State University of West Georgia

Course or Program Addition, Deletion or Modification Request

Department: Psychology
College: College of Arts & Sciences

Current course catalog listing: (for modifications or deletions)

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Rationale: To include a discussion of the impact this change may have on the substance of the major or academic program (attach additional material as necessary) and whether or not existing resources are sufficient to support this change.

☑ Library resources are adequate ☐ Library resources need enhancement

Prerequisite(s)

Present or Projected Enrollment: (Students per year) Effective Date*:

Term/Year

Grading System: ☑ Letter Grade ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Other

Approval:

Department Chair: [Signature] Date: 2/7/04

Department Chair (if cross listed): [Signature] Date: FEB 25 2004

Chair of TEAC (if teacher prep. program): [Signature] Date:

Final Approval: Submitted by College Dean to Undergraduate Academic Programs Chair and/or Committee on Graduate Studies Chairman (six copies with signature for proposals carrying undergraduate credit only and seven copies with signatures carrying both undergraduate and graduate credit).

Chair, Undergraduate Academic Programs Committee: Date
Chair, Committee on Graduate Studies: Date

Vice President for Academic Affairs: Date

Revised 1/09/02
LETTER OF INTENT

Institution:  State University of West Georgia   Date:  February 23, 2004

School/Division:  College of Arts and Sciences   Department:  Psychology

Name of Proposed Program:  Doctoral degree in Psychology

Degree:  Doctor of Philosophy   Major:  Psychology   CIP Code:  42.9999

Starting Date:  Fall 2005

Institutional Mission

1.  Does this program further the mission of your institution?

The Ph.D. program proposal in psychology is consistent with the mission of UWG and will further that mission in the following ways:

   A)  By providing opportunities for intellectual and personal development through quality teaching, scholarly inquiry, creative endeavor, and service for the public good.

   B)  By continuing to aspire to preeminence in providing educational excellence in a personal environment through an intellectually stimulating and supportive community for its students and faculty.

   C)  By imparting knowledge and fostering critical understanding needed for intellectual growth, personal and social responsibility, cultural and global literacy, and life-long learning in an increasingly diverse community. By emphasizing disciplinary rigor and fostering the development of effectiveness in communication, critical and independent thinking, problem solving, and the use of technology.

   D)  By promoting faculty research, scholarship, and creative endeavors which foster knowledge, enhance professional development, contribute to the quality of instruction, and provide significant opportunities for student involvement and field-based experience.

   E)  By providing a broad range of public service activities and proactive partnerships to promote more effective utilization of human resources that will contribute to economic and social development within an increasingly diverse community, and enhance the quality of life within the University’s scope of influence.

2.  Will the proposed program require a significant alteration of the institutional mission?

   No, the proposed program will not require an alteration in the institutional mission, but will indeed further the mission of the institution.
3. **Will the program require the addition of a new organizational unit to the institution (e.g. college, school, division or department)?**

   No, the program can function effectively within the existing organizational unit.

4. **Is it likely that a SACS visit for substantive change will be necessary?**

   Yes, SACS would consider this program to be a substantive change.

5. **How does the proposed program help meet the priorities/goals of your strategic plan?**

   The proposed Ph.D. program in psychology significantly contributes to the strategic plan of the institution because of its commitment to provide doctoral candidates with experiences in teaching and research that will make a positive impact throughout an increasingly diverse and global society.

6. **Will this program require an addition or change in your institutions strategic plan?**

   No, the Ph.D. program in psychology will contribute to and further facilitate the institution’s strategic plan.

7. **Will the program require an increase in state appropriation within the next five years?**

   While the Ph.D. program in psychology can begin initially without additional revenues, it will require additional funding within the next five years as the program grows. (see additional explanation under budget below.)

8. **If this is a baccalaureate program, will you be asking for an exception to the 120 hour expectation or to the core curriculum?**

   Not applicable.

9. **Are there program formats that will be new or different for your institution?**

   The curriculum includes four different formats of courses: lectures, seminars, tutorials, and independent projects.

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**Needs**

In the past several years, a key subject matter has emerged in psychology: the study of consciousness in the realm of its social, cultural, linguistic, and historical expression. For example, there are now regular, widely attended and highly successful conferences devoted to the subject. Many recent books and new journals, such as the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* and the *International Journal of Critical Psychology* evince this rising interest, as do the work of institutes such as the Institute of Noetic Sciences and the funding of foundations.

