

WESTMONT COLLEGE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT A SIX-YEAR PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

Submitted by the Department of Psychology
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Introductory Summary

We are excited to present the findings of our six-year review, which illustrate the strengths of our department, achievements in student learning, alumni feedback, challenges faced by the department, and potential growth areas for the future. All of the members of the department of psychology played a role in collecting data and critically assessing the department's performance over the past six-year cycle. Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, our departmental meetings have incorporated discussion of components of the review process, and we held a separate retreat in February to strategically discuss the review process. As a department, we are strongly committed to each other, our students, the College, and our defined mission, which states:

Mission of the department: *Westmont's psychology department provides a comprehensive undergraduate education in scientific psychology emphasizing basic research and applied practice. As a part of a larger Christian liberal arts community, we are committed to integrating psychology with a wide variety of academic disciplines and Christian faith traditions in order to promote the health and well being of individuals and of our communities, churches, and world.*

The past six years have seen the department of psychology holding firm to its foundational and historical framework as epitomized by our mission statement. We embody a flourishing community among our faculty, students, and staff, as well as active engagement in the greater college community. At the same time, a number of significant changes have occurred during this time that have transformed our department and allowed growth in new and exciting directions. We also recognize the challenges that we face and have identified potential areas of development that will help our department meet those challenges and expand upon our key strengths.

At the beginning of this review cycle, the department had fairly recently (2010) moved into new facilities in Winter Hall. In addition to establishing ourselves in the new facilities, this period saw changes in department personnel. As of Fall 2018, the department comprises 4.33 FTEs (3 full-time and 2 two-thirds time tenure track faculty), one half time 10-month administrative assistant, and one full time 10-month laboratory coordinator. Dr. Carmel Saad joined the faculty in 2012, and she has subsequently gone on to establish herself as a pillar of the department with her teaching portfolio and active research program in social psychology. The college recently recognized her talents, contributions, and abilities by granting her tenure and promotion to associate professor in spring 2018. This time period also saw the departure of Dr. Thomas Fikes, and the arrival in fall 2015 of his replacement, Dr. Ronald See. Dr. See brought an extensive career background in both basic and clinical neuroscience, and has established strong teaching and research portfolios over the past three years. We have also consistently hired adjunct faculty each year to meet the high demand for courses that we cannot fill with our currently limited faculty FTE.

Over the course of the current review cycle, we conducted assessment of parts of our PLOs each year in three key areas. These included PLO #2, Scientific Thinking, Methods, and Skills (2013-2014 and 2016-2017); PLO #4, Values and Character (2012-2013 and 2014-2015); and PLO #5, Applications of Psychological Principles, Knowledge, and Skills (2015-2016). Through our assessment of these PLOs, we concluded that our students are

generally doing well in these areas. However, we identified specific areas for improvement and we are now involved in closing the loop to implement and reassess the modifications that were designed to improve the program.

Our alumni survey results provided positive and encouraging feedback. We surveyed alumni from 2007-2017 (ten year period) and received a 30% response rate. Details can be found below, but some highlights include: 96% of alumni indicated that teaching in the psychology department was Strong to Superior, 88% noted preparation for graduate work as Good to Excellent, and 81% indicated their preparation in the psychology major as Somewhat or Much Better than their peers at other institutions. In addition to highly positive input, some suggestions for improvement were offered. Common themes centered on career preparation and more elective course offerings. Some students also desired more internship and research experiences. As detailed in this report, the department has made strides in increasing career exposure by improving internship and research experience for our majors. We are searching for ways to increase career exposure throughout the major, including earlier target exposure as well as offering more opportunities to engage in community training and research with some of our professors already doing this work in various contexts. In addition, the department has re-instituted an annual professional development presentation to which psychology students are invited. The focus in these presentations alternates between addressing graduate school issues and providing students with introductions to various career options. Students have expressed gratitude for how we have addressed these needs since receiving their suggestions for improvement.

Our curriculum remains a pillar of the strength of the department. In particular, the rigorous scientific and laboratory focused approach of our program continues to produce graduates that are grounded in empirically based psychological science. Given the very small size of our department, especially compared with some other institutions that share our mission and size, we provide a surprisingly wide array of courses in the discipline. However, we recognize the lack of certain key sub disciplines (e.g., Industrial-Organizational Psychology) that would provide even greater opportunities for our students to engage with the evolving nature of the field. The department strongly contributes to the mission of the college with our general education courses serving over 300 students per year in PSY 001, General Psychology (~20-25% of our departmental teaching load), as well as other courses in our department (e.g., Abnormal Psychology, Child Development) that support various majors and programs across campus (e.g., premedical, liberal studies/education, and kinesiology).

Our student practicum and internship programs continue to form a strong core of the student experience. Over the course of the reporting period, we have expanded and built upon the number of field sites available to our students in practicum (PSY 196) and other internship activities. While we are pleased with the status of these programs, we see the need to both actively maintain and further expand these opportunities, especially at earlier stages of the major for second and third year students.

While Westmont is primarily a teaching college, research in several areas of psychology and neuroscience distinguishes our department. The amount and type of faculty research varies widely across the department. Active research laboratories include neuropsychology (Rogers), social psychology (Saad), and behavioral neuroscience (See). The department

devotes substantial resources to student-faculty research, supporting student researchers during the academic year and in the summer student research program. Our professors also supervise independent student research and involve students in their own research projects during the academic year, as reflected in the number of independent research and major honors credits that do not contribute to teaching load, the PSY 197/198 Senior Research (Smith), and other informal research involvement. Professors in the department also regularly bring students along with them to present their shared research at both local and national psychological conferences.

By a variety of measures, our program is strong and thriving. In the spring semester of this past year (2017-2018), the total number of psychology majors reached $n = 89$, which represents 6.8% of the total Westmont student body and the *third highest* major enrollment on campus. We have maintained our key strengths in scientific based teaching of psychology and further expanded in areas of practical training and research. Although our program continues to thrive, we continue to seek new avenues of preparation and experience for our students. We have maintained a robust department, but we face notable challenges as we look to the future. As will be made apparent below, we are currently understaffed relative to other departments at the college, which hinders our ability to meet the needs of our large number of majors, minors, and nonmajors. We also face uncertain future support for staff members who critically contribute to our mission. In spite of these challenges, we feel optimistic about the state of our department and its continuing role in teaching, mentoring, and training students.

Findings

A. Student Learning

PLO # 2: Scientific Research Methods and Skills. Our students will be able to recognize, describe, and implement a variety of research methods and skills common to the psychological sciences.

The psychology department selected two parts of Scientific Thinking, Methods, and Skills to assess in 2013–2014. At the time, the department was interested in how well its senior students in capstone courses accomplished two tasks related to critical thinking, namely their ability to effectively utilize disciplinary databases to refine research questions and identify answers within the literature, and their ability to distinguish good versus bad experimental designs and theories. To assess student's ability to effectively navigate databases, students in one of our senior capstone courses (History and Systems of Psychology, PSY 111) were given a scenario and asked to search PsycINFO, the primary database indexing professional publications in psychology, in order to determine the availability of information that could be used to answer a research question related to the scenario. They were then asked to turn in a list of the searches they performed and, based on those searches, a list of articles they found most relevant. We developed a rubric (Appendix 2a) to assess the number and quality of the searches and articles, and the ability of the students to follow directions.

For the second task related to critical thinking, the department appraised the literature reviews of students who completed Capstone Senior Research in Psychology (PSY 197/198) in order to examine their abilities to present and evaluate relevant theories, and

link their literature reviews to their experimental studies. A rubric was prepared that allowed department members to assess how well students presented and discussed relevant theories and whether they appropriately linked their literature reviews to their own experimental studies (Appendix 2b).

