

2015-2016 Program Efficiency and Enhancement Review

Psychology Program

Psychology Program Goals and Mission

The WNMU Psychology program is a generalist program, covering a wide range of topics in the field including courses in the major subfields and many specialized areas. We emphasize the scientific nature of psychology. Our courses highlight scholarly research, theories, and applications while fostering critical thinking. The curriculum prepares students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be educated consumers of psychological research and to communicate effectively.

The psychology program was created to serve many groups of students and programs. We serve our own minors, majors, and interdisciplinary graduate students. We also serve other minors and majors on campus by offering and teaching courses that serve as prerequisite or requisite components of their programs (i.e., degrees in nursing, criminal justice, kinesiology, rehabilitation services, occupational therapy, social work, chemical dependency, sociology, history, and political science). We also support the endorsement area in social sciences for the School of Education. We historically provided coursework to support the School Psychology certificate.

The baccalaureate degree provides students with a solid foundation in a liberal arts education, as well as breadth and depth within the field of psychology. The psychology major prepares students for advanced academic study, professional training, and employment in a wide range of fields, including health and human services, research, and law, among many others. Students are required to complete a “capstone” experience in psychology which can provide a bridge to their professional life after WNMU. Options for capstone experiences include core requirements as well as cognition and learning, developmental, biological, and socio-cultural content domains, and a minimum of three elective courses in psychology to build a bridge to their professional life after WNMU. Options for capstone experiences include senior seminar, internships, or sponsored research with a faculty member. A minor is required of all psychology majors. Common choices include Criminal Justice, Sociology, Chemical Dependency, Coaching, Computer Science, and Political Science.

The psychology minor is a great supplement to other majors in that it enhances understanding of human relationships, interactions, and behavior. Both the major and the minor are flexible, allowing students to customize the degree to meet their individual educational goals.

Program Productivity and Efficiency

The discipline’s core mission is to provide general education coursework, upper division coursework in support of other disciplines, a psychology major and minor, and graduate coursework in support of the MAIS degree.

A. Major Headcount Enrollment

Table 1. Major Head Count

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
BA/BS Major	80	67
Minor	50	47
MAIS Concentrations	54	39
Total	184	153

B. Degrees Conferred

The Psychology program has great graduation rates at this point. We have awarded degrees at multiple levels to a hundred students in the past two years.

Table 2. 2011-2016 Degrees Awarded in Psychology

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
BA	4	0	0	1	0
BS	5	14	8	18	13
Minor	7	2	5	12	12
BIS	-	-	3	8	6
Graduate Certificate	0	5	1	5	1
MAIS Concentration	10	17	26	19	15

C. Credit Hour Production

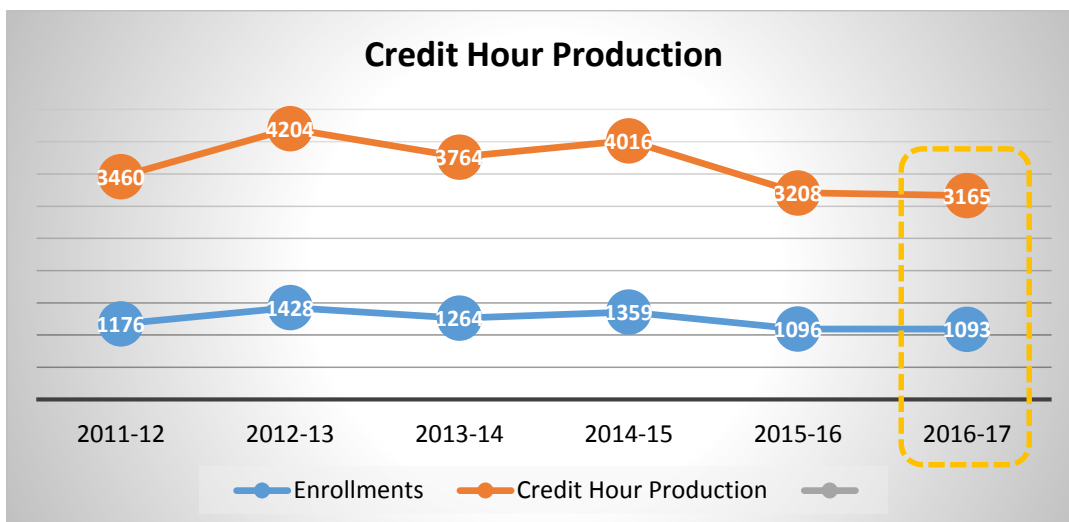


Figure 1. Psychology Credit Hour Production

An overall enrollment decrease hit the University in 2015-16 (-10%) and the psychology program was also affected (see Figure 1). Luckily, the enrollment numbers for the fall of 2016 and the spring of 2017 have picked back up.