Contemporary society is beleaguered by school violence, drug abuse, racial tensions, crime, technological overload, and ideological polarization. These are not isolated “problems” that can be simply identified and eliminated. Otherwise they would have been corrected long ago. Rather, they are human concerns
that require individuals and communities to become meaningfully involved in personal and communal transformation. Certainly, Georgia is not immune to these pressing concerns. Now second in the nation in the percentage of increased immigration, Georgia is becoming an epicenter of cultural pluralism.

For example, the rapid influx of Hispanic immigration in recent years has found rural Georgia unprepared to address fundamental issues of social integration in a global age, and thus underscores the need to develop a well-articulated conceptual understanding of the relationship between social transformation and the transformation of consciousness. Now is the time to offer an academic program that rigorously explores the consciousness in context affecting these pressing social issues, and trains scholars and practitioners to address them with doctoral-level rigor.

The State University of West Georgia provides the ideal university setting and support for the proposed doctoral program through ongoing collaborations with a variety of community organizations designed to treat social problems in Carroll County and Georgia.

Since 1969, West Georgia's Psychology Department has been distinguished for its orientation to psychology as a human science. The value and distinctiveness of this approach has drawn to the university the Department’s entire current faculty, as well as the many hundreds of graduate students who have come from every state (and continent) for its M.A. program. Indeed, typically 98% of all out-of-state graduate students at the university are here for the Psychology program.

Because of the nature of this program, there will be a very high level of demand for it. Therefore, students will be drawn from a very qualified national pool of applicants and the admissions process will be a competitive one. This opportunity is due to the gap existing between the high level of student interest in this subject matter and the relative lack of currently available programs that meet this need. Presently, those interested in consciousness studies and alternative approaches to sociality must attend programs at universities far from Georgia, typically at expensive, private institutions. Several Georgia residents, for example, after receiving their M.A. from West Georgia, enrolled in doctoral programs in California that charge over $25,000 per year. Surveys of UWG students and graduates have shown large numbers would much prefer to attend a doctoral program here. (For example, a survey of one MA class revealed that 86% of students were interested in attending such a doctoral program). Given that the UWG M.A. program in psychology has graduated over a thousand students during the thirty-five years it has existed, an enormous pool of potential doctoral students exists just from that population alone. In addition, there is wide, national interest in such a program. The University of Arizona, for example, sponsors a program in Consciousness Studies that is highly successful in attracting student interest, even though its coursework is non-credit, continuing education only.

Additional evidence of student support of the program will be provided. An extensive survey of all MA graduates is now being administered to assess the extent to which current and former graduate and undergraduate students feel the need for this kind of doctoral program and their interest in it.

**Students**

This program anticipates admission of five or six students per year on average. Thus, once established in its “steady state” it should graduate approximately five students per year. None of these students would be drawn from already existing programs, since this one is an entirely new one that will not duplicate any present University or University System programs. It is anticipated that students will be drawn largely from graduates of M.A. programs both within and beyond Georgia (see comments in section above “Need”). A few highly qualified graduates of B.A. programs may also be admitted for matriculation in the M.A. and then Ph.D. program.
**Budget**

- The psychology department’s current budget is approximately $740,000. In the steady state, this cost will rise to approximately $890,000. This is an estimate of cost for two additional faculty and assistantship monies for doctoral students. Approximately 5% will come from reallocation, 3% from student fees and 11% from grants and outside sources.
- The startup costs for the program will be minimal, and incurred by internal reallocation and outside funding from a variety of interested grant sources.

**Facilities**

If additional facilities are needed, how will they be acquired? The current facilities are adequate for the new program.

**Curriculum and Delivery**

**Curricular Formats**

The curriculum includes four different formats of courses: lectures, seminars, tutorials, and independent projects. Lecture courses are larger in size (10-20 students each), and present foundational overviews. Seminars are smaller (6-10 students), more specialized discussion-oriented courses. Tutorials are even smaller (3-5 students), for advanced study of an area with a faculty mentor, along the lines of the Oxford model. Independent projects are individualized research projects, designed by the student in collaboration with a supervising professor, for the final attainment of mastery in a concentration area. These are available only to those students who have qualified for more in-depth work in a particular area.

**Special Characteristics of the Curriculum**

The doctoral program will entail advanced course work encompassing the breadth of post-positivistic approaches to consciousness and human experience; it will explore the particular complexities of consciousness and human development in a global age, and will involve a praxis-based internship wherein course work is applied to a particular social setting, context, or issue; and it will terminate with a dissertation, research-based or theoretical. The doctoral program is an extension of the Department's highly successful Masters program, which is rooted in humanistic and transpersonal psychology. There is no currently existing doctoral program in Georgia centered on the proposed specialty.

