

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
STRATEGIC PLAN
MAY 1, 2009**

Section 1: Description of Department of Psychology

1.1.1 Mission, Vision and Goals

The Department of Psychology is comprised of nine full-time faculty members (4 full professors, 3 associate professors, 2 assistant professors) and one part-time administrative assistant. Over the past ten years (fall 1998 – spring 2007), members of the psychology department have taught an average of 1299 students per academic year. Of these students, roughly 500 are enrolled in General Psychology (PSY100) each year. We have graduated a mean of 60 student majors annually over the past ten years.

The mission of the Department of Psychology is to foster in students an understanding and appreciation of the scientific approach to describing and explaining behavior and mental processes. To this end, faculty members strive to provide opportunities for students to challenge generalizations, engage in objective thinking and observation and employ the research methods necessary to establish a more complete understanding of mind and behavior. Throughout the program, students are introduced to theoretical explanations and the associated empirical evidence and research methods employed to establish and evaluate them. We expect that the knowledge and skills that students develop will serve them well as they consider their responsibilities to society and their role in the world.

We envision a department that promotes psychology as a science both for the sake of gaining understanding and for the applications that may emerge as a consequence (American Psychological Association Task Force, 2002; McGovern, Furomoto, Halpern, Kimble & McKeachie, 1991). To this end we expect faculty and students to be actively engaged with ideas and one another. Ideally, this vision will be reflected in students and faculty who collaboratively or independently work to understand behavior and solve problems in a variety of settings including classrooms, laboratories and the world beyond our campus. As these ideals are long held by the department, we hope to increase and enhance our collaborations with students and with each other in a place that encourages and supports meaningful interactions in and out of the classroom. To achieve this vision the department has established the following goals:

- Goal 1:** Provide greater opportunity to engage in psychological science to create a more vibrant, interactive research culture among students
- Goal 2:** Promote emerging areas in psychology and emphasize interdisciplinary connections
- Goal 3:** Encourage students to value the practice of psychology and its application to the larger community
- Goal 4:** Enhance ongoing relationships with psychology major alumni
- Goal 5:** Maintain academic excellence through a solid foundation of course offerings and increase depth of student understanding

1.2 Programs

The Department of Psychology offers students the opportunity to complete a major in psychology or honors psychology. Moreover the department is committed to strongly supporting the Neuroscience minor by contributing courses and faculty time to ensure the success of this program and by communicating with department chairs and faculty in biology about the needs of the Neuroscience program. Faculty members directing the Neuroscience program have created a separate strategic plan for the minor.

The Psychology Department is committed to contributing to the General Education Program and to Curriculum II in several ways. For instance, the department regularly contributes two First Term Seminar courses each year and has been a long time contributor to the Curriculum II program through the teaching of Individual and Society (CUR210) and more recently Senior Seminar (CUR399). In addition, General Psychology (PSY100) is a course that many Gustavus students complete to fulfill the general education course requirement in Human Behavior and Social Institutions (SOI) and is important in promoting aspects of the liberal arts such as providing answers on classic philosophical questions, becoming knowledgeable about the self, making connections with other disciplines and teaching critical thinking (Gray, 2008).

Furthermore, courses in the Department of Psychology are required to complete majors in education (PSY100 required) and nursing (PSY100 and PSY234 required) and are necessary to fulfill the prerequisites for several pre-professional health programs, including medicine, dentistry, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

1.3 Support Relationships

The Department of Psychology does not require courses outside the department to complete the Psychology major. However, we rely on biology to join with us in contributing courses to support and diversify the Neuroscience minor.

There are a number of offices on campus that provide technical, administrative or specialized services for our department. Some of these are Alumni Relations, Dining Services, Gustavus Technology Services, the Registrar and the Office of the Provost which interact with our department periodically. We rely on the Career Center to provide support to students who are researching and participating in internships and have utilized resources offered by the Community Service office when creating service learning opportunities in our courses. We have also requested support from the Library for our students who are learning to navigate resources for research and for faculty requiring resources for teaching or research.