The results (Appendix 2c) were gratifying on the first aspect of the assessment, as we found that the majority of students (89%) performed multiple database searches, indicating that they persevered in trying to find articles that satisfied the task requirements. These results indicated their ability to critically evaluate the results of their searches and use reasonable judgment in completing the task according to the instructions provided. Regarding students' ability to differentiate good and bad experimental designs, we were disappointed that none of our students performed at the highest (Exemplary) level.

In the 2016-2017 academic year, the department also assessed the Scientific Research Methods and Skills PLO with particular emphasis on students' ability to recognize the creative aspects of theory construction and experimental design, and demonstrate such creativity in their own disciplinary work. We adapted a creativity rubric (Appendix 2d) to focus on 3 dimensions: Problem Solving, Embracing Contradictions, and Innovative Thinking, with evaluation levels denoting Beginning, Developing, Accomplished, and Professional.

We were pleased with the results (Appendix 2e) as the benchmarks for Embracing Contradictions and Innovative Thinking exceeded our expectations. However, this was not the case for the Problem Solving benchmark, as we had expected that 90% of the student papers would be at the Accomplished level, but only 63% of papers were at or above that level. While these results initially seemed disappointing, after reviewing and discussing this as a department, we realized that the type of problem solving we were interested in assessing is not typically revealed in a final paper.

Closing the Loop

From these two assessments, we hypothesized that our students need more experience distinguishing good versus bad experimental designs and theories. These areas have received more attention in the semesters following this initial assessment (2013-2014). Specifically, beginning in the fall of 2014 the department implemented changes in order to provide more training and explicit teaching on experimental design in our Capstone Senior Research course (PSY 197). We have also implemented more time and rigor to experimental design in our second year Experimental Psychology Laboratory course (PSY 013). The department will consider reassessing this aspect of the PLO during our next 6-year cycle in order to determine the effectiveness of the implemented changes.

In regards to students' ability to recognize the creative aspects of theory construction and experimental design and demonstrate such creativity in their own disciplinary work, the department is pleased with the overall results.

PLO #4: Values and Character. Our students will value, appreciate, and welcome through understanding and demonstrative action:

- Scientific methods. Students will see empirical, evidence-based methods as essential and as complementary to other methods of knowing.
- Ethics. Students will be committed to high ethical standards, including professional, discipline-specific domains and their own personal lives.
- Faith. Students will be able to articulate the interactions between psychology and faith.
- Openness to experience. Students will understand the importance and desirability of a diversity of experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds (including ethnic, sociocultural, and gender diversity). They will embrace ambiguity, being comfortable without closure or black-and-white answers, and valuing questions as much as answers.

In 2012–2013, the department assessed Christian Beliefs, Values, Affections, and Practices by sending a survey to psychology and neuroscience alumni who graduated between 2006 and 2012 (N = 142). The survey was adapted from the College Students Beliefs and Values Survey, one of the instruments used to evaluate religiosity and spirituality in higher education by the Higher Education Research Institute (Appendix 3a). The items selected, modified, and added by the department were designed to address Faith and Openness to Experience, two aspects of the Values and Character PLO. Mean ratings and standard deviations were determined for the survey items and a factor analysis was done to determine correlations between clusters of survey items (Appendix 3b). We were pleased to find that relatively recent alumni who graduated with a neuroscience or psychology major experienced positive changes in their religious and spiritual understandings, beliefs, and practices while they were at Westmont and since they have graduated from Westmont. These changes are correlated with changes in social values, affections, and behaviors that indicate openness to experience.

We also specifically assessed Openness to Experience in 2014–2015 as part of the Values and Character PLO. The department was interested in how senior students enrolled in the Capstone Senior Practicum in Psychology (PSY 196) were rated by their internship site supervisors on these qualities. To this end, the department developed a rubric (Appendix 3c) and set a benchmark of 75% of the students performing at the Effective or greater level. Site supervisors were notified by phone and email at the beginning of each semester and given the questions they would be asked at the completion of the semester about the student intern (Appendix 3d). Site visits were then conducted at the end of each semester, during which the supervisor responded to the Openness to Experience questions; responses were audio taped and/or written. After completion of all interviews, each psychology department member individually rated each of the 18 students on the 4 questions utilizing the rubric. The department members then met and discussed their individual ratings and the mean was used to determine the final rating (Appendix 3e). The findings indicated that 97% of our senior students enrolled in the Capstone Practicum course were engaged and open to new experiences at their internships. In addition, the department was encouraged by the ways in which its students engaged at their internship sites in regards to cultural awareness and diversity, which was one main criterion for evaluating openness to experience.

Closing the Loop

We were pleased to learn that recent psychology and neuroscience alumni experienced positive changes in their spiritual understanding, beliefs, and practices while they were at Westmont, and since they have graduated from Westmont. These changes are associated with changes in social values, affections, and behaviors that indicate openness to experience and understanding of others' backgrounds and cultures. We were also glad to know that site supervisors in the greater Santa Barbara area who had Westmont psychology students as interns found our students highly open to diverse and new experiences. At the time of the assessments, we did not include measurement of students' appreciation and value for the scientific method or their commitment to ethical standards. This is an area that the department will consider for assessment in the next 6-year cycle.

PLO #5: Applications. Our students will apply psychological principles, knowledge, and skills to their lives and to the transformation of their worlds. Applied domains include:

- Personal (personal development, relationships, personal experience, etc.)
- Community and societal/global concerns and issues
- Integration with other academic disciplines

Given our desire to see our students and graduates actively engage in their communities and bringing their abilities to bear on improving the world around them, we assessed the PLO Applications in the 2015–2016 academic year. We constructed a survey comprised of three quantitative and three qualitative questions (Appendix 4a) and administered it in one of our three senior capstone courses, History and Systems of Psychology (PSY 111). Twenty of the 23 students enrolled in the class were present on the day the questionnaire was administered and therefore participated in the assessment. We found that our psychology seniors rated themselves highest and above average for displaying behavior that can be regarded as civil. They also rated their positive influence on the community as slightly above average and their search for opportunities to serve and promote the community as average. The differences between the ratings of their search for opportunities to serve their community and both their civil behavior and their positive influence on their community were statistically significant. These results (Appendix 4b) suggest that they perceive themselves as less actively searching for opportunities to serve others, but they do rate themselves as displaying greater than average civility in behavior.

Closing the Loop

It was encouraging to see our students being active agents in their communities and our hope is that this trajectory continues. We believe our department provides a strong, holistic, multi-faceted engagement at the community level with our organized practicum and internship opportunities. We have also increased our applied research opportunities in the community in recent years, which we believe will provide a vehicle for students to gain valuable research experience for graduate school while at the same time actively serving their communities. Additionally, we have been intentional as individual faculty advisors and mentors, and as a department, to emphasize the importance of community involvement while at the same time focusing on academic demands. Overall, the department is currently satisfied with the ways in which our students engage on a community level and look forward to increased opportunities for the future.

B. Alumni Reflections

In preparation for this 6-year review, we contacted 182 psychology alumni whose emails were available from the college alumni office and requested their completion of an alumni survey (Appendix 6a). Of that 182, 45 graduated between 2007 and 2010 and 137 graduated between 2011 and 2017. The reason for this particular division of the graduates was that the earlier group graduated before or during the department's last 6-year review, and a comparison of "before" and "after" seemed useful. Twenty of the graduates in the earlier group responded (44.4%), and 35 of the more recent group responded (25.5%), giving an overall response rate of 30.2%. Data tables 1-27 can be found in Appendix 6b. The majority of graduates from both graduating groups were female (Table 1), indicating a consistent proportion of females and males in the psychology major over the 11-year period. The majority of graduates were also white, but the percentage of whites was somewhat greater in the more recent alumni group.

Examining the major tracks among which alumni chose (Table 2), it is clear that the B.A. continues to be the more popular choice, with the B.S. with a concentration in Neuroscience being slightly more popular among the more recent graduates. More of the recent graduates compared to older graduates completed either a second major or a minor (34% vs. 25%, respectively), with the preference being a minor. Generally, these majors completed their degrees in 3 to 4 years, with no one in this sample taking more than 4 years (Table 2). Somewhat more of the older alumni compared to the recent group graduated in less than 4 years (30% vs. 20%, respectively).