The proposed program would provide a unique conceptual bridge generally missing in more applied programs, especially those grounded principally in quantitative methodologies. This link between the long-standing study of individual and collective consciousness and its socio-historical evolution, and the study of society and its pressing dilemmas, will also be informed by a solid grounding in a wide range of transformative social praxis seeking to address socio-historic realities in rural Georgia and a number of other settings. Such a program would be in a position to prepare teachers, scholars and researchers to contribute to the national and international conversation about the pressing need for a new level of social integration in a global age.

In addition, there has been a tangible split between theoretical programs that study consciousness and applied programs that study social realities, needs and interventions. The proposed Ph.D. program will be unique in bridging that split. It will combine the rigorous study of the nature, structure, and socio-historical context of human consciousness, characteristic of the emerging and increasingly recognized
area of consciousness studies, with an equally rigorous study of the relationship between social systems and individual and collective consciousness and well being. It will place this examination squarely in the unprecedented complexities of the global age, thus bridging the gap between theory and praxis, and preparing teachers, scholars, researchers and practitioners for a wide range of domains.

**Appeal to Underserved Populations**

The proposed program will be highly attractive to underserved populations. Research by scholars such as Sue Rosser, Mary Frank Fox, and Anne Kerr suggests that women and minorities are particularly attracted by programs that embody a deeper awareness of contextual and social factors.

Women comprise 66% of doctorates awarded in psychology (*Trends in Educational Equity of Girls and Women*, U.S. Department of Education, 2000, NCES 2000601). Psychology also is a frequently chosen degree at the college level for minority women. (Our department is one of the top three majors for that population in College of Arts and Sciences.) Nonetheless, women are still under-represented in university and research settings in the field. A number of components within the proposed program will entail preparing women for research that will encourage women and minorities to enter academic positions.

The proposed program’s emphasis on contextually based, community attuned research would *draw* from these populations and further through internships, *serve* such populations within Georgia, in educational, organizational, and community settings.

**Collaboration**

The proposed PhD program will build on the success of its Masters program, which is the largest in Georgia, and its emphasis will not overlap with any existing doctoral program in Georgia. Hence, it will constitute an efficient use of the resources of Georgia State University System. It will amplify existing resources through a variety of collaborative efforts as follows.

**Collaboration within UWG**

Present collaborations of the current MA program underway within UWG will be helpful to the proposed doctoral program. These include:

- Academic and Student Service units such as Sociology, Gerontology, Counselor Education, Educational Leadership, Student Development Center, and Career Services routinely collaborate with the Department. The Ph.D. program will build on collaborations and alliances to involve doctoral students in community practice, research in consciousness, and other venues for scholarly research and theoretical reflection.

- Partnership with the College of Education to develop innovative curriculum design (includes a program called the Soul of Education) and programs for teacher renewal.

- The innovative approach to transformative social praxis developed by UWG Psychology Department has already fostered the creation of a new academic program at the School of Arts & Sciences at UWG, namely the Academic Service Learning Program. It is only logical, and in the best interest of UWG and the University System of Georgia that this approach be further developed into a unique doctoral program which can attract students from all over the state and nationally, as well as internationally.
**Collaborations beyond of UWG**

The Department has also currently developed the following collaborations with other universities, institutes and associations:

- It has earned recognition from the Carter Center and Georgia State University by receiving the 2003 Carter Campus/Community Partnership Award for the unique transformative social praxis developed by UWG Psychology Department seeking to address socio-historic realities in rural Georgia. This praxis, undergirded with a solid theoretical understanding developed at UWG Psychology Department, has also been recognized as essential to the life of Carroll County by public figures such as Carroll County Commissioner Trent North. A number of state politicians have expressed serious interest in the work of UWG Psychology Department with Hispanic immigrants in rural Georgia. Hence, the new doctoral program will continue and develop further the collaboration with both the Carter Center and Georgia State University, as well as with local Carroll County institutions. Collaborations also include a community outreach center for Carrollton’s growing Latino population, a tutoring program in the city school system, and Holocaust training and resource center for teaching social justice in Georgia’s schools.

