

TO: Bethami Dobkin, Provost

**FROM: Tom Poundstone, Chair
Academic Senate**

DATE: January 13, 2010

**RE: Senate Action S-09/10-10CA
Title/Description Change for Psych 104**

At the January 13, 2010 General Meeting of the Academic Senate, the attached proposal for a title and description change for Psychology 104 was approved on the Consent Agenda. This action was sent to the Senate from the Undergraduate Educational Policies Committee where the proposal was approved by a vote of 10-0. This action was assigned Senate Action # S-09/10-10CA.

Attachment

cc: Br. Ronald Gallagher
Interim Dean Roy Wensley

Proposal for a Title/Description Change for Psychology 104

Rationale for a Title/description Change for Psychology 104:

We are proposing that Psy 104 be taught as a topics course, with an emphasis on testing. The principles and qualities of tests would then be examined through the lens of various topics. For example, the course could be on Forensic, Counseling, Cross-Cultural, Educational, or Personality Psychology and test characteristics and issues would be discussed in the context of that topic.

The reasons for this proposed change are many, but there are three main ones:

1. to increase student interest in the course by increasing the range of topics covered,
2. to increase the applied aspects of the course, and
3. to increase the array of potential instructors for the course.

An email-based discussion of this change elicited only positive and supportive comments from Psychology Department members, indicating strong support.

Department members who could teach this new course, Emily Hause, Mary McCall, Sally Stampp, Paul Zarnoth, and Elena Escalera, are all supportive of the change.

Targeted Student Population:

Psy 104 is one of a set of three required courses. Students must take either Psy 104, Psy 105 (Advanced Statistics) or Psy 106 (Experimental).

The current title and catalog description are as follows:

“Psy 104 Test Construction

A study of the principles of testing and measurement in the creation of a psychological test. The general history, function, and use of tests. Norms, reliability, validity, item analysis. Prerequisites Psychology 3, 4.”

This course was originally designed to best serve the needs of Psychology students who would be going on to PhD programs and/or to a career designing tests. The vast majority of our majors will not be doing either of these. This new format would allow the communication of these materials in an applied format, of greater use and interest to the majority of our majors.

This course is designed for students who wish to pursue careers in social work, organizational, community, counseling, or clinical psychology.

Catalog Description:

Psy 104 Special Topics in Assessment and Testing

This course will offer an examination of testing topics such as norms, reliability, validity and item analysis within the context of an applied area of Psychology such as Forensic, Counseling or Cross-Cultural. Special attention will be given to the use of tests and the role of testing in society. Course

may be repeated for credit as content varies. Prerequisites: Psychology 3 and 4.

Impact on Current Departmental or College Curriculum:

The course is being re-designed to better engage students. Other than the opportunity for improved student outcomes and learning, there should not be an impact on the department or college curriculum.

Implementation Costs:

The proposed name/course change would not require any new resources. No would it create any demands on other departments within the college. Resources required from the library would be no different from those in the current course.