Section 2: Strategic Review

2.1 Strategic Issues

In 2007, the Department of Psychology completed a ten-year review that included a self-study and an on campus visit and evaluation by psychologists from Hope College and the University of Minnesota. The ten-year review and subsequent follow-up conversations, as well as focused departmental conversations during fall 2008, serve as the basis for our summary of strategic issues.

2.1.1 Internal Strengths: The Department of Psychology maintains a collegial working environment that includes regularly scheduled formal meetings of all department members as well as frequent informal conversations about teaching, research and issues of shared interest and concern. Department teaching evaluation data collected since the 1980's indicate that collectively,

our teaching is well respected by students. Moreover, academic assessment data based on the requirement that all senior students complete a version of the Graduate Record Exam in psychology, suggest that our majors graduate with very high mastery of skills and information in our discipline. These assessment data have been collected every year since 2004 and periodically since the early 1980's.

2.1.2 Internal Weaknesses: We are aware of weaknesses in our department, many of which we believe, emerge from the high student demands for our courses and our time. This demand is consistent and long-standing and is not likely to diminish. Indeed, all indications are that interest in psychology among college undergraduates is likely to grow to meet the growth in opportunities for people trained in the discipline. (Department of Labor expects 10-20% increase by 2010; American Psychological Association, 2009). As a consequence, we regret that there is little time available in our collective schedules to engage in long-term planning. Our past ten year evaluations (1995/1996; 2006/2007) were useful and led to documented changes in our curriculum, but discussion of long range planning on a more regular basis is simply not feasible given the many other demands on our time. Moreover, we regret that our curriculum does not include a greater variety of upper level elective courses. We are aware of students' desire for these courses (because of their informal comments to us and because of survey data from graduating seniors) and believe such courses would enhance their breadth and depth of understanding, but we simply have been unable to create and provide these courses because of the staffing required to meet the high demand for our core courses.

Similarly, we regret that there is little time to provide our students with many of the enhanced experiences we would like to offer in the courses we currently teach. For example, without additional assistance, the laboratory experiences available to students are lacking and are simply not feasible in our introductory course (PSY100) or in our 200-level foundational courses. Early lab experiences would inform students about the scientific nature of psychology and prepare them better for statistics and research methods I and II (PSY224 and 225) as well as for the Neuroscience minor. Moreover, our commitment to meeting student demands both in and out of the classroom has in many cases made it difficult for faculty to engage in scholarly work in their field. This not only has the potential to create morale problems for faculty, but also makes it less likely for students to engage in collaborations with faculty on original publishable research. Finally, we are less systematic than we would like to be in our ability to track our majors post-graduation – this despite the fact that our students could serve in a variety of ways as resources for ourselves and for our current students.

External Opportunities 2.1.3: That there is growing interest in psychology both from students and from colleagues in other disciplines is an important opportunity for our department. The growth of research in such areas as neuroscience, evolutionary behavior, and cognition, has pushed the boundaries of psychology and made more apparent the connections psychology has with other disciplines (e.g., biology, health, education, communications). With this in mind, psychology can be viewed as a major that provides connections to and flexibility in variety of career options. Given the current economic uncertainty, this flexibility is likely to be appealing both to prospective students, their parents, and to employers. In addition, Gustavus alumni provide unique opportunities for current Gustavus students. Specifically, psychology graduates are proud of their degree and some have enthusiastically volunteered to stay involved by giving invited talks and by providing students with career guidance and internship supervision. We hope to strengthen this connection between the department and alumni. Although funding from national granting agencies is becoming increasingly competitive, in the past we have been successful in securing funds for technology such as computer classrooms, and hope to take advantage of such opportunities in the future. Emerging

technology, such as computer software for creating experimental programs for research, will continue to inspire our research and classroom teaching.

