

PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN SERVICES

2021-2022 PROGRAM REVIEW



1 UNIT PROFILE

1.1 Briefly describe the program-level planning unit. What is the unit's purpose and function?

The Psychology and Human Services department at American River College offers courses in Psychology, Human Services, and Chemical Dependency that may be taken to fulfill general education requirements, and/or to earn one of the awards in Psychology (A.A. or A.A.-T), or in Human Services and Chemical Dependency (A.A. or certificate).

- Upon completion of our courses, students become better prepared to reach their academic or vocational goals. Our courses are academically rigorous, transfer-level courses, thereby allowing students to transfer to and succeed at a four-year institution. Our A.A.-T degree in Psychology offers a clear path for transfer to the CSU system.
- Our department offers a wide variety of courses from many of the subdisciplines of psychology that gives students a solid foundation of lower division coursework in our discipline. Our degree program offers students a comprehensive overview of the field of psychology, including but not limited to: general principles, statistics, research methods, biopsychology, social psychology, abnormal psychology, and developmental psychology across the lifespan. All of our courses meet requirements for general education.
- Our courses may be required for degrees, certificates, or transfer. In addition, some courses serve as electives. All of our courses offer opportunities for students to engage in lifelong learning as well as personal and professional development.
- Further, courses in the Human Services provide preparation for employment as a paraprofessional aide with agencies such as correctional institutions, parole, probation, welfare, rehabilitation, mental health, schools, and substance abuse centers.. Courses in Chemical Dependency Studies provide preparation for paraprofessional work with public or private agencies that treat problems of chemical dependency in our communities.
- Faculty in the human services and chemical dependency programs work closely with various community agencies. Students in human services and chemical dependency studies are given the opportunity to work in the community as interns, as part of their field experience. As our students gain skills necessary for their eventual employment in the field, they also serve a vital function to the agencies themselves.

1.2 How does the unit contribute to achievement of the [mission of American River College](#)?

The Psychology and Human Services department at American River College contributes to the mission of American River College by...

- Offering a variety of courses that fulfill General Education requirements, and/or earn an A.A., A.A.-T, or certificate
- Helping students meet their educational and career goals, supporting student success via Learning Communities, Beacon tutors, 1-on-1 faculty-student interactions, and referrals to our HomeBase coaches
- Providing student-centered instruction and an inclusive learning environment
- Developing critical thinking by examining behavior and mental processes using scientific methods and empirical observation, grounded in research and supported by statistical analyses
- Providing foundational knowledge for future mental health and counseling professionals

2 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The program review process asks units to reflect on the progress they've made towards achieving the goals they identified in each of the Annual Unit Plans they submitted since their last Program Review. Follow [this link](#) to access your previous EMP submissions. For Faculty support, please contact Veronica Lopez at lopezv@arc.losrios.edu.

2.1 🦋 Consider the progress that has been made towards the unit's objectives over the last six years. Based on how the unit intended to measure progress towards achieving these objectives, did the unit's prior planned action steps (last six years of annual unit plans) result in the intended effect or the goal(s) being achieved?

Since the last program review cycle, the Psychology and Human Services department has achieved many of its planning objectives.

- The Psychology department awards more discipline-specific A.A.-T degrees than any other department at ARC. In 2020-2021, the Psychology department accounted for one-third (33.4%) of all awarded A.A.-Ts (133 out of 393)*. In addition, the Psychology and Human Services department ranks in the top 5 for traditional discipline-specific A.A. degrees*. [*Source: ARC Data on Demand]
- All Psychology courses required for the A.A. and the A.A.-T. are now available through distance education
- Access to SPSS has expanded, providing more opportunities for students to gain experience learning this statistical software
- Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the department continues to support NAMI, Life is worth the walk, and Psi Beta
- The PRIDE center was established, in part, due to the leadership of one of our faculty members
- Course offerings have been adjusted to meet the changing needs of our students, with more sections of PSYC 310, 330, and 335 being added each year (all part of the core courses required for the Psychology degree)
- Psychology of Women and Issues of Diverse Populations classes are approved part of the curriculum for the Social Justice A.A., an interdisciplinary program.
- All courses in Human Services and Chemical Dependency have been approved to either be offered 100% or at 50% distance education.
- Many agencies have been recruited for internship placement of Human Services and Chemical Dependency students, this will be ongoing.
- In an effort to improve employment rates for Human Services students; the department is currently involved in accepting and implementing a Mental Health Specialist Apprenticeship program. This program is working with agencies in the community to pay students while they attend and complete the courses in the program.

