“Welcome to the Major”
Events Helpful to Students

As reported in our October 2013 newsletter, Dr. Nora Dunbar, Associate Chair, organized a team of faculty to hold three separate “Welcome to the Psychology Major” events in October. Eleven faculty gave brief presentations about the psychology major, its learning goals and curriculum, post graduation opportunities for the psychology major, how to get involved in outside-of-classroom activities, skills employers seek, applying to graduate school and more. Evaluations revealed that those in attendance (about 25) felt very positively about what they learned at these sessions. Attendees include both women (60%) and men (40%); half were transfer students (n = 11) and half identified themselves as first-generation college students (n = 11). About 73% of attendees were declared psychology majors. Of those that were not, about 25% were considering the major. Taken together, the respondents provided feedback suggesting that they thought the event was very informative and helped them learn about topics that were important to them—specifically about the basic curriculum in psychology, the skills and value of the psychology major, and content, sequence, and planning for the senior capstone course.

Details of the evaluation survey: Respondents rated eight topics on a 5-point scale (1 = Not at all important; 5 = Very important). The highest rated topic was planning for capstone courses as the most important (M = 4.55, SD = .60). This item was rated as statistically more important than the other items, however, all of the items were rated as important to very important. The remaining items were rated as follows (these items were not statistically significantly different): information about the major’s foundation courses, PSY 230 and PSY 302w (M = 4.36, SD = .85), information about the Psi Chi / Psychology Clubs (M = 4.28, SD = .77), learning about the skills psychology majors learn (M = 4.23, SD = .81), the skills employers seek (M = 4.23, SD = .63), employment options (M = 4.27, SD = .70), breadth courses (M = 4.25, SD = .95), and applying to graduate programs (M = 4.24, SD = .83). Students rated these items again on how much they learned using a 5-point scale (1 = Not at all; 5 = A great deal). Responses on these items ranged from 4.00 (applying to graduate programs, skills psychology majors learn, breadth courses) to 4.46 (capstone courses). The pattern suggested that students learned most about those topics that were important to them (correlation coefficients between item importance and amount learned were all over .70 (df(21), p’s <.001).

Participants reported the information was very helpful in increasing their understanding of the NAU Psychology major. To assess how helpful the event was, participants answered five more questions rated on 7-point scales, followed by two open-ended questions. Overall, students reported the event really helped them understand the basic curriculum in the NAU Psychology major (M = 6.5, SD = .91), the basic skills that a psychology major will learn (M = 6.18, SD = .91), and the value of the psychology major (M = 6.16, SD = .99). When asked if they thought the event changed their feelings about the major, 25% reported no change with another 20% reporting a 2, 3 or 4 point change on the scale (indicating not much change). Six attendees reported their feelings about the psychology major became much more positive (rated a 5 or 6 on the question “How do you feel about the psychology major now?” 1 = more negatively, 7 = more positively).

In their open ended comments, attendees requested additional information about the graduate school application process and about career planning after graduation. For information about upcoming presentations on graduate school contact John.Houser@nau.edu, the advisor for the Psychology Club. Help with career exploration and planning can be obtained at the Gateway Student Success Center, or by meeting with an advisor through the SBS Academic Services and Advising Center. Additional “Welcome to the Major” events will be held during the spring semester. We look forward to seeing you there!

Visit Our Website @ nau.edu/sbs/psych/

November 2013 Newsletter
National Study by Dr. Ann Collier

An active link to a national study just opened: We want to know about the meaning of handcrafts and textiles in your lives! Dr. Ann Collier (NAU, Psychology) and Dr. Kim Hahn (Kent State University Fashion School) are looking for participants from 18 to 100 of age with textile and handcraft experience to participate in an on-line survey that asks about the role of fiber arts (e.g., sewing, knitting, weaving, felting, lace-making) and handcrafts in your life, especially as it relates to fashion, psychological meaning, technology, and sustainable practices. The Survey is confidential and takes about 30 minutes! Please share this link with interested participants: https://kent.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_39lpqnNy65NAhJr.

Faculty’s Hidden Talents:
Our Favorite Things!

What does the song “My Favorite Things” and Lemon Tarts have in common? .... the secret (or not so secret!) talents of our departmental faculty! Prior to earning her doctorate in psychology, Dr. Dunbar was a pastry chef at the renowned Berkeley California restaurant Chez Panisse In October, Dr. Dunbar treated several faculty members to a lesson about how to make pie crust and pate brise. The group made pie crusts and enjoyed the group-made lemon tart! . It was delicious and a new “favorite thing” of those at this event! The song “My Favorite Things” doesn’t mention lemon tart specifically, but it does mention a lot of other nice things (Apple Strudel) and Dr. Chad Woodruff has been hearing this song a lot lately! Dr. Woodruff, Flagstaff’s newest discovered talent, will be performing the male lead (Captain Georg Von Trapp) in the Flagstaff Light Opera Company’s performance of “The Sound of Music!” You can read more about his upcoming performance in the Daily Sun http://azdailysun.com/getting-close/image_3b098be0-9546-57cb-b2d5-c87cdea8fb0f.html. Here he is pictured with Emma Hoover (Maria Rainer). The musical opens November 8 and runs through November 17.

Publications


Presentations


Grant Submissions

Collier, A: Letter of Intent for the Pilot Grants Program for a Preliminary Studies Grant titled: Developing an Obesity Intervention for Native American Youth Using a Community-Based Participatory Research Paradigm.

Announcements

Graduate Student Poster Presentations
Advanced Cognitive & Behavioral Neuroscience - November 21, 2013 11:30 am - 12:30 pm
The Franke College of Business, Room 207

Study Abroad in Peru this Summer
June 2 - June 27, 2014
Undergraduate & Graduate Students