

## **Selected Features of the Psychology Program at Truman State University**

### **Psychology is a liberal arts and sciences program, not a professional program.**

- From the *General Catalog*: “There are three overall objectives of the Psychology program: to provide a broad-based education in the discipline, to instruct students in the scientific method, and to prepare students for success in graduate school and in the workplace.”

### **The Psychology Program uses resources extremely efficiently.**

- Psychology’s FTE ratio is always one of the highest, if not the highest, in the University. For example, in 2006 Psychology’s FTE ratio was 20.63 (highest in the University).
- Psychology graduates large numbers of majors (e.g., mean = 114.5 / year from FY 2002-2005) and minors (e.g., mean = 73.0 / year from FY 2002-2005).
- Psychology employs relatively few faculty members (13 professors). Other Disciplines that produce roughly comparable numbers of graduates (e.g., Biology and English) have about twice as many faculty members.

### **Psychology’s students engage research, internships, and service learning opportunities.**

- All Psychology majors undertake significant empirical research in their capstone, PSYC 466 Psychological Research. Psychology majors design, conduct, analyze, and report on an independent, mentored, semester-long scientific research project.
- Collaborative research with faculty and internships provide exemplary service learning.
  - Beyond course requirements, about 30-35 Psychology students per year collaborate with Psychology faculty in research. For example, from FY 2002-2005, 141 (mean = 35.3 / year) Psychology students presented 58 (mean = 14.5 / year) research projects at the Student Research Conference.
  - Roughly 25-30 psychology students per year complete internships for course credit. Internship sites often include health care and business settings.

### **Psychology’s students achieve nationally competitive outcomes.**

- From FY 2002-2005, 59% of graduating Psychology majors immediately entered graduate or professional school. About 41% of graduating Psychology majors entered the workforce.
- From FY 2002-2005, Psychology majors achieved an average score on the Major Field Achievement Test at roughly the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to other institutions.
- From FY 2002-2005, Psychology majors’ scores in Scientific Reasoning from the Liberal Arts and Sciences Portfolio were substantially above the University average (1.83 vs. 1.17; 0-3 scale).

### **Examples of Psychology’s recent and ongoing Program improvements.**

- We developed an end-of-semester research symposium during which all PSYC 466 students present their research. We recently changed the symposium format to a large poster session held during a weekday afternoon to increase attendance by Psychology students, faculty, and other people in the University community.
- To improve assessment of target knowledge, skills, and attitudes, we developed a discipline-specific senior survey. The survey measures students’ views about their gains in the target areas, as well as the means by which they achieved these gains. As sufficient data become available, we will evaluate the reliability and validity of the survey to inform its revision and continued use.
- To recognize formally the extensive laboratory work involved in PSYC 466, the Psychology Program changed the capstone from 3 to 4 credit hours and designated it as a laboratory course. Starting in Fall 2007, this change will convey more clearly to students, graduate schools, and employers the type of in-depth research experience that our students achieve.