The standard data set is intended to provide data that may be useful in promoting equity and informing departmental dialogue, planning, decision making, and resource allocation.

Recent updates include (1) better integration with ARC's Data on Demand system to provide users with more sophisticated and nuanced ways of exploring their unit's data and (2) greater emphasis and access to disproportionate impact data (*how student achievement outcomes vary by gender, race/ethnicity, veteran, foster youth, disability, and income/poverty level status*) to enable users to engage in more advanced *student-centered* and *equity-centered* analysis, reflection, and planning.

To access the Enrollment or Disproportionate Impact data reports, you may be prompted to log in to ARC's Data on Demand system. If so, click on "Log in with ARC Portal" and enter your Los Rios single sign-on credentials (same as Canvas or Intranet).

(To streamline the standard data set, the productivity data element has been removed, as has the green-yellow-red light icon system for all data elements except for department set standards.)

Enrollment

Fall

Spring

The two data sets show 5 years of fall or spring duplicated enrollment, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. Note that ARC's data-on-demand tool will soon provide considerably more sophisticated ways of viewing and analyzing your planning unit's headcount and enrollment trends.

Green

current fall/spring semester enrollment is equal to or exceeds the prior year's fall/spring enrollment.

Yellow

current fall/spring semester enrollment reflects a decline of less than 10% from the prior year's fall/spring enrollment.

Red

current fall/spring semester enrollment reflects a decline of 10% or more from the prior year's fall/spring enrollment.

Productivity

Fall

Spring

The two data sets show 5 years of fall or spring productivity (WSCH per FTEF: the enrollment activity for which we receive funding divided by the cost of instruction). Note that ARC's data-on-demand tool will soon provide considerably more sophisticated ways of viewing and analyzing your planning unit's productivity trends.

Green

current fall/spring semester productivity is equal to or exceeds the prior year's fall/spring productivity.

Yellow

current fall/spring semester productivity reflects a decline of less than 10% from the prior year's fall/spring productivity.

Red

current fall/spring semester productivity reflects a decline of 10% or more from the prior year's fall/spring productivity.

Precision Campus Report Links

Disproportionate Impact

[Success Rate DI](#) 

[A_B Rate DI](#) 

[Drop Rate DI](#) 

The disproportionate impact (DI) links now direct you to your unit's DI data in ARC Data on Demand. The DI data will show which student groups are experiencing disproportionate impact for course success rates (A, B, C, Cr, P), A-B rates, and course completion rates (students who did not withdraw) at the course level.

In addition, a new report on intersectional DI (e.g., ethnicity/race by gender) is available for assessing intersectional DI for course success rates. The intersection DI report defaults to the subject code level (e.g., all ENGWR courses). Use the org tree in the side bar to filter to individual courses (click on the right arrow next to American River College, right arrow next to your division, right arrow next to your department/discipline, then select the specific course to view).

If prompted to log in, click on "Log in with ARC Portal" and enter your Los Rios single-sign on credentials (same as Canvas or Intranet).

Department Set Standards

[Most Recent Academic Year](#) 

Shows course success rates (# of A, B, C, Cr, and P grades expressed as a % of total grade notations) compared to lower and upper thresholds. Thresholds are derived using a 95% confidence interval (click the report link for details). The lower threshold is referred to as the Department Set Standard. The upper threshold is referred to as the Stretch Goal.

Green

Most recent academic year exceeds the upper threshold

Yellow

Most recent academic year falls between the lower and upper threshold

Red

Most recent academic year falls below the lower threshold

SLO Data Set

[Psychology and Human Services AARR Summary](#)

[Psychology and Human Services AARR Results by SLO](#)

The faculty's continuous review of student achievement of course SLOs is documented using the **Authentic Assessment Review Record (AARR)**, which involves a review of student work demonstrating achievement of the course SLO. Faculty record student achievement for a randomly assigned course SLO based on one or more authentic assessments that they regularly perform in their classes. The aggregated results are then reviewed annually as part of Annual Unit Planning, in which the results may serve as the basis for actions and, if applicable, resource allocation, and are aligned with college goals and objectives.

