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## Proposal to the Senate Educational Policy Committee

**PROPOSAL TITLE:** Establish a New Master of Science Degree in Psychological Science (M.S. in Psychological Science) and Eliminate the Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in the Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**SPONSOR:** Wendy Heller, Professor and Head  
Department of Psychology  
Phone: 333-1147  
Email: [w-heller@illinois.edu](mailto:w-heller@illinois.edu)

**COLLEGE CONTACT:** Associate Dean Karen Carney  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Phone: 333-1350  
Email: [kmcarney@illinois.edu](mailto:kmcarney@illinois.edu)

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:** The Department of Psychology proposes to establish a two-year, self-supporting Master of Science in Psychological Science program that combines advanced coursework and research. The aim is to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to be competitive for admission to doctoral programs and/or to pursue professional opportunities within industry. As a separate initiative (see Page 5 below), the department also proposes to eliminate an existing Master of Arts in Psychology (not a freestanding program but embedded in the doctoral program) since its function is better served by an embedded Master of Science in Psychology degree (which is separate from the proposed Master of Science in Psychological Science).

**JUSTIFICATION:** Our proposed **Master of Science in Psychological Science** will respond to two educational trends within the field of Psychology. The first is the provision of advanced training for students who wish to pursue doctoral education, but do not yet have sufficient preparation in the field of Psychology. The Department of Psychology has found that within the last several years, as doctoral student funding has decreased and doctoral study in psychology has subsequently gotten more competitive, the number of applicants to our doctoral program who have an advanced degree has increased significantly. This year almost 30% of our applicants, and 25% of those admitted to our graduate Ph.D. program, had already obtained Master's Degrees. Many of these Master's Degrees were earned from peer institutions such as NYU, Columbia, and Harvard. Some students entering with Master's Degrees completed their undergraduate work at institutions without sufficient research opportunities and experiences to make their students competitive for the best doctoral graduate programs in Psychology. Others either discovered their interest in Psychology late in their undergraduate careers, or were talented international students who needed more research experience to make them

competitive for the top doctoral programs. Our proposed Master of Science in Psychological Science program with both a strong graduate-level curriculum and an intensive research experience would meet the educational needs of these students.

A Master's program at an institution like ours, within a department consistently ranked within the top ten in the country, will also make this program desirable to students who wish to pursue professional careers. Knowledge of human behavior and advanced analytic and statistical skills have become increasingly desirable across sectors. Graduates of our proposed Master's program would be competitive for placements in education, industry, consultant groups, state governments, federal government, and healthcare systems based on current hiring requirements in these areas.

Given the increasing number of doctoral applicants with a Master's degree and current trends in industry, we anticipate that there will be a large enough demand to support this as a freestanding program. Further, because these Master's students can be included in many of our currently offered graduate courses, the costs to the department for the program will be relatively low. The department will only need to develop a few new courses that specifically target the professional development needs of these students.

We intend to make this a high quality program that produces successful graduates. To do this, applicants will be carefully vetted and will only be admitted with the guarantee of appropriate mentorship and training from faculty in the area the student wishes to pursue. We also will train the members of our Graduate Student Education Office to handle the administrative and advising needs of the students in the Master's program. We will have a professional seminar course devoted to the Master of Science in Psychological Science students to support their success post-graduation. This will include assistance and support in the preparation of doctoral program admissions' materials as well as career placement assistance for those who plan to enter professional roles.

In addition, we plan to implement procedures to document and track outcomes of this program including first placement (e.g., into professional roles, into graduate programs) and follow-up inquiries three and five years post-graduation. We will also track experiences during the Master's program with attention to the quality of their experiences in courses as well as their research advising. Given one of our aims is to strengthen applications for those who aim to pursue doctoral education, we will also track whether students are indeed gaining opportunities that would enhance entry to graduate schools including opportunities to present at conferences and prepare manuscripts.

**BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:** *(Please respond to each of the following questions.)*

1) Resources

- a. How does the unit intend to financially support this proposal?

The proposed Master of Science in Psychological Science program will be self-funded by the tuition paid by the students.

- b. How will the unit create capacity or surplus to appropriately resource this program?

The students in this Master's program will be placed in open research positions in Psychology labs. Advising of these students will be handled by the Psychology

Department Graduate Student Education Office and by the student's research mentor. Adjunct faculty already employed by the department are available to teach courses developed specifically for the needs of the Master of Science program. If additional adjunct faculty are needed as the Master's program grows, they will be paid using the tuition generated by the program. A space for a classroom dedicated to instruction in the Master's program has been identified that will be equipped with the appropriate teaching technology. An office/meeting space for these students within the department has also been identified.

