

Department Manual, Operating Policies and Procedures

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1. Mission, Goals and Objectives

Mission

The mission of the department is to engage students in the discovery of knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences. The undergraduate programs emphasize broadening and deepening students' understanding of people, considered from the perspectives of the individual, group and society. An overarching goal is to engage students in the application of what they learn so that it enriches their personal lives, enhances their effectiveness in the workplace and stimulates their interest in pursuing responsible citizenship roles. The graduate programs in psychology build on the foundation of scientific discoveries in the core areas of the field and focus on the development of professional insights and skills necessary for becoming effective and productive practitioners, researchers and instructors.

Goals

- Provide high-quality undergraduate degree programs and courses that meet the educational needs of the general student population and those with majors or minors in psychology, sociology and social work.
- Provide high-quality graduate programs that meet the educational needs of students who are seeking advanced training in psychology.
- Promote and publicize the growth and accomplishments faculty and advanced students in their fields of expertise.
- Share the knowledge and expertise of students and faculty with others outside the university community.
- Incorporate innovation, technology and diverse instructional techniques into the

curriculum.

Degree Program Objectives

The department offers these degree programs:

- Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- Bachelor of Science in Psychology
- Bachelor of Arts in Sociology
- Bachelor of Science in Sociology
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Master of Science in Applied Psychology
- Master of Science in Counseling Psychology
- Master of Science in Industrial-Organizational Psychology

Each of the programs has five-to-10 student learning objectives that are reviewed and revised annually according to procedures described in the Institutional Effectiveness section.

2. Department Committees

Department Peer Review Committee

- The committee comprises three tenured faculty members who are elected by tenured and tenure-track faculty to serve three-year staggered terms. The chair rotates to the most senior committee member each year. The department head conducts the election.
- The term of the members runs from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.
- The committee conducts the annual review of faculty and promotion and tenure process under the supervision of the department head and in accordance with university guidelines.
- The current members are:
 - Dr. Robert Mowrer (chair, two years remaining)
 - Dr. James Forbes (three years remaining)
 - Dr. Kraig Schell (three years remaining)

Institutional Effectiveness Committee

- The committee is composed of three members appointed by the department head. The members serve indefinite terms.
- The committee develops, implements and revises the department plan for institutional effectiveness.
- The current members are:
 - Dr. James Forbes (chair)
 - Dr. Tom Starkey
 - Dr. David Sanders

3. Faculty Roles

- A Faculty Senate representative is elected to serve a three-year term by a majority vote

of full-time faculty. Dr. Thomas Starkey's term began in FY 2012 and ends in FY 2014. The representative reports senate business to the faculty and solicits faculty input on matters under senate deliberation.

- Graduate program directors (William Davidson, Kraig Schell and James Forbes/Robert Mowrer) are appointed to serve indefinite terms by the department head. They recruit and advise incoming students, maintain a modernized curriculum, track students' progress, select graduate/research assistants, serve on the Graduate Council, maintain the program Web site and oversee all aspects of program assessment.
- The First Year Experience Coordinator in psychology (Kristi Cordell-McNulty) is appointed by the department head to serve an indefinite term. The responsibilities include establishing and maintaining a First Year Experience Program for psychology majors.
- Undergraduate internship coordinators (David Sanders, Ken Stewart and Ingrid Russo) supervise the field placement of students enrolled in internship courses.
- The psychology subject pool coordinator (Dr. Robert Mowrer) is appointed by the department head for an indefinite term. The responsibilities include managing the Sona system and setting policies that enable faculty and student researchers to collect data and that enable instructors to receive accurate reports on the participants' credit.
- The social work program director (Dr. Thomas Starkey) is appointed by the department head and serves an indefinite term. The responsibilities include overseeing all aspects of the program and maintaining compliance with accreditation standards.
- The Research Lab 205B coordinators (TBA) are appointed by the department head for an indefinite term. The responsibilities include maintaining the facility's electronics and furnishings and designing and operating an effective procedure for scheduling activities.
- Teaching assistant (TA) supervisors (Dr. Kristi Cordell-McNulty and Dr. Crystal Kreitler) are responsible for selecting, training and supervising the work of the three teaching assistants.
- The Honors Program liaison (Dr. James Forbes) is appointed by the department head and serves an indefinite term. The primary responsibility is to set course guidelines that enable Honors students who have majors in the department to meet their Honors Program requirements.