Many psychology majors go on to complete post-baccalaureate degrees (Table 3). The majority of alumni in the earlier group completed a masters or PhD. Those percentages drop precipitously among the more recent graduating group, but based on the department's ongoing contact with its alumni and the information in Table b8, Career and Employment: Current Employment Status, it appears that: 1) these younger alumni are still in a graduate program (37%), or 2) possibly have not yet returned to school to complete a graduate program. The department was also interested to know what kind of masters and PhD programs alumni were selecting (Table 3). In the older alumni group, 60% completed a master's in psychology or a related field (e.g., Human Rights, MSW), and 30% completed a doctoral level degree. In the recent alumni group, 22.9% have completed a master's degree in psychology or a related field. The majority of both alumni groups rated Westmont's preparation for graduate work as Good to Excellent (85.0% for the older group; 91.4%, for the recent group; Table 4). In addition, both groups of alumni rated their preparation in their psychology major as Somewhat or Much Better than their peers (80% of the older alumni, and 82.8% of the more recent alumni; Table 5).

With respect to career development, the majority of the older alumni reported that their first job after college was in a psychology-related area (Table 6). In contrast, less than half of the more recent alumni reported that their first job after college was in psychology. The majority of both groups reported, however, that Westmont prepared them for this position, and they were satisfied with that position. The speed with which alumni found their first professional position varied (Table 7). The majority of the older alumni group found their first professional position within 2 months of looking. About one third took a little longer (3 to 9 months). The speed with which the more recent

alumni found their first position was somewhat slower—28.6% took 3 to 9 months; 22.9%, took 10 months or more. Slightly more than a third of both groups report that they are looking for other employment at this time (Table 6). The majority of alumni in both groups are employed full or part-time, either in or out of the home (Table 8). However, far more of the recent alumni reported being students (37% vs. 5.0%).

When asked about the characteristics described in Westmont's mission statement (Table 9), a majority of both alumni groups reported that they would describe themselves as thoughtful scholars and grateful servants. More than half of the recent alumni, compared to older alumni, would describe themselves as faithful leaders and prepared for global engagement with the academy and church. And just a little over half in both groups describe themselves as prepared for global engagement with the world.

Alumni were asked how important their General Education experience was in their careers (Table 10). Among older alumni, 75% reported that General Education was Somewhat to Very Important. A slightly higher percentage (82.8%) of the more recent alumni reported the same. A higher percentage (25%) of the older alumni were neutral or believed that General Education was Not Very Important, compared to more recent alumni (5.8%). Approximately 11% of recent alumni did not respond, however. Finally, when asked about satisfaction with their Westmont education (Table 11), a majority of older alumni were Extremely Satisfied or Satisfied (95%), with 100% of the recent alumni responding as Extremely Satisfied or Satisfied. Further verification of alumni's satisfaction with their Westmont education can be found in Table 12. Eighty percent of the older alumni group and 94.3% of more recent alumni were Somewhat to Very Likely to recommend Westmont to someone they know. Reasons given by the 5 alumni who were not very likely to recommend Westmont included: it is a Christian institution (1 alumnus), costs a great deal (1 alumnus), does not support the LGBT community (2 alumni), lacks ethnic diversity (1 alumnus), and does not emphasize literal interpretation of scripture (1 alumnus). All but one of these responses came from older alumni.

Turning to questions about the psychology program, nearly all alumni in both groups reported that teaching in the psychology department was Strong to Superior (95% among older alumni; 97.1% among recent alumni; Table 13). Furthermore, the majority of alumni also reported that they Successfully or Very Successfully integrated their faith with their psychological knowledge (80% of older alumni; 77.1% of recent alumni; Table 14). Twenty percent of both groups integrated faith and psychological knowledge Somewhat Successfully. Only 1 recent alumnus was unsuccessful in achieving this task.

When asked what the top three aspects of the psychology program were, the majority of alumni reported the faculty members as the best aspect (Table 15). Many alumni mentioned the caring, helping, approachability, and availability of the professors. Others referred to the outstanding scholarship, teaching, and mentoring that they experienced. The percentage of alumni selecting professors first was higher among more recent alumni, compared to the older alumni. This may be related to the number and quality of adjunct professors that taught during the earlier period. A few alumni ranked various aspects of the curriculum as the best aspect of the program, but far more of them ranked curriculum as the second or third choice for best part of the program. They appreciated the rigor and breadth, as well as the hands-on and applied nature of the curriculum.

Two other aspects of the program were important to alumni: Small class sizes and relationships with classmates and professors. More recent alumni reported the importance of relationships more frequently. This difference in the two groups may be due to the new facilities to which the department moved in August 2010. In this facility, faculty offices are grouped around a central lounge area where students study and hang out. This arrangement of offices and student space may promote the development of stronger relationships and a greater sense of community.

In the last 6 years, the psychology department evaluated aspects of three of their learning outcomes. The first is that graduates will be able to articulate and integrate the structure of the academic discipline of psychology and key content in a wide variety of psychological areas. They will also be familiar with career/vocation options in psychology and psychology-related fields. The second outcome relates to the methods of psychology: Graduates will be able to recognize, describe, and implement a variety of research methods and skills common to the psychological sciences. And the third outcome focuses on graduates' ability to write and speak in genres appropriate to the academic discipline of psychology. Evaluations of the relevance of the Psychology programs' learning outcomes that were assessed during the last 6 years (Tables 16 and 17) showed that most alumni agreed that the three learning outcomes were Somewhat to Very Important in their careers. Percentages ranged from 70.0% to 82.9%, depending on the learning outcome. A high percentage of alumni also reported that they had Somewhat to Very Successfully achieved these learning outcomes.

The department was also interested in alumni perceptions of the psychology curriculum. Alumni were asked which of the courses offered, aside from Capstone Senior Practicum and Capstone Senior Research, were most and least helpful in their work or everyday lives. General Psychology, along with Child Development, Psychology of Learning, Abnormal Psychology, and Fundamentals of Clinical and Counseling were rated the most helpful among the majority of earlier alumni (55% to 80%). A good number of older alumni (30% to 45%) perceived Experimental Psychology, Lifespan Development, Cognitive Psychology, Clinical Neuropsychology, and Personality as most helpful. However, among more recent alumni, the majority rated Abnormal Psychology and Fundamentals of Clinical and Counseling as most helpful (68.6% to 82.9%). Most of the rest of the courses were rated most helpful by a good number of these alumni (31.4% to 45.7%): Experimental Psychology, Child Development, Cognitive Psychology, Psychology of Learning, Behavioral Neuroscience, Cultural Psychology, and Personality. Sensation and Perception, Social Psychology, and History and Systems were selected as being most helpful by less than 26% in either alumni group.

On the opposite end of the scale, the least helpful perceived course in work or everyday life was History and Systems among the older alumni group. All of the other courses were selected by 10% or less of these older alumni. In the more recent alumni group, History and Systems was also perceived as the least relevant course, with all of the other courses selected by less than 12% of the more recent alumni. Overall, the clear majority of courses offered in the psychology department are perceived as helpful in work or everyday life, particularly among the more recent alumni.

