

**Improving student learning and student retention at the undergraduate level
Application Cover Sheet**

*Maximum funding for any single grant: \$50,000.
Proposal must be limited to two pages plus a budget page, in addition to the cover sheet.*

DIRECTIONS:

1. Complete cover sheet
2. Attach 2 page proposal summary
3. Attach 1 page budget
4. Submit your proposal electronically to your college office for approval. College offices will submit recommended college proposals to the Provost office **no later than March 16, 2007 for FY'08 funding.**

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Date **March 9, 2007**

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Collaborators (other departments, if any): **Christopher Henrich (also Psychology)**

Title of Your Proposal **Developing an Innovative Advisement System in the Department of Psychology Through Individual, Group and Peer Advising**

Theme of Your Proposal (Support for students; Fostering connections; Enhancing advisement; Other innovations): **Enhancing advisement**

College rating (approved; not approved) **APPROVED**

Developing an Innovative Advisement System in the Department of Psychology Through Individual, Group and Peer Advising

Summary

Purpose: Results of our advising needs assessment show clearly that the activities proposed in last year's proposal are warranted. The majority of 273 respondents reported having had at least one advising session and having basic information pertinent to the major. However, far fewer students had information regarding psychology's honor society (Psi Chi), the COAS Honors Program, the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference, opportunities to work on research with faculty members, careers in psychology, and gaining entrance into graduate school. Presumably, information about and engagement in these opportunities would increase retention, progression and graduation. Our findings also show that when students did receive this information, they received it from faculty. However, no systematic method for delivering this information exists.

Thus, we propose to complete the development of group advising sessions and to implement a regular calendar for them. To date we have developed five group advising sessions including: 1) the COAS Honors Program (developed with the Honors Program), 2) Career paths with a degree in psychology (developed with University Career Services), 3) Curious about graduate school in psychology? 4) Applying to graduate school in human service fields, and 5) Making the most of your major. Our plan is to pilot and evaluate these sessions in April, 2007. After making necessary modifications we will schedule two cycles of these sessions so that they are available to students twice each fall and spring. Ongoing evaluation will be used to keep these presentations fresh, interesting, and relevant.

We also hope to move ahead with our plan to develop a peer advising system. Peer advising is an additional effective method of delivering this and other information desired by our students, particularly sophomores (Layman, 1981). We were not able to advance this objective beyond identifying model peer advising programs due to the time required to develop the group advising sessions, and develop and conduct the needs assessment and the advising satisfaction survey. However, we anticipate advancing this objective through summer 2007 and early fall so that the system can be implemented by spring 2007. We have made one design change to our initial proposal with respect to peer advising. Our first submission proposed paying peer advisors as student assistants but this method will be unsustainable without ongoing funding. Instead, we will model our program after James Madison University psychology's peer advising system that offers practicum credit for students serving as peer advisors.

To these ends, the Department proposes to continue and extend its efforts to enhance advisement by appointing a faculty member who will continue to direct the development of our new and innovative advising system and provide consistent oversight to the department advisor, graduate student assistant advisors, and peer advisors through a model of vertical supervision. This system is being developed in the context of an ongoing comprehensive review of the undergraduate curriculum. Furthermore, the developing advising system places particular emphasis on increasing the number of sophomores receiving advisement services. In addition to sophomore year being critical for student retention, in the Department's curriculum it is important for students to be directed to gateway courses, such as Statistics and Research Methods, in their sophomore year.

Goals

I. Increase the quality of academic advising in the Department of Psychology.

Project Activities

To meet this goal, the appointed faculty member will:

1. Implement and evaluate group advising system.

2. Continue to develop and refine departmental advising WebCT page as an interactive method of providing information. Group advising materials will also be available via this page.
3. Continue to develop resource materials (e.g., books, journals) on best practices in undergraduate advising.
4. Market features of new advising system to psychology majors and interested students through psychology newsletter, advising WebCT page, and school/office supplies identifying the psychology advising office and services (e.g. pens that advertise group advising sessions, the WebCT page, etc.). In essence, we are branding psychology advising!
5. Monitor and evaluate vertical supervision of departmental, graduate assistant, and peer advisors.