- c. Will the unit need to seek campus or other external resources? No.
- d. Please provide a letter of acknowledgment from the college that outlines the financial arrangements for the proposed program. N/A

## 2) Resource Implications

- a. Please address the impact on faculty resources including the changes in numbers of faculty, class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratios, etc.

The number of students admitted to the program each year will be determined by the availability of faculty mentors. Based on meetings within the various divisions as well as meetings of the departmental committee charged with exploring the feasibility and benefits of the program, we estimate this number to be approximately 25 students in total with about 12 in each cohort. The department is already well equipped to handle these additional numbers. It is anticipated that this program will not significantly impact teaching loads or student-faculty ratios in our graduate courses.

- b. Please address the impact on course enrollment in other units and provide an explanation of discussions with representatives of those units.

The coursework required for the Master's program is offered only through the Psychology Department and will not affect enrollments in other units.

- c. Please address the impact on the University Library

The maximum capacity of this program will be about 25 students total given the size of the dedicated classroom and the available number of research placements within the Psychology Department. Since graduate students in Psychology primarily use the electronic journals in their background research on a project, we expect that the impact on the library will be minimal.

- d. Please address the impact on technology and space (e.g. computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.)

A student will only be admitted to the Masters of Psychological Science program if there is a faculty researcher/mentor willing and able to work with the student in their lab. While the Master's students will take a general graduate research methods course, their primary research experience will be with their faculty mentor. With over 50 research-active FTE faculty in the department, there should be minimal impact on laboratory use. The Master's students will use our computer labs for their statistics

courses, but there is currently enough extra capacity to absorb the number of students that will participate in the program. We have also done a careful building use analysis and determined that there is enough space within the Psychology Building to accommodate the additional students. An appropriately-sized meeting/study room for the students in the Master's program has already been identified. For these reasons, we expect there to be little impact on the technology and space in the building.

For new degree programs only:

- 3) Briefly describe how this program will support the University's mission, focus, and/or current priorities. Include specific objectives and measurable outcomes that demonstrate the program's consistency with and centrality to that mission.

The proposed Master's degree program will provide quality advanced instructional and research experiences for students who wish to augment their training in Psychology to further enhance their chance of entry to top doctoral programs or who wish to enter professional roles for which a Master of Science in Psychological Science is desirable. The goal of the program will be to provide the transformative experiences that will allow these students to be competitive at the level of the best graduate programs in the world and attractive for positions seeking individuals with a broad understanding of human behavior and advanced analytic and statistical skills. The proposed Master's degree also aligns with the University's goal of actively supporting additional revenues through self-supporting continuing education programs. In addition, we hope that the program will generate enough revenue that we can provide a limited number of scholarships for underrepresented students and thereby increase diversity at the graduate level.

- 4) Please provide an analysis of the market demand for this degree program. What market indicators are driving this proposal? What type of employment outlook should these graduates expect? What resources will be provided to assist students with job placement?

This degree is targeted at students who want research and coursework at the graduate level to prepare them for a successful application to a doctoral program or who wish to enter professional roles for which a Master of Science in Psychological Science is desirable. Our review of applicants to our doctoral program indicates that such a degree program is increasingly common. Interviews with applicants show high satisfaction with the Master's program in which they were enrolled, and that they would have been interested in such a program at Illinois. We also receive queries every year about the existence of a freestanding Master's program as well as interest from the undergraduates in our classes who would be interested in such a program. Given the volume and success of applicants with Master's degrees who apply to our programs, we think that with the outstanding training we will be able to provide, the students who receive their Master's degree at Illinois will be quite successful in their academic pursuits. The full resources of our Graduate Student Education Office, as well as the mentoring from their research advisors, will be available to them to assist them in their applications to doctoral programs. One of the benchmarks for the success of the proposed Master's program will obviously be how successful the students are in obtaining admission to top-rated doctoral programs.

For those who aim to enter the workforce, there appears to be a strong demand for master's degrees in Psychology. A search of the major job recruitment sites including Indeed.com and Monster.com with the search term "Master's in Psychology" yielded over 10,000 job listings

overall and 422 in Illinois. Jobs for which graduates from our program would be competitive include placements in education (secondary and college level), industry, consultant groups, state governments, federal government, and healthcare systems. Examples of these jobs include the following titles: statistician, senior program manager in talent management, deputy commissioner of employment services in a city resources administration, employment and training counseling, director of admissions and financial aid, academic support service associate, research study coordinator, EAP counselor, assistant lab director, market research consultant, director of admissions and financial aid and manager in selection and assessment. Companies posting these jobs include Amazon, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Northwestern University, The University of Chicago, The Family Independence Administration of New York, MRCI work source consultants, United Health Group, and Optum.

