

5A. UNC Degree Program Proposals - *Establishment* .....Courtney Thornton

**Situation:** UNC Greensboro requests authorization to establish a Bachelor of Science in Psychology (CIP 42.0101).

**Background:** Per UNC 400.1, UNC General Administration, in consultation with the campuses, brings recommendations to the UNC Board of Governors for new degree programs that meet identified academic program needs.

**Assessment:** Establishment of the programs is recommended.

**Action:** This item requires a vote.

**Request for Authorization to Establish a  
Bachelor of Science in Psychology  
(B.S., CIP 42.0101) at  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

**I. Program Highlights**

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- 122 credit hours including general education
- Requires 15 credit hours of advanced courses in psychology (including statistics), science, and mathematics, beyond the requirements of the B.A. degree.
- 5-10% of students currently applying to the B.A. are expected to pursue the B.S.
- 80 full-time students estimated at steady state
- No new faculty, facility, or library resources required for launch

**II. BOG Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)**

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1. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Five UNC institutions offer the Bachelor of Science in Psychology (ECU, FSU, UNCC, UNCP, and WCU), and seven UNC institutions offer the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (ECU, NC A&T, NCCU, NCSU, UNCA, UNCW and WSSU). Two institutions offer both the Bachelor of Science and the Bachelor of Arts (ASU and UNC-Chapel Hill). Upon approval of this request, UNC Greensboro would be a third institution offering both undergraduate degree options. FSU offers its program online, and ASU and FSU also offer their programs on-site in Catawba and Cumberland counties, respectively.
2. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program aligns with the mission of UNC Greensboro to “foster intellectual inquiry to prepare students for meaningful lives and engaged citizenship.” The program aligns with several aims of UNCG’s strategic plan, specifically as related to enhancing health sciences research (Strategic Area 2.1), infusing critical thinking in the undergraduate curriculum (3.5), attracting increasing numbers of highly qualified students (1.5), and making UNCG the first choice of more students (1.4).
3. **Demand (Local, regional, state).** The aim of the B.S. in psychology is to strengthen the experience and opportunities for students interested in pursuing graduate and professional programs. Approximately 800 undergraduate students per year are declared psychology majors at UNCG. In Fall 2010, all psychology majors were surveyed regarding their interest in the B.S. degree, with 70% of respondents indicating interest. UNCG also consulted Directors of Undergraduate Studies at several peer institutions offering both degrees. Most programs indicated 5-20% of their psychology majors were in the B.S. program at any given time. Based on peer institution responses and the student survey, UNCG estimates 5-10% of its existing Bachelor of Arts population will pursue the Bachelor of Science track.
4. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** While psychology is a highly sought undergraduate degree systemwide, programs vary in terms of sub-areas of focus and strength. UNCG’s psychology program has historic strengths in memory and educational psychology, developmental psychology, clinical psychology, and to a lesser extent, social psychology.

**5. Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Bachelor’s level psychology graduates are hired in diverse fields, including sales, investment management and analysis, and entrepreneurial ventures. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and National Science Foundation both indicate that psychology jobs are growing steadily and especially for those who obtain graduate degrees; preparation for graduate and professional programs is a primary purpose of UNCG’s proposing the B.S. degree. Based on the best data available, UNCG estimates that ~18% of their B.A. in psychology graduates are accepted to and attend graduate programs. A search of job postings within North Carolina (90-day period in early 2015) produced 275 job postings for baccalaureate psychology degree holders, with 5% of those postings specific to the B.S. in psychology. NC Tower (<http://nctower.com>) also includes relevant information on outcomes of baccalaureate degree holders from UNC institutions (Table 1). Of all 2007-2008 baccalaureate degree recipients in psychology, the highest percentages are employed in healthcare and social assistance, educational services, and professional and business services.

Table 1. Outcomes for baccalaureate degree recipients in psychology in North Carolina

	2007-2008 baccalaureate degree recipients in psychology from all UNC institutions	2007-2008 baccalaureate degree recipients in psychology from UNC Greensboro
Percent employed in NC after five years	61%	65%
Mean annual wage five years after graduation	\$30,133	\$33,010
Median annual wage five years after graduation	\$30,359	\$34,751
Percent enrolled in UNC graduate schools within five years of graduation	7%	8%

**6. Faculty Quality and Number.** Twenty-four faculty teach in the existing B.A. psychology program, and since the preponderance of majors will be drawn from that program, no additional faculty will be needed. The psychology department is top ranked in UNCG’s College of Arts and Sciences for research productivity, and their students made up 17% of UNCG’s undergraduate research expo in the most recent year.

**7. Availability of Campus Resources (library, space, etc.).** No new library holdings, facilities, or information technology services are needed to launch the program.

**8. Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed B.S. requires six additional hours of mathematics or science courses outside of the department and will vary depending on student interest and goals. For example, students interested in health counseling might want to gain skills in nutrition and biology whereas students interested in cognitive psychology of science learning might pursue courses in a variety of sciences.

**9. Impact on Access and Affordability.** The program is anticipated to attract a subset of students from the existing B.A. degree program at UNCG.

- 10. Expected Quality.** See prior comments on the size of the existing UNCG program, faculty success in research productivity, and involvement of students in research.
- 11. Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Opportunities for substantive collaboration in delivery of the degree are not readily apparent as the program is intended to serve a resident audience at UNCG.
- 12. Other Considerations.** American Psychological Association (APA) site visitors recently visited UNCG, strongly urged the development of the B.S. degree program, and indicated the program should be in demand among UNCG students.

### III. Summary of Review Processes

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**Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The program was reviewed by the Department of Psychology faculty, the College of Arts and Sciences Dean and Curriculum Teaching Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, Provost, Office of Assessment and Accreditation, and Chancellor. Reviewers had minor suggestions on strengthening the discussion of opportunities for program graduates and requirements to declare the major.

**UNC General Administration Review Process and Feedback.** Prior to UNC system faculty review, UNC Greensboro responded to questions from UNC General Administration staff on need/societal demand, curricular requirements, and budget. The proposal was then reviewed by three faculty representing three UNC campuses. All reviews were either “acceptable” or “acceptable with some considerations,” and two reviewers provided few to no constructive comments. The third reviewer suggested that a) the difference in opportunities for B.A. and B.S. graduates may be overstated; b) B.S. objectives may be better met by further defining parameters for the additional quantitative and advanced psychology coursework requirements; and c) the positioning of the two programs at UNCG has important implications for the students and the programs (i.e. being careful not to convey the B.A. as for “weaker” students).

UNCG responded by noting the desire to keep the additional program requirements in math and science flexible and to utilize their existing robust course advising system to direct students in alignment with their goals (see #8 above). UNCG responded that the B.S. will enhance the credentials of some students with particular career or graduate education goals and will provide clarity between two types of undergraduate training and preparation available. Finally, UNCG agreed the proposed program should not be marketed for “stronger” students but rather as an option for those who aim towards science-oriented careers where the math and science requirements will better serve their needs.

Benefits of program approval include a degree option with strengthened quantitative and scientific preparation for students who desire it and that can be achieved without significant additional resources. For these reasons, we do not recommend any alternatives to implementing the degree program.

#### **IV. Recommendation**

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It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve University of North Carolina at Greensboro's request to establish a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Psychology degree program (CIP 42.0101) effective August 2015 for enrollments beginning Fall 2016.