Another set of curriculum questions focused on alumni's perceptions of their experiences in research and internships while at Westmont. Students can work with faculty on research during the semester or the summer, and can do so for more than one semester or summer. They can also take the Capstone Senior Research course, which is required in the B.S. tracks. Besides taking the Capstone Senior Practicum course, students can complete psychology-related internships at off-campus sites (e.g., Westmont in San Francisco). We asked first, what percentage of majors completed some kind of research or internship experience, and second, how beneficial did they find these experiences to be. Among the older alumni, all completed an internship for psychology credit, with a little less than 20% taking internship courses for more than one semester (Table 20). In contrast, about 75% of the more recent alumni completed an internship, with 33% taking internship courses for more than one semester. The majority of alumni in both groups also described the benefits of taking one or more internships (Table 21). These benefits were categorized, and showed that, among older alumni, about 20% reported that their internship(s) helped them develop relevant skills and increased their knowledge, as well as verifying their career interests or preparing them for their present career. About 10% reported that they learned more about themselves, got real world experience, or the internship disconfirmed their career interest. In contrast, 14% of the more recent alumni reported that they developed relevant skills; 20% reported that they increased their knowledge; and 31% reported that they verified their career interests or were better prepared for their present career. This increase in developing skills and learning about career options from older to more recent alumni is encouraging, as it reveals that the steps we have implemented to provide meaningful internships and research opportunities may be bearing fruit.

Among the older alumni, about 33% participated in a research experience for psychology credit, with only 1 alumnus taking research for more than one semester (Table 22). In contrast, nearly half of the more recent alumni participated in research, with about 20% working more than one semester or summer. Table 22 also shows that about 33% of the older alumni participated in both internship and research experiences, whereas about 25% of the recent alumni did so. The majority of alumni in both groups also described the benefits of taking one or more internships (Table 23). These benefits were categorized, and showed that about two fifths of the older alumni and one third of the recent alumni reported that their research experiences helped them develop relevant skills. The two groups also reported that their experiences increased their knowledge, and at least among older alumni, increased their self-knowledge and helped prepare them for graduate school. The older alumni also appreciated the hands-on experience.

In addition to knowing what alumni appreciated and valued in the psychology program, we also sought alumni suggestions for improvement. In the Westmont psychology program, 5 courses are required: General Psychology, Statistics, Experimental Psychology, History and Systems, and a Capstone course. In addition, two (from 7) lecture courses and two (from 5) upper division laboratory courses are required. Finally, 2 to 3 electives (depending on the track) are required which may be taken from the lecture, capstone, or laboratory course categories. One question asked whether there were courses that were not required but alumni thought should have been required (Table 24). Many from both groups of alumni did not respond, said that no

changes were required, or weren't sure what should be changed. When they did have suggestions, the older alumni thought that various clinical or counseling courses, some of which are not presently offered, should be required (e.g., Effects of Trauma on Psychology Disorders and Behavior). The more recent alumni were more supportive of Social or Cultural, Personality, or Developmental courses being required. A related question concerned any desired expansion of the curriculum (Table 25). A number of alumni in both groups desired more depth in the existing courses, or wanted additional specialty courses (e.g., Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Applied Behavioral Analysis).

Finally, the department asked alumni for their top three ideas for improving the psychology program (Table 26). About one third of alumni in both groups had no suggestions, but another one third of older alumni and nearly 10% of recent alumni desired better preparation for careers and graduate school. This concern is also seen in the responses obtained to the question of how much advice alumni received regarding careers or graduate school (Table 27). Among older alumni, just over 50% reported that they had received "Enough Information", whereas slightly less than 50% of the more recent alumni reported that they had received "Enough Advice". Across both groups, a third to nearly a half reported that they had gotten no advice or not gotten enough (35.0% and 48.6%, older and recent alumni, respectively).

With respect to other suggested improvements to the psychology program, about 25% of older alumni and 20% of recent alumni desired more specialty courses or more focus on psychology-related issues (e.g., social justice issues in psychology). Another suggested improvement of both older and more recent alumni is in the Neuroscience track (5% and 11.5%, respectively). Some specific suggestions included more courses and more cohesion in, or integration of, the courses in the track. The remainder of the suggestions included some by individual alumni that ranged from creative (e.g., more practicum experience via site rotation) to providing more depth (e.g., more research or practicum experience) to already having been implemented (e.g., less turnover in professors).

Closing the Loop

Overall, we are pleased with the feedback from our alumni survey. We would have liked a higher response rate from our alumni, but we feel that we gathered useful information from the respondents. In general, the results confirm our core strengths of our curricular structure, caliber of faculty, the academic community of Westmont and the psychology department, and preparation in the major for future success. We were encouraged by the rise in the participation of our more recent alumni in the areas of both practicum and research. We see this as a key area of future development (see below). In addition, the survey reinforces our awareness of the need to provide additional important psychology courses for our students. Lastly, we have intentionally addressed the perceived lack of information given to students about graduate school and career options by a) being more intentional in our advising sessions regarding this topic, and b) holding Graduate School and Career Information Nights at least once a year. These informational sessions are intended to answer questions about future career paths in psychology, offering practical advice about how to maximize students' current experiences in the psychology department as well as how to apply to graduate school.

C. Curriculum Review

The psychology major at Westmont College seeks to provide high-quality undergraduate education in the academic field of scientific psychology and opportunities for high-quality scholarship and professional development. It also intentionally integrates faith by exploring how psychological knowledge can inform one's faith and how one's faith can inform his or her knowledge about the science and practice of psychology. Whether through basic and applied research, careers in applied psychology, or the application of behavioral skills and knowledge, our faculty, students, and staff strive to positively influence and transform ourselves and our communities.

Curriculum Structure

The department offers a Psychology B.A., Psychology B.S. (General), and Behavioral Neuroscience B.S. and has conceptually organized common "trajectories" through the coursework in these major tracks to help the progress of our students as they proceed from initial to mastery stages in their undergraduate education. We have strategically opted not to offer tracks organized around content or specialization areas (e.g., clinical, developmental, etc.) in order to emphasize the integration of material across these areas and the importance of being broadly educated in psychology no matter what career path a student might choose.

The structure of the three major tracks offered in our department offers rigorous undergraduate training in scientific psychology and, in addition to the Minor in Psychology, offers academic program options for a wide variety of student interests and needs. The minor offers a meaningful psychology experience for students in other majors.

- The B. A. degree track offers strong training with a low enough unit count to allow for other specializations (minors or double majors).
- The General B. S. degree track offers additional training in the sciences and research curriculum.
- The Behavioral Neuroscience B. S. offers a rigorous interdisciplinary experience with core training in neuroscience.

In addition to core psychology coursework, B. S. General and B. S. Behavioral Neuroscience students must also complete a number of courses outside the major in other departments. Both of these options emphasize psychology's connections with biology and chemistry, in addition to physics and mathematics.

As can be seen in Table 1 (Appendix 7), all degree options incorporate (a) lower-division coursework in methodological and theoretical foundations, (b) a statistics course taken in the math department, (c) core upper-division lecture and laboratory courses in specific areas of psychology, and (d) a senior capstone experience that integrates their psychological knowledge (History and Systems) and teaches them to apply the knowledge that they have gained in psychology over the past several years in practicum, individual research, or both.