II. Increase the quantity of students who receive advising on a semester basis, with special emphasis on sophomores.

Project Activities

To meet this goal, the appointed faculty member will:

1. Develop, implement, and evaluate undergraduate peer advising system.
2. Recruit, appoint, train, and review undergraduate peer advisors.
3. Develop opportunities for off-site advising to supplement individual and group advising that uses features available in WebCT.

Timeline

These activities will span one academic year.

- Implementation, evaluation and refinement of group advising sessions ongoing through fall 2007 and spring 2008
- Release and evaluation of advising WebCT page ongoing through fall 2007 and spring 2008
- Identification, recruitment, and appointment of peer advisors in fall 2007 to begin service in January 2008.

Evaluation

With multiple changes occurring with respect to the undergraduate curriculum, attributing change in retention of majors, progression or graduation will not be possible. However, careful and ongoing *process* evaluation will be critical to evaluate how well the new advising system works.

1. Develop ongoing process evaluation for individual, group, and peer advising services that includes measures of
 - a. Student satisfaction
 - b. Number of students seeking initial advisement
 - c. Number of students returning for additional advisement
 - d. Number of students using group advisement
 - e. Number of students using peer advisement
 - f. Number of students using WebCT advising resource.

Year 2 Budget Justification

Personnel:

- One faculty member will receive one course release and 10% summer salary to continue the development, implementation, evaluation, and refinement of the proposed advising system.
- The two Graduate Learning Assistants who assist in advising will be upgraded to Graduate Teaching Assistants, and their time commitment increased from 5 hours per week to 10 hours per week. One additional GLA will be appointed to assist with development of materials, implementation, and evaluation.
- A library of ‘undergraduate advising best practices’ will be compiled.
- School and office supplies advertising Psychology Advisement office will be purchased and distributed.

Year 2 Budget

Personnel:

One faculty member, one course release and 10% summer support	\$16,120
Upgrade from GLA to GTA for 2 students, \$6,000 per student + one additional GRA	<u>\$18,000</u>
Subtotal personnel	\$37,968

Equipment:

Library	\$1,000
School/office supplies	\$750
Subtotal equipment	<u>\$1,750</u>
Total	\$36,870

Brief Interim Progress-Toward-Goals Report
Retention, Progression, and Graduation Proposals
Department of Psychology

Submitted by Sarah L. Cook
March 1, 2007

The Department of Psychology's goals were two-fold: 1) to increase the quality of academic advising in the Department of Psychology and 2) to increase the quantity of students who receive advising on a semester basis, with special emphasis on sophomores. Below, the department's objectives under these goals are listed, with progress noted.

