

Year 1 (2024) - FAR Implementation Report

Psychology (PSYC)

Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2022/23)

Recommendation #1

New communications should be created to support undergraduate students' informed decisions regarding, and navigation of, different undergraduate Psychology programs.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the Dean's office to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue and recognizes that this recommendation is also linked to #4.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Add a Psychology Brightspace page to serve as a communication hub for Psychology majors.	Department	C		
Action #2 Update and streamline the Department's undergraduate website (with support from FOSS Communications Officer).	Department	C		
Action #3 Hold the "Choosing a Stream" Information session this spring; Have Academic Advisors also offer 2 online sessions in June before registration.	Department	T		
Action #4 Host online information sessions for specific student cohorts the day before registration opens for each cohort.	Department	C		
Action #5 Hold two Registration Information Sessions in June for all students.	Department	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Action #6 Increase walk-in advising availability.	Department	C		
Action #7 Implement new Excel-based program plans that include information about all streams including requirements and outcomes.	Department	C		

Comments 2024:

Action #1: The page is expected to go live April 1, 2024.

Action #4: These sessions will be held again this year.

Action #6: We now have 1 hour of walk-advising every day (2 hours on Tuesdays).

Action #7: On these new excel-based plans there is a clear indication at the end of 2nd year that students need to consider their choice of stream, with links to more information about the streams. The new plans also have a section for notes about meetings where students can review information that was covered during an appointment. They are standardized, live cloud-based documents that students can refer to on an on-going basis.

Recommendation #2

The graduate program should include opportunities for graduate students to gain critical professional skills by presenting their research ideas and findings to multiple faculty members and fellow graduate students, and by engaging in discussions of research theory and practice in their fields.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the staff of both Deans’ offices to enhance opportunities for graduate students’ professional development.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Deans
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Deans
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024/25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Discuss possible updates to program requirements.	DEPT, GPD	C		
Action #2 Offer elective grad courses related to professional development.	DEPT, GPD	O		
Action #3 Promote and disseminate professional development opportunities offered by FOSS and FGSPA.	DEPT, GPD	C		
Action # 4 Communicate regarding professional development opportunities via Fall orientation and the creation of a monthly department newsletter.	DEPT, GPD	T		

Comments 2024:

- We have already discussed updating Focal Area Research Seminar (FARS) and other program requirements, including the possibility of an annual in-house conference. Next step: Departmental discussion (likely April department meeting).
- We will continue to offer Professional Issues (PSYC 7P03) as an elective on a bi-annual basis, open to MA and PhD students, which addresses professional development.
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Teaching Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P07) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes professional skill development in the form of undergraduate teaching (i.e., lecture planning and delivery, seminar planning, assessments).
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Research Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P08) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes professional skill development in the form of expanding and advancing students’ hands-on experiences with different types of research and research methodology.
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Community Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P09) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes professional skill development in the form of community-based research and other hands-up learning experiences (e.g., psychological assessments; applied practice; placements in schools, community-groups, NGOs, and governmental organizations).
- We will continue to promote and disseminate (e.g., via email, in-class announcements) information concerning professional development opportunities offered by FOSS and FGSPA.
- We will incorporate professional development opportunities during the Fall orientation (MA-1 students) re-orientation (MA-2, PhD1-4 students) sessions.
- We will create a monthly departmental newsletter for communicating to students and faculty various upcoming deadlines and opportunities, including experiential learning opportunities. The first newsletter is expected by September 2024.