Table 3. 2015-16 Credit Hour Production and Income/Cost Difference by Full-Time Faculty

Year	Actual Head Count	Credit Hour Production	Income/Cost Difference
Faculty A	188	564	\$34,604.83
Faculty B	104	312	-\$10,741.43
Faculty C	203	529	\$23,648.47
Faculty D	199	597	\$55,793.41

At this point, the Psychology program is making profit despite the reduced enrollment rates in the program and throughout the University. Thanks to the 2015-2016 Budget and Revenue Report generated by Donna Rees, we are able to present the estimated revenue (i.e., total tuition generated based on credit hour production) each full-time psychology faculty generated after deducting their salaries, benefits (estimated as 37% of salaries), and overhead costs (estimated as 26% of salaries) in Table 3 above. We also see that we can even the workload a bit better amongst ourselves. The psychology faculty have met this February and came up with a plan to redistribute higher enrolled and lower enrolled courses more evenly among faculty members.

D. Average Class Size

As mentioned earlier, there was a significant decrease in student enrollment in 2015-2016 that negatively impacted the University overall outcome. The reduction affected psychology class size as well. On the other hand, the Psychology program awarded 54 degrees in various levels in 2014-2015. This number was the highest since 2011. The high graduate rates partially contributed to the lower enrollment in 2015-2016.

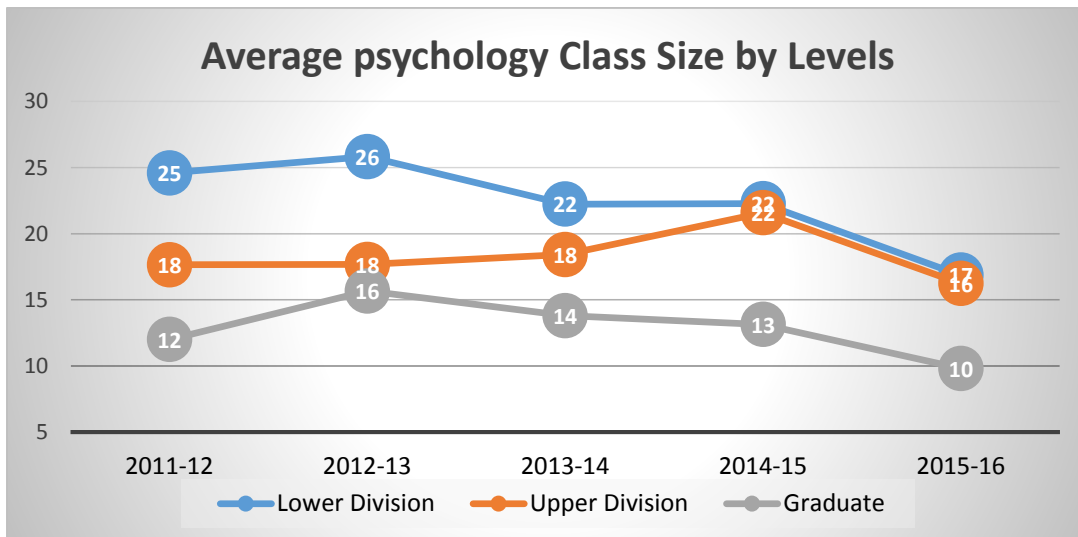


Figure 2. Average Psychology Class Size by Course Levels

As Figure 3 shows below, the decrease in psychology course enrollment was mostly due to fewer face to face students across campus. The reduction in online enrollment was not prominent.

