responsible for keeping faculty on track, and tenure-track faculty and the chair are expected to meet regularly to plan successful negotiation of the tenure and promotion criteria.

Additionally, all faculty members are also formally reviewed in a biennial merit review process. The merit review also constitutes the university's post tenure review for senior faculty members. For the merit review, faculty members prepare a report of accomplishments in the previous two years and there is a faculty-chair discussion to identify strengths and weaknesses and to promote planning. The merit evaluation is used as a basis for merit pay, when funds are made available from the legislature.

Faculty development for continuing full-time and adjunct faculty is handled at the university level through the Teaching and Learning Forum. In addition, the department has cultivated a number of informal procedures for its own faculty development. Once a month Friday faculty development lunches are organized for faculty. These lunch discussions (with lunch provided) have addressed such topics as teaching, ethics, technology, policies, and curriculum and have included distinguished guests (John Cacioppo).

## **G. Support Staff, Administration, Facilities, Equipment, and Library.**

### **G1. Adequacy of Staff**

Like most other departments in the college and university, the Psychology Department employs one full-time secretary and part-time work-study office personnel. The work-study students cost the department 10% of their actual costs, and so the department has placed a priority on hiring such workers, mostly to free up the secretary from routine clerical jobs to perform the more advanced bookkeeping, accounting, management, and IT functions. Additionally, recently funds were made available by the office of Student Affairs to share the costs of a position in the department relevant to the career plans of the students in the department<sup>30</sup>. We have hired a psychology student to serve as a lab manager whose primary responsibilities are to manage the computer lab and help with the operation of the subject pool. The secretary receives a standard compensation package with benefits that include lower priced tuition for WSU classes (which extend to family members), and other amenities of college life (gym and library access). Nonetheless the financial compensation is low and additional financial support is often found for her extraordinary work for the department.

The Department Chair works closely with the secretary regarding meeting departmental responsibilities. The full time secretary/office manager also utilizes WSU training opportunities for professional development to acquire relevant skills. One of the major responsibilities of the secretary is to serve as an office manager who supervises the part-time work-study students and lab manager. A work-study student works approximately 20 hours a week and serves as a support for more menial jobs, freeing the secretary to handle more difficult tasks.

### **G2. ii. Ongoing Staff Development**

Full-time staff is formally evaluated using a strategy adopted by the provost called PREP, which assesses a number of performance areas and establishes goals for future development.

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<sup>30</sup> The work-study students are usually not students in the department to protect confidentiality of files and records.

While the primary responsibility of the chair, the evaluation of the secretary includes feedback solicited from department faculty regarding areas that could profit from mentoring and appropriate assistance is given. Work-study students are informally evaluated by the secretary in her role as office manager. The secretary relies on her own evaluation as well as through her informal consultation with the faculty regarding the work study students' performance.

## **G2. Adequacy of Administrative Support**

The department is funded at \$31,400 a year, which has remained the same over the past 5 years. Each faculty had received \$600 per year in discretionary funds, but due to improved financial management<sup>31</sup>, faculty discretionary allocations have increased to \$800 (approximately a third of the budget). Additional departmental income has been generated by student fees. Introductory Psychology students pay \$2.00 in fees which generates approximately an extra \$3,500 per year. Those funds are used to support the Introductory Psychology Subject Pool. Student fees are also being charged to students in Statistics Lab (\$5.00), Research Methods (\$5.00), and Tests and Measurements (\$20.00) for course management and related costs.

## **G4. Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment**

There are a host of specialized facilities, equipment, and institutional support resources (computers, software, university networks, labs, etc.) used by the department. The institutional support is very strong and includes the campus learning/testing centers which are used for electronic and paper-pencil test administration and for student tutoring and student writing assistance. Also included are a superb learning management system and WSU online facilities and staff for the development of, maintenance and improvement of multimedia course work.

