AOC Summary of Psychology’s Assessment Report

On September 26, 2011, the Assessment Oversight Committee (AOC) conducted an assessment review of the Psychology department. Dr. Elizabeth Gates presented the report. She identified a number of issues that their assessment tools revealed. For instance, students were frustrated regarding unavailability of upper level courses, especially Behavioral Research I and II. There are currently three students who will not be able to complete their psychology major within four years because they have been unable to get into Behavioral Research I and II. Moreover, students reported confusion regarding jobs they can obtain with only a bachelor’s degree in psychology. Finally, Graduate schools in counseling and social work have heightened expectations regarding students’ completion of volunteering, internships, and/or human services related work experience.

In response, the Psychology department is shifting around the schedule so that more academic staff can teach the lower level courses. This would free up time for qualified faculty to teach the Behavioral Research course (which is a full year commitment). In addition, the department will change the GPA requirement for psychology majors (which is currently going to the Curriculum Committee). It is proposed that students have a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA after the completion of 45 credits to declare a psychology major. This would help to manage enrollment growth and decrease demand for upper level courses. Professors teaching these courses report increase frustration with the academic inabilities of students completing the courses.

Other implementations included a Tri-State Undergraduate Psychology Conference Panel, an Advisory Group, a revision of the Careers in Counseling and Human Services course, the addition of a Substance Abuse Counseling emphasis, and increased “volunteer” hours as part of the service learning component of the major.

The AOC’s three primary questions were addressed and the committee was very satisfied with the current efforts and plans for continued assessment. The Committee commends Psychology for its very good report.