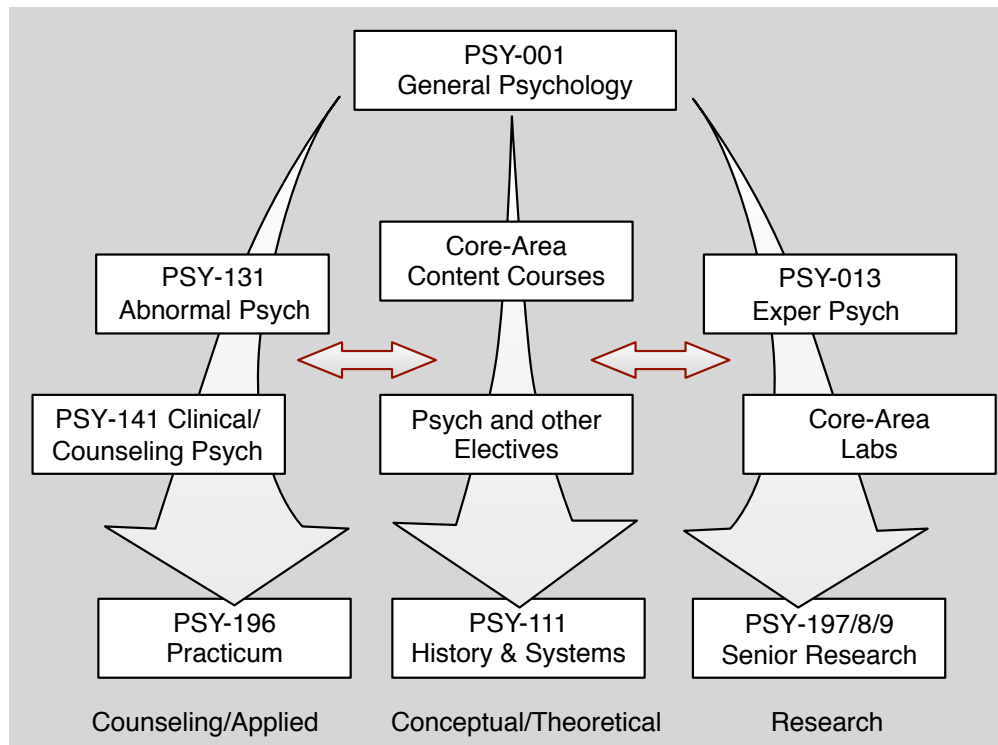
Course Sequencing: In addition to the three degree tracks, we have also structured our curriculum in terms of students' trajectories through their years in Westmont's psychology program, with each trajectory beginning with General Psychology, moving through specific methods and core area courses, and culminating in a well-defined and comprehensive capstone experience. Other important hallmarks of our academic program include ample opportunities for high-level student research in psychology and local, professional community involvement.

Lower Division Courses: In their first year, students take General Psychology and Statistics. These courses are prerequisites for most of our other classes, so faculty encourage students to complete them by the end of the first year. Students are then encouraged to take Experimental Psychology during the first semester of their sophomore year. These three classes (General Psychology, Statistics, and Experimental Psychology) provide the foundation of the psychology major.

Upper Division Courses: Students must complete four upper division courses, two lecture-based courses and two-laboratory based courses. B.A. students then complete three elective courses, while B.S. General students complete two elective courses and a total of four courses from a menu of specific courses in the math, computer science, biology, chemistry, and/or physics departments. Finally, B.S. Neuroscience students complete two elective courses and a total of five pre-selected courses in math, biology, and chemistry.

Senior Capstone Courses: Students have three capstone Courses as seniors: History and Systems, Practicum, and Senior Research. History and Systems is designed to help students integrate and extend their psychological knowledge within the context of the development of psychology as a discipline. The latter two courses are designed to help students apply their knowledge and develop their skills by working and reflecting on their experiences in the Practicum, or by examining a specialized research area in depth and discovering new psychological knowledge. Students who intend to pursue an applied field of psychology are encouraged to complete the practicum course. Those planning to pursue graduate school are encouraged to complete both the research and practicum courses, depending on their interests, though they have the option to take only one or the other. All B.S. majors must complete the Senior research course as part of their capstone experience.

We reinforce the conceptualization of how our curriculum can be sequenced in advising sessions with students and on our website so that we can integrate student trajectories from the introductory courses through to the capstone experiences as seen in the three overlapping Introduction-Through-Capstone trajectories. As the figure below illustrates, PSY 111, 196, and 197/8/9 comprise the capstone experience, which represents a set of proximal goals to help students think strategically and functionally about courses and course sequencing. Our goal is to emphasize both the sequential and hierarchical nature of the curriculum (i.e., that certain courses will prepare you for others) as well as the integrated nature of the curriculum (horizontal arrows), and to increase students' ability to plan towards their educational goals. Students' trajectories can overlap on any or all of the tracks.



We expect that all of our students' experience begins in the General Psychology course, which serves as the introduction to the major, department, and discipline, in addition to serving its primary function as a liberal-arts introduction to the big questions of psychology. Similarly, all trajectories culminate in a senior capstone experience comprising History and Systems and Senior Practicum or Senior Research. Other courses within the department are strategically designed to move our students developmentally from their introductory experiences into each of these capstone experience courses. These trajectories have been increasingly important in our advising as we try to encourage students to think functionally about their course selection and sequencing, focusing on their capstone experience as a proximal goal for which their unique course trajectory should be preparing them, and using that proximal goal to help focus them on the more distal goals of graduate school, vocation/career, and civic/community responsibility.

Recent Revisions in Psychology Coursework

During the past six years, we have adjusted course offerings and timings in order to assist our students to complete all major requirements comfortably within four years.

1. The department moved Experimental Psychology with Laboratory from the spring semester to the fall. This allows students to start their upper division coursework earlier in their undergraduate career. Moreover, because our Experimental Psychology laboratory is designed to introduce students to research in a broad range of sub disciplines (e.g., Cognitive, Social, Learning, Behavioral Neuroscience, and Personality), students can make a more informed decision about which upper division courses to complete earlier in their undergraduate career as they choose most of their upper division courses following exposure to hands-on research in the Experimental Psychology laboratory.

2. We moved our Fundamentals of Clinical and Counseling Psychology course from spring to fall semester to give students enough time to complete it before taking their Senior Capstone Practicum course, for which it is a prerequisite.
3. In response to high demand by majors and non-majors, we added another section of Abnormal Psychology, allowing us to meet the needs of Psychology majors while serving other programs that require or recommend completing Abnormal Psychology as part of their majors (e.g., Kinesiology).
4. We moved the Clinical Neuropsychology w/Laboratory course from spring to fall to create more opportunities for other spring lab courses and improve the use of our departmental resources that are required for all of our laboratory courses.
5. To make course offerings comparable to peer institutions that are similar in mission to Westmont, we added a Lifespan Development and a Cultural Psychology course.

Comparison with Peer Institutions

We conducted an in-depth analysis comparing our course offerings with those of psychology departments in 16 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) four-year liberal arts colleges of similar mission to Westmont. Based on this analysis (Appendix 8), our course offerings align with, and sometimes exceed, those of peer programs. For example, only 38% of the 16 comparison institutions offer a B. S. or B. S. Neuroscience in Psychology. Moreover, this analysis clearly revealed that one of our department's greatest strengths is the wide array of laboratory courses in Cognitive Psychology (19% of peer programs offer this), Psychology of Learning (6% of peer programs offer this), Clinical Neuropsychology (6% of peer programs offer this), and Behavioral Neuroscience (31% of peer programs offer this). In addition, we offer a Sensation/Perception lecture course and laboratory, when only 31% of peer institutions offer the lecture course and only 6% of peer institutions offer the laboratory course. This unique range of laboratory courses intentionally gives our students the hands-on preparation needed for graduate study.

Closing the Loop

While the fundamental structure of our program is sound, we see potential issues to consider in the future. For example, in psychology programs that require Statistics for their major (69% of comparison programs), those courses are always offered within the psychology department instead of in the math department. For these psychology programs, the Statistics course is not a general mathematics course, but rather a course focused on statistics as applied in the behavioral sciences, specifically psychology. The fact that we currently require our majors to complete a general Statistics course outside the department rather than a focused Statistics course in Psychology may leave them less prepared for Experimental Psychology, of which Statistics is a prerequisite. It may also leave them less prepared for graduate school and their professional endeavors beyond Westmont, because they do not get as much out of the Experimental Psychology laboratory course as they could have had they better statistical preparation. While some comparison programs require an additional Statistics course in a mathematics department as well, this was always a prerequisite to the Statistics course housed in the psychology department. In addition, many students opt to take an online or community college statistics course over

the summer before they complete Experimental Psychology, so this could be contributing to the poor retention of statistics observed in Experimental Psychology. We would like to consider our options in the future for assisting our majors obtain a firmer grasp on statistics before taking Experimental Psychology.

