

# PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

## Social Sciences and Humanities Division

**Department:** Psychology

**Preparer(s):** Charles B. Ramskov/chair in consultation with department

### I. Description and Mission of the Program

This program addresses:  Basic Skills     Transfer

- A. The Psychology department provides one of the best two-year G.E. transfer preparations in the U.S. and has done so since the inception of the Psychology department in 1967. Over the years our mission has remained unchanged; to provide a diverse set of offerings in the field of Psychology and the best B. A. and B.S. as well as graduate transfer preparation at the two year college level. The strength of the department is anchored by a solid foundation in methodology, experimental research and design (Psychology 2, 3, 8, and 60, quantitative analysis (Psychology 15), Psychobiology (Psychology 24) and are complimented by a wide range of clinical courses: Introduction to Clinical Psychology, Abnormal, Personality, Humanistic, Adjustment Psychology and Psychology of Women. Our interest in social action and community service has been long standing with the Psychology Internship program (Psychology 64 XYZ 1-4 units).
- B. The Psychology department at De Anza has a wide diversity in course offerings and has kept pace with the change of focus in the discipline. Faculty are very well trained and have specialties that encompass the entire discipline. The full-time staff members are supported by an excellent Instructional Associate that makes the smooth high-level delivery of instructional services possible. The use of essay exams and other writing assignments, that are so necessary to the learning process, could not be provided at the same level without the support of the Instructional associate staff. Our department also has a very diverse and well-trained staff of part-time faculty, without which this department would be a shadow of its current self. We have communicated with faculty members from a wide range of California community colleges and our menu of offerings and size of department and staff, have no match statewide. Additional strong points about our department are the Internet laboratory and hands on Psychology laboratory for experimental courses with animals, neuroscience, and human learning, memory, perception and social function. We have dedicated laboratory space and classroom support areas that allow us to go beyond the traditional top down classroom process.
- C. The strong offerings in biopsychology, experimental 2 and 3 advantage of having a laboratory facility and Internet laboratory with wireless computers and access.

Psychology must continue its excellent trend in the areas of retention and enrollment as well as serving targeted and non-targeted groups to raise the success levels overall.

- D. The main improvement area in our department would be the fine tuning of course offerings to include new courses in Forensic Psychology, or generally update to criminal psychology, and a course in the Positive or Health psychology area. We can always improve access and retention and add to the steady gains we have made in the last 3 years. Computer software updates and new laptop batteries would also help improve the on-line laboratory. Some new operant learning systems would be ideal.

## **II. Retention and Growth**

- A. Our numbers have been quite good and clearly in line with the institutional goals set out in the last program review. We have experienced significant growth in the department's enrollment and overall productivity rivals any department college wide. The Psychology department has seen a rise in retention overall from 83 percent in 2005-2006 to 86 percent in 2007-08. More importantly our retention in the critical targeted populations has climbed from 78% in 2005-2006 to 82% for the 2007-2008 instructional year. Psychology as a department, second only to the History department, is the most productive of any at De Anza College, based on total sections and enrollment. Total enrollment is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest departmentally college wide. Average student contact hours is approximately 70 per section, the second highest figure division-wide. This steady rise in the retention rates for the targeted populations is not elevated by high-side numbers in one or two of the sub-groups but reflects steady gains across the entire population range. Success in targeted and non targeted populations is also on the rise across the sampled time frame.
- B. Specific to targeted populations the Psychology department has a steady trend toward greater access and retention enrollment since 2005-2006 levels. Overall enrollment has increased from 2005 to 2008. Psychology serves the second largest number of students in the Social Sciences and Humanities division. The Psychology department and Social Sciences and Humanities division have used several projects to augment the success of all groups as well as specific targeted groups. These projects include the C.A.R. Project, early alert contact of at risk students, Social Sciences and Humanities support tutorials, student expectation success strategies, as well as positive attendance and vocabulary tutorial. The overall targeted population success rate has risen from 78% to 82% (2005-2008). While the non targeted group has risen from 84% to 87%, over the same time frame. Clearly the gap is being reduced and a ceiling effect will contain non targeted groups and a slow upward push for targeted groups will be effected.

- C. The basic skills emphasis in Psychology has been most concentrated on vocabulary acquisition, writing and analytical skills. The shortfall in these areas represents the largest threat to success in targeted groups especially but in other populations as well. The use of writing assignments and diagnosis from the Instructional Associate in Psychology allows the faculty to recommend to students the use of the Basic Skills center in the ATC.

### **III. Student Equity**

- A. The targeted populations (as noted above) have increasing access and increasing and success in the Psychology department, with percent increasing from 78 to 82 percent from 2005 to 2008. The targeted population increase has been larger than the non targeted group, with all groups across Psychology increasing in percent retained. The targeted population has larger total numbers of successful students rising from 785 in 2005 to 877 in 2008. The total percent success has risen slightly from 2005 to 2008 and nonsuccess values have dropped by 3% as has the percent withdrawal rate.
- B. The Psychology department continues to work toward achieving equity goals by maintaining standards, and by making course offering relevant to student life and career success. We continue to apply C.A.R. pedagogy and applications, tutorial aid, early alert basic skills training.
- C. The largest challenge will be potential budget restrictions that force the department to constrict or reallocate resources.

### **IV. Budget Limitations**

- A. Department limitations that would result with budget constraints would include lower total section offerings, loss of Instructional Associate resource, reduced emphasis on writing skills. The experimental laboratory upgrade with computers and equipment support could not be accomplished (current software upgrades are needed). Internship programs would be difficult to continue and transfer preparation would fall on the upper division institutions.
- B. Student access would be limited and transfer preparation would be compromised. Student success would undoubtedly drop across all populations but most likely be larger in the targeted groups. Greater numbers of students would be competing for smaller resource supported college services. We simply could not continue to serve high populations of students at the same success level. Graduate student populations would also be effected as many of our transfer students come back for additional course preparation and Internship experience in order to maximize graduate program acceptance.

### **V. Additional Comments**

The Psychology department has participated in outreach with the parent night events, Psi Beta Honor Club, and De Anza College Psychology Club. Constraints on the Psychology department would limit C.A.R. participation and lower faculty moral and productivity. The combination of programs, events and transfer success available here at De Anza, including the PGSP B.S. program, is unmatched in the State of California. The Internship Program (social engagement) is also one of the corner stones in the Psychology department's effort to provide a well prepared and experienced student to the upper division college level.