Each classroom in the department is multimedia equipped, in addition to other standard equipment (Photocopier, Risograph, Scantron reader, and AV equipment). Although the multimedia equipment was secured by internal grants, their maintenance and replacement (like the other equipment) requires departmental funds. The department also has a physiological laboratory, a computer laboratory, a statistics laboratory, four small psychological testing cubicles with psychological testing equipment and materials, and a series of rooms used for developmental, cognitive and social psychology research. Each faculty member has a personal computer linked to the internet, which the College provides a three- year replacement schedule. All other equipment (TVs, VCRs, CD players) is the responsibility of the department to replace if necessary.

## **G5. Adequacy of Library Resources**

Psychology faculty and students make extensive use of the book, media, journal, and other library collections and other resources they have (e.g., PSYCINFO). Although book and media collections seem more adequate than the journal offerings, any inadequacies are well-compensated by the effective and quick interlibrary loan service.

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<sup>31</sup> The department initiated a more disciplined financial budgeting and monitoring process which has allowed us to realize savings by finding overpayments or renegotiating financial arrangements in a variety of areas, e.g., telephone overcharges, disadvantageous photocopy contracts, and unnecessary facilities management costs.

## H. Relationships with External Communities

The Psychology Department is proud of its community involvement. Two faculty members have been acknowledged for their community service by being awarded the *Utah Campus Compact Service-Learning Civically Engaged Scholar Award*. Lauren Fowler and Maria Parrilla de Kokal are university leaders on issues of community service and community research.

### H1. Description of Role in External Communities

Departmental community involvement activities take a variety of forms including a) activities intrinsically related to course requirements, b) initiatives for which students may get credit but reflect community service, c) faculty professional roles in the community, and d) the invitation of community members to the university to educate students. The first category of community involvement, as an intrinsic component of some courses, is highlighted by Practicum. Practicum involves students working at various community sites and performing various community service activities (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Practicum Sites, Supervisors, Student Numbers, and Student Activities.**

Practicum Site	Supervisor	Students/ semester	Students Activities
DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts	Amsel	1-2	Shadow School Counselor
Treehouse Children's Museum	Amsel	1-2	Floor docent
George Washington High School	Russell-Stamp/ Parrilla de Kokal	5-12	Implement intervention to promote social and mathematics skills
Ogden-Weber Head Start	Garza/Parrilla de Kokal	2-5	Work with students on attitudes towards school
WSU Counseling Center	Kay	2-3	Work with Counseling staff to run stress management and depression screening
Youth Impact	Parrilla de Kokal	1-3	Work as a mentor to adolescents in afterschool program

Community involvement activities are not only an intrinsic component of Practicum, but also are initiatives run as community service, for which students may earn credit. Two such projects completed over last five years are notable for their scope and impact. The George Washington High School practicum has proven so elaborate that students are offered not just Practicum credit for their on-site work, but also enroll in a Selected Topics in Psychology (PSY 4900) course to review techniques and evidence of the intervention, and analyze data and prepare presentations about those presentations. The project is a collaborative effort of department faculty members to provide social skills and mathematics training to inner city High School students. The project was funded by Hemingway grants and departmental support, and has involved more than 200 high school students over its 2 years of its existence. Over 40 WSU college students were trained as tutors and mentors, and they also are collecting data about the effectiveness of the intervention. The evidence suggests a powerful impact of the training on the

high school student targets and college student trainees. In 2011, the program won an award for their work from the Ogden/Weber Educational Partnership.

Another community project is Brain Awareness Week. A number of WSU Psychology and Neuroscience students worked on the project each year, which involved them bringing brain research and demonstrations to local area schools. Literally thousands of students have been exposed to neuroscience for the first time through the program. These projects reflect a commitment of faculty to be involved in community activities and engaging Psychology students in those activities.