Objective	Progress
I. Increase the quality of academic advising in the Department of Psychology.	
1. Identify and research successful, innovative advising models from GSU COAS departments, peer, and aspirational peer institutions and adapt features to the Department of Psychology environment.	Identified University of Minnesota-Duluth and James Madison University as model programs. Have communicated with staff about essential features of advising programs.
2. Develop, implement, and evaluate an individualized system of in person advisement specific to students' developmental status as a college student (e.g. Meeting Core Requirements; Planning for a Psychology Major; Consider a Concentration; Applied and Research Practicum Advising, etc.), with particular focus on the sophomore year.	As we began to develop group advising sessions (see below) we determined that what the department truly needs is advanced training for advisors to use in individual sessions. To that end, the department has joined NACADA and our departmental advisor will be able to take advantage of a range of professional development opportunities. Moreover, NACADA will be a valuable resource for our graduate advisors.
3. Develop, implement, and evaluate an in-person <i>group</i> advising system. Advising modules may consist of topics such as: What is the psychology major and is it for me; Approaches to planning a coherent curriculum for my interests; Psychology and the COAS Honors Program; Is graduate school in my future; Career Trajectories for psychology majors, etc.	Developed group advising sessions complete with materials for following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COAS Honors Program/Dept of Psychology 2. Career paths with a degree in psychology (in conjunction with University Career Services) 3. Curious about graduate school in human service fields? 4. Applying to graduate school in human service fields 5. Making the most of your psychology major Each of these group session will be pilot tested and evaluated in April, 2007
4. Coordinate relevant module content and implementation with University Career Services.	Met with UCS Feb. 13 th , set in place plan for first career path group advising session for April, 2007
5. Identify software that will facilitate continuity in advisement and clear communication between advisors and between students and advisors.	Continuing to work with department IT staff to identify software.
6. Update Department website with respect to new advising system; implement ability for students to make appointments via the web.	Determined that better option than department website is to develop advising WebCT page for all majors. The page is in development.
7. Compile a library of materials (e.g., books, journals) on best practices in undergraduate advising.	Initial materials on advising, many of which were highlighted by Dr. N. King, have been purchased and have been used to direct work on these objectives.

8. Communicate features of new advising system to psychology majors and interested students.	First communication will occur with April undergraduate newsletter, <i>Gray Matters</i> . Consequent communication will occur through advising sessions (group and individual), major email listserv, and flyers.
9. Institute vertical supervision of departmental, graduate assistant, and peer advisors.	In development (see below)
II. Increase the quantity of students who receive advising on a semester basis, with special emphasis on sophomores.	
1. Identify successful <i>peer</i> advising models from peer and aspirational peer institutions and adapt to the GSU COAS environment.	Identified University of Minnesota-Duluth and James Madison University as model programs.
2. Develop, implement, and evaluate undergraduate peer advising system to administer individual and group advisement.	We have not made progress we had hoped on this objective. Group advising sessions took longer to develop than expected. In addition, the original grant was written to provide a course release per semester but only one course release was allowed for the year. This, we decided to continue work on the group advising sessions and focus on peer advising in late spring and summer.
3. Recruit, hire, train, and review undergraduate peer advisors.	See above
4. Develop opportunities for off-site advising to supplement individual and group advising that uses chat room features available in WebCT.	Instituted WebCT advising page.

Our evaluation plan included the following:

1. Collect baseline data on fall/spring 2006 use of and satisfaction of advisement services.
2. Develop ongoing process evaluation for individual, group, chat, and peer advising services that includes measures of
 - a. Student satisfaction
 - b. Number of students seeking initial advisement
 - c. Number of students returning for additional advisement
 - d. Number of students completing full individualized advisement cycle
 - e. Number of students using group advisement
 - f. Number of students using peer advisement
 - g. Number of students using WebCT chat room advisement.

We have collected baseline data on fall and spring use of advisement and satisfaction of advisement from students using advising services between January 15 and February 15 of 2007. We also designed and executed a needs assessment via SurveyMonkey, which highlights student's interest in a range of topics (see attached).

In summary, we have made substantial progress toward both main goals and have at a minimum, begun work on all objectives and have completed approximately 66% of Goal 1 objectives and 50% of Goal II objectives. Our goal is to be close to achieving all objectives by July 2007 with the exception of hiring peer advisors, which may be delayed to September, 2007.

Staff and graduate students assisting with this project include Tenagne Mulugeta (staff), Chantal Poister-Tusher, Elizabeth Anthony, and Leslie Riddick (graduate students).

What is your year at GSU?

	Response	
	Total	Percentage
Freshman	32	11.8%
Sophomore	39	14.4%
Junior	87	32.1%
Senior	98	36.2%
Post-baccalaureate	15	5.5%
Total Respondents	271	
(skipped this question)	2	

How many times have you had an advising appointment in the Psychology Department at GSU?