- 5) If this is a proposed graduate program, please discuss the program's intended use of waivers. If the program is dependent on waivers, how will the unit compensate for lost tuition revenue?

No tuition or fee waivers will be available to students in this program.

#### **ELIMINATE EXISTING MASTER OF ARTS:**

In conjunction with establishing the new master's degree program, but as a separate initiative, the Psychology Department also plans to eliminate the current M.A. in Psychology, a degree option that is embedded within the Department's doctoral program. The degree requirements are almost identical with those of another degree option in our department, which is an M.S. in Psychology. Both degrees are not needed.

There are several reasons for eliminating the M.A. degree rather than the M.S. in Psychology. The current M.A. degree is part of our doctoral program and is a step on the way to the Ph.D. It is optional (doctoral students are required to complete a master's-level research report, but not to pursue a master's degree). For various reasons, students in the doctoral program sometimes leave prior to completion of their doctorate and will complete the M.A. based on coursework and the completion of a thesis.

The needs of such students are better served by an embedded M.S. in Psychology degree. The M.S. in Psychology degree offers both a thesis and non-thesis option. In most areas of psychology, an actual Master's Thesis is currently less important than a journal paper. The non-thesis option is one way to acknowledge this trend (also the reason why a thesis is not being required for the proposed M.S. in Psychological Science). A Master of Science degree also better aligns with the goal of the American Psychology Association (APA) to have psychology accepted as a STEM field. Indeed, the Psychology Department is working to change our Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code to one for psychological research, which is a STEM designation. The M.S. in Psychology is thus consistent with our undergraduate degree, which is a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Psychology. The only change required with regard to this initiative is a minor update to the description of the M.S. in Psychology on the Programs of Study Catalog (see below for revised text).

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** August, 2017

**STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:**

**The Master of Science in Psychological Science:**

A two-year, research-based program designed for students who want research experience augmented by advanced courses in experimental techniques and professional development within a top-rated department at a world-class university. Each student admitted to the program is paired with a faculty advisor/mentor based on research interests. A Master’s thesis is not required.

PSYC 500	Professional Develop for Psych	<b>2</b>
PSYC 501	Best Psych Research Practices	<b>2</b>
PSYC 506	Statistical Methods I	<b>4</b>
PSYC 507	Statistical Methods II	<b>4</b>
PSYC 590	Individual Research	<b>8</b>
Electives		<b>12</b>
Total Hours		<b>32</b>

**The Master of Science in Psychology:**

This degree is not designed to prepare a student for a professional position. As part of the doctoral program, it is a step toward the Ph.D. Note that the department does not require that students obtain a master's degree, but a master's-level research report must be submitted to the department as part of the Ph.D. program.

PSYC 590	Individual Research	<b>0-8</b>
Total Hours		<b>32</b>

**Other Requirements<sup>1</sup>**

Other requirements may overlap

The Master of Science in Psychology degree is awarded as an intermediate degree to candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy degree who have satisfactorily completed 32 graduate hours of graduate work and written an acceptable research report.

Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall: 12  
Minimum GPA: 2.75

<sup>1</sup> For additional details and requirements, refer to the department's [graduate handbook](#) and the [Graduate College Handbook](#).

**CLEARANCES:** (Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval. *These signatures must appear on a separate sheet. If multiple departments or colleges are sponsoring the proposal, please add the appropriate signature lines below.*)

Signatures:

Wendy Heller  
Unit Representative:

April 13, 2016  
Date:

Karen M Carney  
College Representative:

10-4-16  
Date:

[Signature]  
Graduate College Representative:

10/24/16  
Date:



**REQUEST & JUSTIFICATION FORM FOR PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION  
TRADITIONAL, SELF-SUPPORTING or REIMBURSABLE**

**CURRENT PROGRAMS:**

Current graduate programs can request a change in classification to Traditional or Reimbursable, but not to Self-supporting.

**NEW PROGRAMS:**

New programs seeking Traditional classification do not need to complete this form.

