

ACAT Psychology Articulation Committee

Meeting at Canadian University College

Date: 14 May 2013

Attendance:

Tom Spalding (University of Alberta)- Chair

John Connors (Canadian University College)

Nancy Digdon (Grant MacEwan University)

Gregory Wells (Red Deer College)

Alisa McArthur (St. Mary's University)

Teleconferencing Attendance

Dorothy Steffler (Concordia University College of Alberta)

David Hodgins (University of Calgary)

Eric Dohei (Enterprise and Advanced Education)

Jim Samide (Enterprise and Advanced Education)

Notes from Meeting:

I. Review of Terms of Reference

- We do not have representatives from all Alberta universities and colleges that offer psychology courses. In order to increase representation, Enterprise and Advanced Education will re-contact the institutions (through the Vice President Academics), send them the Terms of Reference and minutes from this meeting, and invite them to send a representative to this committee.
- Enterprise and Advanced Education (or someone else?) will contact the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP) and the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) to initiate communication between them and the ACAT committee in order to address curriculum issues that pertain to the certification of psychologists.

II. Institution Updates

- Several universities are reviewing and changing course numberings so that they are better aligned with levels of curriculum (e.g., 100-level= introduction to psychology; 200-level= broad survey of a major sub-field of psychology; 300-level= a narrower,

but more in-depth course on specific specializations within a subfield; 400-level= in-depth, advanced course on a specialized topic or application). If the re-numbering of a course changes its transferability, then institutions should contact the other institutions involved in the transfer agreements in order to resolve transfer issues.

- Many course transfers are course specific (for example, Psyc 258 transfers as Psyc 258), but some are general (for example, Psyc 405 transfers as Psyc 4xx). If institutions want specific course transfers, then they should negotiate this with the other institutions involved in the transfer agreements.
- Province-wide, students have the option of studying psychology through several different types of programs. Some examples are 3 year and 4 year programs; a psychology major, honours or applied degree ; and a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree. Many on the ACAT committee noted that having diverse options benefits students.

Updates:

Grant MacEwan

No curriculum changes since last meeting

Student numbers- 307 declared psychology majors and honours students in Arts and about 200 psychology majors in Science (no honours in Science). In Arts, 1521 students had undeclared majors. According to historical trends, about a third of the undecided will likely become psych majors. Psych is the biggest major in Arts and second biggest in Science (biology is bigger).

60 – 1st year courses max course size

40 – 2nd and 3rd year courses max course size

20 – 4th year course max course sizes

Faculty loads – teaching courses per semester with research

Or teaching 4 per semester

might go 3/4

Psychology Dept's 6th Annual In-house Conference was on April 19. The 13 honours students in 4th year gave talks, and the 18 honours students in 3rd year presented posters, as did 2 independent study students.

Psychology class sizes and full-time faculty teaching loads may increase for 2013/14 due to budget shortfalls. These changes are currently under consideration.

We have experienced an internal transfer issue with students coming to us with grades of D or D+ in a psychology course that is a prerequisite for another course. Because MacEwan University requires a minimum grade of C- in a prerequisite course, students with a lower passing grade are required to repeat the course at MacEwan, unless they have already earned at least C- in higher level courses in psychology.

Canadian University College

Criteria for registration

Half the credits are upper division courses

Made it a priority to have all faculty as registered psychologists

3 and 4 year psychology degree

Built so that students have 1/2 courses needed for registration

Capstone courses

New courses: positive psych, human sexuality, pre-marital counselling

Psychology of religion (offered by Concordia)

CUC independently determined the foundational courses

3 year vs. 4 year degrees: 3 year is a good stepping stone degree particularly for those students whose continuing educational goals are clear

CUC considering psychology premed program

It's a common trend for students to take psychology as a pre-med program (Grant Mac had 2 BA students do med school)

300/400 courses usually offered on rotation at CUC

Professors teach 4 courses a semester (1 hour labs, not 3)

Question: pre-reqs? Are there issues with pre-reqs because there are so many options for courses?

