

**ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT
PSYCHOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM
SIR WILFRED GRENFELL COLLEGE**

DECEMBER 4, 2009

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Preface

The undergraduate program offered by psychology is considered to be a high quality program by everyone interviewed. It is very successful in attracting students and offering courses that complement the intended careers of both the psychology major, the non-major, and those students who minor or enroll in psychology courses as electives or for general interest. Background preparation in psychology within the program is quite good and those who complete the program develop a very good understanding of statistics and research methodology.

The honors portion of the program also attracts high numbers of students and has an excellent success rate of completion. The psychology honors program has the highest enrolment and completion rate of current honors programs offered at the college. All faculty appear to supervise students and their attentiveness and professional supervisory support for their students is to be commended.

Psychology faculty and staff are clearly a collegial group who can engage in decision-making independently and collectively, to the beneficial support of the program. Teaching is considered a highly valued and dedicated part of the faculty experience, as is support for student success, student research, and research collaboration.

The interaction between faculty, staff, and students is exemplary, as evidenced by faculty/staff involvement with honors students, majors, and the interactive social/professional networking with the Psychology Society. Honors students, majors, and graduates are very supportive of the program and think very highly of the faculty and staff.

The Review Process

Members of the Review Panel were provided with copies of documents (APPENDIX I) in support of the academic review process. An itinerary (APPENDIX VII) was provided and followed. The formal review of the Psychology Program took place from November 5–7, 2009. All members of the Review Panel were present at all scheduled interviews and meetings. Interviews were carried out with all faculty/staff, as well as with the Acting Principal, Acting Vice-Principal, and Associate Vice-Principal (Research) (APPENDIX V). Separate interviews were also conducted with individual faculty/staff, the Chair of the Program (Dr. Sonya Corbin-Dwyer), the Head of Social Science (Dr. Sandra Wright – also a member of the psychology program unit) and the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Librarian (Ms. Louise McGillis). Lunch and dinner meetings were convened, where possible, to enable the Review Panel to meet informally with faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

Two separate group meetings were conducted with students, comprising honors, majors, non-majors, and the president of the Psychology Society. Both meetings were well attended by students who positively and significantly contributed information on the program, faculty and staff, resources, opportunities for student research, and the potential for a graduate degree program.

The Undergraduate Psychology Degree Program

1. Strengths of the Program

The psychology program was originally designed about sixteen years ago. At the time of conception it was well designed for an education in psychology and with a mandate to obtain the most from the limited resources available. Students who completed the program received a good background in psychology. The program still appears to be strong, functional, positive, and running well, but now somewhat limited. As one faculty member stated it is now “a victim of success”, with little opportunity to expand its course offerings to non-psychology students or to potential minors. Comments from interviews seem to indicate that current strengths still lie in teaching and community service.

Currently, in terms of staffing, the psychology program has one staff member, one senior faculty member, five faculty members appointed within the last 8 years, and one eight-month contractual appointment. The more recent appointments, which all appear to be tenure-track, along with the senior person, are in an enviable position to contribute to further stability and evolution with regard to teaching, research, and student supervision. The program, then, appears to have staffing stability which provides an opportunity to evolve offerings within the program.

The research methods and data analysis components of the program provide students with a strong background in applied statistics, which can be successfully utilized and applied in almost any future career option chosen by graduating students. These courses also provide a very good background for those students who intend to apply for admission to graduate programs. Students positively commented that these courses, while sometimes difficult to cope with, provide a very good background in statistics and research methodology.

Psychology has been approached by other programs (i.e., Tourism, Environmental Studies) to consider broadening their statistics and methodology courses across college programs. While this suggestion has merit, it can be negotiated only when the psychology program unit receives the support of additional teaching faculty, staff, and resources to offer and operate such expanded services.

Faculty/staff have a strong commitment to provide a student-centered program through course offerings and interactivity with students, through an open-door policy, and through participation in events operated by the student Psychology Society. Faculty/staff appear to be very collegial with regard to consensus in decision-making, with respect for one another, and with an ability to “agree to disagree”. Faculty/staff appear to collectively socialize external to the work environment, further strengthening collegiality and the ability to interact informally.

The single staff member (Ms. Kelly Brown) is valued by faculty and students and is considered a “peer” by the faculty. The opinion of faculty and staff is that she has and demonstrates excellent abilities in working with students and she is considered a significant contributor to the success of the psychology program. The fact that Ms. Brown was awarded the university President’s Award for Exemplary Service (2005) confirms these opinions.