Psychology faculty members have a long history and tradition of using their background and training in psychology in the community. For example, a number of faculty members have been formally involved as psychologists offering consulting to private agencies (LDS Social Services), state agencies (Governor's Conference on Marriage), serving on the board of directors of community agencies and schools (Ogden-Weber Community Action Partnerships, Weber Human Services, Head Start, DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts, Foster Grandparents, and Treehouse Children's Museum), or otherwise volunteering their expertise by supervising clinical candidates, reviewing IRB protocols at the local hospital, offering diversity trainings to businesses, collaborating with Air Force research, and consulting and training staff at Youth Impact. A number of faculty members have engaged in community research, including not only the aforementioned projects but also assessing the success of federal (Weed and Seed), state (Diversity), and community (Treehouse) programs. Additionally, more specific forms of community involvement performed by the members of the Psychology faculty include giving lectures to alumni, presentations to school science clubs, commentary on psychological issues to community organizations, and being media resources. Finally, some faculty members require civic engagement as a component of their classes where students are required to work in the community as part of their grade for the course.

Finally, community activities include bringing members of community to students in the department as guest lecturers either in classes or out of classes. Students have had a chance to interact with elderly, gay, minority, mentally challenged, and Native American community members in various classes including Introductory Psychology, Psychology of Diversity, Abnormal Psychology, and Psychology of Women and Gender. Department lectures for students have included presentations by local psychiatrists, counselors, forensic psychologists, and marketing researchers. Alumni from the department are also asked to give lectures on their experience in graduate school or other psychology-related activities.

## **H2. Summary of External Advisory Committee Minutes**

The department does not have an external advisory committee.

**I. Results of Previous Program Reviews**

Problem Identified	Action Taken	Progress
Additional support for improvement of physical facilities, laboratory equipment, and numbers of faculty.	Negotiated with the Dean to add new research and teaching spaces, and secured additional funding by requesting and receiving permission to add student course fees.	Some progress has made to reach out to and encourage support from alumni and to encourage faculty grants. No progress made on new faculty slots.
Integrate a capstone experience into the final year or two of the curriculum for the students.	Capstone requirement remains a topic of discussion in the department.	Department is creating a new series of laboratory and community experiences for core content courses which promote synthetic thinking.
Students should have advisement opportunities and education early on in their academic career, with faculty becoming more proactive in the advisement process.	The department now requires major/minor advising as soon as a student declares in Psychology. Students meet with the department advisor, who earns a course reduction for the work.	Additional career advising opportunities being initiated (Graduation Fair). Career and Academic advising has been strengthened in certain classes (e.g., <i>Psychology as Science and Profession</i> )
Improve faculty compensation for student research and experiential learning supervision, and increase status of faculty's undergraduate research activities in tenure and promotion decisions.	Faculty members now receive course reductions for each 12 SCHs of supervisory work with students, although the rate of reductions is substantially lower than they have earned.	A review of the college tenure document is underway which will address the status of undergraduate research.

**J. Action Plan for Ongoing Assessment Based on Current Self Study Findings****J.1 Action Plan for Evidence of Learning Related Findings**

Problem Identified	Action to Be Taken
Extend EOL student outcomes to all classes, including elective and individualized instruction classes.	Year 1 -5 Action to Be Taken: Faculty members will be asked to work on the curriculum map and learning outcomes for each elective and experiential/individualized instruction class taught.
Collect EOL data, interpret the evidence, and make recommendations for each course they teach	Year1-5 Action to be Taken: Faculty members will collect EOL data, interpret the evidence, and make recommendations for each core general, core content, elective, and experiential/individualized instruction class taught.
Collect artifacts reflecting strong and weak student performance related to EOL data and upload them into the department Sakai site	Year1-5 Action to be Taken: Faculty members will add to the collection of artifacts for each core general, core content, elective, and high impact class taught.

**J.2. Action Plan for Staff, Administration, or Budgetary Findings**

Problem Identified	Action to Be Taken
Issue 1: Increase external funding of the department and the college by forging better relations with and support from departmental alumni.	Current 5 Year Program Review:
	Year 1 Action to Be Taken: Produce an alumni newsletter
	Year 2 Action to Be Taken: Create an Alumni Award in which an alumnus is honored and others are invited to return to the department for the event.
	Year 3 and 4 Action to Be Taken: Increase direct appeal to promote alumni giving to the department and the college.



