

Executive Summary:

Psychology Department Self-Study for the 2016-2017 5-year Regent Review

The self-study is a descriptive, analytic, and diagnostic assessment of the health of the Psychology Department focusing on how well the department realizes the goals set forth in the mission statements of the department, college, and university; as well as recommendations for how the goals can be more effectively accomplished.

The Mission

The mission of the Psychology department is to facilitate students' career aspirations and academic goals by excellence in training in the science of psychology in the context of an undergraduate, Liberal Arts University and a department which values teaching and research. There are four central program goals that follow from the mission which have been embraced by the department and embodied in the curriculum: Knowledge: Students will acquire content knowledge and methodological skills to understand psychology as a scientific discipline; Application: Students will be able to critically apply psychological principles and research to themselves, others and society; Values/Ethics: Students will share key beliefs, attitudes, and values adopted by scientific psychologists; and 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. A strength of the department's statement of goals is that they are a consolidation of the statement of goals recommended by the American Psychological Association for undergraduate psychology departments.

The Curriculum

The curriculum of the department has undergone substantial revision since the last program review. These changes were partially in response to issues directly raised in previous program reviews. For example, the inclusion of a diversity course and a capstone requirement to the curriculum are direct issues previous review committees have raised. Other changes made have been in response to research on teaching as well as simply being responsive to student needs. The creation of PSY 3615 and 3616 (Psychological Statistics and Research Methods I & II) was in response to research suggesting that student learning and understanding of statistics was greater when combined and grounded with research methods. Additionally, the creation of Learning and Memory (PSY 2250) and Conditioning, Learning, and Behavior Modification were in response to students' learning outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Examination of student learning outcomes shows that by all reasonable metrics students are learning and internalizing the program goals of the department. Examining their understanding of the scientific approach to psychology supports the idea that students are understanding that psychology utilizes a

scientific methodology to understand human behavior and cognitions. Additionally, by examining student performance on measures assessing the long-term retention of discipline-specific knowledge (e.g., the ETS MFT in Psychology), it is evident that the department is flourishing in accomplishing its program goals.

Academic Advising

The department has been incredibly proactive in addressing academic and career advising to students. The inclusion of mandatory advising, and a devoted departmental advisor ensures that most students are receiving more consistent advising, and that advising is occurring earlier in the students' academic career.

The Faculty

The department has added two new faculty since the previous program review. The new faculty (McGillivray and Hillhouse) join an already talented department. The department demands excellence in instruction from its faculty, and this can be seen in students' overall positive evaluations of the faculty.

Program Support

The department support staff currently consists of one secretary and multiple work- study students. These resources are similar to those in other departments in the university. Typically, the department also has a student lab manager. The department also receives support from the college and university as a whole.

Community Relationships

During the past five years, faculty in the Psychology Department have been involved in a number of community organizations and activities. This pattern is consistent with previous trends in the department, we are simply doing more work in the community that in previous review cycles. This focus on utilizing psychology to better assist in the community is expected to only expand as the department continues to increase its focus on application.

Review Team

The review team includes Dr. Christopher Hoagstrom (Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Zoology, Weber State University), Dr. Kenneth D. Keith (Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychology, University of San Diego).