Moreover, other lecture-based courses that are standard in other departments are noticeably lacking from Westmont's course offerings. For example, 63% of comparison programs offer Psychology of Sex and Gender and/or Human Sexuality, 56% offer Health Psychology, and 50% offer Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Because our current faculty have full course loads and because these specialty areas do not fall within the realm of their expertise, we propose hiring full-time and/or part-time faculty that can fill some of these course needs. This is important to maintain parity with our comparison institutions' offerings and to keep up with the evolving nature of the field.

D. Program Sustainability & Adaptability

The psychology curriculum has maintained students' interest, and enrollment in the psychology major has increased over the past six years. Several factors contribute to this, including the students' general interest in psychology as a discipline, the psychology faculty at Westmont, the continuing attraction of multiple career options in psychology, and the broader opportunities in related fields afforded by a psychology degree. Psychology as an area of study has wide appeal to students who seek to eventually work and serve in people-oriented careers. As recognition of the need for psychology education in medically related fields (e.g., premed, kinesiology, OT, PT, etc.) continues to grow, we expect to see a continued large number of majors and enrollment of nonmajors in various courses.

Contributing to our sustainability is the structure of the three major tracks offered in our department. To recap the section above, the B.A. degree track offers strong training flexibility for other specializations (minors or double majors). The General B.S. degree track offers additional training in the sciences and research curriculum, and the Behavioral Neuroscience B.S. offers a rigorous interdisciplinary experience with core training in biological sciences and neuroscience research. Students appreciate how our curriculum structure guides them through their years in Westmont's psychology program, with each trajectory beginning with General Psychology, moving through specific methods and core area courses and culminating in a well-defined and comprehensive capstone experience.

Program Demographics

Reflecting national trends and the improvement in the program over the last decade at Westmont, psychology has achieved a standing as one of the most popular academic majors at Westmont. The number of psychology majors over the reporting period has seen psychology continue to place within the top five majors at Westmont consistently since 2012. At the end of the spring semester 2018, we had a total of 89 declared majors in psychology, the third highest number of majors on campus. Since 2012, the size of the psychology graduating class has ranged between 10-26. While we are pleased at the continuing strength in our number of majors and minors, we do not want to become complacent. Thus, we continue to strive for improving the caliber of the program by expanding the educational, training, and research opportunities for our students.

Our department consists of three full time faculty members and two 2/3rds time faculty members. We have a consistent number of annual adjunct faculty hires in order to meet the demands of our large number of enrolled students. The sizeable number of students has placed quite a demand on our permanent faculty. For example, the psychology department carries a much higher than average advising load relative to the college average (for the 6 years covered by this report, psychology had an annual average of 23 advisees/faculty member as compared to the college average of 15.8 advisees/faculty member). We also carry a greater teaching load than most other departments (for students x faculty load/faculty load credit, the Westmont annual average = 16.6 and the psychology department = 19.9). This is in spite of less total permanent faculty members (Westmont average FTE/department=5, psychology FTE=4.3). We also accommodate a greater number of majors and nonmajors in our upper division courses relative to most other departments on campus. Details on faculty teaching and advising load for the department can be found in Appendix 9.

The gender and ethnic data for the department can be viewed in Appendices 10 and 11. Our current faculty consists of two males and three females, one of which represents a racial/ethnic minority. From 2013-2018, psychology majors that graduated from Westmont were 77.2% female and 22.8% male. Students that identified as white were 66.2% of the total and all other categories were 33.8%. These numbers reflect the general population at Westmont, although our department has a relatively larger number of female students.

Program Service to Westmont and Society

An important contributor to the sustainability and adaptability of our program derives from the extensive program service of both our students and faculty. We have intentionally sought to incorporate new venues for students in both required programs (e.g., Practicum), as well as supporting our students in their choices to serve in other locations (e.g., Westmont Downtown and Westmont in San Francisco). Important hallmarks of our academic program include ample opportunities for high-level student research in psychology and local, professional community involvement. Our faculty members are also consistently engaged in a variety of service activities on and off campus. Details on the key features and strengths of the department in the area of program service are presented below in the Additional Analyses section.

Closing the Loop

We feel confident that the structure of the department is solid and we can meet the tasks of maintaining our current curriculum and our commitment to our students and to the overall Westmont community. However, we clearly face several challenges, particularly in regards to our size and resources. Due to the small number of permanent faculty, coupled with the outsized teaching and advising load that we maintain relative to other Westmont departments, we continue to struggle with staffing and resources. Our low number of FTE positions and reliance on adjunct faculty in order to accommodate the large student demand for psychology courses is not a desirable permanent solution. Our high teaching and advising loads would best be addressed by recruiting an additional faculty member, specifically in an area not currently represented in the department (e.g., industrial/organizational psychology; health psychology; methods and statistics).

The active presence of a full time laboratory coordinator is a major strength in the department. This position has greatly enhanced the educational mission of the department and the learning experience of our students. The laboratory coordinator directly underpins the educational experience in the laboratory courses; this position is a key role that cannot be covered by any department faculty member. However, we currently are required to use our limited reserve funding each year to maintain this position, and sustained future funding for this position is not clear. A crucial goal is for the college to honor its previous commitment to establish the psychology laboratory coordinator role as a permanent staff position as exists in other Westmont science departments (e.g., biology and chemistry).

Other areas of future expansion include our desire to develop more course offerings in areas that reflect ongoing changes in modern psychology and that are in tune with increased student interest. As noted, we have identified the area of industrial/organizational psychology as a key potential subfield for future growth. In addition, if time and resources allow, we would like to add new courses in areas already represented on our faculty, particularly in behavioral neuroscience, clinical psychology, and psychology of religion.

A critical challenge for our future is the operating fund status of the department. Based on our high level of enrollment and number of majors, we face ongoing trials in meeting the needs of our faculty and students. One example is the need for ongoing funding for statistical software in the department. Given the importance of training students in line with our comparison institutions and effectively preparing them for graduate school, we require more consistent funding to purchase the latest software packages (e.g., SPSS). We also need to maintain institutional support for our key position of laboratory coordinator. Finally, better funding opportunities for professional activities (e.g., research and conference support) for faculty and students is a priority for improving research endeavors.

Finally, we envision several other areas for future development. First, we want to establish better links with our alumni. For our current students, such links may improve career planning and potential network connections. For the department, it may lead to future support for department research and on-campus psychology related events (e.g., seminars). This goal may be established by building an online alumni network and through increased communication (e.g., an annual newsletter). Second, we want to improve communication of the department with the various audiences of importance to our mission (e.g., prospective students, current students, and local internship sites and employers). This goal may be achieved through further development of our newly redesigned website and other media (e.g., Twitter feed), and in conjunction with the Westmont development office. Third, we have had some recent success with bringing external speakers in psychology (e.g., preeminent social psychologists from UCSB such as Drs. Heejung Kim and David Sherman), but we would like to sustain a programmatic presence of prominent psychology professionals that would benefit our psychology majors, as well as the greater Westmont community.

E. Additional Analyses

1) Vocation/Career/Internships

An emphasis on applied experience and professional development is core to the values, curricula, and advising in the psychology major. In our Capstone Practicum class (PSY 196), students gain a supervised, practical experience that integrates skills and knowledge from a wide variety of psychology courses with students' field experience. This occurs via hands-on participation at their field site and group supervision with a licensed clinical psychologist and fellow students in weekly classroom meetings. Each student is provided a practicum handbook (Appendix 12a), which lists over 40 sites and includes county social services, day treatment programs for those with mental illness, elementary and high schools, organizations specializing in industrial/organization psychology, and neuropsychology clinics.

Over the past six years, 77% of psychology majors have participated in this course. Site supervisors utilize a rubric (Appendix 12b) to evaluate students. This includes 93% of B.A. students and 27% of B.S. students. For a large number of these students, their service at their practicum site (e.g., Sanctuary Psychiatric Centers, California Psychcare, Noah's Anchorage, Pacific Neuroscience Medical Group, and Jodi House) converts into a paid job position after graduation.