	Response Total	
	Total	Percentage
Never	95	34.9%
Once	56	20.6%
Twice	42	15.4%
3-4 Times	54	19.9%
5-7 Times	15	5.5%
8-9 Times	6	2.2%
10 + Times	4	1.5%
Total Respondents	272	
(skipped this question)	1	

For what purposes have you made an advising appointment in the past? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
	Total	Percentage
I had personal problems and I needed to talk with someone	10	5.5%
I had a problem with a course instructor	3	1.7%
I had a grade/course complaint	3	1.7%
to discuss my academic evaluation or PACE form	117	64.6%
to learn the difference between a B.A. and B.S. in psychology at GSU	44	24.3%
to learn about Psychology courses that are required	106	58.6%
to learn about Psychology courses that are available	60	33.1%
to learn what prerequisites are required to take upper level courses	47	26.0%
to learn about concentrations available to psychology majors	38	21.0%
to learn about having and declaring a minor	42	23.2%
to learn about or register for practicum opportunities	55	30.4%
to learn about requirements to graduate from GSU w/ a Psychology major	93	51.4%
to learn about Psi Chi	15	8.3%
to learn about PURC (Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference)	2	1.1%
to learn about the Honors Program	9	5.0%
to learn about conducting an Honors Thesis	7	3.9%
to learn about opportunities for working in professors' labs	11	6.1%
to learn about or discuss transfer credits	50	27.6%
to learn about withdrawals	5	2.8%
to learn about hardship withdrawals	7	3.9%
to learn about taking the GRE	7	3.9%
to learn about the application process for graduate school	14	7.7%
to learn about different areas of psychology for graduate school (for example	21	11.6%
to learn about things to do to increase the chances of admittance to graduate school	20	11.0%
to learn about employment options for college graduates with a psychology major w/	18	9.9%
Total Respondents	181	
(skipped this question)	92	

Do you have information about the difference between a B.A. and B.S. in psychology at GSU?

	Response Total	
	Total	Percentage
Yes	135	54.4%
No	113	45.6%

Do you have information about the psychology courses that are required?

	Response Total	
Yes	198	81.1%
No	46	18.9%
Total Respondents	244	
(skipped this question)	29	

Where did you get your information about the psychology courses that are required? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	82	41.8%
from an instructor or professor	15	7.7%
from a peer or other student	29	14.8%
from the GSU psychology website	90	45.9%
from the GSU psychology handbook	50	25.5%
Other (please specify)	47	24.0%
Total Respondents	196	
(skipped this question)	77	

Do you have information about the psychology courses that are available at GSU?

	Response Total	
Yes	178	73.9%
No	63	26.1%
Total Respondents	241	
(skipped this question)	32	

Where did you get your information about the psychology courses that are available at GSU? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	43	24.6%
from an instructor or professor	18	10.3%
from a peer or other student	26	14.9%
from the GSU psychology website	97	55.4%
from the GSU psychology handbook	48	27.4%
Other (please specify)	38	21.7%
Total Respondents	175	
(skipped this question)	98	

Do you have information about the prerequisites required to take upper level courses?

	Response Total	
Yes	178	74.8%
No	60	25.2%
Total Respondents	238	
(skipped this question)	35	

Where did you get your information about the prerequisites required to take an upper level course? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	59	33.3%
from an instructor or professor	14	7.9%
from a peer or other student	21	11.9%
from the GSU psychology website	77	43.5%
from the GSU psychology handbook	52	29.4%
Other (please specify)	41	23.2%
Total Respondents	177	
(skipped this question)	96	

from the GSU psychology website	38	49.4%
from the GSU psychology handbook	34	44.2%
Other (please specify)	9	11.7%
Total Respondents	77	
(skipped this question)	196	

Do you have information about having and declaring a minor?		
	Response Total	
Yes	88	37.6%
No	146	62.4%
Total Respondents	234	
(skipped this question)	39	

