

COPLAC Summer Institute on Liberal Learning in the Disciplines
Departments of Psychology
7-9 June 2007

23 faculty members attended from 10 COPLAC institutions and 1 candidate institution.

Concurrent Session Topics

The senior capstone experience in the major
Experimental research and design across the curriculum
Undergraduate research in the major
Requirements in the major
The department's relationship to general education

Summary of Best Practices in Psychology at COPLAC Institutions

1. The departments place extensive emphasis on the rigorous scientific nature of psychology throughout the curriculum.
2. Learning psychology occurs in small classes that emphasize interaction between faculty and students.
3. Mentoring student researchers in psychology *is teaching*. Research experiences for students are essential (research meets all of the liberal arts goals, teaches applicable skills that employers want, and is essential for students' pursuit of advanced degrees).
4. As the American Psychological Association recommends, every student has a capstone experience that should synthesize/integrate curriculum. These may include seminars, supervised independent research and/or internships involving a tangible outcome (e.g., term paper, research presentation, portfolio).
5. Within the psychology department and across the university as a whole, a transparent, open, inclusive, and democratic system is necessary for making changes in the major requirements.

Final Plenary Session Recommendations

- Provide sufficient faculty lines to serve general education and historically large major numbers that preserves COPLAC mission (i.e., small class size)
- Provide sufficient faculty necessary to maintain integrity of capstone experience
 - Senior seminar classes should not be larger than 15
 - Independent supervision should be a maximum of 5 students
- Provide sufficient support for faculty and student research
 - financial and time compensation for independent research supervision
 - funds for equipment and space
 - funds for faculty and student travel to conferences