REVIEW OF THE B.A., B.S. IN PSYCHOLOGY

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 42.0101
Psychology, General

Review Outcome. The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the B.A., B.S. in Psychology to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-study report were accomplished during the time period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Academic Planning Committee commends the faculty for the high levels of scholarly productivity during the current review period. Since fall 2012 (i.e., submission of the previous self-study report), faculty have produced 425 publications (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters), 149 of which were co-authored with undergraduate and/or graduate students and 38 of which were co-authored with international scholars. In addition, faculty have given 517 professional conference presentations within the United States and 54 professional conference presentations outside the United States; of these, 411 were co-authored with undergraduate and/or graduate students, and 51 were co-authored with international scholars.

The committee commends the changes that the Department has made to its annual faculty evaluation processes. During fall 2019, faculty voted to alter the Department's Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) policies to better acknowledge diversity, inclusion, and safe environment efforts completed during the annual performance evaluations. The committee commends that statements regarding the integration of such efforts were developed in the three areas of evaluation (i.e., teaching, scholarly and creative productivity, and service) to render all faculty accountable for diversity, inclusion, and a safe environment.

The committee commends the work completed between the Department and the subject librarian to develop a structured, programmatic instruction schedule for psychology students. This tiered approach for learning information fluency skills begins during the introductory psychology course with an introduction to the library and use of its databases for accessing resources. Similar training is provided in the introductory statistics course, and the introductory research methods course includes advanced training in the use of databases for accessing and selecting different types of resources that are appropriate for the students' purposes. Some faculty also incorporate the subject librarian with the advanced research methods course to provide additional instruction regarding the use of databases and library resources for research and scholarly purposes (e.g., to develop a larger-scale literature review).

The committee commends the community engagement and outreach efforts that have been sustained from the previous review period. The Psychological Services Center on campus provides assessment, intervention, and consultation services for the academic and social-emotional concerns of community members. These services provide opportunities for approximately 40 graduate-level students every year to receive supervised experiences in these areas. The Autism Place is located off campus and has been funded through grants from the State of Illinois to provide autism treatment services for children with autism and their families. These services provide training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in psychology, speech-language pathology, and education programs.

The committee commends the Department for providing an online graduation ceremony in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during spring 2020. Faculty and staff noted the importance for graduating students to celebrate this event and organized the ceremony during which the undergraduate academic advisor gave the graduation speech. Faculty read the names of each graduating student, and every student had the opportunity to say a few words to the attendees after their name was read. Given that faculty, staff, and students reported how moving reported the event was, the Department intends to hold similar graduation ceremonies for students at the end of each fall and spring semester.

The committee commends the Department for supporting undergraduate student participation in the Honors program on campus. Although the percentage of psychology students participating has decreased, this seems to be due to the increase in program enrollment because the number of psychology students participating has remained stable. One faculty member serves as the departmental Honors coordinator whom students can contact for assistance registering for Honors courses and tracking their progress in the program. In addition, the Department offers Honors students

the opportunity to graduate with Honors in Psychology, and this includes the capstone requirement of completing an Honors thesis that reflects substantial research and quality of thought and then presenting it at the Department's Honors colloquium.

The committee commends the several out-of-class opportunities that psychology students are offered to gain applied experiences that are related to their interests. Students can complete research apprenticeships and teaching assistantships with faculty and internships with professionals, all of which can be used to fulfill the capstone requirement for the program. The committee also commends the co-curricular opportunities that are supported by the Department. These includes three registered student organizations (RSOs): The Student Psychology Association; the international psychology honor society, Psi Chi; and the newly formed Black Student Psychology Association. There are faculty sponsors for these groups who guide, but do not direct, student officers so that they can develop their leadership skills. In addition, the Department hosts external speakers who present on topics regarding their research/scholarly and/or practice/clinical interests. During fall 2018, the Department organized a series of colloquia called The Extending Empathy project to provide a space to share ideas regarding empathy and to create a persistent, positive voice in the campus environment. Faculty, staff, and students from the Department, from other units on campus, and from other institutions have presented colloquia, many of which focus on issues surrounding diversity, inclusion, and safe environments.

Follow-up Report. The committee notes that the Department completed the comparator program analyses in which the program at Illinois State University was examined in relation to the similar programs offered at other public universities in the State of Illinois. The Department acknowledged that the aspirational program analyses were not completed prior to submission of the self-study report. The committee asks that the faculty complete these analyses in which they review similar programs regionally or nationally and use the findings to inform the program improvement initiatives that have been prioritized during the next review period. These initiatives should be those identified by the faculty for the program to pursue, and the selected programs should be those that already have implemented actions to achieve those identified initiatives. After reviewing the actions taken by the aspirational programs, faculty then should describe how the program at Illinois State University can achieve its initiatives and indicate any additional resources needed to do so. The committee requests that the Department of Psychology submit its aspirational program analyses as a follow-up report to the Office of the Provost by May 15, 2022.