In addition to Practicum, some of our majors complete experiences through off-campus programs and the applied studies department. Over the past six years, 10% of psychology majors have participated in Westmont in San Francisco, and 3% have participated in the Westmont Downtown program. The former requires an internship in a variety of private, government, and non-profit organizations throughout the Bay Area. Among the sites where our students have served are the ARC SF, City of Hope, Department of Human Services, San Francisco General Hospital, Larkin Street Youth Services, Ella Barker Center, Florence Crittenton Services, La Casa de las Madres, Raphael House, Richmond Hills Family Center, Real Options for City Kids, St. Anne's Home, and St. Anthony's Foundation. The Westmont Downtown Program requires 20 internship hours per week at local non-profit, policymaking, or county social service organization, such as Immigrant Hope, Sansum Diabetes Center, California Psychcare, and ImpactHub of Santa Barbara.

In a similar manner, over the past six years, 11% of psychology majors have completed an internship through the applied studies department. This opportunity allows psychology students to complete 6-12 weekly hours of internship at a site specializing in psychological services, including many of those listed in our Practicum Handbook. Students can earn 2 to 4 units of upper division psychology elective credit (PSY 190) for these internships. An integral part of the department's policy is to encourage students to complete one of these internships, particularly for those students who are interested in careers in clinical and counseling psychology.

The department also holds several events and conversations designed to facilitate students' vocational and career development. This past year, our laboratory coordinator presented professional development opportunities for students to gain experience within the department (e.g., TAs, individual research, faculty-led research, animal care). Our local chapter of Psi Chi, the international honor society in psychology, hosted a workshop for

students detailing how to craft and construct curriculum vitae. For the past five years, the department has hosted a 90-minute professional development symposium for all psychology majors and minors. During this event, each faculty member, recent alumni, and a psychologist from a sub discipline in the community (e.g., Industrial/Organizational psychology) discuss pathways toward careers in his/her subspecialty. Attention is also given in this symposium to the necessary steps for applying to graduate school or pursuing other careers in psychology.

Conversations about vocational and career development are also part of our formal and informal curriculum. For example, in our fall 2017 Fundamentals of Clinical and Counseling course, a local licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) spoke about training for the MFT degree and occupational opportunities for those who complete this degree. In our Practicum class (PSY 196), a staff member from the Career Development and Calling department administers two measures, the Strong Interest Inventory and Type Focus, to all students in the course and then discusses how the results can be used to inform students' optimal career and workplace trajectories. Moreover, each department member has several conversations with students about professional development (e.g., graduate school, local job opportunities) in advising appointments, coffee/lunch meetings, and informal interactions.

Finally, the department has carefully selected and crafted multiple resources related to graduate school and careers on its website. Among the resources available are how to choose, prepare (e.g., necessary courses, requisite GPA, timetable for applying, taking necessary standardized tests), and apply to graduate school (e.g., how to write a personal statement); information about what graduate school is like (e.g., what to expect and skills to develop) and how to succeed in graduate school; goals for post-doctoral work; a list of psychology programs and schools where many of our recent majors have completed graduate work; and several materials related to available careers in psychology, including the steps necessary toward securing positions and success in those careers.

Closing the Loop

Although the department is generally pleased with its attention to the professional development of its students, we have identified two key areas for further development. The first is to establish and maintain a more comprehensive alumni database and networking system. The department has been intermittently detailing the graduate programs and careers of our alumni, but we will be discussing ways to implement a systematic approach to monitor, track, and contact our alumni. When implemented, this could further our offering to current students by highlighting available graduate programs and affording networking opportunities related to internships and careers.

The second area we would like to expand is the exposure to career and internship opportunities of first and second year students who are psychology majors. Presently, the majority of students who attend our symposia and appear to benefit the most from the available opportunities are more advanced students. This is not surprising, considering that newer students are still learning the subdisciplines available in psychology and developing the skills necessary for successful completion of internships. However, there

may be ways to better customize our discussions and offerings for students who are in their early years.

2) *Faculty and Student Research Activity*

The department places a strong emphasis on scholarly activity in psychological research. Indeed, the research portfolio of our faculty and students is a major strength of the program. This scientific focus is integrally linked to our educational approach to undergraduate training in the psychological sciences. As described in our curriculum description (section C), laboratory based courses comprise a substantial part of required core courses for psychology majors. These empirically focused courses prepare our students to engage in research in a manner rarely found within an undergraduate psychology curriculum. In this section, we summarize the primary research areas of our faculty and students. Additional information is contained in Appendix 13, which lists annual publications, professional presentations, and related research activity. Current research areas in the department are:

- **Social Psychology (Carmel Saad):** Dr. Saad specializes in cultural psychology and the ethnic minority experience in America. She studies bicultural experience, focusing on how bicultural identity integration affects how various biculturals respond to cultural cues in their environments. She also examines the nature and consequences of implicit bias, and whether evidence-based bias interventions can reduce outcomes in real-world contexts, such as in schools, law enforcement, and in clinical practice.
- **Neuropsychology (Steve Rogers):** This research focuses on: (a) the cognitive and emotional functioning of individuals with neurodegenerative conditions, such as Lewy Body dementia, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's disease, and (b) the relationship between religion and neurological disorders, including how religiousness manifests and changes with a variety of neurological disorders and the implications of this connection for religion and neurology.
- **Behavioral Neuroscience (Ronald See):** This research focuses on behavioral and hormonal measurement in stress conditions and psychological disorders. Since arriving at Westmont in 2015, Dr. See has established a neuroscience laboratory to measure a variety of hormones and physiological parameters (e.g., electrodermal activity). In collaboration with the TheraMind Center of Santa Barbara, neuroendocrine measures are being obtained in patients undergoing repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation for major depressive disorder. The project involves both former and current Westmont students.
- **Student Research:** Approximately 50% of our students engage in some research activity outside of the classroom environment. These projects include research activity closely aligned with a department faculty member, as well as independent student projects both during the academic year and for summer fellowship projects. A list of student research presentations and posters, as well as Senior Capstone Research in Psychology (PSY 197-198) research projects can be found in Appendix 13. Other student research activity includes research assistantships at Jodi House, research assistants for senior research students, and neuroassessment experience.

3) General Education

The department makes major contributions to general education at Westmont. Each year, a substantial number of students from across campus take courses in the psychology department. The majority of these students enroll in PSY 001, General Psychology, which satisfies the Life Sciences Common Inquiries requirement. In the most recent year (2017-2018), 210 students completed PSY 001, which is one of the highest annual enrollments for a single elective GE at the college. Enrollment in PSY 001 is very likely to continue to be high, based on increasing recognition of psychology as a primary area of interest across multiple disciplines (e.g., the recent addition of a significant focus on behavioral sciences for the medical college admission test [MCAT]).

Additional psychology courses provide critical service to other majors across campus. Our Abnormal Psychology (PSY 131) course directly supports the pre professional programs (e.g., Kinesiology). The Child Development (PSY 115) course supports the education/liberal studies' state-mandated course in this area, and we have worked closely with that department over the years to maintain the required curriculum. Another notable contribution is our psychology minor, which has been a popular option at the college with about 8-12 students each year.

Several other general educational areas stand out for contributions made by members of the psychology department. This past year (2017-2018), Dr. Andrea Gurney served as a faculty instructor and mentor for second year students in the Augustinian Scholars program at Westmont. This scholarship covers 85% of tuition for four years, and students participate in the Augustinian Honors Program. Psychology faculty members routinely provide guest lectures in other departments (e.g., kinesiology and sociology). Faculty members also serve as committee members for student honors projects in other departments (e.g., religious studies, biology). Finally, active departmental participation in general education has come from Dr. Steve Rogers' service on the general education committee.

