



MEMORANDUM: Work Process Request

TO: Transfer Council
FROM: CCN Psychology Subcommittee
DATE: May 7, 2024
SUBJECT: Aligning a third, lower-division psychology course

Dear Transfer Council,

The CCN Psychology Subcommittee would like to thank the Transfer Council for their support and guidance with transfer-related concerns, especially issues related to Common Course Numbering, Major Transfer Maps, and the legislatively required reporting for such initiatives.

It is our understanding that the Transfer Council has tasked the Psychology Common Course Numbering Subcommittee with the alignment of a third course that meets the following criteria:

- 1) is offered at the lower-division level: required by SB233
- 2) is offered at a number of the community colleges (CCs) and Oregon public universities (OPUs): required by SB233
- 3) counts toward the psychology major: requested by TC co-chairs, not in legislation

This memorandum serves as notice from the CCN Psychology Subcommittee to the Transfer Council that the subcommittee is unable to reach agreement on selecting a third, lower-division psychology course for alignment. As indicated by the [CCN Faculty Subcommittee Charge](#), "If faculty cannot reach agreement on tasks, proposed solutions shall be brought to the Transfer Council in a summary document that contains the issue and each subcommittee member's position on the issue," (§IV). This memorandum serves as that document.

Vote on memo: 15 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain (Absent: Laura Jones, LBCC).

The CCN Psychology Subcommittee requests explicit direction on how to proceed, specifically with respect to the possible exemption of a third lower-division course alignment.

- Seven of eight CC members on this subcommittee, as well as nine non-member CCs, are in favor of aligning a third, lower-division psychology course (Columbia Gorge, Chemeketa, Lane, Clackamas, Linn-Benton, Mount Hood, Portland, Central Oregon, Treasure Valley, Umpqua, Klamath, Blue Mountain, Clatsop, Oregon Coast, Southwestern, and Tillamook). Rogue CC does not want a third transfer course.
- Six of seven OPUs are not in favor of aligning Lifespan Development, which is on the list of the [80 Most Transferred Courses](#); Five of seven OPUs are not in favor of aligning an introductory research methods course (an alternate suggested course). Three of seven OPUs are requesting an exemption from aligning a third, lower-division psychology course that counts toward major requirements (U of O, OIT, PSU). Four of the seven OPUs are open to the alignment of a third lower-division course, provided that this alignment does not impact existing course offerings (e.g., the conversion of an upper-division psychology course to lower-division).

In short, some of our OPU members support alignment of a third lower division course, others do not support alignment. Additionally, most institutions believe there is not currently a suitable, common lower division course

for alignment. Because there is not an obvious choice for aligning a third course, we are unable to proceed and request explicit guidance from TC on how to do so.

Community College Perspective:

Sixteen of the 17 CCs support the alignment of a third lower-division transfer course and do not support the request for an exemption from aligning said third lower-division transfer course. Sixteen of the 17 CCs believe they are the higher education institutions pushing for a third transfer course with a focus on students and believe that some of the OPUs see it as a threat to the integrity of their programs. While the CCs acknowledge there are issues and understand most of the OPU concerns, we are more student-oriented than program-oriented, and it is our position that alignment of a third lower-division course will provide strong benefits to transfer students for the following reasons:

1. Community colleges offer the widest door into higher education. Only being allowed to transfer two Introductory Psychology courses for credit in the PSY major puts transfer students at a disadvantage as this does not provide enough topic knowledge.
2. Transfer students get excited about Psychology by taking courses. Two courses over two years are not enough to sustain the interest of the average student. Also, if a student takes Psychology 201Z and 202Z in the first year, they are transferring without having been exposed to Psychology for a full academic year or more.
3. Many of the Psychology classes offered at our community colleges do not transfer as that named course; instead, they transfer as general elective credit. Adding a third course that counts toward a PSY major would help with purposeful transfer and help avoid putting students in a situation where they end up paying for the same or similar course twice, once at the 200 level and again at the 300 level.