The **AARR summary** link provides an aggregate of the results of the most recent AARR implementation. The **AARR results by SLO** link provides a more detailed view, including the specific ratings assigned by faculty to each randomly assigned course SLO, and what, if any, actions were taken.

Note: Established thresholds (i.e., green/yellow/red indicators) have yet to be developed for SLO data.

Email Standard Data Set link 

In addition to reflecting on the metrics shown above, it may prove useful to analyze other program-level data to assess the effectiveness of your unit. For instructional units, [ARC's Data on Demand system](#) can be used to provide program and course level information regarding equitable outcomes, such as program access or enrollment, successful course completion, and degree or certificate achievement (up to 30+ demographic or course filters are available).

You might also consider pursuing other lines of inquiry appropriate to your unit type ([instructional](#), [student support](#), [institutional/administrative support](#)). Refer to the Program Review Inquiry Guide under the resources tab for specific lines of inquiry.

2.2 What were the findings? Please identify program strengths, opportunities, challenges, equity gaps, influencing factors (e.g., program environment), data limitations, areas for further research, and/or other items of interest.

Program Strengths:

- The Psychology department leads the college in discipline-specific A.A.-T's awarded, and ranks in the top 5 for A.A.'s awarded.
- Both Psychology and Human Services not only met their Department Set Standards, but exceeded their stretch goals for the 2020-2021 academic year
- SLO assessment results indicate that most students achieve the course SLOs

Program Challenges:

- Disproportionate Impact for success rates, AB rates, and drop rates remain a challenge in many courses, particularly for African American and Latinx students, and in courses with larger class sizes
- The department continues to closely monitor enrollments trends, and make scheduling changes as needed to meet student needs
- Psychology Department Chair position workload: To meet the needs of a large department, the workload for the department chair continues to be in excess of the allotted release time, regularly requiring work beyond the contracted work schedule for hiring, scheduling, petitions, coordination of the Human Services program (which does not have an allotted release time for coordination), collaboration with academic counselors and HomeBase coaches, and other college planning and curricular work.
- Human Services Coordination: The two full time faculty in Human Services are involved in an increase in workload in additional meetings and curriculum development for the new Mental Health Specialist apprenticeship program without coordination time. Additional courses will be added due to the Mental Health Specialist apprenticeship program, thereby requiring the hiring of additional adjuncts for the program as well.

3 REFLECTION AND DIALOG

3.1 Discuss how the findings relate to the unit's effectiveness. What did your unit learn from the analysis and how might the relevant findings inform future action?

The process of reflection and dialogue has revealed the following findings related to the department's effectiveness:

- Our department's focus on responding to student demands by adding course sections and/or cutting course sections in a variety of modes of delivery and at various meeting times has fostered student degree and certificate completion for both Psychology and Human Services students.
- The department continues to hold equity-advancing meetings at least 2 times per semester (in addition to our regular dept business meetings) and many of the faculty (full-time and part-time) also attend (or facilitate) additional workshops on equity-advancing practices. Despite these ongoing efforts, a Disproportionate Impact for success rates, AB rates, and drop rates remain a challenge in many courses, particularly for African American and Latinx students.
- Our department has also maintained a partnership with the Umoja Sakhu, P.R.I.S.E, Puente, and the Native American Resources Center through offering two of our the Psychology degree core courses (PSYC 300 and PSYC 330) as a cohort-based, learning community course only open to students engaged in the aforementioned programs. One of the key characteristics of these learning community courses is the

relationship-rich educational framework that guides this partnership. The success in these courses in the past years have been promising (e.g., higher average success rates for African American students), suggesting that a partnership between instructional faculty and programs across campus might be a fruitful approach to address the DI on course completion and success rate.