External Challenges 2.1.4: Growing interest in psychology brings with it growing competition among schools to recruit capable, interested students. We are keenly aware of the competition we face from Minnesota colleges who appear to be addressing this interest in more highly visible ways. For instance, St. Olaf College, Macalester College, Carleton College, and the College of St. Catherine have all within the last several years celebrated new or renovated buildings, newly equipped psychology and neuroscience laboratories, or created new programming that are likely very attractive both to prospective students and prospective faculty. We face this challenge for new facilities and equipment at the same time that the nation's economic state makes funding from external government sources less likely. Another challenge we face comes from growth in the areas of neuroscience, cognition, and genetics and their integration with other disciplines – a trend that is not necessarily congruent with prospective students' interest in more applied career paths such as pursuing professional degrees in psychology (PsyD), rather than the more traditional academic degrees (MA, PhD). Meeting this challenge requires careful attention to curricular offerings that might be addressed by adding upper level elective courses that emphasize the relevance of findings in these basic research areas to more applied areas of concern. We also face challenges that come from our discipline's increasing reliance on technology. Computer-based presentation of stimuli and data collection will require that our department (including students) receive specialized assistance in creating custom experimental methods that to date, we have simply managed on our own.

2.2 Barriers

Gustavus is located over 50 miles from a major metropolitan area. This distance from potential job markets, housing, and other resources is a hurdle to attracting and retaining new faculty and their partners, thus making it essential to market Gustavus as a vital, attractive and competitive workplace. The relatively homogeneous demographic profile of the surrounding area also makes it difficult to recruit new faculty and students from diverse backgrounds. Another impediment to recruitment is the state of our classrooms, offices and research spaces. A new building is expected to address these needs in the future, but presently we work in cramped, outdated facilities with inadequate equipment, poor temperature controls, few windows, and inadequate space for labs, storage and student work spaces.

Distance from large urban areas also makes collaboration with colleagues difficult and expensive. Although some support is given by the College to attend conferences for research purposes, resources for learning new teaching techniques and providing faculty development off campus are less vigorously supported. More support for technologies such as videoconferencing, access to online journals and funds for travel to teaching conferences to learn innovative techniques for supporting pedagogy would mean that faculty would not have to choose between their research or teaching when spending faculty development funds. Our students also are affected by our distance from a major urban center because we lack variety and numbers in internship sites and career exploration opportunities in St. Peter and the surrounding area.

Our ability to provide in-depth, quality experiences for students is hampered by our large student enrollments, heavy advising load and lack of flexibility in scheduling. We would be able to interact more with students in an advisory and research capacity with a reduced teaching and advising load and increased administrative support for the Neuroscience program and chairs. Research too would be enhanced with availability of a subject pool for conducting research during the summer months.

Section 3: Strategic Initiatives and Recommendations

The following descriptions represent the strategic initiatives we have envisioned to accomplish our department goals. For ease of exposition, these initiatives are listed separately under the goal to which they are most directly linked. However, in many cases the initiatives are interrelated and in virtually every case, the initiatives would contribute toward accomplishing multiple goals. Some of these goals are reinforced in the strategic plan for the Neuroscience program.

Goal 1: Provide greater opportunity to engage in psychological science to create a more vibrant interactive research culture among students

Strategic Initiative 1.1 Create research suites to encourage, inspire, and support high quality research in psychological science

The plans for a new academic building on campus include designs for research laboratory suites that will allow students and faculty to engage more effectively in original psychological science both independently and in collaboration with each other. These proposed suites are designed to maximize interactions between students and faculty in related areas of research with the intent to spark interest and collaboration that might not otherwise occur. We anticipate that these research areas will encourage students to think of themselves as scholars and create a culture whereby students are inspired to engage in the excitement of generating research questions that they can address in empirical research. We also plan to dedicate a block of departmental time to events such as student/faculty research presentations, regularized student research meetings, outside speaker presentations, and technology seminars.