As a STEM discipline and a hub science (one of the seven disciplines most cited in scientific research), the CCs propose Research Methods as the third transferable course in Psychology. Currently, three OPUs offer Research Methods at the 200-level with a fourth OPU offering support for alignment. When researching other Western states using the CCN model, we found that Research Methods was the most commonly aligned Psychology course, in addition to the two Introductory Psychology courses. Furthermore, a Research Methods course would help students learn valuable skills; in a Research Methods course, students learn how to review literature, design a study, submit it to the Institutional Review Board, collect and analyze data, and write about the findings in the appropriate APA style and format. This also provides opportunities for community college students to present research at undergraduate symposiums. In addition, the American Psychological Association (APA) has noted some of the issues and discrepancies with the barriers some universities are putting up for both students and CCs, notably issues of equity and the more personalized instruction often received at the CC compared to the larger classes common at universities. The APA's recommendations include both Research Methods and an initial Statistics course at the CC level (<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/09/barriers-community-college-psychology>).

Rationale for this Request, Public Universities:

This request has been initiated by our subcommittee in response to a subset of the OPUs who do not see alignment of a third lower-division psychology course as possible given the current requirements for alignment (provided by SB233 and the TC Cochairs). The other OPUs support alignment conditionally, and as noted above, the CCs are largely supportive of alignment. However, we all recognize the complexity of the situation and alignment of a third course presents significant challenges for many of our institutions even under the best of circumstances. Regardless, because of this disagreement, we are unable to proceed.

At the most basic level, our reason for disagreement stems from there being no suitable courses for alignment. Beyond [PSY 201Z Introduction to Psychology I](#) and [PSY 202Z Introduction to Psychology II](#), there are no common PSY lower-division courses that are offered at both Oregon community colleges and public universities (conflicting

with Criteria #2 above). Additionally, several of the OPUs do not accept additional lower-division psychology credits beyond PSY 201Z/202Z that count towards major requirements (conflicting with Criteria #3 above). Each of the OPUs have identified other institution-specific issues/concerns regarding alignment, and these are articulated below. However, there are some common concerns from the OPUs:

- As noted above, there are no common lower-division PSY courses across all CCs and OPUs.
 - Several OPUs don't accept additional psychology lower-division credit beyond PSY 201Z and 202Z to count towards psychology majors.
- There is concern among nearly all the OPUs that alignment of a third lower-division course will impact current upper-division course offerings.
 - e.g., A currently offered upper-division course will, due to seeming similarity with an aligned lower-division course, have to be aligned at the lower division.
- Per legislation, institutions are not required to add aligned courses to their catalogs. In cases where an aligned course is not offered at a particular OPU, transfer students will have a different foundation than non-transfer students.
- Across the OPUs, Psychology major requirements involve primarily upper-division coursework. Accommodating an additional lower-division course into the major for transfer students may create inequities.
 - Few lower-division psychology courses are offered at OPUs. In some cases, adding a third lower-division psychology course could require the addition of courses to the major and possibly increase the required number of credits for the degree.
 - Accepting a lower-division psychology course in lieu of an upper-division psychology course reduces the overall number of upper-division credits a student is completing as part of their major requirements, and this may place students at a disadvantage as they will be required to make up the missing upper division credits to meet the requirements for the degree.
 - Accepting a lower-division psychology course in lieu of an upper-division psychology course may impact other programs that require an upper division psychology course (e.g., an upper-division lifespan development course is frequently required by non-psych programs). Those students would then have to take an additional and/or different upper division course to satisfy programmatic requirements.
- Most of the OPUs have relatively small majors (e.g., 56 credits) with specific and intentional requirements. This small size advantages students by allowing them more credits to allocate towards general education, minor requirements, and/or other areas of interest. We believe it important to retain this characteristic of our majors. Correspondingly, we would be open to the alignment of a third course that counts towards general education or elective requirements, but not towards major requirements.
- Notably, several of the previously aligned non-PSY CCN courses are also required for psychology programs at the OPUs (e.g., WR 121Z, WR 122Z, COM 111Z, STAT 243Z etc.), either as a required course for the major or a required general education course. Therefore, where these are incorporated into a program, these programs already have three or more CCN courses.
- Issues specific to aligning Lifespan Development:
 - Some programs require this to be an upper-division course. Aligning this course at the lower division would thus impact students in both psychology and non-psychology majors, as well as the programs themselves (many non-psychology programs need this course to meet their accreditation requirements).