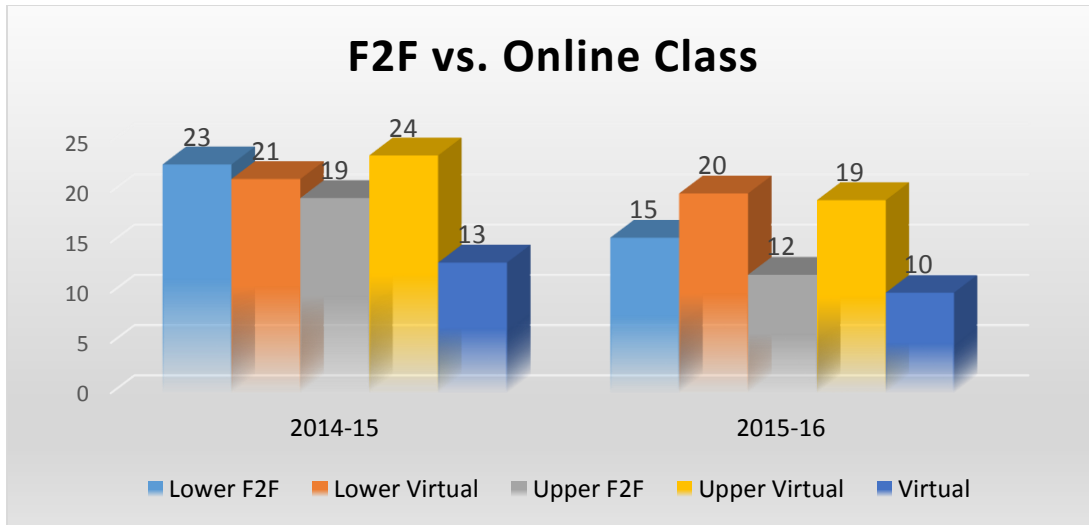


Figure 3. F2F vs. Online Class

Our Next Steps

Seeing the unsteady trend in student enrollment and constant budget cuts in the past few years, the Psychology program has taken the initiative to increase the cap of all psychology courses from 25 to 30. The change made quite a difference on faculty's work load as most of us are now teaching more students than ever. We expect to see a positive impact of this effort to show in our next year's program review.

This move has boosted our credit hour production for 2016-2017. By the end of January 2017, the psychology program has already generated credit hours equivalent to the overall credit hours produced in 2015-2016. The psychology faculty will continue to monitor lower enrolled courses that can be cross-listed to cut program costs. At the same time, we are also enhancing the program quality by strengthening our assessment plan.

In our prioritization report for 2014-2015, the psychology program identified three areas of focus: *program outcome evaluation*, *graduation rates*, and *student-centered advising*. These areas are still relevant so we will continue our effort in them.

Student-centered advising: The psychology program will keep utilizing Psychology Advising Space to facilitate communications on degree plans, schedule planning, and career goals. Degree plans will be regularly updated and made available to students so the students can have an ownership of their degree plans and graduation goals. As a proactive measure, reminders on new semester enrollment and important deadlines have been sent out regularly to help students prepare for the new semester. Our proactive approach has greatly reduced the uncertainties during the first few weeks of school for both students and faculty. It also has helped prevent

students from dropping out of the program. Therefore, we will keep offering these services and continue to refine our approach in advising.

Graduation rates: The psychology faculty will continue our efforts in the following areas: 1) Continue to improve the quality of teaching and the content of our courses. 2) Review and update the student degree plans regularly. 3) Contact students who appear to drop out of school and encourage them to continue their education. 4) Urge students to enroll a few months before the new semester starts. 5) Create a graduation plan for students who are near graduation to help them visualize their graduation goals.

Program outcome evaluation: 1) Students who are enrolled in exit courses like senior seminar, independent study, and internship will be asked to participate in a state-level psychology outcome assessment such as ACAT so the psychology program can track student learning outcomes. 2) Students in aforementioned exit courses will complete an exit survey to collect program satisfaction data. They will also be asked to fill out future contact information and be encouraged to participate in future alumni surveys. 3) Conduct alumni surveys every 2-3 years to track alumni and program outcomes.

The outcomes assessment components of the undergraduate psychology program target toward meeting 2013 theAPA Guidelines and are listed b:

Table 4. Psychology Program Outcomes Assessment Plan

Levels	Timing of Data Collection	Assessments to be Administered
Freshman-Sophomore	PSY 102 General Psychology	pre-test/post-test
	PSY 180 Education & Career in Psy	first year goal statement, career research project report – students will start building their professional portfolio
Junior	PSY 333/334 Research Methods	poster or oral presentation in WNMU Symposium
Senior	PSY 496 Senior Seminar	National Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT)
		student portfolio (resume, service learning project report, work and/or internship experience, writing samples collected from selected upper-level psychology courses, a research paper, and a revised goal/personal statement ready for job or graduate school application)
Alumni	Every three years or so	alumni survey (perceived program outcome, including strengths, weaknesses, and recommended changes to the curricula)

The faculty in the Psychology program believe the outcomes assessment plan is a step in the right direction and we look forward to analyzing some of the results in the near future.