Strategic Initiative 1.2 Develop a lab-based curriculum to integrate research into courses

Research-based teaching is already a core component of our curriculum. However, with a new academic building and research suites comes the opportunity to include new lab components in existing classes and create more research opportunity for students. To make full use of these new facilities and spaces, the department requires additional time and resources to allow faculty to create these lab-based courses or add lab components to existing classes. To accommodate the additional pedagogical planning, faculty time will require supplementation through course release time, additional adjunct faculty or larger class enrollments.

Strategic Initiative 1.3 Fulfill laboratory equipment needs necessary to conduct high quality psychological research

With the plans for a new academic building and the design of research suites (Initiative 1.1) comes the need for the equipment necessary to realize the potential to conduct high quality original psychological research. Although the department has long been creative in managing to conduct research with low tech equipment, and indeed has inspired this creativity in our student projects, the technological expertise and expectations of a more sophisticated student population as well as the disciplinary trend toward greater methodological sophistication requires a meaningful commitment to purchasing up-to-date laboratory equipment (including computers and software) in order to support high quality student, faculty, and student-faculty collaborative research. The Neuroscience minor, in particular, requires extensive, ongoing funding to start-up and maintain functional, dedicated laboratories.

Strategic Initiative 1.4 Hire two additional faculty to capitalize on the natural collaborations that psychological science supports

Recent evidence suggests that collaborative endeavors in psychological science are on the rise and lead to more meaningful results than those that emerge from solitary endeavors (Wuchty, Jones, & Uzzi, 2007). To capitalize on the relative ease with which these collaborations can occur with students and to model what is happening across the discipline requires a commitment from faculty that is difficult to meet with the current six course per year classroom teaching assignment. Hiring two additional tenure track faculty in psychology would lessen the teaching load, thereby creating the opportunity to increase research collaborations with students outside the classroom. As described in Initiative 2.1 and 2.2, we are especially in need of an additional neuroscientist and cognitive psychologist who would be effective in providing connections within psychology and the neuroscience program.

Strategic Initiative 1.5 Hire two laboratory technicians

The department has a long history of necessary self-sufficiency when it comes to introducing and maintaining technology both in the classroom and in laboratory research. As psychological science expands its reliance on technology in research and data collection, it is becoming increasingly necessary for the department to have dedicated laboratory support to keep up with these changes. To this end we propose hiring two technicians with computer expertise, one whose primary responsibility would be to support research initiatives and one who would primarily support pedagogical initiatives.

Research support technician: This technician would have the expertise necessary to design custom computer programs for stimulus presentation and data collection and additionally, run laboratories. This person would work closely with students enrolled in Statistics and Research Methods II (PSY 225), a major requirement with multiple sections offered every semester, to support the original research projects required of students in this course. This person would also be available to consult with and support honors psychology students and faculty members engaged in original psychological research. Expertise in advanced statistical software, data collection, and analysis would be an asset to faculty and students who require guidance or support. This technician would also have the ancillary task of maintaining the department's website. Increased visibility as a result of updates to the department website would raise the profile of the department and help facilitate contact with psychology alumni (see Initiative 4.1).

Pedagogical support technician: This technician would be dedicated to creating high quality course experiences (primarily computer-based) tailored to enhance faculty course offerings. Creating these experiences for the many students we serve in General Psychology would be a primary task, but our 200-level survey course offerings would also benefit from these computer experiences. This technician would also have the ancillary task of providing technical assistance necessary to maintain the psychology alumni network and database and should be skilled in computer methods for delivering information to and soliciting feedback from alumni via the internet (see Initiative 4.1).

Strategic Initiative 1.6 Encourage the college to develop a fund dedicated to supporting student conference travel.

