

ACADEMIC YEAR 2005-2006 UNIT PLAN (Amended)
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

27 September 2005
Deborah S. Richardson, Chair

Section 1. Purpose Statement for Department of Psychology

The curriculum of the Department of Psychology is designed to help meet the university's general education (core) objectives and to prepare interested students in obtaining bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology. The department is dedicated to sharing the science of behavior and mental processes with our students, participating in the advancement of psychological knowledge, preparing practitioners to serve the citizens of Georgia, and applying psychological science for personal and professional growth and for the betterment of society.

Section 2. Summary of Challenges and Goals

Challenge 1 (VPAA Goal 2; A & S Goal 1a)

Maintain and enhance quality of instruction by meeting staffing needs. Our faculty needs analysis reveals a shortage of 3 full-time faculty, even with the addition of two temporary positions. Over 30% of our undergraduate sections are taught by parttime adjunct instructors. In addition to the demands created by increasing enrollments throughout the University, the Department of Psychology serves the second largest major in the College of Arts and Sciences, is facing continually increasing demands on our lower-level service courses, and supports a strong M.S. program that trains psychologists for service in our community and to the state of Georgia. The draft of the report from our recent accreditation visit commented on the high level of morale in view of the heavy work demands placed on our faculty.

The enrollment increases as well as an increase in demands for reports of various sorts has put a strain on our administrative staff. Last year we made some changes in office staff, but we find that we need more assistance in the front office. Although graduate students are able to assist with some tasks, they do not provide the kind of consistent service that is necessary to meet ongoing department needs.

Goals:

- 1a We have received approval to recruit for two tenure-track positions. One is funded; we are high in the priority list for another. Thus, a major goal for this academic year will be to succeed at hiring two new faculty.
- 1b In order to meet our staffing needs, we would like to hire a ½-time administrative secretary to take the burden off our Office Coordinator and to assist with the heavy load on the Degree Program Specialist. In the future we might be able to coordinate with the Masters of Public Administration program to share one full-time Degree Program Specialist.
- 1c In order to maintain the quality and morale of our faculty members, we must deal with the problem of salary inequities. Dr. Richardson is serving on a committee in the College of Arts and Sciences to address this issue, and the proposed department budget will include a request for funds to resolve these inequities.
- 1d We will seek to hire a laboratory technician who would have responsibility for ordering laboratory and testing supplies, maintaining inventory, overseeing ordering

of lab supplies, and supporting the animal colony. It is possible that this could be a shared position with the Department of Biology.

Challenge 2 (VPAA Goal 3; College of Arts and Sciences Challenge 2)

With the second largest major in the College of Arts and Sciences we face heavy demand for advising. In order to maintain the quality of our programs, we continually evaluate our efforts.

Goals:

- 2a Review our efforts toward advising, including review of exit interview data regarding student responses to advising.
- 2b Prepare an undergraduate advising handbook. This task began during the last academic year. Our goal will be to have it ready for spring preregistration.
- 2c We will complete graduate and undergraduate alumni surveys and report the results at the end of spring semester. These surveys will assess respondents' evaluation of their advising experience while students at ASU.

Challenge 3 (VPAA Goal 5)

To secure needed technology and facilities. The Department's goal of "sharing the science of behavior and mental processes" is not being met for either our graduate or undergraduate students due to a lack of budgetary and human resources to carry out our mission. In anticipation of moving into the New Science Building (which includes extensive laboratory space), the Department sought increased funding to support labs and research activities. Although the VPAA's have helped to meet this need with budgetary supplements or special purchase of some supplies, our budget does not accurately reflect the needs of the department or the demands of our instructional program. At the end of last year, we were able to buy a few computers to replace older ones, but received no assistance from reallocated funds. Thus, we are quite a bit behind in our replacement sequence.

Several of our classrooms are in serious need of renovation. Our large, tiered classroom (SH 1008) is very difficult to maneuver and to monitor because it includes no aisles among the seats. Another of our classrooms needs a dimmer so that students can take notes during PowerPoint presentations.

We are beginning to face a space crunch. In order to house new temporary faculty (and planning for new fulltime tenure-track faculty), we have had to take over some laboratory space that was used for psychophysiological research.

Goals:

- 3a Obtain adequate funding within the Department's budget to meet annual laboratory costs (assessment materials, expendable supplies, maintenance contracts, repairs, new equipment and equipment replacements, animals, food, bedding, etc.). For the current year, we conservatively estimate that \$4000 would be adequate to meet our needs, with the expectation that that sum might increase over time as we are better able to use our facilities (see Challenge 2).