Recommendation #3

The graduate program should include work-integrated or experiential learning opportunities for graduate students.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the staff of both Deans’ offices to enhance existing work-integrated or experiential learning opportunities for graduate students.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Deans
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Deans
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024/25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Offer and promote existing courses with experiential learning opportunities.	DEPT, GPD	O		
Action #2 Consider changing program requirements to allow Ph.D. students to take an additional elective course, which would expand experiential learning opportunities.	DEPT, GPD	T		
Action #3 Promote and communicate information about experiential learning opportunities, including those available through FOSS, FGSPA, and MITACS.	DEPT, GPD	T		
Action #4 Consult with CCEE and FOSS Dean’s office concerning experiential learning opportunities.	DEPT, GPD	T		
Action # 5 Create a database of organizations that have offered community apprenticeships or employment to psychology graduate students.	DEPT, GPD	T		

Comments 2024:

- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) Professional Issues (PSYC 7P03) as an elective on a bi-annual basis, which addresses professional development including discussions of on- and off-campus experiential learning opportunities for our grad students.
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Teaching Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P07) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes experiential learning

opportunities in the form of undergraduate teaching (i.e., lecture planning and delivery, seminar planning, assessments).

- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Research Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P08) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes experiential learning opportunities in the form of expanding and advancing students' hands-on experiences with different types of research and research methodology.
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) the Community Apprenticeship (PSYC 7P09) course as an elective for our PhD students, which includes experiential learning opportunities in the form of community-based research and other hands-up learning experiences (e.g., psychological assessments; applied practice; placements in schools, community-groups, NGOs, and governmental organizations).
- We will continue to offer (and promote to our students) a rotating series of advanced statistics and research methods elective courses, each of which include experiential learning opportunities in the form of hands-on data analysis, coding skills (e.g., in MATLAB, Python, R), and writing communication of research findings.
- We have considered changing program requirements to allow PhD students to take an elective course in place of a third year in FARS, which would expand opportunities for experiential learning (e.g., through apprenticeships or other electives). Departmental discussion and voting are anticipated by May 2024.
- We will continue to promote and disseminate information concerning experiential learning opportunities offered by FOSS and FGSPA.
- We will promote the MITACS program as a mechanism for gaining (paid) research experience in a real-world setting.
- We will incorporate professional development opportunities during the Fall orientation (MA-1 students) re-orientation (MA-2, PhD1-4 students) sessions.
- We will consult with Co-op, Career and Experiential Education concerning experiential learning opportunities with local organizations and businesses who might benefit from graduate student participation. Consultations will begin in May 2024.
- We will consult with the FOSS Dean's office concerning connections with the university-wide Community and Government Relations Office. Consultations will begin in May 2024.
- We will create a database of local organizations where grad students have either participated in a community apprenticeship and/or locations where former students are now employed. This process will begin in May 2024.
- We will create a monthly departmental newsletter for communicating to students and faculty various upcoming deadlines and opportunities, including professional development opportunities. The first newsletter is expected by Sept 2024.

Recommendation #4

Offer centralized information for undergraduate students about opportunities to engage in research.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the Dean’s office to determine appropriate strategies to move forward recognizing that this recommendation is also linked to #1.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Add a Research Experience page to the Undergraduate website.	Department	C		
Action #2 Hold workshops about how and why to gain research experience twice per year (once per term), beginning in fall 2024.	Department	O		
Action #3 Post signs in the Department (outside Academic Advising office) about volunteer and/or paid work as a research assistant.	Department	C		
Action #4 Add information about research experience (its importance and how to access it) to the presentation given by Academic Advisors to the students of the research methods courses (PSYC 3P30 and 3F40).	Department	C		

Comments 2024:

Action #1: This page includes information about how to contact faculty members to ask about opportunities directly, but does not include a running list of current opportunities because of the challenges involved in keeping information up to date.