Many national conferences strongly encourage undergraduate participation and our department has a strong record of faculty/student research collaboration. Our students would benefit greatly

from attending these conferences and having the opportunity to meet other students and faculty in their area of interest. These experiences would help them establish connections to other schools and programs that would be valuable for future careers and graduate school applications. In addition, students that attend conferences return to campus excited about research and this excitement is contagious. To encourage this extension of the vibrant research community beyond the Gustavus campus, we would like funds to be available for students working on a research project to attend one national conference per year.

Goal 2: Promote emerging areas in psychology and emphasize interdisciplinary connections

Strategic Initiative 2.1 Hire a neuroscientist

Neuroscience has emerged as a growth area in psychology and an important interdisciplinary program. It is clear that the explosion of new knowledge in this field and the strong interest of our students should be addressed with more course offerings. There is a tremendous strain on the two faculty members making up the Neuroscience program to meet student demand for courses. Additionally the popularity of the program has led to an increase in administrative and laboratory preparation tasks without an increase in support staff or technicians. Our students require opportunities to acquire both breadth of knowledge, through diverse courses and depth through laboratory experiences. In order to maintain the current quality and to expand our commitment, we need to hire an additional full-time faculty member who would contribute to the existing neuroscience and psychology courses and offer new courses in this area.

Strategic Initiative 2.2 Hire a cognitive psychologist

Another academic and research area for which we are underserved is cognitive psychology. More courses that address cognitive areas beyond the 200-level would prepare students for emerging areas of study in graduate school or careers in management, education, economics or politics. This new faculty member could provide additional research expertise or courses in decision-making, reasoning, attention, or knowledge acquisition. Additionally, interdisciplinary approaches bridging neuroscience and cognitive psychology provide valuable research, theoretical and computer techniques that inform the other psychology sub disciplines.

Strategic Initiative 2.3 Hire a laboratory assistant to support physiological psychology and neuroscience teaching labs

The addition of support staff is necessary to facilitate the laboratory component of neuroscience and physiology-related courses. The labs require extensive preparation and the complex equipment used requires considerable time in set-up and maintenance. This individual would assist with a range of tasks such as setting up and testing electrical equipment, animal care and preparation of solutions. We believe that this support is necessary to allow us to expand our laboratory offerings and fully utilize the laboratory space provided in the new academic building. Laboratory experiences are essential to promote psychology as a science (APA Task Force, 2002) and emphasize the field's extensive connections to other sciences.

Strategic Initiative 2.4 Create a post-doctoral fellow position

This will be a revolving position, advertised as an opportunity for new psychology Ph.D.s to gain experience in teaching and working with undergraduates in psychology as well as the opportunity to be mentored by established faculty in a liberal arts program. Those from underrepresented

groups will be encouraged to apply. The position will entail teaching one course each semester and conducting research with undergraduates on a topic in the fellow's area of expertise. Fellows will be chosen so that their work complements our psychology program, rather than duplicates it. It is intended that the courses taught by fellows will be those that are not part of our current curriculum so as to provide our students with access to course content, methods and research issues not covered by existing staff. Two members of the current staff will be given course release time (one course each semester) and assigned as mentors to the fellow. Activities will involve visiting classes and advising on syllabi and assignments. This position will serve as a vehicle by which Gustavus can raise its prominence by providing additional opportunities in research for our undergraduates and encouraging those from underrepresented groups to pursue careers in liberal arts education.

Strategic Initiative 2.5 Expand journal collection to reflect emerging areas and interdisciplinary connections

Although we understand that the cost of journals continues to rise at staggering rates and that many articles for journals to which Gustavus does not currently subscribe can be acquired via ILL, students (and faculty) will frequently conduct research using the path of least resistance and only use articles that can be freely downloaded from Gustavus Full Text or Google searches. Therefore, until Open Access Electronic Journals in psychology become more prominent and complete, the department would like to increase the online access to journals that are essential for the ongoing research and teaching in the department (e.g., Cognition, Hormones and Behavior, Psychology of Music). In addition, more representative access to journals online will help attract and retain new faculty members.