## **K. Summary of Artifact Collection Procedure**

The department's Sakai site (<http://sakai.weber.edu>) was created in response to the 2009 Northwest Accreditation visit. The goal of the site was to afford accreditors an opportunity to review class assignments that instructors used to assess students learning outcomes. To that end, one or two Psychology faculty members uploaded a syllabus, all assessments, and artifacts from core content, core general, and general education courses. As the artifacts are from actual students, FERPA laws apply so access is limited only to accreditors who have been given a password (which is allowed under FERPA).

### **Core General Courses**

PSY 1010 Introductory Psychology (GE): [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

PSY 3600 Statistics: [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

PSY 3610 Research Methods: [Section 1](#)

### **Core Content Courses**

PSY 2730 Biopsychology: [Section 1](#)

PSY 3000 Child Psychology: [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

PSY 3010 Abnormal Psychology: [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

PSY 3140 Psychology of Adolescence: [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

PSY 3250 Conditioning and Learning:

PSY 3430 Theories of Personality: [Section 1](#)

PSY 3460 Social Psychology: [Section 1](#)

PSY 3500 Cognition: [Section 1](#)

### **Elective Courses**

PSY 2000 Interpersonal Relations (GE): [Section 1](#), [Section 2](#)

## IV. Appendices

### Appendix A: Student Statistical Summary (NOTE: data provided by Institutional Research\*)

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-2011
Student Credit Hours Total (% of the College)	12,955 (20.0%)	11,407 (18.9%)	11,487 (18.8%)	14,356 (20.63%)	15,344 (20.1%)
Student FTE Total	431.83	318.69	334.89	478.53	511.47
Student Majors (% of the College)	367 (21.0%)	391 (21.6%)	407 (22.9%)	456 (23.5%)	503 (522*) (23.9%)
Bachelor Degrees (% of the College)	79 (21.4%)	62 (21.6%)	103 (15.1%)	63 (20.0%)	56 (63*) (19.6%)
Major Demographic Profile:					
Female	227	233	251	269	316
Male	140	158	156	187	187
Faculty FTE Total:	20.83	19.81	19.29	20.24	NA
Adjunct FTE	8.25	7.2	6.61	7.13	NA
Contract FTE	12.57	12.61	12.68	13.11	NA
Student/Faculty Ratio	20.73	19.19	19.83	23.64	NA

Note: At full strength, the Psychology Department faculty members represent 17% of the college faculty.

\* The bracketed number represents the department's own internal and validated analysis of the all the Psychology majors and graduates for 2010-2011. IR uses procedures to count which systematically underestimate Psychology majors and degrees by counting dual majors as having only one major. The percentages reflect the actual numbers, not those generated by IR.

**Appendix B: Faculty Statistical Summary (NOTE: data provided by Institutional Research)**

<b>Financial Analysis Form</b>					
<b>Costs</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
Instructional	\$950,172	\$970,442	\$1,019,099	\$1,025,057	\$952,633
Support	\$90,314	\$66,954	\$102,698	\$77,825	\$124,285
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total	\$1,040,486	\$1,037,396	\$1,121,797	\$1,102,882	\$1,076,919
Cost per SCH <sup>1</sup>	\$80.32	\$90.94	\$97.66	\$76.82	<b>\$70.19</b>
Cost per Major <sup>2</sup>	\$2,835.11	\$2,653.19	\$2,756.26	\$2,418.60	<b>\$2,063.06</b>
Note 1: Cost per SCH computed as TOTAL COST / NUMBER OF SCHs. The college's overall Cost per SCH was \$72.38 for 2010-2011.					
Note 2: Cost per Major computed as TOTAL COST / NUMBER OF MAJORS. The college's overall Cost per Major was \$2,402.67 for 2010-2011.					