- Some programs (e.g., Oregon Tech) teach this course as an upper-division two-course sequence. Aligning it as a single lower-division course would necessarily reduce the focus on content in some areas.
- Issues specific to aligning one or more Psychology courses in the Research Methods sequence:
 - There is a great deal of variability in the way research methods coursework is taught/included across programs (e.g., as a required three-term sequence, as one lower-division course and one upper-division course, with a lab vs. without, etc.)
 - These courses have been designed and incorporated into the various programs to serve a variety of program-specific functions. Any attempt to align a single course would require some programs to re-align their entire curriculum to ensure that they do not lose the intended function.
 - Faculty-student relationships are a key factor in program completion. Many programs provide students with the opportunity to work with program faculty on research. These relationships often begin with a research methods class. Students who transfer research methods from another institution may not have the same opportunity to develop that relationship.
 - Student research projects that begin in research methods classes may develop into independent research projects that lead to high-impact educational experiences and beneficial deliverables (e.g., publications). A connection with the research faculty at the universities is a critical factor in the development of these projects.

Put succinctly, aligning a third psychology course that (1) is offered at the lower-division level, as required by SB233, (2) is offered at a number of the CCs and OPUs, as required by SB233, and (3) counts towards the psychology major, as requested by the TC Cochairs, would require the OPUs to make major modifications to the established psychology curriculum, as well as possible modifications to non-psychology program curriculum. Additionally, several members of the subcommittee are concerned that alignment of a third lower-division course may actually disadvantage students (e.g., see above). Moreover, many of the individuals on this subcommittee, beyond just those requesting an exemption, object to non-faculty bodies (e.g., state-level governing bodies) mandating major changes to faculty-established curriculum.

For detailed statements on the position of individual universities, see Appendix A.

Summary of [PSY 101 memo](#) (approved by Transfer Council on June 15, 2023):

- Although PSY 101 (Human Relations) is the 20th [most transferred course](#) across the state and is offered at 14 of the 17 community colleges (exceptions being Blue Mountain, Lane, and Southwestern Oregon), PSY 101 (Human Relations) is not offered at any of the 7 public universities and thus not included in any baccalaureate degree program. We proposed (and Transfer Council agreed) not aligning PSY 101 at this time, given that the course is not offered at any OPU, does not satisfy requirements for a major at any OPU, and is only accepted for general education credit at some (5) but not all OPUs.

Please provide a response to this memo, either in a Transfer Council meeting or via a memo to Jennifer Markey (transfercouncil@hecc.oregon.gov) and the CCN Psychology Subcommittee Co-chair(s): Zip Krummel (CGCC) and Ethan McMahan (WOU)

Thank you again for your continued service,

CCN Psychology Cochairs Ethan McMahan (mcmahane@mail.wou.edu) and Zip Krummel (zkrummel@cgcc.edu)

CC Transfer Council Cochairs Teresa Rivenes (teresa.rivenes@umpqua.edu) and Jose Coll (collj@mail.wou.edu)
 Donna Lewelling, Director of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, HECC
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Appendix A

Each of the Oregon public universities provides a description of the impact of aligning a third lower-division course on the psychology (and other) programs at their institution.

Institutional Partner	Position
EOU	<p>The psychology major at EOU has four 200-level courses required – PSY 201Z, PSY 202Z, PSY 222 (an APA writing course that must be a lower division course to meet the requirements for EOU’s University Writing Requirement), and PSY 223 (Introduction to Research Methods). We also offer two additional 200-level PSY courses which do not count toward the major – PSY 211 (Lifespan Development; offered as a service course for our pre-professional majors, particularly pre-nursing) and PSY 231 Human Sexuality (a legacy course from a now-retired professor’s area of specialty). In addition to the two 200-level required psychology courses in addition to PSY 201Z and PSY 202Z, majors need to complete 25 credits (five courses) of 300-level core psychology courses (generally topic areas covered as chapters in a General Psychology textbook), 15 credits (three courses) of 400-level psychology courses (specialty courses within a core area), STAT 327 (a research methods/statistics course which is offered by the psychology department), and a capstone course. We feel our psychology program provides both the foundational knowledge needed and the flexibility desired for students to be successful after they earn their bachelor's degree, whether they enter our program initially at EOU or they transfer into our program.</p> <p>Students are introduced to the topic areas of psychology in the two lower-division general psychology courses, and then explore these topics in depth in the upper-division courses. Alignment of a third psychology course that is part of our psychology major and that is offered at the community college level (other than an Introduction to Research Methods course) would add to the required number of credits for our psychology major (which is already at 65-66 credits). Any additional required course for the psychology major would reduce the flexibility students currently have to fulfill the remaining approximately 115 credits outside of the psychology major needed to meet the required 180 credits for graduation.</p> <p>We do not offer PSY 101, and do not plan to do so. We are not opposed to alignment of the Lifespan course or the Introduction to Research Methods course, as long as any such alignment does not impact our ability to offer our 300-level Child Psychology course or our 300-level research methods course (STAT 327). We are concerned that these two 300-level courses may be impacted by the 75% similar content constraint if we align either the Lifespan course or the Introduction to Research Methods course. EOU does not support the replacement of a 300-level psychology content course with a 200-level course.</p>
OIT	<p>Oregon Tech’s BS in Applied Psychology curriculum has been intentionally developed to provide a strong core curriculum with skills-based courses and requirements for applied experience. The majority of the courses are offered at the upper division level with only the introductory psychology courses (PSY 201Z and PSY 202Z) and abnormal psychology (PSY 215 and PSY 216) offered at the lower division. We accept lower division psychology transfer courses in place of similar upper division courses so that students are not asked to</p>