Undergraduate students in the program, at least at the majors and honors level, consider psychology to be a “high quality program”. Course Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ) results, which are considered indicators of course and faculty teaching performance, are not usually part of the review process, so faculty teaching effectiveness and performance is more difficult to ascertain. However, it is apparent from the selected CEQ results provided in the Self-Study for 2008 (Table 9, p. 43), that Psychology “consistently rated higher than other programs in the Division (Division of Social Science), higher than the College as a whole, and higher than the St. John’s campus as a whole. The Psychology faculty appear to be (slightly) above average in teaching effectiveness as gauged by CEQs”. A summary of results from student surveys (2007 & 2009) indicate that students, both undergraduates and graduates of the program, feel that they are receiving high quality instruction across the psychology curriculum. These impressions were confirmed by the students who were interviewed during the review process.

Results of student surveys (undergraduate and graduate) provided a plethora of information in support of the psychology program. A sample of acquired skill sets identified by students included: the development of research skills, an extensive education in statistics, writing skills, oral skills (through presentations), analytical thinking, counseling skills (within the confines of courses), problem-solving, interpersonal and communication skills, and learning good work-study skills. A sample of program strengths identified by students included: clear degree requirements, the variety of courses offered, high quality of instruction, knowledgeable and interested instructors, access to excellent professors, good communication with professors, an extensive education in statistics, individual attention to students, practical work, and small class size.

Undergraduate students (majors and honors) are eager to engage in research and tend to seek research opportunities as student research assistants and as research volunteers. Students hold faculty in high regard in terms of teaching, providing research opportunities, mentoring,

advising, supervising, student-faculty interactivity, and socializing (within Psychology Society events). Students consider faculty/staff as knowledgeable, always available (advocating an open-door policy), and as one student stated “just there for you”.

As evidenced in the Self-Study, students who graduate from the program have a very good record of student success; many students enter graduate school or move into other undergraduate degree programs or professional schools.

The psychology program appears to be a very strong stable program. While the College currently appears to need an increase in total budget funding and is very limited in effective support of resources and space, the Review Panel is of the opinion that psychology could do more to justify and acquire additional teaching and research resources. Since the psychology program appears to retain the highest number of undergraduate students per degree, has the highest number of honors students per degree, provides more opportunity for student supervision and research, is held in high esteem by its students, runs well with the fewest resources for its size, and has the potential to offer a graduate program; it is well positioned to strongly petition administration to address its program and research needs. As well, its inherent strengths could be marketed in a more public way to reinforce and support its needs.

The efforts of the Psychology Society are to be commended. While not a direct functional part of the psychology program, the Society, nevertheless, significantly contributes to student and faculty/staff faculty social functions, as well as supporting the cohesion of psychology students within the program. The Society promotes fund-raising and social events, interactivity between faculty/staff and students, and financially contributes to university scholarships and awards. In some regards the Society functions as a semi-professional organization by promoting psychology in the community.

Recommendation #1: That the Psychology program unit advocates and promotes a more assertive and public approach to addressing its resource, teaching, and research needs.

2. Resource Issues

The Psychology Degree program at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College is in dire need of additional resources.

(a) Physical Resources

Even though the existing space was renovated in 2008 to make it more appropriate for research, overall research space to support the existing program is barely adequate. Current lab and research space has to be shared between various faculty and student researchers and if most of them are working simultaneously, the noise level could pose a significant problem for some researchers. The acquisition of additional space is vital to maintain the research productivity of the faculty, staff, and the students. Many students have expressed a keen interest in doing

research external to the honors thesis requirement. Currently, this is not possible, given the limited space that is available for research. Furthermore, since all current faculty members in the Psychology program have to go through a promotion and tenure process, additional research space could enhance their ability to reinforce their research profiles in applying for progress through the ranks.

Psychology program unit members need to rationalize and prioritize their requirements for additional space. The requirements for research space vary significantly between the various areas of expertise of the faculty. Members of the psychology program unit will have to decide whether additional research space should encompass dedicated sound-proof rooms with one way mirrors, small sound-proof interview rooms, small counseling chambers, a large room (to host interviews or focus groups for between six to ten individuals), a room equipped with a computer and secured data storage facilities, or additional laboratory space for animal research. If additional equipment is acquired additional space to house and maintain such equipment would have to be justified and submitted in advance of equipment procurement.

If a graduate program in Psychology were to be developed, additional physical resources must be allocated. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to mount a graduate program with existing resources.

(b) Financial Resources

The Psychology program is operating on a limited and tight budget. The budget currently does not support undergraduate student travel to attend and present research at regional or national conferences. A dedicated budget for this purpose could support student research and provide an opportunity to present, which could strengthen students' graduate program applications. Currently, there are no dedicated research computers to support student, faculty, and staff. Acquiring one or two such dedicated high-end research computers (with appropriate software) could prove to be beneficial to enhancing the analysis of research data and to the overall success of the program. Furthermore, money obtained from the Principal's Research Fund, which is minimal, cannot be used to purchase equipment, like a computer.

Recommendation #2: The Review Panel supports, as a high priority, additional research space to accommodate the faculty/staff and student research needs of the program, subject to its justification.