4. Institutional Effectiveness

Records on the assessment and improvement plans of all programs in the department are maintained by the Department Institutional Effectiveness Committee (DIEC). The graduate programs and the undergraduate social work program are assessed by the program directors, who maintain the results and report them annually to the DIEC.

The sociology program is assessed by students' performance in the capstone course, SOC 4161, and the results are reported to the DIEC by the course instructor.

The undergraduate psychology program is assessed by an exit exam and other informal methods, and the results are reported to the DIEC. Policies for the psychology exit exam are set

by the department head and are described in this [exit exam policy](#).

In addition to the procedures described above, the degree programs are assessed by mapping program goals with the assessment of course goals. The students' progress on course goals is measured each long semester with an IDEA form, a self-report instrument. The results and plans for improvement are retained in an electronic archive.

5. Advising

Faculty members are expected to advise students during registration periods. They are usually scheduled to do so during their office hours. The office coordinator maintains a list of times that faculty are available for advising in their offices, and he/she schedules the advising appointments. During the designated advising times, the faculty member who is on duty should leave his/her office door open so that students can stop by for advisement without an appointment.

Typically, students are each advised by a faculty member who teaches in the student's major area. However, some faculty members provide specialized advisement to students who aspire to graduate or professional training outside the disciplines offered in the department. In this regard, Dr. Robert Mowrer advises students who are preparing for graduate study in physical therapy.

6. Syllabus Guidelines

Course syllabi are expected to include the content listed below.

- Information about the instructor: office location, phone number and e-mail address, office hours (10 hours per week)
- Attendance policy
- Course goals (including some from the IDEA list)
- Criteria for determining course grades
- Honor Code – Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the [Academic Honor Code](#).
- Disabilities – People with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 in the University Center, to request such accommodations prior to any being implemented.
- For PSY 1303 and 2301 syllabi – Students are required to complete two research experiences. For additional details, see the department's "Research Opportunities" Web site menu item.
- For syllabi of undergraduate PSY courses other than 1303 and 2301 – Indicate that extra credit will be offered for completing research experiences. For additional details, see the department's "Research Opportunities" Web site menu item.

7. Textbook Ordering

Faculty members are responsible for ordering textbooks for their courses. They can do this in one of two ways:

1. Access the ASU Bookstore Web site and enter the required information (www.angelo.bkstr.com; password=295)
2. Provide the department's office coordinator with the necessary information to place the order:
 - Discipline
 - Course number and section
 - Estimated enrollment
 - Textbook title, author, publisher, edition, ISBN #

8. Make-Up Exams

Faculty members are free to set their own make-up exam policies. However, the department does provide an optional service in this regard. Beginning the third week of classes, a graduate assistant is assigned to monitor an afternoon make-up exam session once a week. Typically, the session is scheduled from 2-4 p.m. Wednesday afternoons (the exact days and times are set at the beginning of the semester).

If faculty members choose to use this service, they must give the office coordinator copies of the test with the names of the students who will take it – preferably the day before the make-up session.

9. Testing Center

Faculty members are responsible for setting their own testing policies. However, the university does provide a testing service to those who want to use it. [The Testing Center](#) is in the Vincent Nursing-Physical Science Building and can be used by faculty to administer computerized tests to students on a drop-in basis. The center is available for drop-in testing for 15-20 hours per week.

The exams must be loaded into Blackboard, which administers the test in a secure environment. The center is staffed, so faculty members do not have to be present during exam times. For more information, call the center director, Virginia Lester, at (325) 942-2060, ext. 266, or contact Dr. Bill Davidson, who served as a member of the founding advisory committee.

10. Research and Training Laboratories

The department maintains four research and training facilities: A201B, A205B, A215 and the Psychology Laboratory located on Jackson Street. In addition to these labs, the department faculty and students also serve in the CREED Center, which is located in the College of Nursing and Allied Health.

11. Adjustments in Teaching Loads

According to university policy, graduate courses count for 1.5 courses toward the normal

teaching load of four courses per semester. As the schedule permits, the department head adjusts the teaching load of faculty after they have completed two graduate courses, so that they may teach seven rather than eight courses during the academic year.

12. Honors Program

Students in the university's Honors Program are required to take one or two courses for Honors credit in their major. To fulfill this requirement, students must complete a regularly scheduled advanced course in their major and complete an Honors project in that course. This must be done with prior consent of the instructor.