Where did you get your information about having and declaring a minor? (select all that apply)		
	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	45	52.3%
from an instructor or professor	8	9.3%
from a peer or other student	11	12.8%
from the GSU psychology website	23	26.7%
from the GSU psychology handbook	20	23.3%
Other (please specify)	11	12.8%
Total Respondents	86	
(skipped this question)	187	

Do you have information about practicum opportunities?		
	Response Total	
Yes	66	28.4%
No	166	71.6%
Total Respondents	232	
(skipped this question)	41	

Where did you get your information about practicum opportunities? (select all that apply)		
	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	23	34.3%
from an instructor or professor	23	34.3%
from a peer or other student	16	23.9%
from the GSU psychology website	28	41.8%
from the GSU psychology handbook	10	14.9%
from the practica fair	11	16.4%
Other (please specify)	7	10.4%
Total Respondents	67	
(skipped this question)	206	

Do you have information about the requirements to graduate from GSU with a psychology major?		
	Response Total	
Yes	150	64.7%
No	82	35.3%
Total Respondents	232	
(skipped this question)	41	

Where did you get your information about requirements to graduate from GSU with a psychology major? (select all that apply)		
	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	80	53.3%

(skipped this question) 41

Where did you get your information about Psi Chi? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	4	6.5%
from an instructor or professor	21	33.9%
from a peer or other student	20	32.3%
from the GSU psychology website	24	38.7%
from the GSU psychology handbook	9	14.5%
Other (please specify)	11	17.7%
Total Respondents	62	
(skipped this question)	211	

Do you have information about PURC (Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference)?

	Response Total	
Yes	31	13.4%
No	200	86.6%
Total Respondents	231	
(skipped this question)	42	

Where did you get your information about PURC? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	1	3.2%
from an instructor or professor	29	93.5%
from a peer or other student	11	35.5%
from the GSU psychology website	5	16.1%
from the GSU psychology handbook	1	3.2%
Other (please specify)	5	16.1%
Total Respondents	31	
(skipped this question)	242	

Do you have information about the Honors Program?

	Response Total	
Yes	44	19.0%
No	187	81.0%
Total Respondents	231	
(skipped this question)	42	

Where did you get your information about the Honors program? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	3	6.8%
from an instructor or professor	12	27.3%
from a peer or other student	10	22.7%
from the GSU psychology website	17	38.6%
from the GSU psychology handbook	6	13.6%
Other (please specify)	11	25.0%
Total Respondents	44	
(skipped this question)	229	

Do you have information about conducting an undergraduate honors thesis?

	Response Total	
Yes	11	4.8%
No	218	95.2%

Do you have information about opportunities for working in professors' labs?

	Response Total	
Yes	34	14.9%
No	194	85.1%
Total Respondents	228	
(skipped this question)	45	

Where did you get your information about opportunities for working in professors' labs? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	7	20.0%
from an instructor or professor	24	68.6%
from a peer or other student	12	34.3%
from the GSU psychology website	7	20.0%
from the GSU psychology handbook	1	2.9%
Other (please specify)	5	14.3%
Total Respondents	35	
(skipped this question)	238	

Do you have information about transfer credits?

	Response Total	
Yes	77	34.1%
No	149	65.9%
Total Respondents	226	
(skipped this question)	47	

Where did you get your information about transfer credits? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	50	64.9%
from an instructor or professor	4	5.2%
from a peer or other student	3	3.9%
from the GSU psychology website	18	23.4%
from the GSU psychology handbook	7	9.1%
Other (please specify)	16	20.8%
Total Respondents	77	
(skipped this question)	196	

Do you have information about withdrawals from courses at GSU?