Recommendation #3: A dedicated budget should be provided to support student attendance and the presentation of student research at local and national conferences.

Recommendation #4: The current budget for the psychology program unit should be enhanced to accommodate the upgrading of outdated or obsolete equipment and the purchase of new equipment, which can be justified for use in teaching and research.

Recommendation #5: Two computers with sufficient memory and software to enable students, as well as faculty and staff, to compile, collate, store and analyze research data should either be assigned and upgraded from existing Computing and Communications equipment or purchased separately.

(c) Human Resources

The Psychology program has one laboratory instructor staff member. She is involved in teaching three statistics courses as well as teaching the sexual behavior course every second year. In addition to her teaching and marking duties, she is responsible for ordering laboratory supplies and assisting psychology faculty members and students, when requested. Psychology is encouraged to justify the case for an additional instructional assistant, if they visualize that to be a priority in support of the program.

Recommendation #6: Additional faculty/staff positions, with full justification and rationalization, should be given a high priority, especially if additional undergraduate laboratory courses or a graduate program is to be incorporated into the psychology unit offerings.

3. Research and Scholarship

Psychology program unit faculty carry an unusual teaching load in terms of both the number of courses taught per semester, and the total number of courses each faculty member must prepare. Consistent with this teaching demand, the research productivity of Sir Wilfred Grenfell College psychology faculty is lower than that of faculty in other programs across the country. Despite this, several faculty members have been successful at obtaining grant funding for their research programs, indicating the value of the research ideas of Sir Wilfred Grenfell College faculty members. In our conversations with faculty members, it was clear that most have a strong commitment to building psychological knowledge through research. However, the limits of time (due to the large teaching loads) and resources (i.e., very limited lab space, outdated equipment) severely constrain their productivity. Several young faculty members expressed concerns about promotion and tenure, given their limitations in this regard. Furthermore, limitations on research also have consequences for student success, especially for students wishing to pursue graduate studies.

To date, students graduating with a B.A. or B.Sc. in psychology from Sir Wilfred Grenfell College have largely been successful in obtaining entry to graduate studies (Self Study, p. 27). However, this situation is likely to change in the future, given the increasing demand for such programs and the importance given to research experience in graduate school admissions. It is not uncommon for undergraduate students in other programs to have several conference presentations or even a publication based on research collaborations with their professors to their credit upon graduation. Such experience requires that faculty members have active research

programs with sufficient supervision time and laboratory space to facilitate undergraduate student research. In this context, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College psychology graduates are likely to fall short of graduates of other programs, and this will undoubtedly influence their ability to gain acceptance in graduate programs of their choosing.

Recommendation #7: The committee supports recommendations 1 through 3 of the Self Study recommendations, all of which are related to the needs of psychological research in the program unit.

In our opinion, these recommendations are quite reasonable, and providing support for such a successful academic unit would be in the interests of Sir Wilfred Grenfell College as a whole. (See also Recommendations 44, 54, and 56 (APPENDIX II) in the previous external review document.)

It should be noted that several recommendations of the previous external review related to research resources were implemented, and thus the situation in the program unit has improved from that time. Specifically, Recommendations 2 (reduced teaching load for new faculty) and 4 (start-up research grants) were implemented (APPENDIX II).

4. Curriculum

As stated above, the major picture of the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College psychology programs are their strength, including the admirable efficiency in their delivery. It is in this context that the committee wishes to mention a few issues that may make the curriculum even stronger.

One of the ways that the department manages to deliver the psychology programs, despite having few faculty members, is that there is little flexibility in course offerings for three of the four years of the program. This enables faculty to offer core courses at the 1000, 2000, and 4000 levels sufficiently often, and simultaneously ensures that student enrollment in each of these courses is maximized. It is only in the 3000 level courses that students are offered some flexibility in their choice of courses. Both students and faculty reported being satisfied with this arrangement. However, students had a few suggestions to increase the value of the 3000-level offerings, and most of the committee's curricular suggestions are aimed at this third year of the program.

3000-level Courses

(a) Sustainability

Several new courses have recently been added to the list of available 3000-level courses. These new courses are designed to take advantage of new faculty members' interests and expertise, to provide classes that match student interests, and/or to include emerging areas in the discipline. Introducing courses for these reasons is appropriate. However, given the limited number of

faculty in the program unit, courses should also be eliminated so that the teaching demand does not continue to increase. Deciding which courses to archive will be a more difficult task than approving new courses, but is essential to maintain sustainability of the program with the current faculty complement. (See also Recommendation #11 (APPENDIX II) of the previous external review.)

Recommendation #8: Maintaining a balance of course additions and deletions should be a goal of the program unit. As new courses are added to reflect changing faculty expertise and student interest, other courses, especially those offered less frequently or with declining enrollments, should be archived.

(b) Integrating new courses into the program

Students were very appreciative of the value of the newly-introduced 3000-level courses, but strongly expressed disappointment that these courses did not count toward their major in psychology.