- It has strong links with the Georgia Institute of Technology through a program that awarded two recent visiting fellowships to our faculty. This has established intensive and ongoing faculty involvement with an externally funded multidisciplinary research group that is examining the social and cognitive practices and developing expertise of laboratory scientists, using a unique combination of ethnographic and cognitive-historical methods. The research is intended to inform pedagogical practices and classroom structure across disciplines, and to identify factors that support the development of effective interdisciplinary communities across the sciences. The research group offers opportunities for doctoral students to take part in a dynamic multidisciplinary think tank, to develop skills in cutting-edge qualitative methodologies that can be transferred to other problem domains, and to contribute to critical reformulations of pedagogy and learning science. The research group offers potential for involvement in grant writing, public policy initiatives, and creative research trajectories in collaboration with principal investigators who have international reputations and impressive records of external research funding. The larger interdisciplinary cognitive science program of which the research group is a part offers colloquium series, brown bag seminars, doctoral courses for audit, library services, and related resources to which doctoral students involved with this project would have access.

- It linked with Emory University to bring in three psychoanalysts whose successful work with psychotics (who are often either in and out of hospitals or on the streets and in jails) was presented and related to clinical technique. Further collaboration will allow opportunities for doctoral students to combine innovative therapeutic techniques with multidisciplinary outreach programs.

- For several years, the Department has participated in an annual joint graduate course with the following universities: University of Paris (France), University of Irkutsk (Russia), and the Universidad Autonoma de la Laguna (Mexico)

- The Department has a permanent seat on the Executive Board of the Counsel of Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology, a collaboration of graduate programs in Humanistic Psychology.
• It has partnered with the Child Spirit Institute in order to establish an annual international conference on children’s spirituality that has become the premier event of its kind in the world. Doctoral students will have ample opportunities for research and networking with an international community of scholars.

• It has collaborations with organizations in the Atlanta area that could provide professional development opportunities and field experiences for doctoral students. Included among these organizations are the Organization Change Alliance (OCA)—an affiliate of the Organization Development Network; OD Peg, a component of the Atlanta Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management; and the Atlanta Chapter of the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD).

• Currently, a number of organizations participate in providing field experiences for Master level students. Some of these collaborations provide field training sites i.e. internships/practicum, and project sites; and, some provide instructional expertise external to the department. This current network of community resources should provide some excellent opportunities for the Ph.D. program to develop. A select group of current collaborating organizations include: Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, West Georgia Industrial Leaders Association, Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Haralson County Chamber, Douglas County Chamber, Governor's Intern Program, Pathways, and Family Connections.

Other

The proposed program is in concert with both the short-term immediate goals, as well as the visionary goals of UWG, in the following ways.

**Congruence with Short-Term Goals**

The proposed PhD program in Psychology, partially based on the unique transformative social praxis developed by UWG Psychology Department seeking to address socio-historic realities in rural Georgia, will support university goals to:

• Create academic programs, which include faculty-directed student experiential learning, research, creative, or professional activities.

• Improve public relations through forging stronger and broader town/gown relations as discussed in the sub-section on Collaborations.

• Improve further the university experience, by giving students a reason to stay at UWG on weekends. The UWG Psychology Department praxis with the Hispanic community, which is primarily focused on weekends, has already kept many commuting students on campus over the weekend, and has helped tie further commuter students into the life of the campus. The UWG Psychology Department has a tradition of creating an active community life for its students and will, no doubt, do so even more with its doctoral students.

• Continue to encourage cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender diversity in students, faculty, and staff.

• Emphasize regional service in academic offerings, and foster regional collaboration for economic and community development

• Promote an understanding of cultural diversity within the region.
• Form partnerships with government agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations to apply the resources of the University to the solution of our community's economic and social problems.

**Congruence with Visionary Goals**

The proposed program bolsters the long-term UWG goal of achieving national recognition as a leader among research universities in the areas of faculty-directed student research and professional activities, and innovations in professional preparation. The Department evidences a clear and successful track record of sponsoring research for students, which will continue and expand with doctoral students. Examples include:

- Students from the department have participated in “Big Night” (an opportunity for selected students to present a paper or project).
- The department also sponsors SPARC, a similar one-day event for psychology students.
- As well, within the last two years, psychology graduate students have made six presentations at national conferences, including the meeting of the American Psychological Association.
- One Masters student won a prestigious national student research award at this meeting.
- Students have also published in refereed journals.

**Conclusion**

Four important points concerning this proposal merit particular emphasis:

- The program would be a significant draw for a large pool of highly qualified students, nationally and internationally.
- The program can be established with no new money and indeed should be able to attract external funding for its early budgetary needs.
- The program is “ready to go” in the sense that the Psychology Department already has a well-established M.A. program with both the resources to mount this program and a highly regarded reputation in this specialty area.
- The program would not duplicate any existing programs in the University System, and so would provide a vital enhancement for the System in an innovative specialty.