13. Subject Pool in Psychology

In support of the research conducted by faculty and students, the psychology program maintains a subject pool. It operates by requiring students enrolled in PSY 1303 and 2301 to earn two credits of research participation (equivalent to two hours of time) and by awarding extra credit to students in other PSY courses who serve as subjects.

Investigators who use the subject pool are required to post their studies in the Sona system after receiving authorization from the department Sona administrator, Dr. Robert Mowrer. When the research is being conducted by undergraduates, the supervising faculty member is responsible for posting the studies in Sona.

Investigators set the number of research credits awarded to participants according to the amount of time taken to complete the session: one credit for each 0-30 minute time period. Course instructors decide how the research credits convert into course points.

In any given semester, investigators who utilize the subject pool must finish collecting data no later than the Friday prior to Dead Week, at which time the Sona administrator will verify that no additional sessions are scheduled. Prior to Wednesday of Dead Week, investigators should complete the awarding of credit to participants (in Sona). These deadlines will permit instructors to clarify any discrepancies between Sona records and students' reports.

14. Graduate Programs

Graduate and Research Assistants

Selection Procedure

The department has eight positions: six graduate assistants (GAs) and two research assistants (RAs). One GA is assigned to the Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.) program and is selected by the program director. The remaining positions are filled as follows: the directors/co-directors of the three graduate programs each appoint two students to serve either as GAs or RAs, totaling six positions. The remaining GA slot will be filled at the discretion of the department head, based on the recruiting needs of the programs.

Assignment of GAs and RAs to Supervising Faculty Members

The director of the B.S.W. program will determine the work assignments of the GA appointed to that program, and the graduate program directors will assign the GAs or RAs to faculty in

their programs.

Contracts

The contract for GAs is \$7,489. It covers their work during the fall and spring semesters as follows: 17.5 hours per week for 31.7 weeks at an hourly wage of \$13.50.

The contract for RAs is \$8,345. It covers their work during the fall and spring semesters as follows: 19.5 hours per week for 31.7 weeks at an hourly wage of \$13.50. In addition, RAs qualify for in-state tuition, but GAs do not unless they are Texas residents.

Work Responsibilities of GAs and RAs

The duties of RAs are restricted to completing research responsibilities, which are described in the ASU document Policies and Procedures Governing Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants. Because of the tuition benefit, this provision must be strictly followed.

The responsibilities of GAs may include research activities as well as other duties, as described in the aforementioned document. They are allowed to make classroom presentations only with supervision from faculty. The contracts of RAs and GAs stipulate the maximum number of hours they are to work per week.

GAs and RAs are paid according to the maximum, even if they work less than that during some weeks. They should not be asked to exceed the weekly maximum to make up for weeks where they worked less. In addition to each working for a faculty member, GAs will also monitor make-up exams one afternoon per week for two hours, beginning the third week of the semester. This duty may be rotated among the GAs.

Orientation of GAs and RAs

Orientation information will be distributed by the program directors, supervising faculty and the office coordinator.

GA Opportunities Outside the Department

Many offices on campus hire GAs. The department head will maintain a list of those offices and send them the applications of students who were not selected in this department. Typically, this will occur in July.

Teaching Assistants

The contract for teaching assistants (TAs) is \$11,095 and covers the fall and spring semesters. It is considered half-time employment and carries three important provisions:

1. TAs qualify for in-state tuition and employee benefits.
2. TAs may not have any other paid positions while serving as a TA.
3. TAs must enroll in at least six, but not more than nine, semester credit hours.

Teaching assistants are selected by the TA supervisor(s) in April or May of the year prior to the appointment. The selection process involves a review of application forms and personal interviews. The TAs are trained and assigned work by the supervisor(s).

Their primary responsibilities are to learn about all aspects of course delivery, attend one or more of the undergraduate courses taught by the supervisor(s), practice lecturing on selected topics and serve as discussion group leaders on Fridays. In addition, the TAs may be assigned to teach their own courses after being trained for one semester.

Graduate Faculty Development Account

Graduate students at ASU pay a surcharge of \$20 per credit hour. Eighty percent of these funds are returned to the departments that generated the credit hours, as follows: each fall, the department receives an amount determined by the average number of graduate credit hours generated during the past year. Of the funds received annually in this department a small amount is set aside to support recruiting initiatives and is spent at the discretion of the graduate program directors/co-directors. The remaining funds are dispersed evenly among the faculty who teach graduate courses. Expenditures must comply with state and university regulations and be in support of graduate education.