Recommendation #9: Given the reasons for introducing new courses listed in (a), we recommend that these courses count toward the degree major.

(c) Informing students of options

Recommendation #10: Given that 3000-level courses provide the only flexibility in the programs, it is recommended that schedules of these course offerings be communicated to students in a two-year window, so that they can plan a future timetable of course selection.

(d) Practical experiences

Students expressed a desire for more practical experiences to integrate their developing knowledge. These experiences could involve either research or community service, and would be best integrated into appropriate 3000-level courses. As stated above, such experiences are important for students wishing to apply for further study in either graduate school or professional programs. **This is consistent with Self-Study Recommendation #4, at least with respect to research experiences. (See also Recommendation 36 (APPENDIX II) in the previous external review document.)**

(e) Reduction of pre-requisites for 3000-level courses

Several of these courses would be of interest to non-psychology students, including those wishing to obtain a minor in psychology. However, in the present system, these courses are not available for minors because of the 2000-level pre-requisite structure. Faculty members indicated that not all 3000-level courses required previous knowledge of psychology, especially statistical methods. If the courses are most appropriate for more mature students, but don't require specific

psychological knowledge, pre-requisites could be listed as ‘completion of 60 credit hours’ or the like. (See also **Recommendations 21 and 22 (APPENDIX II) of the previous external review.**)

Recommendation #11: Review the pre-requisites for 3000-level courses to ensure that they accurately reflect the needed prior knowledge for each course. One goal of this review should be to identify courses that would be appropriate for non-majors, and redesign the pre-requisites for those courses to increase their accessibility.

Other Curricular Issues

(a) 2000-level concentration areas

At the present, the structure of required ‘core area’ 2000-level classes seems to suit both students and faculty. However, psychology is an evolving discipline, and areas that are considered fundamental or ‘core’ to psychology are subject to change. For instance, in most universities learning is no longer considered a core area of psychology, while neuropsychology is.

Recommendation #12: Over the long-term the committee suggests that the faculty develop a process to re-examine and potentially revise their core area offerings. (See also Recommendations 13, 14, and 15 (APPENDIX II) of the previous departmental review document.)

(b) Statistics and research methods courses

The triad of statistical and research methods courses is acknowledged to provide psychology majors with important skills in this critical area of the discipline. However, there may be opportunity to consider minor changes in these requirements to increase efficiency for both student progress and Sir Wilfred Grenfell College resources. For example, do all non-major students require all three courses? Or would two courses satisfy their needs, with only honours students or those seeking a research career taking the most advanced course? (See also Recommendation #10 (APPENDIX II) of the previous external review). Or would it be possible to amalgamate the research courses for all Sir Wilfred Grenfell College students, rather than having separate courses in psychology, sociology, math, and geography?

Recommendation #13: That Psychology program faculty, in consultation with other academic program units consider the possibility of streamlining the delivery of the three statistics and research methods courses.

A second issue identified by both students and faculty is the need to provide students with more instruction and experience in qualitative research methods. This could be accomplished either by integrating such instruction into one of the existing methods courses, or by providing an

independent course which could perhaps be taken as an alternative to the third existing course requirement.

(c) Information to support student decisions

Students indicated a lack of timely information to support some of their decisions. These needs could be met by providing students with on-going career-based information and support throughout their program. The following is presented as an example of such information:

- 1st year:** There are some difficulties obtaining credit for courses taken beyond the first year when moving between campuses. Thus, first-year students could be informed about the transfer difficulties as well as the specific differences between programs on the two campuses in their first year.

- 2nd year:** Students would like to be informed about the honours program, and other issues related to establishing careers in psychology such as the Graduate Record Exam (GRE; for application to graduate schools), need for research experience, etc. This would also be a good time to let students know about the upcoming schedule of 3000-level courses for the following two years.

- 3rd year:** Students expressed a need for initial support in preparing for graduate school applications, such as advice on preparing for the GRE and searching for appropriate graduate schools.

- 4th year:** Students expressed the need for assistance with tasks such as developing their Curriculum Vitae, drafting letters of intent to graduate schools, and applying for scholarships. Some of this support is not discipline-specific, and could be offered to Sir Wilfred Grenfell College as a whole as a service within the College's Office of Research.

Recommendation #14: That psychology program faculty consider implementing a system to augment their current means of providing relevant program and career information to students in each year of the program.

(d) Recruitment of minors

In most courses in the program, there is capacity for more students. Some of these places could be filled by non-psychology students. A psychology minor is a useful adjunct to many other degrees, and thus presents an attractive option to counteract lower enrollments. However, the current structure of classes, especially pre-requisites, provides a barrier to many students who would be interested in psychology minors. The three-course statistics requirements were specifically mentioned as a barrier to minor students.