	Response Total	
Yes	157	70.4%
No	66	29.6%
Total Respondents	223	
(skipped this question)	50	

Where did you get your information about withdrawals from courses at GSU? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	24	15.5%
from an instructor or professor	56	36.1%
from a peer or other student	33	21.3%
from the GSU psychology website	54	34.8%
from the GSU psychology handbook	15	9.7%
Other (please specify)	38	24.5%
Total Respondents	155	
(skipped this question)	118	

from the GSU psychology website	5	11.4%
from the GSU psychology handbook	4	9.1%
Other (please specify)	19	43.2%
Total Respondents	44	
(skipped this question)	229	

Do you have information about taking the GRE?

	Response Total	
Yes	30	13.5%
No	193	86.5%
Total Respondents	223	
(skipped this question)	50	

Where did you get your information about taking the GRE? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	2	6.7%
from an instructor or professor	11	36.7%
from a peer or other student	14	46.7%
from the GSU psychology website	3	10.0%
from the GSU psychology handbook	2	6.7%
Other (please specify)	20	66.7%
Total Respondents	30	
(skipped this question)	243	

Do you have information about the application process for graduate school?

	Response Total	
Yes	40	17.9%
No	183	82.1%
Total Respondents	223	
(skipped this question)	50	

Where did you get your information about the application process for graduate school? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	3	7.5%
from an instructor or professor	18	45.0%
from a peer or other student	15	37.5%
from the GSU psychology website	11	27.5%
from the GSU psychology handbook	1	2.5%
Other (please specify)	12	30.0%
Total Respondents	40	
(skipped this question)	233	

Do you have information about different areas of psychology for graduate school (for example clinical community neuroscience developmental I/O cognitive social etc)?

	Response Total	
Yes	86	39.6%
No	131	60.4%
Total Respondents	217	
(skipped this question)	56	

Where did you get your information about different areas of psychology for graduate school? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	6	7.1%
from an instructor or professor	49	57.6%

Where did you get your information about things to do to increase your chances of admittance to graduate school? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	6	15.0%
from an instructor or professor	31	77.5%
from a peer or other student	15	37.5%
from the GSU psychology website	8	20.0%
from the GSU psychology handbook	5	12.5%
Other (please specify)	8	20.0%
Total Respondents	40	
(skipped this question)	233	

Do you have information about employment options for college graduates with a psychology major who do not wish to go to grad school?

	Response Total	
Yes	25	11.7%
No	189	88.3%
Total Respondents	214	
(skipped this question)	59	

Where did you get your information about employment options for college graduates with a psychology major who do not wish to go to grad school? (select all that apply)

	Response Total	
from an advisement appointment	3	12.0%
from an instructor or professor	11	44.0%
from a peer or other student	6	24.0%
from the GSU psychology website	2	8.0%
from the GSU psychology handbook	5	20.0%
Other (please specify)	6	24.0%
Total Respondents	25	
(skipped this question)	248	

Which of the following areas would you like to know more about? Check all that apply.

	Response Total	
The difference between a B.A. and B.S. in psychology at GSU	79	37.8%
Psychology courses that are required	64	30.6%
Psychology courses that are available	66	31.6%
Prerequisites required to take upper level courses	46	22.0%
Concentrations available to psychology majors	113	54.1%
Having and declaring a minor	78	37.3%
Practicum opportunities	113	54.1%
Requirements to graduate from GSU w/ a Psychology major	86	41.1%
Psi Chi	100	47.8%
PURC (Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference)	109	52.2%
The Honors Program	77	36.8%
Conducting an Honors Thesis	81	38.8%
Opportunities for working in professors' labs	128	61.2%
Transfer Credits	42	20.1%
Withdrawals	16	7.7%
Hardship Withdrawals	30	14.4%
Taking the GRE	141	67.5%
The application process for graduate school	166	79.4%
Different areas of psychology for graduate school (for example	145	69.4%
Things to do to increase your chances of admittance to graduate school	176	84.2%
Employment options for college graduates with a psychology major who do not wish	166	79.4%
Total Respondents	209	
(skipped this question)	64	

What else would you like to know about studying psychology at GSU?

Total Respondents	55
(skipped this question)	218