- 3b Include a budget item for renovation and improvement of classroom space. We will coordinate with the Department of Biology in pursuing this goal as their classrooms are suffering from the same problems.
- 3c Upgrade or purchase new computers and portable projection equipment.
- 3d Evaluate current and future space needs. Seek additional office space.

Challenge 4 (VPAA Goal 2; A&S Challenge 1)

Maintain the high quality of our accredited master's program.

Goals:

- 4a Pay to our graduate assistants is less than recommended for their pay level and their level of contribution to our department. We will seek a raise to \$7.00 per hour for our assistants. This will also allow us to be competitive when recruiting high-quality graduate students to our program.
- 4b Create a Community Advisory Board made up of individuals in the community who hire and help train our graduate students. This board would advise the department regarding curriculum, internship experiences, and preparation of our students for jobs in our community.

Challenge 5 (VPAA Goal 3)

Approximately 40% of Psychology majors are African-American; approximately 10% of our graduate students are minorities. This situation mirrors the attrition of minority representation at increasingly higher levels of education found throughout the United States. Our department instituted an initiative, consistent with the American Psychological Association's Minority Pipeline project, to increase participation of minority students, especially African-American students, in graduate-level education in Psychology. Dr. Vickie Williams chairs the committee that is addressing this issue. Although we made significant progress toward meeting some parts of this goal last year, we will continue our efforts to recruit and retain minority students.

Goals

- 5a. Develop proposals for recruiting and retaining minority students in our M.S. program.
- 5b. Seek funds for special graduate assistantships for minority students.
- 5c. Conduct the third annual seminar educating minority undergraduate students about the benefits of a graduate degree and financing graduate school.
- 5d. Continue development of our web page specifically aimed at recruitment and retention of minority students.
- 5e. Seek continuing funding for minority students to attend the meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association.

Challenge 6 (VPAA Goal 2)

The Department of Psychology is pursuing a Public Relations initiative designed to bring more attention, and hopefully more external money, to the Department of Psychology.

Goals

- 6a. Develop proposals for alumni contact and services

- 6b. Review and redesign the Department of Psychology website.
- 6c. Include Psyclnsight newsletter in alumni survey.

Section 3. Procedures for Evaluating Progress towards Achievement of Goals

Goals Assessment for Challenge 1:

1. Recruit two new faculty.
2. Acquire approval and funding for new ½ time staff position.
3. Include budget line to resolve salary inequities.
4. Coordinate with Department of Biology to prepare proposal for lab tech position.

Goals Assessment for Challenge 2:

1. Review advising sheet
2. Prepare advising handbook
3. Evaluate effectiveness of PSYC 3190 (Careers) in meeting advising needs.
4. Extend course offering planning beyond current one-year projection.
5. Seek budgetary assistance from Dean's office to cover expense of mailing alumni survey.

Goals Assessment for Challenge 3:

1. Seek funds to purchase research supplies and equipment.
2. Seek funds for renovation of Room 1008 and adding dimmer in Room 1053.
3. Develop plans for use of office space.

Goals Assessment for Challenge 4:

1. Seek funds in budget to allow increase in graduate assistant pay.
2. Prepare proposal for Community Advisory Board and have first meeting early in spring semester.

Goals Assessment for Challenge 5:

1. Contact American Psychological Association for information on Minority Pipeline program.
2. Investigate state or national sources for funding for scholarships for minority graduate students in psychology.
3. Initiate discussion of joint programs with Paine College and Atlanta Center universities.

Goals Assessment for Challenge 6:

1. Coordinate with Alumni Office to plan events and activities for alumni in the local area.

Section 4: Assistance from Other Units

Assistance for Challenge 1:

- 1a. Dean and VPAA
- 1b. Personnel Office, Dean, & VPAA
- 1c. VPAA
- 1d. Department of Biology, Dean and VPAA

Assistance for Challenge 2:

2c. Dean

Assistance for Challenge 3:

3a. Dean & VPAA

3b. Department of Biology, Physical Plant, VPAA

3c. Dean, VPAA, & Media Services

Assistance for Challenge 4:

4a. Personnel Office, Dean, VPAA

Assistance for Challenge 5:

5a. Institutional Research

5b. VPAA

5e. Grants Office

Assistance for Challenge 6:

6a. Alumni Office