<p>Goal 3: Encourage students to value the practice of psychology and its application to the larger community</p>
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Strategic Initiative 3.1 Hire a clinical psychologist

A clinician would provide additional teaching, research and applied clinical expertise for the psychology department. Many of our students plan to pursue graduate work and careers in therapeutic or health service settings. An additional faculty member with clinical expertise would reduce our need to hire adjunct faculty to teach clinical courses and provide additional offerings in upper level, elective and IEX courses (e.g., psychological therapy, child psychopathology). Whether hired to replace a retiring department faculty member or as a new hire, this clinician would also serve as an additional research supervisor, academic advisor and mentor in an area that is important to our students.

Strategic Initiative 3.2 Create a strong IEX and semester-long internship program that provides opportunities for connecting academic knowledge and research experience with applied settings.

Our internship program is an exciting tool for students as they explore future career paths and make connections between the classroom and the community. We hope to improve the availability of clinical and counseling sites while increasing the breadth of sites devoted to public policy, advocacy, social justice, industrial/organizational principles and neuroscience. An important goal is to apply psychological science to social problems and initiatives. More faculty time would be required to reevaluate the way in which cooperative programs are administered and designed. The program is projected to be a cornerstone of experiential opportunities provided by our department.

Strategic Initiative 3.3 Provide support for campus- and community-based service learning initiatives in the classroom

Our department provides experiential learning opportunities in a number of psychology core and elective courses. However, because there is a strong demand for these courses, resulting in full enrollment and waiting lists, it is difficult to implement large scale service-learning components that can be administered by the course instructor and fully addressed by the sites available through community services. Smaller enrollments is one way to address this issue, although without additional faculty such a step is not feasible. Smaller enrollments would also allow more time to be devoted to integrating the academic content of the course more fully with the community-based learning component.

Strategic Initiative 3.4 Reduce psychology core course load to provide support for campus-wide centers and interdisciplinary programs.

Because psychology focuses on understanding the human mind and behavior, it can meaningfully contribute to the curriculum of many interdisciplinary programs, such as Peace Studies, Environmental Studies, and Gender, Women, & Sexuality Studies. Recent research has empirically established psychology as a “hub discipline”, that is, a discipline in which scientific research is cited by many in other fields (Cacioppo, 2007; Boyack, Klavans, Borner, 2005). By hiring the additional faculty mentioned in Initiatives 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, and 3.1 and by creating a new postdoctoral fellowship (2.4) and endowed chairs (5.1), we hope to decrease the number of core courses each faculty member needs to teach to facilitate the development of elective courses (see also 5.2) that can contribute to interdisciplinary programs, thereby capitalizing on the “hub” nature of our discipline and allowing students to see how psychology can contribute to broader issues.

<p>Goal 4: Enhance ongoing relationship with psychology major alumni</p>

Strategic Initiative 4.1 Develop an online psychology alumni database and network.

We would like current psychology majors to have the opportunity to interact and learn from former students throughout the year, not just during the reunion weekend. To facilitate this interaction, an online psychology alumni database and network will be created. This network will include the interests and current occupations of psychology alumni. This information would be searchable so that current students can easily identify alumni that share their interests or potential career choice. The network would also provide a way for current psychology students to easily contact (e.g., forums, instant messaging and email) alumni to ask questions and get advice throughout their time at Gustavus and after.

Strategic Initiative 4.2 Utilize the full-time pedagogical support technician position created in Initiative 1.5 to provide technical assistance for the alumni network

Maintaining the psychology alumni database and network would be beyond the responsibilities of the psychology administrative assistant. Therefore, we intend to use the full-time technical support staff position created in Initiative 1.5 for this purpose in addition to the responsibilities listed above (see Initiative 4.1).

Strategic Initiative 4.3 Work with alumni to establish a psychology department research endowment fund.