Recommendation #5

Enhance onboarding and mentorship supports for early career faculty.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)
 Responsible for approving: Department
 Responsible for resources: Department/Dean
 Responsible for implementation: Department/Dean
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Strike onboarding and mentorship working group.	Chair, DEPT	C		
Action #2 Develop onboarding materials for new faculty and part-time instructors.	Chair, DEPT	C		
Action #3 Review and enhance mentoring supports.	Chair, DEPT	C		

Comments 2024:

During this academic year, the Psychology Department established an onboarding and mentorship working group to develop onboarding procedures and resources. This resulted in the creation of several documents that are now available on SharePoint, including the following: 1) a checklist of onboarding procedures for the Department Chair; 2) onboarding procedures for part-time instructors; 3) an overview of required or common course preparation tasks; 4) a summary of useful resources for faculty and instructors, including communication and information storage, financial (e.g., Workday), teaching, and research-related information; and 5) a summary of the responsibilities and assistance provided by Psychology Department staff and faculty in major service roles.

The document outlining the Chair’s onboarding responsibilities includes assigning and introducing a faculty mentor prior to the position’s start date and contacting/introducing previous instructors of courses assigned to the new faculty position to enlist their support and assistance as required. The Department will ensure clear expectations regarding the mentorship process are included in the onboarding documents and that these are communicated to faculty mentors.

Recommendation #6

Create an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Committee in the Department.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Department. The Committee understands that the recommendation is already under review and believes that the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on the issue of EDIA, as part of their overall efforts under Brock’s Strategic Plan Pillar #4: Fostering a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation, and decolonization.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Create an EDI Officer as a departmental service position.	Chair	C		

Comments 2024:

The Department created an EDI Officer service position tasked with providing faculty and relevant committees with periodic updates or reports on information or resources relevant to equity, diversity, inclusiveness, and accessibility. More generally, this position will view departmental policies and procedures through an EDI lens, make recommendations where appropriate, and serve as a resource for departmental committees.

Recommendation #7

Engage in succession planning and leadership development.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will move forward as appropriate and discuss their efforts with the Dean’s office.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Develop a succession plan for major departmental service roles.	Chair	T		

Comments 2024:

The department Co-Chairs have agreed to continue serving as Co-Chairs in 2024/2025, and another department member has volunteered to serve as Chair from 2025/2026 to 2027/2028. The Department will vote to approve these plans in our April 17th departmental meeting.

Furthermore, we have volunteers in place for the other major service positions. The current Undergraduate Officer will be continuing in the position for 2024/2025, and we have two faculty members who have agreed to serve as Graduate Program Director and Associate Chair, respectively, over the next three academic years.

Recommendation #8

Expand Departmental Orientation for new graduate students.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects the Department will work in consultation with both Deans’ offices to determine strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Deans
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Deans
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Offer and promote various orientation events and communicate deadlines and opportunities in various ways.	DEPT, GPD	T		

Comments 2024:

- We will offer in-person orientation sessions for new MA and PhD students each September.
- We will offer in-person re-orientation sessions each September for students entering MA year 2, and PhD year 2, year 3, and year 4.
- We will update our students (and supervisors) throughout the academic year (via emails, committee meetings, department meetings) concerning upcoming deadlines concerning academic deadlines and milestones, award applications, thesis defenses, etc.
- We will promote (typically via email) non-departmental orientation sessions and related opportunities hosted each Fall by FOSS and FGSPA.
- We will work with FOSS and FGSPA to ensure students stay up to date on relevant matters related to program progression, thesis defenses, award deadlines, and other important aspects of grad student life.
- We will create a monthly departmental newsletter for communicating to students and faculty various upcoming deadlines and opportunities. The first newsletter is expected by June 2024.

Recommendation #9

Limit graduate admission offers to 1 per candidate.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects the Department will work in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs to determine best strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2023/24.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Modify graduate admission procedures.	DEPT, GPD	C		

Comments 2024:

This recommendation has already been implemented. In the most recent round of grad admissions, we limited grad admissions offers to one per candidate (i.e., an offer from only one potential supervisor).

Our grad program admissions procedures have been modified to clarify that, in cases where two or more faculty are interested in making an offer to the same student, the student will be asked to rank these faculty supervisors in order of the student’s preferences. This ranking will determine the supervisor indicated on the offer letter.