	<p>take redundant coursework. Our program has a significant number of free elective credits which can be filled with lower or upper division coursework so long as they meet the requirement for 60 upper division credits for the BS degree. We do not support re-classifying our upper division courses as lower division courses as this would impact the accrual of the requisite 60 upper division credits. We primarily offer 3-credit courses with several of the content areas taught as two 3-credit course sequences (e.g., Human Growth and Development I, Human Growth and Development II; Social Psychology I, Social Psychology II). These content areas are generally offered as one lower division 4-credit course at community colleges (CC). Aligning with the CCs would dilute the curriculum by reducing the content and contact hours for these courses. Furthermore, the majority of courses at Oregon Tech are offered as 3-credit courses. The alignment of other CCN courses has created scheduling issues as we attempt to fit 4-credit classes alongside 3-credit courses. Psychology courses fulfill social science general education requirements and minor requirements. Aligning a third 4-credit psychology course will impact schedules for students across majors. We are opposed to modifying our upper division courses to align with lower division courses. We do not offer PSY 101 and have no plans to require this course, however it can be used to fulfill a lower division elective in the program. Therefore, we would support alignment of PSY 101.</p>
<p>OSU</p>	<p>Nationally, Psychology is an upper-division major. With dual enrollment programs, all CC students have access to OSU advisors and the option to begin 3xx courses as soon as they complete PSY 201Z and PSY 202Z. We welcome dually enrolled students. This route leads to the lowest cost and fewest “lost” credits.</p> <p>We currently manually override degree requirements to allow students who have completed a 2xx course similar to a required 3xx course so that students do not have to retake those courses. The CCN process has caused us to re-evaluate this practice, which is the most transfer-friendly in the state but is not aligned with other institutions or visible to students, which we understand to be CCN goals.</p> <p>At OSU, we teach the first course in a 3-course stats/methods sequence at the 2xx level. We support aligning that course. We do not support a mandate to change major requirements to include that course, add a new course in the major, or change the number or which upper division courses count for the major.</p>
<p>PSU</p>	<p>At the lower division, PSU only offers 201(Z) and 202(Z). Developmental/lifespan psychology is taught at the 300 level as a core course. Our research methods requirement involves two possible three course sequences to be taken in order: Math/Stat 243Z, Math/Stat 244, and Psy 321 Research Methods OR Soc 396, Psy 320, and Psy 321 Research Methods. We do not support moving Psy 321 Research Methods to the 200-level. The research methods course sequences vary widely across the OPUs in terms of the nature, number, sequencing, and prerequisites. This is far beyond simply aligning a single research methods course. We support alignment of Psy 101 as a general survey lower division social science elective course introducing psychology as a field with objectives that are less in-depth and comprehensive as 201(Z) and 202(Z), but do not anticipate offering Psy 101 at PSU.</p>
<p>SOU</p>	<p>The Psychology major at SOU includes five lower division courses; PSY 201Z, PSY 202Z, PSY 211, PSY 225 & PSY 225L. PSY 201Z and 202Z are aligned in the spirit of CCN. Our curriculum</p>