We would like to establish a fund using psychology alumni donations for faculty/student research and development opportunities and continue funding of existing department endeavors. Presently the Psychology Department has the high profile Kendall Lecture Series to bring leading psychology scholars to campus. It is funded by an endowment created in honor of Dr. John Kendall, a former president of the College and psychology department faculty member. The department wants to ensure that this series will continue by encouraging funding from alumni and associated foundations. Other research lectures and symposia established by the department such as the Psychology Department Fall Alumni Lecture Series and the twice yearly Psychology Student Research Symposium could be supported by an endowment fund. Other possibilities to enhance student/faculty research are summer stipends for student projects and on-campus housing, travel funds to conferences for faculty and students and research equipment that would enhance all student research opportunities or the Neuroscience program in particular. We also propose an alumni advisory council that allows interested alumni to participate in choosing outstanding senior honors theses or proposals for summer research stipends.

Strategic Initiative 4.4 In anticipation of an expanded role in supporting alumni relations, increase work hours for the psychology administrative assistant to meet these new needs and continue to serve existing and presently unmet departmental needs.

Expand the current 6-hour/day, 9-month administrative assistant position to a 6-hour/day, 10-month position with hours available to cover one week beyond commencement, one week prior to the first day of class and one six-hour day each week during the summer. The current six-hour, 9-month position does not reflect end-of-year and beginning-of-year administrative responsibilities and thus, fails to meet the departmental needs adequately.

Computer technical support, event organization, contact building and record and budget maintenance are additional tasks that will present themselves as we increase communication with our psychology alumni. The department's administrative assistant has already assumed some of these tasks, but without additional hours and funding, our plans to increase alumni contact and participation are less likely to succeed.

Strategic Initiative 4.5 The creation of a psychology alumni reunion that corresponds with the College's annual alumni weekend

This event would bring together current psychology faculty, former psychology faculty, current psychology majors, and graduated psychology majors. The weekend would include panel discussions featuring psychology alumni who have gone onto pursue careers in a variety of fields. It would include invited talks from psychology alumni and current faculty members, a poster session featuring current student research, and social gatherings (e.g., dinner parties), all of which would provide different types of opportunities for current students to get to know former students. We believe this event would create excitement among current psychology students and energize former students to remain active in the future plans of Gustavus.

The celebration of a major from Gustavus should be a campus-wide event; therefore, other academic departments could consider organizing similar reunion events. This collaboration would foster a culture on campus that keeps close ties between current and previous students. These connections may benefit our current students as they consider future career paths and may also benefit the College by energizing alumni's interest in Gustavus' future objectives.

Goal 5: Maintain academic excellence through a solid foundation of course offerings and increase depth of student understanding

Strategic Initiative 5.1 Establish two endowed chairs

The department proposes two endowed chairs that will allow current Gustavus faculty members to increase opportunities for extended research collaborations with students, provide time to explore and develop new curriculum and pedagogical methods, and foster a more vibrant research environment for students. We propose that each endowed chair has sufficient funding to (1) pay salary and benefits for the occupant of the chair at their regularly scheduled salary in order to relieve the College's overall faculty salary pool, (2) pay salary to replace courses associated with the reduced teaching assignment of the endowed chair, (3) pay a summer stipend for the faculty member and up to three research students, (4) provide funding to support the costs of ongoing research (e.g., equipment purchases, participant payment), and (5) provide funding for the faculty member and engaged students to travel to at least two professional conferences each year.

We envision that existing faculty members will rotate through these endowed chairs and occupy the chair for a two-year period. A current strength of our department is collegial common commitment to the work of the department – a characteristic that is supported by the egalitarian spirit of the department. Working with the added benefits of the endowed chair will allow each of us to become more creative in our teaching and research.

During the first year of the two-year assignment, a faculty member would be assigned no more than four regular courses, preferably two sections of one course each semester. The remaining time would be used to work with individual students on a project designed to continue through the summer months and into the following academic year. In the second year, the teaching load would increase to five regular courses. The fifth course would be taught in the spring semester and normally be an upper level seminar focused on the topic central to the project completed during the prior three semesters.