4) Co-curricular Activity

The psychology department has maintained an active commitment outside of the standard curriculum focus. As already detailed above, faculty consistently represent the college at regional and national conferences, in peer-reviewed publications, and national and international research collaborations. Department members also act as reviewers for peer-reviewed journals and serve as members of national professional associations (e.g., American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, American Psychological Association, Association for Psychological Science, Cognitive Neuroscience Society, Society for Neuroscience, Society for Personality and Social Psychology). We have also maintained a particularly strong presence in college-wide and faculty committees and governance, including such time-intensive commitments as the Institutional Review Board, Academic Senate, Augustinian Scholars program, and student recruitment efforts.

Other examples of ongoing faculty involvement include speaking at student club meetings, Westmont parent events, music and arts events, and campus chapel. Our clinical psychologists (Gurney and Rogers) are heavily involved and well-respected members of the clinical and counseling psychology community in the Santa Barbara/Ventura area. Faculty members have also engaged with the community through the Downtown Lecture

Series (Saad and Gurney) and local law enforcement, school districts, and behavioral health organizations (Saad). Local church involvement by faculty includes weekly small group leadership, leadership and involvement in a variety of special activities, and active involvement in church life.

Our students are also highly involved in Westmont and the wider community. Detailed information on the formal participation of our students in practicum and internship can be found above (section 1). In addition to these more formal activities, many of our students serve as resident assistants in the dorms, in student government and other student organizations, and in the local community in contexts that range from volunteer work in church ministries to service in community medical clinics.

5) Laboratory Facilities and Training

A strong component of our program is the extensive experience in laboratory based learning and research (noted in the Curriculum section above). The department laboratories provide for a wide range of learning and research experiences. In addition to standard experimental design, methods, and statistical analysis, Experimental Psychology (PSY 013) students learn more about various subject fields in psychological research (e.g., social, personality, learning, cognitive, and neuroscience). They learn to use programs such as Excel and SPSS and how to write APA-style laboratory reports.

Cognitive Psychology (PSY 120) covers various topics, such as short-term memory and information processing. Students receive additional training in SPSS and Excel, and have the opportunity to completely design their own study, which they present at the end of the semester.

In the Psychology of Learning (PSY 121) course, students learn to train rats using operant conditioning procedures. This process includes conducting each experiment with their own rat, and training their subject to complete an exercise of their choice.

Clinical Neuropsychology (PSY 123) offers training in widely applied neuropsychological testing. Students learn standardized tests and carry out an assignment to conduct a comprehensive interview, administer a full battery of tests to an older adult, and write a full neuropsychological report.

Sensation and Perception (PSY 124) involves experiments using several visual and hearing assessments, web-based simulations for recording sensory neurons, and gustatory taste perception.

Finally, Behavioral Neuroscience (PSY 125) offers exposure to psychophysiology techniques, employing state of the art equipment for electromyography, electroencephalography, polygraph, and biofeedback. In the course, students also dissect sheep brains in order to gain a greater understanding of brain neuroanatomy and function.

In addition to these formal laboratory courses, faculty and students make extensive use of the laboratory facilities and resources to conduct individual and group projects.

6) Student Focus Survey

We recently conducted an online survey of our current psychology majors to gauge their feedback in a variety of areas, particularly in regards to participation in the

department and knowledge of the various opportunities available to them. The questionnaire and summary results can be found in Appendix 14. Out of 66 students contacted, 21 responded to the survey. In general, our students expressed very positive feelings about the caliber and availability of the psychology faculty, available psychology courses, the social environment of the department (as noted through events outside of the classroom), and their overall experience in the psychology program at Westmont. These responses echo those of the alumni who participated in the alumni survey.

Closing the Loop

Through this survey, our alumni survey, and personal communications with our students, we are gratified at the high degree of satisfaction with the department across a variety of areas. In particular, students have high regard for the faculty, the quality of psychology courses, and the sense of community in the department. However, as noted in the survey, we need to address the perceived lack of opportunity and engagement for students who have a desire to be more involved in research and other training opportunities, such as internships, at earlier stages of their undergraduate career. In addition, we must do a better job at facilitating career plans for students who do not desire to go on to graduate school, as this represents a substantial number of our graduates.

7) Collaboration with Department Library Liaison

The liaison for the department from 2012 to 2014 was Savannah Kelly. Since 2014, our liaison has been Lauren Kelley. Our department has a strong working relationship with the library staff, and there is mutual gratefulness between the library and our faculty. The library resources have steadily improved over the last 6 years. The library has been consistently responsive to the needs of faculty for full text articles and various databases. A review of library holdings can be found in Appendix 15. Library staff has consistently partnered with the department in the last six years to provide instruction to our students in several classes. In each section of PSY 001 (General Psychology), for example, Ms. Kelley presents an overview of library resources and databases, and leads students through the process of finding an empirical research article for worksheet assignments. As most students in this class are first years, this activity provides many students with their first learning experience with library resource utilization. An example of the close relationship with the library is Ms. Kelley's attendance in General Psychology lectures in the Spring semester of 2018 with Dr. Saad to further her knowledge of our course goals.

In PSY 111 (History and Systems of Psychology), a senior core course, Ms. Kelley presents an overview of library resources and databases with a focus on accessing and organizing published material from historical sources. Students report positive interactions with Lauren in their scholarly research for history term papers. Across the additional upper division psychology courses, Ms. Kelley and other library staff have been a key resource for student research studies, papers, and oral presentations. Overall, the Westmont library has been an outstanding partner with the department and is consistently responsive to its needs and requests.

Looking Forward: Vision and Challenges

Looking back over the past six years, we are encouraged by the many students who have come through our department and successfully gone out into the world. We strongly feel that we offer an outstanding education in psychological science, including both breadth and depth in the discipline. This education is not limited to the classroom, but is greatly extended through our active research, practicum, and internship experiences.

Based on department discourse, our vision going forward is to first maintain our core strengths that have served our students so well over the years. This begins with our commitment to teaching psychology in line with the historic tenets of the Christian faith. We also will continue our emphasis on empirically based teaching, achieved both in the classroom and through our psychology laboratory courses. Finally, as we have detailed above, we will seek to bring our students into direct and practical life experiences in the areas of psychological research and clinical application of psychology.

As a department, we recognize the importance of research opportunities for students. We have accomplished much in this area, with students actively engaged in faculty research and independent projects. It is gratifying that our students annually present at national and international conferences in psychology. We are aware of the limitations in the area of research opportunities that we feel can be addressed moving forward over the next few years. As noted above, we plan to increase our ability to provide more prospects outside of the classroom to our students during their early years in the program.

As our program has increased over the years in the number of students both for psychology majors and nonmajors, interest in additional courses has grown. Evidence for this is clearly seen in our alumni survey. Thus, we envision optimally expanding our course offerings in several potential directions. For example, Dr. Gurney has begun to conceptually develop a course centered on marriage and family, based on her own expertise and experience as a clinician in this area. We have also had a consistent demand by students for greater offerings in neuroscience, and Dr. See has proposed the future development of a course in psychopharmacology. Finally, we have identified industrial/organizational psychology as a high priority for future growth. This area has great potential in modern psychology and would enhance the learning experience and career options for our students. Optimally, development in this area would include collaboration with other departments on campus, most notably Economics and Business. All of these plans would necessitate the addition of a new full time faculty member to accommodate the substantial growth of the program.

In conclusion, the psychology department at Westmont College has a number of strengths and notable features, outlined above. We maintain our commitment to our core mission and a strong focus on providing the best possible education and training in scientific psychology and its practice to our students. We have identified some weaknesses and gaps that we look forward to addressing in the next review cycle with college support. We will continue to provide a rich academic experience to our majors and in service to the wider campus, local community, and communities beyond the region. We know that these goals can be readily achieved successfully if the college provides the necessary resources for the future. We thus look forward to greater achievement of our goals and vision.