

**Undergraduate Psychology Program Utilization of Evidence to
Improve Psychology Program
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The following proposal to the Academic Council is a demonstration of how the process of assessment has been utilized to improve program content and links from course work to Program Student Learning Outcomes.

The assessment process integrated instructor input, student input, results of the assessment rubric for the integrative paper, and recent research in this area.

**Proposal to ACADEMIC COUNCIL
PSY 464 Evolutionary Psychology
April 2010**

Proposal

Evolutionary Psychology (PSY 464) is currently an elective course. The proposal is to make it a required course. This will increase the required credits for the Psychology major from 39 credits to 42 credits.

Rationale

One of the program student learning outcomes for the Psychology major is **Psychology as an Integrated System**. The psychology coursework is integrated with evolutionary theory/psychology. This PSLO is assessed in PSY 490 Senior Seminar in Psychology. Our assessment indicates this outcome is not adequate.

Assessment

- Feedback from course instructors is that there needs to be a separate course to develop evolutionary theory/psychology as a means to integrate psychology coursework into an inter-related system.
- The results of a survey of students (N= 15) in PSY 490 Senior Seminar in Psychology (Spring 2009) indicated all 15 students favored a separate course in evolutionary theory/psychology.
- The Psychology Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) of *Psychology as an Integrated System* and *Specific Focuses in Psychology* were assessed using a rubric, for the first time, during the Spring 2009 Day term offering of the course PSY 490 Senior Seminar in Psychology. The data from the rubric used to determine inter-rater reliability (.8735) were used for this analysis (see CUH WASC re-accreditation undergraduate psychology evidence website).

You want to convey to your Martian colleague an integrated understanding of this strange species called *Homo sapiens*. You want to retain all the important insights the psychologists have discovered but you don't want to cling to the disciplinary divisions that strike you as a somewhat arbitrary. Because evolution by selection is the only known process that is capable of generating complex organic design, such as the human mind, evolutionary psychology appears to be the only viable meta-theory that is powerful enough to integrate all of these sub-disciplines. (385)

- A recent volume (Vol 64: 2, February/March 2009) of the journal *American Psychologist*, the premier journal of the American Psychological Association, devoted the entire volume, a special edition, to Charles Darwin and Psychology.

The April 2006 volume (Vol 61:3) of the journal *American Psychologist*, the premier journal of the American Psychological Association, had an article "Fundamental Principles for an Integrative Science of Personality" which used evolutionary psychology to integrate the fragmented sub-discipline of personality theory.

Requirements

Requirements for psychology major will increase from 39 to 42 credits

Costs

No additional costs

Staffing

No additional staffing required. Course will also be offered online.

Implementation

Fall 2010