Recommendation #15: The committee suggests that the faculty examine whether access to some 3000-level courses could be granted with fewer statistical pre-requisites. (See also Recommendations 10 and 24 (APPENDIX II) of the previous departmental review document).

Library Resources

The interview with the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Librarian (Ms. Louise McGillis) provided an insight into library resource support for the undergraduate psychology program. Since the psychology program and its students appear well focused, the librarian indicated that their resource needs are fairly easy to support.

The library has performed a “weeding” process that identifies older outdated resource materials and updates or replaces them with current information, such that the library now maintains a current collection in psychology. The library maintains a full psychology information database with improved article searching, a citation index with full text, and library search results that can be sent to students via email (Self Study – Appendix G, p. 193). Any delays in the above search processes are the result of electronic outcomes rather than a limitation in services.

An ongoing reordering library program is available to all college units. Potential purchase lists are sent to faculty who provide input to the librarian on purchases. The librarian and psychology faculty stay connected when determining library resources for use within the program.

Audiovisual materials are in use by psychology faculty within their courses. Such library purchases are based on faculty needs within courses. While it is considered a small collection, it is still used by psychology faculty and the DVD collection is current.

The library offers presentations on library use and searching appropriate to the level of students in psychology classes. Generally, this service is offered at class start-up and is usually requested by individual faculty members for courses. Senior students (fourth year) tend to use the library for independent projects, research projects, and honors research.

Library liaison with faculty, staff, and students is deemed to be less formal at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College than at the main campus library (Memorial University, Queen Elizabeth II Library) in St. John’s. Library staff appear to have a good liaison with psychology faculty/staff and library hours of service seem to be well covered, including weekends, extended hours during the last three weeks of classes (open until 2:00 AM), and during examinations. The Review Panel was informed that during extended hours and during examinations, library staff provide snacks and ear plugs for students.

The Sir Wilfred Grenfell College librarian is of the opinion that library services are very good for the operational size of the college campus. As well, she is also of the opinion that the library could currently support a potential graduate program in psychology, subject to the focus and direction of the program and to the library resource needs of new faculty, new graduate courses offered, and ensuing research.

Issues that were of concern in the last report (i.e., Library Resources; Recommendations 47 and 48 – Appendix II) appear to have been resolved. As well, electronic versions of journals are now available and interlibrary loan services between the two campuses (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College [Corner Brook], Memorial University [St. John's]) have vastly improved since the last review.

It would appear that library support is more than adequate for faculty and the undergraduate psychology program at this time. Therefore, except for the library resource requirements of new faculty/staff, the offering of new courses, and the potential for graduate program courses and research, **the Review Panel has no recommendations that would address library resources.**

Future Graduate Program

Interviews with faculty/staff and students provided opinions on the notion of and support for a psychology graduate program offering at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. Most faculty were supportive, while others were neutral. The major concern expressed was related to resources, including the need for new faculty/staff appointments to address the additional course load, greater honors and graduate student supervision, graduate student funding, faculty research, and space and equipment resources.

Senior undergraduate students provided a mixed view of a graduate program at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. Most were in favor of it and wished that it was already in operation. Other students, who appear more informed about graduate school requirements and applications, stated that they would prefer a graduate experience at a different campus. This was not taken negatively by the committee, as the majority of graduating students who intend to go on to graduate school seek a graduate program experience at a different campus.

The undergraduate psychology program is well positioned to introduce a future graduate program, subject to new faculty/staff appointments and teaching and research resources, as presented throughout this report. The psychology program has the highest number of undergraduate students and the highest number of students enrolled in an honors program. Therefore, psychology is in a position to engage in planning to promote a graduate program appropriate to their size and resources, assuming that these needs are met by administration.

However, the Review Panel notes that Sir Wilfred Grenfell College is currently in a transition period that will force an analysis of its future enrolment, infrastructure and resources, funding, levels of administrative restructure, research and teaching, governance, and autonomy. Thus, this may not be an appropriate time to introduce a graduate program, but it certainly is a time to plan for one.

One proposal put forward in the Self Study was the introduction of an applied experimental psychology graduate program. This type of program would be less resource-demanding and would permit more opportunities for research, utilizing existing and value-added resources. As stated in the Self Study (p. 290), this type of graduate program could act as a catalyst for faculty research, allow expansion of the program's human and physical resources, provide teaching opportunities for graduate students, provide an opportunity for graduate students to mentor undergraduate honors students, and may even serve as a potential model for other College units considering a graduate program. Such graduate programs can be designed largely as research apprenticeship programs, with a limited number of courses and a primary focus on helping the student to develop independent research skills and helping to establish a research program.