New programs seeking Self-supporting classification should be aware of the following:

- a) Students enrolled in Self-supporting programs are ineligible to hold waiver-generating appointments. NOTE: There is no mechanism within the Human Resources Front End system that restricts the appointment of a Self-supporting program student to an assistantship. Therefore, if a unit (faculty or staff) appoints a student, in error, significant problems result for everyone involved.
- b) Self-supporting status results in reduced flexibility for the program. Even if a student in the program is most qualified for a particular assistantship appointment and financing is available through the program, the program status makes the student ineligible.
- c) Because Traditional, Reimbursable and Self-supporting programs each yield 90% of net tuition, and the Reimbursable classification avoids the limitations above, a program might find the Reimbursable classification more advantageous than Self-supporting.

Please contact the Fellowship Office at the Graduate College if you have questions or seek clarifications, (217) 333-0036 or gradfellowships@illinois.edu.

**COLLEGE OR SCHOOL:** Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**IS THIS A NEW OR EXISTING PROGRAM:**

New Program

Existing Program

Program Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Classification: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUESTED CLASSIFICATION:**  TRADITIONAL  REIMBURSABLE  SELF-SUPPORTING

**JUSTIFICATION:** On a separate sheet, please address the following.

1. Describe the reasons for this request and explain: (a) the pros and cons of the classification requested, and (b) how the requested classification will benefit and not adversely affect the academic quality of the program.
2. Describe the expected impact of the requested classification to new students. How will these measures affect the affordability of the program? What type of financial aid, if any, will be offered? Note: Continuing students will not be affected as they are subject to the rules in effect at the time of their admission.
3. What provisions will be made to communicate the implications of the classification to prospective and newly admitted students?
4. Name the college and program contact persons in charge of implementing and communicating the classification and its consequences to students.

Unit Head Signature and Date Wendy Heller October 13, 2016

College Dean Signature and Date [Signature] October 29, 2016



## Justification for the New Master's in Psychological Science Program to be Classified as Self-Supporting

1. The Department of Psychology has found that a large percentage of the applicants for our doctoral program have obtained a Master's degree from other institutions in order to improve their attractiveness as candidates. Since the department is highly ranked nationally, a Master's degree from our program would greatly benefit these potential doctoral students. For the Psychology Department to be able to offer this new degree, there must be sufficient funding to maintain it. That funding is only available if the program is classified as self-supporting.

1 (a). A self-supporting classification will clearly benefit the program for three reasons. First, without this funding mechanism, the department does not have the resources to offer the degree. Second, the funds will allow us to adequately provide professional development services to the students. Third, the students are required to do research and the support will make it attractive to professors to add these students to their labs. The major negative to a self-supporting classification is that the cost may access to the program difficult for low income students, which may affect the diversity of the students in the program. We have, however, made a commitment to use a significant portion of the revenue generated by the program for scholarships in order to alleviate this issue. The Psychology Department also views the scholarships as a means of increasing the diversity and qualifications of the applicants to our doctoral program and within the field of psychology, in general.

1 (b). By offering the new Master's program, we will attract good students who are not quite prepared or competitive enough for a doctoral program. These students will benefit from being able to receive outstanding graduate-level instruction and from working in some of the best psychology labs in the world, which will make them competitive for doctoral programs here and around the country. Since this program would not be possible without the support provided by the tuition, the self-supporting classification is necessary to benefit the students.

2. The classification is not expected to impact new students. We would not be able to offer the program without this classification, and these students will benefit by obtaining a Master's degree from a top ranked program. Most of the students who will be in the program would have attended a different institution to obtain such a degree and the cost to them would be higher, especially at a private university. A significant portion of the revenue will be used to create a scholarship fund to help offset the tuition costs for low income and under-represented minority students, but no other financial aid will be offered.

3. The self-supporting status of the program will be clearly communicated to prospective students in the materials describing the program both on the internet and in any hand-outs or fliers. For admitted students, the implications of the self-supporting classification will be reiterated by our graduate student office.

4. The contact persons for this program will be Prof. Nicole Allen, Associate Head and Director of Graduate Studies, Prof. Tamara Sher, who will be the primary faculty advisor for the program, and Ashley Ramm, the Graduate Program Coordinator and the person in charge of our graduate office.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Office of the Dean

2090 Lincoln Hall  
702 S. Wright Street, MC-448  
Urbana, IL 61801



October 4, 2016

Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko  
Dean, Graduate College  
204 Coble Hall MC-322

Dear Dean Chodzko-Zajko:

The Committee on Courses and Curricula, on behalf of the Faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has voted to approve the following proposal:

**Establish a New Master of Science Degree in Psychological Science (M.S. in Psychological Science) and Eliminate the Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in the Department of Psychology**

Please let me know if you have any questions on this proposal. This proposal is now ready for review by the Graduate College for proposed implementation upon approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen M Carney".

