

Secret Diary of a General Psychology Redesign



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Pre-Redesign

One 977-student class (taught by Faculty) & twelve 45-student classes (taught by GTAs)

Classes follow a traditional lecture format, meet 2-3x weekly

Textbook, assignments, exams vary by class

Hybrid Teaching Model Adopted

Spring 2014

Nineteen 45-student sections (GTAs teach 3 sections each), classes meet 1x/wk.

Common online text is adopted, but instructors operate independently and autonomously

Common final exam implemented with 10 essay questions (*this turns out to be a grading burden on the GTAs...can we get reliable assessment in a more efficient format?*)

Team Teaching Approach Implemented

Fall 2014

Twenty-five 45-student sections (GTAs teach 4 each), classes meet 1x/wk.

Susan Marshall hired as Program Coordinator; Marsha McCartney hired as teaching post doc to address redesign efforts

Restructured common final exam (75 MC & 4 essays)

Writing assignments required for the 10 common units but are not common across sections (*grading burden*)

GTAs operate independently but weekly teaching team meetings encouraged (*low attendance*)

Spring 2015

Twenty-four 45-student sections (GTAs teach 4 each), classes meet 1x/wk.

Common course objectives implemented (see reverse)

Four common writing assignments implemented with peer review so students can revise their work and practice "writing like scientists." (*Reduces grading burden on GTAs*)

Required weekly team meetings to discuss issues, brainstorm classroom activities, share teaching resources

Fall 2015

Twenty-nine 45-student sections (GTAs teach 4 each), classes meet 1x/wk.

GTA retreat in August—Introduce team teaching, review resources, discuss active learning model, plan for first day of class

New textbook adopted with more resources for novice instructors.

Standardization of all course components: syllabus, schedule, unit exams (*reduces administrative load on GTAs*)

Writing assignments cut from 4 to 2 and revamped to focus more on depth. Peer review/revision still employed

Course Objectives for PSYC 104: General Psychology at The University of Kansas

1. To develop a fundamental understanding of the science of psychology, the study of thought, feelings, and behavior
2. To construct a working vocabulary of terminology used in psychology and a familiarity with key people and ideas that have shaped psychology
3. To practice systematic and technical writing skills as utilized in the psychological sciences
4. To think critically about the importance of scientific methods and ethical principles of research design, and how these contribute to the body of knowledge about psychology
5. To understand the connections between content areas within psychology, and how to apply those psychological principles to daily life and new situations
6. To create a foundation of psychology knowledge as a prerequisite for all other psychology courses at KU

Organization	Standards	Objective
KU Psych Dept	Goal 1. Acquire and update knowledge base: Survey level	1,2,6
	Goal 2. Understand, critically evaluate, and integrate information: Novice level	4,5
	Goal 3. Address questions with objective evidence: Survey level	3,4
	Goal 4: Articulate applications of psychological knowledge: Novice level	3,5
KU Core Goal #3	Develop a basis of knowledge across fundamental areas of study.	1,6
APA National Standards for Psychology Curricula	The development of scientific attitudes and skills, including critical thinking, problem solving, and an appreciation for scientific methodology	4
	A recognition of the diversity of individuals who advance the field	2
	A multicultural and global perspective that recognizes how diversity is important to understanding psychology	N/A*
	An awareness that psychological knowledge, like all scientific knowledge, evolves rapidly as new discoveries are made	4
	An acknowledgement that psychology explores behavior and mental processes of both human and non-human animals	1
	An appreciation for ethical standards that regulate scientific research and professional practice	4
	An understanding that different content areas within psychological science are interconnected	5
	An ability to relate psychological knowledge to everyday life	5
	A knowledge of the variety of careers available to those who study psychology	5
	An appreciation that psychological science and knowledge can be useful in addressing a wide array of issues, from individual to global levels	5
	An awareness of the importance of drawing evidence based conclusions about psychological phenomena	4

*Not an intentional part of the KU Psych 104 curriculum, though many instructors may include relevant discussion in their individual classes

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