In contrast, while a Clinical Psychology graduate program would likely be more attractive to students and community needs, such a program is much more resource intensive. Accreditation guidelines by the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) require clinical graduate students to take a large number of courses, including those directed to practice (e.g., Assessment, Interventions, and Ethics) and cognate knowledge areas (e.g., Lifespan Development, Cognitive and Affective Basis of Behavior, Biological Bases of Behavior, and Social Bases of Behavior). Thus, faculty would need to mount a large number of additional courses to serve the needs of a Clinical graduate program, as well as provide both research and clinical supervision to graduate students. Given the resource constraints of Psychology, it is the committee's opinion that such a program is more than the department could manage in the foreseeable future.

In addition, the introduction of graduate programs at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College may raise the campus profile with regard to attracting undergraduate and graduate students, retaining students, providing greater opportunities for undergraduate and graduate research, enhancing faculty research leading to publication, enhancing student supervising and mentoring, and providing graduate course offerings.

Recommendation #16: Psychology should investigate the offering of a research-oriented applied experimental psychology graduate program that would complement student and faculty/staff needs. The analysis should include a potential offering of suitable graduate courses, space requirements for teaching, research and equipment storage, additional faculty and staff appointments, graduate student funding, and any other resources deemed necessary by the Psychology unit to support such a program.

Summary

The strongest conclusion from the committee's review is of the strength and efficiency of the psychology programs offered at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. In this context, the need for increased resources to continue to operate the undergraduate program at a high level of success was apparent. Over the longer term we also recommended areas for discussion of curriculum offerings and structure.

We would like to thank all members of Psychology for their time and patience and for their openness during the process of the review. We were also very appreciative of the frankness expressed by psychology students. The students are very supportive of the program, but also recognize and are knowledgeable of the inherent problems faced by the program unit. For students to be so in tune with their own program and its faculty/staff is commendable.

Further, the Review Panel supports all six of the recommendations presented in the Self Study (p. 60 and APPENDIX III of this report), subject to the caveats and explanations presented in this Report.

Edward Andrews (Chair)

Dr. Katherine Arbuthnott (External Reviewer)

Dr. Sudhir Abhyankar (Internal Reviewer)

Date: _____

APPENDIX I – ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW DOCUMENTS

1. Procedures for the Review of Units and Programs.
(http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/unit_program_review.php)
2. Academic Program Review. Psychology Program. Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University of Newfoundland (the psychology program “self-study”)
3. Site Visit Itinerary. (APPENDIX VII).
4. External Review. The Psychology Programme. Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. 1999.
5. Programme Unit Response to the External Review of the Psychology Programme. 1999.
6. Memorial University Fact Book (2008) compiled by the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP). (http://www.mun.ca/ciap/fact_book.php).
7. The Psychology Program information brochure.
8. Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Strategic Plan (2008–2013)
(<http://www.swgc.mun.ca/admin/Pages/strategic.aspx>)
9. Memorial University Strategic Plan (2007)
(<http://www.mun.ca/strategicplanning/strategicplanjan25webfinal.pdf>)
10. Memorial University of Newfoundland Calendar. (<http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/>).

APPENDIX II
SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE
1999 ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PSYCHOLOGY)

Recommendation #10:

I would recommend that the unit consider eliminating the requirement of the third stats/design/methods course, Psychology 3950, as a requirement for the specialization in psychology.

Recommendation #11:

I would suggest that, if registration in a specific course is actually the sole basis on which decisions are reached relating to whether the course may be offered, a new system be adopted based on a) need, b) overall department enrolments, and c) the individual Faculty member's running average of student numbers.

Recommendation #13:

I would suggest that consideration be given to maintaining Psychology 2225 but dropping Psychology 3225, Contemporary Issues in Learning, from the course offerings. I propose maintaining the second year course since the basic concepts of conditioning and learning are fundamental to a number of other areas. These days, as well, a course such as Psychology 3425 (Memory and Cognition) probably includes some material that would once have been taught in a learning course.

Recommendation #14:

The suggestion has been made that a course in Sensation and Perception be offered at the second year level. It would logically fit in with the range of courses already offered, and it makes sense to introduce the field at that point in the curriculum. On the other hand, if this were done, it might be difficult to justify—given typical student interest—a contemporary issues course in the same area (i.e., Psychology 3325, Sensation and Perception). As a further complication, if Sensation and Perception were offered in the second year, it would presumably have been offered each year. Additionally, at some point, if the number of second year offerings increases, it will not be possible to require honours students to take all the 2000 series of courses. It will, instead, become necessary to create a rule such as one requiring “at least three courses from among Learning (2225), Perception and Cognition (2x25), Cognitive (3425), and Biological Psychology (2825).” **I would suggest that the department consider this issue and decide what makes most sense given both the logic and realities of the issues involved.**

Recommendation #15:

The unit should seriously consider the direction it wishes to take with respect to this issue. **The department should decide, given the nature of its general approach, whether animal psychology is still central to its conception of what it is attempting to do.**

Secondly, **the department and the College should look at costs realistically and determine, given the resources available, whether it is possible to continue to offer courses in this area.**

Is the money available and, if so, is this how the unit wishes to spend it? It may be that the answer is “yes” to both questions, but the decision to continue to offer courses in animal psychology should be an informed one rationally chosen. The decisions taken will have considerable impact on other aspects of the programme.