Karen M. Carney  
Associate Dean

enclosure

C: Professor Wendy Heller  
Professor Robert Wickesberg  
Professor Nicole Allen



**Senate Educational Policy Committee  
Proposal Check Sheet**

**PROPOSAL TITLE** (Same as on proposal): Establish a New Master of Science Degree in Psychological Science (M.S. in Psychological Science) and Eliminate the Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in the Department of Psychology

**PROPOSAL TYPE** (select all that apply below):

A.  Proposal for a NEW or REVISED degree program. Please consult the Programs of Study Catalog for official titles of existing degree programs.

1. Degree program level:

Graduate                       Professional                       Undergraduate

2.  Proposal for a new **degree** (e.g. B.S., M.A. or Ph.D.):

Degree name, "e.g. *Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science*": Master of Science Degree in Psychological Science

3.  Proposal for a new or revised **major, concentration, or minor**:

New or  Revised **Major** in (name of existing or proposed major): \_\_\_\_\_

New or  Revised **Concentration** in (name of existing or proposed concentration): \_\_\_\_\_

New or  Revised **Minor** in (name of existing or proposed minor): \_\_\_\_\_

4.  Proposal to rename an existing major, concentration, or minor:

Major                       Concentration                       Minor

Current name: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed new name: \_\_\_\_\_

5.  Proposal to terminate an existing degree, major, concentration, or minor:

Degree                       Major                       Concentration                       Minor

Name of existing degree, major, or concentration: Master of Arts in Psychology

6.  Proposal involving a multi-institutional degree:

New                       Revision                       Termination

Name of existing Illinois (UIUC) degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of non-Illinois partnering institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of non-Illinois partnering institution:

State of Illinois       US State: \_\_\_\_\_       Foreign country: \_\_\_\_\_

B.  Proposal to create a new academic unit (college, school, department, program or other academic unit):

Name of proposed new unit: \_\_\_\_\_

C.  Proposal to rename an existing academic unit (college, school, department, or other academic unit):

Current name of unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed new name of unit: \_\_\_\_\_

D.  Proposal to reorganize existing units (colleges, schools, departments, or program):

1.  Proposal to change the status of an existing and approved unit (e.g. change from a program to department)

Name of current unit including status: \_\_\_\_\_

2.  Proposal to transfer an existing unit:

Current unit's name and home: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed new home for the unit: \_\_\_\_\_

3.  Proposal to merge two or more existing units (e.g., merge department A with department B):

Name and college of unit one to be merged: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and college of unit two to be merged: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed name and college of new (merged) unit: \_\_\_\_\_

4.  Proposal to terminate an existing unit:

Current unit's name and status: \_\_\_\_\_

E.  **Other educational policy proposals** (e.g., academic calendar, grading policies, etc.)

Nature of the proposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 10/2012

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University Library  
Office of Dean of Libraries  
and University Librarian  
230 Main Library, MC-522  
1408 West Gregory Drive  
Urbana, IL 61801



April 20, 2016

Wendy Heller, Professor and Head  
Department of Psychology  
603 E Daniel St 715  
M/C 716

Dear Prof. Heller:

Last week, we received a proposal to establish a new Establish a New Master of Science degree in Psychological Science (M.S. in Psychological Science) in the Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Based upon the documents received on April 12, 2016 and the review conducted by Kelsey Cheshire, it is our belief that there will be no significant impact on collection development, instruction, or other operations within the University Library.

If additional services or materials are required as the program develops, we will be happy to discuss those needs as they emerge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John P. Wilkin', written over a large, stylized flourish.

John P. Wilkin  
Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson  
Dean of Libraries and University Librarian

e-c: Kelsey Cheshire  
Thomas Teper  
Bob Wickesberg, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

EP.17.31

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor  
for Academic Affairs

Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



November 3, 2016

Bettina Francis, Chair  
Senate Committee on Educational Policy  
Office of the Senate  
228 English Building, MC-461

Dear Professor Francis:

Enclosed is a copy of a proposal from the College of Liberal Arts to:

- 1) Establish a Master of Science in Psychological Science; and
- 2) Eliminate the Master of Arts in Psychology.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kathryn A. Martensen'.

Kathryn A. Martensen  
Assistant Provost

Enclosures

c: A. McKinney  
W. Heller  
K. Carney  
A. Elli  
A. Edwards  
J. Hart