Recommendations. The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty and staff of the B.A., B.S. in Psychology program for the opportunity to provide input regarding the program at Illinois State University through consideration of the submitted self-study report. The following committee recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle are provided in a spirit of collaboration with psychology faculty and staff. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2028, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Continue to analyze student retention and address areas of concern. The committee recognizes that the program has experienced increases in student enrollment during the current review period and appreciates the Department's actions to address the noted decreases in student retention, including the establishment of the Department Task Force for Student Success. Given that some potential reasons for these decreases in student retention were identified in the self-study report, such as students' awareness of the discipline and program requirements, the committee notes that other program components also should be considered, such as the sequencing of program courses and their class sizes, tutoring opportunities available to students, and academic advisor load. The committee also notes that examining students' academic information, such as whether first-time-in-college students and external transfer students have different retention rates or whether there are specific programs on campus to which psychology students frequently transfer, may provide additional insights.

Collaborate with campus units to market and promote the program. The committee acknowledges that the Department noted potential reasons for the decreases in student retention, such as students' awareness of the discipline and program requirements and specifically misunderstandings regarding mathematics/statistics course requirements. Given that students may not persist in the program due to such misunderstandings, the committee notes that establishing partnerships with other units on campus can assist in more accurate marketing and promotion of the program. These units could include those that directly interact with prospective and current students who are interested in the discipline and its various subfields, such as the Office of Admissions and University College, respectively, both of which can be helpful in marketing and promoting the program to high school students whose

exposure to the discipline may have been limited. In addition, partnerships with units on campus that offer programs within similar disciplines, such as the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, and the School of Social Work, can assist in ensuring that students are well-informed of the various fields that focus on the social and behavioral sciences.

Continue to infuse diversity and inclusion throughout the curriculum and program. The committee recognizes the work that the Department has completed to incorporate more diversity with the curriculum, such as expanding the content offerings of the cultural psychology course. The committee also acknowledges the Department's efforts to support diversity, inclusion, and safe environments among students, faculty, and staff through the establishment of the Black Student Psychology Association, The Extending Empathy project, and the Task Force for Student Success. Given that additional opportunities for infusing diversity and inclusion with the program were identified in the self-study report, such as considering how content can be integrated further with core content and methods courses, the committee notes that such work is important because of the exposure this will provide to all students in the program. Student learning regarding diversity and inclusion can be informed by program assessment efforts and could include the consideration of study abroad as another opportunity for the program to address diversity and inclusion. Specific, discipline-related study abroad opportunities for psychology students could be developed in collaboration with units on campus that offer programs within similar disciplines.

Continue to track program alumni and monitor their successes. The committee acknowledges the mechanisms that the Department has developed to track alumni, such as holding an Alumni Day Award ceremony and reception/dinner as part of the University's Homecoming celebration, supporting the School Psychology Institute Day, and inviting alumni to return to campus and present colloquia for students, faculty, and staff. The committee also recognizes the establishment of an Alumni Relations Committee in the Department to manage such activities, such as the administration of a department-based survey of alumni. Although this survey was not administered due to circumstances surrounding the pandemic that most likely would have influenced response rates, the Department plans to administer this alumni survey to gather information regarding alumni success after graduation. Given that stakeholder feedback is important for program assessment, the committee notes that administering the survey, as well as developing an exit survey for graduating students, can provide further insights on strengths and areas for improvement that faculty can consider.

Continue the collaborative work with Milner Library. The committee commends faculty and the subject librarian for their continued work to integrate library instructional sessions with several courses and the tiered approach for learning information fluency skills within those courses. Given recent journal cancellations and expected increases in online and hybrid courses, the committee notes that the Department and Library should work to increase awareness of alternative access to resources, such as Interlibrary Loan and I-Share lending, among psychology faculty and students. In addition, the committee notes that the program can work to integrate the established information fluency outcomes with the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program.

Continue to implement and refine the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The committee recognizes faculty for their work to implement the assessment plan during the current review cycle. Given other initiatives identified by the department, the committee notes that continued examination of student learning can inform these initiatives, such as student retention and success, diversity and inclusion within the curriculum, and tracking and monitoring program alumni. In addition, consistently gathering feedback from stakeholders and developing mechanisms for using this feedback among other gathered information can provide a more holistic perspective on student learning in the program.