Recommendation #21:

I would additionally **suggest that the unit look at its prerequisite structure.** This would seem to be an issue particularly with respect to courses at the third year level, although the existing prerequisites seem logical in most cases.

- (a) One particular course about which I have questions in this respect is Abnormal Psychology (3626). It is at least important today that a student of abnormal psychology have a background in the fields of learning (2225) and biological psychology (2825) as to have knowledge of personality (2625), but this is not reflected in the current prerequisites.
- (b) The prerequisites for the Systems of Psychology course (Psychology 4910) should also be reconsidered. The prerequisite of “78 credit hours in Psychology” as stated in the calendar must surely be an error, and **the more specific requirements listed cannot be justified on academic grounds.** As a historian, I **cannot, for example, imagine any topic covered in a systems course where a third year level statistics course would be a useful background preparation.**

Recommendation #22:

I would **suggest that the members of the Psychology unit review its prerequisites policy from the point of view of general principles, keeping in mind the academic needs and possible personal interests of students pursuing a specialization or honours programme in disciplines other than psychology.**

Recommendation #36:

...I would suggest that the department review its present set of laboratory requirements to determine whether they are providing students with sufficient training and, if not, what is the most satisfactory (least problematic?) way to improve the present procedures, given local realities. One possibility ... would be to have labs attached to two of the second year survey courses (one in developmental, social, or personality and the other in learning, cognition or sensation and perception.)

Recommendation #44:

The College as a whole benefits from the involvement of members of the Psychology unit in administrative responsibilities outside the department. **It is essential** for the successful operation of the psychology programme that these debts be repaid and **that human resources be provided to cover the teaching capacity that is lost to the department.**

Recommendation #48:

Once the department has reached decisions with regard to the issues of the continuation of courses involving animal research for students and the possibility of introducing labs in selected second year courses, **the department should examine and prepare a report on its support staff needs.** This report should be submitted to the Administration for consideration.

Recommendation #52:

I would **recommend that care be taken to maintain the demonstration room (or some similar space) as a place providing a valuable opportunity for developing the kinds of students-faculty and student-student relationships that many universities would envy.**

Recommendation #54:

The use of one-way mirrors in psychological research is very common, particularly in the fields of developmental and social psychology. I would, however, recommend that such a facility be built when there is a faculty member who wishes to use it regularly in his or her own research and that of honours students under his or her direction. In general, this relates to the general principle I espouse of developing research to meet the evolving needs of the members of a department. Any changes to space tend to be expensive and, unless tied to an individual faculty member's actual needs, are often used less than anticipated.

Recommendation #55:

I would also **recommend that the issue of storage of equipment be given some serious consideration.**

- (a) Purpose built space could accommodate much more efficiently the materials that are currently scattered from room to room. There may also be outdated equipment that is no longer useful to keep.
- (b) I would also suggest that the Departmental Secretary of the laboratory supervisor be given the responsibility of storing, maintaining, and issuing equipment when necessary

Recommendation #56:

The College should develop a plan to fund the continuing modernization and upgrading of the department's equipment both for student and faculty research. The unit, having reviewed its needs in terms of its goals, should establish a list of priorities for such improvement.

APPENDIX III
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY
PROGRAM SELF STUDY REPORT (2009)

Recommendation #1: The program should be increased to seven full-time faculty members.

Recommendation #2: The space available to the Psychology Program should be expanded immediately.

Recommendation #3: Equipment needed for teaching and research should be upgraded.

Action: The Program should explore means for increasing opportunities for students to engage in research.

Action: Provide more extensive research instruction in research methods, including qualitative and mixed research methods in each of three methods and analysis courses. One possibility we are exploring is to recognize our course descriptions and coverage in the first two research design and analysis courses to allow more time to cover qualitative and mixed methods in Psychology 3950.

Action: Where feasible, include empirical exercises in Contemporary Issues courses.

Action: Seek more opportunities for undergraduates to work on faculty research. (See recommendation 4). There are some problems in this regard (e.g., lack of available space) which have been previously described.

Recommendation #4: The program should explore means for increasing opportunities for students to engage in research.

Recommendation #5: The level of funding allocated to Psychology should be increased, particularly for operating funds that reflect the number of majors taught and the number of students graduated. Increased funding would support many needed Program activities that are not currently possible.

Recommendation #6: In addition to keeping our lab instructor position, the position of Instructional Assistant in Psychology be re-established to assist with Program needs including tutoring of students, providing academic service to students, and providing other support to teaching faculty.