- Our two Human Services full-time faculty continue to work many hours outside their weekly hours of instructions and service to the college by maintaining Chemical Dependency accreditations that are more cost-friendly to students, holding advisory board meetings once a year to gather input from partner agencies, responding to agencies' feedback on areas that could benefit our students' employability, and engaging in 1-1 career advising. More recently, our full-timers have been given the task to participate in the newly formed Mental Behavioral Health Apprenticeship Program, which includes committee meetings, workgroup assignments, and coordinating with employers, the State Department of Apprenticeship Standards and the Federal Department of Labor in order to develop a new Mental Behavioral Health certificate that meets the requirements of a recently received \$500,000 CAI Apprenticeship grant.

3.2 🌿 What is the unit's ideal future and why is it desirable to ARC? How will the unit's aspirations support accomplishment of the mission, improve institutional effectiveness, and/or increase academic quality?

Our department's ideal future includes collaborative efforts, and much needed resources to improve institutional effectiveness and improve student achievement outcomes for our Psychology, Human Services, and Chemical Dependency students:

- Our department would like to explore the possibility of scaling up our partnership with the Umoja Sakhu, P.R.I.S.E., Puente, and the Native American Resource Center programs by offering a learning community section for each of our multi-section courses, starting with PSYC 310 and PSYC 335 (the remaining core courses for the Psychology degree).
- Our department would like to maintain regular contact with our HomeBase counselors so we can better understand the students' barriers and the counselors can better understand our degree and programs' maps. In doing so, students will continue to receive consistent and accurate information from both counselors and instructional faculty and will be less likely to enroll in classes with prerequisites not being met, which adversely affect student completion rates in some of our courses.
- Our department is in urgent need to secure a regular 0.2 FTE for program coordinator for the Human Services program, a growing program with an increasing number of demands involving partnership with outside agencies. This program coordinator would not only maintain the curriculum, accreditation, and connection with outside agencies, but they would engage in community outreach with the local high schools in an effort to increase the program visibility as a fruitful and viable A.A. degree to meet the demands of a growing industry.
- With the anticipation of the growth of the apprenticeship program, HSER may need additional coordinator time for this new program in addition to the existing critical need for coordinator time in the existing HSER program. We anticipate staffing issues with the growth of the existing HSER program and the growth of this new apprenticeship program will exasperate this need dramatically which may necessitate additional LTT hiring in the immediate future and a look toward filling a full time tenure track growth position as well.

4 🌿 STRATEGIC ENHANCEMENT

4.1 🌿 Identify/define one or more program-level objectives which enhance the unit's effectiveness. What does your unit intend to do to work towards its ideal future? How will success be measured?

The following Program-level objectives will enhance the department's effectiveness:

- Coordinator reassigned time for Human Services
- Create more equitable student achievement outcomes through inclusive online and face-to-face learning environments and culturally relevant curriculum, supported by equity focused professional development
- Monitor and adjustment course offerings to meet changes in student demand (e.g., AB 705 may dramatically increase the demand of Psychology 330)
- Identify possible avenues for including student voices (particularly those students from disproportionately impacted populations) in the unit planning and program review process (e.g., via survey, focus group, or student advisory board)

4.2 🌿 How will the unit's intended enhancements support ARC's commitment to social justice and equity?

The Psychology and Human Services Department has been consistently engaging in equity-advancing initiatives with the goal of **decreasing the opportunity gap** for our students, shifting away from a deficit approach of academic success (not hyper-focusing on the individual student or individual faculty members through a deficit lens) and toward a more systemic and institutional approach.

The department's continual effort **focusing on systemic barriers for success** is reflected by:

- the ongoing professional development opportunities faculty members (both FT and PT) are engaged in,
- intentional considerations of anticipated and anecdotally reported student barriers when planning course offerings,
- inclusion of scholarly work from traditionally marginalized groups in course curricula (e.g., use of ARC PRIDE Center Campus Climate data in PSYC 330 Introductory Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences),
- integration of relevant psychology courses (PSYC 361 Psychology of Women and PSYC 365 Issues in Diverse Populations) into the Social Justice A.A. degree curriculum, and
- efforts to continue collaboration with the program coordinators from Umoja Sakhu, P.R.I.S.E., Puente, and the Native American Resource Center.

This approach to education and educational outcomes focused on intentional and consistent efforts to decrease opportunity gaps for our students aligns with ARC's commitment "*to uphold the dignity and humanity of every student and employee.*"