To be adopted:

Proposal for Change of Major Criteria in Psychology

PRESENT

Change of Major Students Students switching to the Psychology Major must have completed the following courses with grades of C- or better and have been in good academic standing for two quarters or more.

1. Lower Division requirements
   a. MATH 004 or MATH 005 or MATH 008A or MATH 009A
   b. PSYC 001, PSYC 002

Transfer students and others entering the major after achieving sophomore standing must complete the requirements within one year by enrolling in applicable courses every quarter until the requirement is met. Students who do not complete the lower-division requirements in this timely fashion and with at least the minimum required grade average will not be permitted to continue in the Psychology major. Students must check course descriptions for prerequisite requirements.

PROPOSED

Change of Major Students Students switching to the Psychology or Psychology/Law and Society Major must have completed the following courses with grades of C- or better and have been in good academic standing for two quarters or more.

1. Lower Division requirements
   a. PSYC 001, PSYC 002 and PSYC 011

Transfer students and others entering the major after achieving sophomore standing must complete the requirements within one year by enrolling in applicable courses every quarter until the requirement is met. Students who do not complete the lower-division requirements in this timely fashion and with at least the minimum required grade average will not be permitted to continue in the Psychology major. Students must check course descriptions for prerequisite requirements.
JUSTIFICATION:

The overarching goal of the proposed changes is to provide a mechanism to regulate the number of students that switch into the Psychology and the Psychology/Law and Society majors to levels within the capacity of those two majors.

1. Including Psychology/Law and Society Major in the Change of Major Requirements:
   Since the lower-division requirements of the Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society Majors are identical, there is no reason not to include the Psychology/Law and Society students in the Change of Major requirements. Thus we added the Psychology/Law and Society major to clarify that the proposed Change of Major criteria apply to both majors.

2. Adding PSYC 11 to the Change of Major requirements:
   PSYC 11 “Psychological Methods: Statistical Procedures” introduces students to the statistical procedures that are the foundational tools of the discipline. As many students find these procedures to be particularly challenging, having PSYC 11 as a change of major requirement provides students the information they need to make a well-informed decision about whether the major is suitable for them and whether they have the capability to succeed in the major. Notably, PSYC 11 is a key prerequisite to PSYC 12, a required research methods course that requires the application of the statistical procedures covered in PSYC 11.
   Another reason for adding PSYC 11 to the change of major requirements is that this will permit the addition of approximately 100 non-majors per year to the Psychology majors in a controlled fashion. The Department plans on continuing to teach PSYC 11 to approximately 450 students per year, as we have done in the recent past. Historically, there has been an 8% failure rate in PSYC 11, which should result in approximately 400 students per year passing this course. Given the new admission limits for the Psychology majors, the Department estimates that approximately 100 of the students passing the course would be non-majors who, upon completion of the course, would be eligible to declare into Psychology or Psychology/Law and Society majors. Also, we can adjust the quarter-by-quarter number of students permitted to enroll in PSYC 11, as needed to reach but not exceed the capacity of 400 per year and 1600 total. Note that PSYC 1 and 2 cannot be used in this way because they each typically enroll approximately 1800 students per year.

3. Substituting PSYC 11 for the MATH courses: The approval of PSYC 11 will make the MATH courses redundant as they are prerequisite to PSYC 11.

Background and Context

Capacity of the Major: The Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society Majors have a throughput capacity of approximately 400 students per year for a total capacity of approximately 1600 students. The limit comes from the yearly capacity of the required lower-division course PSYC 12 “Psychological Methods: Research Procedures.” This is a required 6-unit hybrid lecture/lab/writing course in which the students perform experiments, collect data, perform statistical analyses of those data and write papers in the format of a research paper for publication. The maximum enrollment is limited to 120 students per quarter, because of the workload on the faculty instructors and because of heavy demand on TA resources. We normally teach the course F, W, S and U to a yearly maximum enrollment of 480 students, of which slightly over 400 pass with the C- or above required to take the core upper-division PSYC courses.

The Moratorium on Changing into the Psychology Majors: In the summer of 2010 we were permitted to enact a moratorium on UCR students changing into the Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society majors. This was essential in order to prevent multi-quarter delays in graduation for students in these majors. At that time, the hundreds of students changing into these majors added to the admission to UCR of approximately 500 new
freshmen and transfer Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society majors yielded over 2000 majors, approximately 400 over our teaching capacity. Most critical is that over 1200 of these majors needed to take and pass PSYC 12 in order to move on to the core upper-division PSYC courses they needed to graduate. In short, the number of majors exceeded our capacity to teach by hundreds of students.

**Actions to resolve the backlog of majors and prevent a recurrence:** On an emergency basis, to resolve the backlog of students so they could graduate on time, we increased the permitted enrollment in PSYC 12 to 140 per offering, only permitted majors to take the course, taught it every quarter including both summer sessions, taught it twice in Spring 2011, and permitted students only one repeat. We also reserved enough seats for majors in each of the other required lower-division PSYC courses (PSYC 1, 2, and 11) all of which are prerequisites to PSYC 12. We also increased our diligence in dismissing underperforming students from the major. To prevent a recurrence of this over enrollment, the UCR Office of Admissions put into effect for F11 and ongoing our request to target the yearly admission of 300 new freshman and transfer majors and the Academic Senate approved our request to raise the minimum GPA of transfer student into the Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society majors to 2.7. The combined effects of these actions are that the total number of Psychology and Psychology/Law and Society majors should soon be back within our capacity to teach. The targeted admission of 300 new freshman and transfer majors was selected to leave room for approximately 100 students per year to switch into the majors without exceeding the 400 majors per year capacity.

**APPROVALS:**

Effective: Upon approval by the Academic Senate
Approved by the faculty of the Department of Psychology on February 14, 2012
Approved by the Executive Committee of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: 3/7/2012
Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy: 4/2/2012