## Appendix C: Contract Faculty Profile

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Rank	Tenure Status	Highest Degree	Years of Teaching			Areas of Expertise
						WSU	Other	Total	
Eric Amsel	Male	White	Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	15	9	24	Developmental Psychology
Aaron Ashley	Male	White	Assistant Professor	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	6	0	6	Cognition/ Language
Todd Baird	Male	White	Assistant Professor	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	8	0	8	Clinical/ Personality
Lauren Fowler	Female	White	Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	13	0	13	Neuro-science
Azenett Garza	Female	Latina	Associate Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	9	0	9	Social Psychology
Joseph Horvat	Male	Native American	Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	30	3	33	Personality Psychology
Teri Kay	Female	White	Associate Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	10	0	10	Clinical Psychology
Maria Parrilla de Kokal	Female	Latina	Lecturer	Not Tenured	M.A.	20	4	24	Clinical/ Gender/ Cross-Cultural
Melinda Russell-Stamp	Female	White	Lecturer	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	4	5	9	School/ Clinical Psychology
Matthew Schmolesky	Male	White	Assistant Professor	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	6	0	6	Neuro-science
Leigh Shaw	Female	White	Associate Professor	Tenured	Ph.D.	9	0	9	Developmental Psychology

**Appendix D: Adjunct Faculty Profile**

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Rank	Tenure Status	Highest Degree	Years of Teaching			Areas of Expertise
						WSU	Other	Total	
Mark Adams*	Male	White	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	5	0	5	Marriage and Family
Brien Ashdown	Male	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	1	2	3	Developmental
Melissa Alder*	Female	White	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	4	0	4	Clinical
Norris Bancroft	Male	White	Professor	Emeritus	Ph.D.	40	0	40	Human Factors
Heather Chapman	Female	White	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	2	2	4	Cognitive Psychology
Sarah Farnsworth	Female	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	3	0	3	Neuroscience
Shauna Flinders	Female	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	M.Ed.	1	0	1	Counseling Psychology
Bruce Haslam	Male	White	Emeritus	Emeritus	Ph.D.	42	0	42	Social Psych
Lawrence Helmbrecht*	Male	White	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	8	0	8	Clinical Psychology
Donna Hunter*	Female	African American	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	M.A.	5	0	5	Counseling Psychology
Jaclyn Knapp	Female	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	M.A.	1	0	1	Clinical
Joshua Marquit	Male	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	1	1	2	Experimental
Wayne Owen	Male	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	10	2	12	Personality/ Psychopath
Craig Oreshnick*	Male	White	Adjunct (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	6	5	11	Counseling
Douglas Richards	Male	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	1	0	1	Neuroscience
Seth Wilhelmson	Male	White	Emeritus (Staff)	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	1	0	1	Social Psych
Trisha Weeks	Female	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	Ph.D.	1	3	4	Develop. Psychology
Jennette Wood*	Female	White	Adjunct	Not Tenured	MSW	1	0	1	Positive Psychology

Note: \* member of the WSU Counseling Center.

**Appendix E: Contract Staff Profile**

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Job Title	Years of Employment			Areas of Expertise
				WSU	Other	Total	
Aubrey Jenkins	Female	White	Secretary I	4	8	12	

**Appendix F: External Community Involvement Names and Organizations**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Donna Corby	District Spokesperson	Ogden City School District
Matt Durham	Director	Boys and Girls Club (Roy)
Rich Essary	Spokesperson	Hill Air Force Base
Lynne Goodwin	Executive Director	Treehouse Children's Museum
Robb Hall	Director	Youth Impact
Jessie Kidd	Executive Director	DaVinci Academy for Science and the Arts
Darin Parke	Lieutenant	Weber Morgan Narcotics Strike Force
Diana Rangel	Director	WSU Counseling Services
Nate Taggart	District Spokesperson	Weber School District
Laura Traum	Director	Ogden-Weber Community Action Partnership: Head Start Program

**Appendix G: External Community Involvement Financial Contributions**

Organization	Amount	Type
Rick Miller Professor of Psychology University of Nebraska, Kearney	\$250.00/per year over the past 5 years	Donation to the Graduating Senior award
James A. Parker EEO/Diversity Officer JHU/APL, Laurel, MD	\$500.00 one-time contribution.	Donation to the Graduating Senior award