APPENDIX IV – PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS

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APPENDIX V
ADMINISTRATION, PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM FACULTY/STAFF, AND OTHERS
SIR WILFRED GRENFELL COLLEGE

Acting Principal

Dr. Holly Pike – Associate Professor

Acting Vice-Principal

Dr. William Iams – Associate Professor

Associate Vice-Principal (Research)

Dr. Ivan Emke – Associate Professor

Librarian

Louise McGillis – Associate University Librarian

Psychology Society President

Ms. Pamela Black – Undergraduate Student (B.A., Honors)

Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP) Staff

Ms. Kim Myrick – Senior Planning Analyst

Ms. Lorraine Kenny – Secretary

President of the Psychology Society

Ms. Pamela Black

Division of Social Science

Division of Social Science - Head

Dr. Sandra Wright, Associate Professor

Faculty/Staff – Psychology Program

Ms. Kelly Brown – Laboratory Instructor (Staff)

Dr. Jennifer Buckle – Assistant Professor

Dr. Les Cake – Professor (retired)

Dr. Sonya Corbin Dwyer – Professor and Program Chair

Dr. Jim Duffy – Professor

Dr. Dan Stewart – Visiting Associate Professor

Dr. Peter Stewart – Assistant Professor

Ms. Kelly Warren – Assistant Professor

Dr. Sandra Wright – Associate Professor and Head, Division of Social Science

APPENDIX VI – RELEVANT WEB SITES

Relevant Web Sites

Psychology Web Page – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca/psych/Pages/default.aspx>

Psychology Faculty and Staff – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca/psych/Pages/faculty.aspx>

Psychology Degree Program – <http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=SWGC-0242>

Psychology Core Program Requirements – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca/psych/Pages/program.aspx>

Psychology Program Courses – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca/psych/Pages/courses.aspx>

Psychology Society – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca/psych/Pages/society.aspx>

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College – <http://www.swgc.mun.ca>


Memorial University of Newfoundland – <http://www.mun.ca>

Procedures for the review of units and programs –

http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/unit_program_review.php

Memorial University of Newfoundland Calendar – <http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/>

APPENDIX VII – REVIEW PANEL SITE VISIT ITINERARY

 <p align="center"> Psychology Program Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Academic Program Review Site Visit Itinerary (November 2009) </p>				
<p align="center"> Wednesday, November 4, 7:00 PM, Wine Cellar, Glynmill Inn Dinner meeting - panel members meet with Principal and Acting Vice-Principal </p>				
<p align="center"> Thursday November 5 Room: GCSU Board Room </p>		<p align="center"> Friday, November 6 Room: GCSU Board Room </p>		<p align="center"> Saturday Nov. 7 </p>
9:30–10:00 AM	Organizational meeting:	9:30-10:00 AM	Organizational meeting:	<p align="center"> Panel: Draft Report Room: Conference Room (AS275) </p>
	Panel		Panel	
10:00–11:00 AM	Panel meets with all Psychology faculty and staff	10:00-10:15 AM	Panel meets with University Academic Librarian	
10:00–11:00 AM	Panel meets with all Psychology faculty and staff	10:15–12:30 AM	Panel meets with Psychology Faculty and Staff:	
11:00–11:15 AM	Coffee Break		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10:15-10:30: Kelly Warren 2. 10:30-10:45: Jennifer Buckle 3. 10:45-11:00: Kelly Brown 	
11:15-11:45 AM	Tour of the College		11:00-11:15 Coffee Break	
11:45–12:30	Panel meets with Programme Chair		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. 11:15-11:30: Pete Stewart 5. 11:30-11:45: Sandra Wright 6. 11:45-12:00: Jim Duffy 7. 12:00-12:15: Dan Stewart 	

12:30–2:30 PM	Panel lunch with Head of Social Science, Program Chair, President of Student Psychology Society and Kelly Brown	12:30–1:15 PM	Panel meets with students	
		1:15–2:45 PM	Panel working lunch and prepare for exit meetings	
2:30–2:50 PM	Panel meets with Acting Vice Principal			
2:50–3:10 PM	Panel meets with Head of Social Science			
3:10–3:15 PM	Break	2:45–3:15 PM	Exit meeting with representative of Acting Vice-Principal Dr Ivan Emke Panel shares its preliminary findings	
3:15–4:15 PM	Panel meets with students	3:15–3:45 PM	Exit meeting with Division Head, Programme Chair, faculty and students – panel shares its preliminary findings	
4:15–4:45 PM	Panel meets with Programme Chair			
7:00 PM	Working supper for panel members to summarize day's meetings, distribute writing responsibilities and draft report	7:00 PM	Working supper for panel members to summarize day's meetings, draft report	
<p>Review Panel Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Edward Andrews, Biology/Environmental Science, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University (Panel Chair) • Dr. Sudhir Abhyankar, Chemistry/Environmental Science, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University • Dr. Katherine Arbuthnott, Psychology, Campion College, University of Regina 				