	<p>doesn't include lower division elective coursework but in the most recent revisions to the major we expanded the number of elective credits required to allow for up to 4 credits of lower division elective credit to be transferred in and count toward the major. This creates the opportunity for students at the CC to take any course they like and transfer that to our degree without any loss of credits. Very often the course transferred is PSY 101. SOU does not offer PSY 101 and has no plans to require this course, however it can be used to fulfill a lower division elective in the program. Therefore, we would support alignment of PSY 101.</p> <p>In addition to PSY 101, students come to our major with lower division coursework in a number of content areas, including those which we require students to complete at the upper division. SOU requires 36 UD credits to be applied toward the major. In order to reduce course duplication, in the event a student transfers in lower division coursework that meets upper division content requirements, the student takes additional elective credits at the upper division to meet the 36 credits.</p> <p>It would be inappropriate to align PSY 211 as it is an orientation and advising course (two credits).</p> <p>SOU supports the alignment of a research methods course at the lower division. PSY 225 (four credits) covers the fundamentals of research methodology, excluding statistics. PSY 225L (one credit) is a lab class focused on statistical techniques for Psychology. These courses can be taken separately, and we often accept transfer courses from other universities which cover research methods topics, requiring students only take the last single credit statistics lab. It is important to note that while all OPUs offer a research methods course at either the lower or upper division, research methods is not universally offered at CCs. In order to achieve the greatest flexibility for students, our present degree requirements allow for, but don't require, the transfer of this course.</p> <p>SOU does not support aligning a third course that would replace an upper division content course. A specific impact could be students who were interested in and completed coursework for the content taken at the lower division would not be able to take the upper division course with the faculty who specializes in that area at the upper division without duplicating credits. This already happens but only occasionally. Formalizing this and aligning a content course would systematically exclude transfer students from being able to take the content course at the upper division without duplicating credits. While we encourage students' ability to explore the major at the lower division, that should not be at the expense of their ability to connect with faculty at the four-year institutions, which often happens in the classroom.</p>
<p>U of O</p>	<p>We are a student-centered program that has been intentionally designed for student-success for transfer and non-transfer students. Our program has been designed to allow for many lower-division preparatory paths to be a successful foundation for the upper-division coursework that is the core of the major. We require (and offer) only two lower-division courses in psychology (201Z and 202Z) to accommodate students who explore different paths prior to deciding on psychology as well as to accommodate transfer students who have a broad foundation of lower-division coursework which may include lower-division coursework in psychology or other disciplines. Three other aligned lower-division courses are already required for our degree plan (WR 121Z, WR 122Z, STAT 243Z) meaning a total of five lower-division courses aligned 'Z' courses are required and will transfer directly to the major. At the 100-level we do offer special studies topics as 199 (e.g.,</p>

	<p>independent study). Other general lower-division coursework could include a broad introductory course or lower-division electives.</p> <p>We do not see Developmental/Lifespan psychology as appropriate for alignment. It is taught at the 300 level as a core upper-division course that is integral to degree programs (such as the Ballmer institute). Research-methods is also not appropriate for alignment. It is taught as a three-course 300-level upper-division sequence foundational to the degree and integral for student-success in psychological sciences.</p> <p>We wish to emphasize that the requirements for the psychology major are flexible compared to many majors. A total of 68 credits are required for degree requirements. Of those credits, 56 credits in psychology courses are required, 48 of which must be upper-division (with the remaining 8 lower-division credits satisfied by 201Z and 202Z), and 16 of which must be taken in residence at the University of Oregon. The remaining 12 lower-division credits are met by WR 121Z, WR 122Z, and STAT 243Z.</p> <p>We are not opposed to accepting additional courses that are aligned among the community colleges or offered at some, but not all OPU's. However, aligning Research Methods and Lifespan at the lower-division is not in students' best interest to prepare them for specialized coursework and research experiences in the individual programs developed at the OPU's, each of which has a unique focus and specialization, a diversity that enriches students and the field of psychology more broadly.</p>
<p>WOU</p>	<p>WOU can accept a third lower-division course and supports alignment. The WOU psychology program accepts up to 16 lower division credits to count towards major requirements. Thus, in addition to accepting PSY 201Z (4 credits) and PSY 202Z (4 credits), 8 lower-division credits will be accepted, allowing WOU to accommodate a third lower-division course. Additionally, we believe that beyond PSY 201Z and 202Z, transfer students will benefit from completing a third psychology course at their CC, as this will better position them for success once they transfer to WOU. In other words, we believe it to be in students' best interest to align a third course and, as noted above, support such an alignment. However, we are concerned that alignment of Lifespan Development or a research methods course would, due to similarity, impact existing upper-division courses in our current catalog. Thus, we recommend alignment of PSY 101 or another course (e.g., one created by the CCN subcommittee) that will not impact existing WOU courses.</p>