Answer from former student: No. Most upper division courses have rather general pre-requisites (eg: have taken at least 20 credits in PSYC)

Considering a separate stats course offered through psychology department

CUC's program generally looks a little more applied (eg: role playing in counselling)

Developmental psychology - could be offered as an upper division course specializing in a specific area

MCAT may eventually require more psychology courses

Perhaps not enough research base

Other schools - more science/research rather than application

Community service learning - specifically working with a community group. An applied practicum.

U of A - no required GPA

Budget cuts may result in a restricted GPA because a limited number of courses

To be in a specialization you need to have a certain GPA (u of a)

CUC wants to keep it open instead of limited

Red Deer College

Collaborative degree with the U of C

Transfer relationships

Core courses transfer everywhere

Transfer with certain specialized courses aren't specified

Planning guides to make transfer seamless

70-80 students in collab program

Sensation/perception is no longer transferred to U of A because of numbering changes (likely fixable)

Sensation/perception at U of A was pulling content from other 200 level courses so they did a little bit of number shifting, same with abnormal psychology

Cognitive psychology

Cognitive at U of A has moved from arts to science. Internal book keeping thing to keep it

balanced

St. Mary's University College

3 and 4 year degrees

Like the 3 year and have no intention of getting rid of it

Psychology is growing and one of the strongest programs

57 new applications for psychology right now

79 last year in September so numbers looking promising

No issues with transfer to report

More students staying instead of transferring out

BA - considering putting together a transfer agreement for a BSc - 2 years at SMU

Considering splitting full year courses

Stats and research methodology

Senior seminar - similar to an honours program

Even balance of applied and research

Athabasca University

No changes in Psychology programmes: We offer a 3-year and a 4-year B.A. Psychology programme.

Courses added in the last few years: Sensation and Perception; Drug and Behavior; Psychology of Sustainability; Psychology of Family and Parenting

AU plays a significant role in transferring credits both TO and FROM universities and colleges in Alberta and nationally.

Visiting students from universities in Alberta take one, two, or more courses at AU and transfer credits to their home institutions, thus facilitating their degree completion sooner.

Students from community colleges and other small institutions in remote areas (particularly First Nations colleges) transfer credit to AU and complete their degree with AU. Instructor credentials can be an issue when transfer credits from very small institutions are assessed.

Our OPEN university mandate means that AU students come from a great diversity of educational backgrounds. We typically use "recommended courses" to indicate the pre-requisite courses for a particular course.

Concordia University

3 and 4 year degrees

Developing a rationale for 200-400 courses

200 - subdisciplines

300 - intermediate

400 - senior levels that require application or in depth worth

Proposing changing numbering in some of their courses

Lots of courses transfer as 2xx

It would be nice to clean this up so students could receive equivalent credit particularly when they are classes actually offered by the receiving institution

Transferability is determined between the institutions. ACAT just negotiates the transfer but the registrars and departments determine the transfers.

If you drop a pre-req, the transfer drops to non-specific. Contact the chair or associate chair to ensure the best transferability.

University of Calgary

Going to do an undergrad curriculum review this fall

850 majors 50 honours

BA and BSc. Most are BA

New course - students can get credit for volunteer work in research laboratories

Quarter course. Can do up to 2 of them.

50 transfers per term. No particular problems at this point

University of Alberta

Courses moving around up and down the scale

Lots of special topics courses

Not enough faculty to teach all courses

Lots of 3xx and 4xx transfer

2xx and 1xx can be issues because of pre-req checking

Contact undergrad chair if you encounter these issues

Pete Hurd (undergrad chair)

Curriculum review activities

APA curriculum development scheme

Making sure the courses offered line up with what APA requires

Making sure particular learning objectives line up with specific courses

Trying to be ahead of the game

Intro to psych in most schools is 2 courses. But there may be some pressure to change it to 1 (budget)

Idea - 1 semester of generals, 1 semester of methods (U of A)

Pure math 30-1 to take statistics? No!

Methods courses

ACAT

Upgrade the transfer web site

Creating a new smartphone app

Block transfers

Auditing the current block transfers

Defined learning outcomes and see if they line up within block transfer agreements

Other business

Massively open online course MOOC

Works well for math or physics

Will it work for psychology?

Advantages – it's great publicity

Replace all intro level courses with MOOCs? Bad idea!

Can't be research intensive with MOOCs

Not necessarily worth university credit