Strategic Initiatives 5.2 Offer greater choice in upper level elective course offerings

Although our current course offerings meet the American Psychological Recommendations for providing a solid undergraduate major in psychology (APA, Task Force, 2002), our heavy enrollment demands have to date, restricted us from offering many upper level elective courses. A greater variety of course offerings, especially electives, is a frequent request from current students and is foremost among the criticisms listed in the survey results of our graduating seniors. Moreover, providing these elective experiences would provide students with the opportunity to study in greater depth the research and ideas introduced in our core survey courses. Hiring new faculty as we propose in Initiatives 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 above, who could provide these courses is one way to address this initiative. Equally important however, is the possibility that new faculty hires could assist in teaching the necessary core courses thereby affording current faculty the opportunity to create new courses for our curriculum.

Section 4: Assessment

The Psychology Department has a number of assessment tools already in place that would evaluate our success in meeting the goals presented in this document. These tools and additional measures that appraise whether we have met our objectives are listed below. Implementation of these assessment procedures will require additional administrative time and support.

Goal 1: Provide greater opportunity to engage in psychological science to create a more vibrant interactive research culture among students

- Track the number of students participating in research with faculty as honors students (PSY390), as research apprentices (PSY290), through directed research (PSY391) and during the summer.
- Record conference presentations and publications for students and faculty at national and international professional conferences and in refereed journals in the discipline.
- Track participation in end-of-the semester research symposia.
- Record attendance at research lectures sponsored by the psychology department and record the number of such lectures on campus.
- Assess the utilization of existing lab spaces to ensure they are being used productively.
- Track senior exam scores in areas related to statistics and research design.
- Evaluate increased sophistication and interest by students in use of technology in the classroom and in labs.
- Follow changes in the number of students who enter research-oriented graduate programs or obtain research-oriented post-graduation work.
- Implement a more formalized procedure for evaluating senior honors theses by including a second reader, creating standardized feedback tools for projects and comparing quality of projects with papers from previous years.

Goal 2: Promote emerging areas in psychology and emphasize interdisciplinary connections

- Record enrollment in all minors, including the Neuroscience minor.
- Examine for evidence of interdisciplinary connections with psychology through chosen research projects for courses.
- Track the development of courses in emerging areas and enrollment in these courses.
- Record the number of speakers in emerging disciplines who give lectures or participate in classrooms at Gustavus.
- Record the number of psychology graduates admitted to neuroscience and cognitive neuroscience graduate programs and participating in summer research opportunities in these fields that are sponsored at other institutions.

Goal 3: Encourage students to value the practice of psychology and its application to the larger community

- Continue to keep track of the number of students who take part in IEX or semester-long internships
- Maintain a more complete record of the number of existing and new internship sites being established.
- Record the variety of choices available to students in applied areas such as public policy, advocacy and industrial/organizational psychology.
- Record the number of graduates employed by their internship sites following graduation.

Goal 4: Enhance ongoing relationships with psychology major alumni

- Follow the success of online networking tools for psychology graduates by surveying them.
- Record the number of alumni who lecture or present through invitation in our department.

- Track any increases in alumni taking part in internship supervision or mentoring programs.
- Record gifts to newly created psychology department research endowment fund.

Goal 5: Maintain academic excellence through a solid foundation of course offerings and increase depth of understanding

- Continue testing psychology seniors using the comprehensive Graduate Record Exam subject test to assess mastery of content.
- Continue to assess psychology majors' satisfaction with course offerings through psychology graduate exit survey administered by the department.
- Continue to track enrollment in existing and new courses.

Psychology Department Faculty (Full-Time)

Jennifer Ackil

Kyle Chambers

Patricia Costello

Mark Kruger

Richard Martin

Timothy Robinson

Barbara Simpson

Marie Walker
(Interim Chair)

Janine Wotton

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