

**Senate Curriculum Committee  
Report to Senate  
June 2016**

**CONTENTS**

**I. SUMMARY**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Items (4) That Do Not Require Senate Approval           | p. 2 |
| 2. Items (2) That Require Senate Approval (with 2 motions) | p. 3 |

**II. DOCUMENTATION**

pp. 4-7

1. Department of Digital Journalism and New Media
2. Department of Psychology

## **A. Items That Do Not Require Senate Approval**

### **1. Environment and Society Program**

Request to cross-list seventeen courses (from ANTH, BUSI, ECON, PHIL, POLS, PSYC, RELG, SOCI, & STS).

*Approved by the SCC.*

### **2. Irish Studies Program**

Request to update *Calendar* listings: (a) listings for IRSH in the Interdisciplinary Studies section of the *Calendar*, & (b) in the main listing of IRSH courses in the *Calendar*.

*Approved by the SCC.*

### **3. Department of Romance Languages (Spanish)**

Request to change the course description for SPAN 4663 *Don Quijote*.

*Approved by the SCC.*

### **4. Department of English Language and Literature**

Proposal for a special topics course: ENGL 3133 *Visual Texts*.

*Approved by the SCC.*

## **B. Items That Require Senate Approval (with motions)**

### **1. Department of Digital Journalism and New Media** ([documentation p. 4](#))

Proposal to revise a course: COMM 3023 *The Business of Communications* as COPP 3043 *Business Communications and Marketing*.

**MOTION: That the revisions to COMM 3023 (becoming COPP 3043) be approved.**

### **2. Department of Psychology** ([documentation pp. 5-7](#))

Proposal to revise the criteria for admissions to the department's Honours program.

**MOTION: That the revisions to the admissions criteria for Honours in Psychology be approved.**

## II. DOCUMENTATION (pp. 4-7)

### 1. Department of Digital Journalism and New Media

Proposal to revise a course: COMM 3023 *The Business of Communications* as COPP 3043 *Business Communications and Marketing*.

#### Background

During the past three years, the Interdisciplinary Major in Communications program has been phased out and replaced by a new program in Communications and Public Policy.

This is a proposal for a course revision to bring a COMM course into the new COPP curriculum.

#### *(a) Current course description*

##### **COMM-3023. The Business of Communications**

*This course will explore information management in the business and corporate worlds. Topics include the manner in which corporations respond to public issues and events, both positive and negative, and the influence of digital technology in communications and corporate communications. 3 credit hours.*

*Prerequisites: JOUR 1013, 1023.*

#### *(b) Proposed (revised) course name and description*

##### **COPP-3043: Business Communications and Marketing**

This course explores the role of communications in business settings, including professional writing, the power of narrative, the influence of social media, and the connection between communications and marketing.

## 2. Department of Psychology

Proposal to revise the criteria for admissions to the department's Honours program.

### **Rationale:**

Following a number of discussions, the Department of Psychology faculty members decided on December 11, 2015 to revise the criteria for admissions to the Honours program. The primary reasons that stimulated and guided our proposed changes centred on improving students' chances for success in their Honours work and their chances for being accepted into graduate programs in Psychology. We also strove to improve the clarity of the admission criteria for prospective students.

Proposed Change (i):

*Usually, students accepted to the Psychology Honours program will have a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher **for the last 60 credit hours** (in all courses, including those in the Winter term in which they are applying).*

Focusing on the academic performance for students' most recent 60 credit hours more closely reflects the portions of applicants' academic performance that are considered by Psychology graduate schools. The proposal of the Psychology department to adopt a similar approach was to allow our admission process to more closely approximate that of many graduate programs in Psychology.

Proposed Change (ii):

*In Psyc 3933 and Psyc 3943, the minimum grade has to be **A-***

Psychology as a discipline adheres to a scientist-practitioner model for both training and practice. Central to this model is the development of an in-depth understanding of research findings and an ability to apply research and analytical methods. As such, Advanced Statistics (PSYC 3933) and Advanced Research Methods (PSYC 3943) are designed to provide training for the knowledge areas central to the scientist-practitioner model. The Psychology department's proposed changes to the minimum required grades in these courses were chosen to improve students' chances of achieving a high level of performance in the Honours program thus also improving their chances to be admitted to graduate programs in Psychology.

### **Summary of Proposed Changes:**

- i) Usually, students accepted to the Psychology Honours program will have a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher **for the last 60 credit hours** (in all courses, including those taken in the Winter term in which they are applying).
  - ii) In Psyc 3933 and Psyc 3943, the minimum grade has to be **A-**.
- If approved, these changes would come into effect for applications due January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, for the 2017-18 Academic Year.

## Current Calendar Text & Requirements:

### **Admission to Honours**

Entrance into the Honours program is competitive and the number of spaces available is limited. **Usually, students accepted to the Psychology Honours program have a GPA of 3.7 or higher.** Given the workload of the Honours Program, students with a cumulative GPA lower than 3.7 are encouraged to seek the advice of the Department Chair before applying. Successful applicants will normally meet the following criteria:

- a. completion of PSYC 1013 and PSYC 1023
- b. completion of PSYC 2013, PSYC 2023, PSYC 3933, PSYC 3943, with a minimum grade of B in each (prior to entry to the Honors [sic] program)
- c. satisfactory indication of interest in pursuing a research-based graduate degree or career involving research skills, following graduation from St. Thomas
- d. satisfactory indication that a tentative arrangement for pursuing a thesis project has been made with a member of the Department.

[Grey box] *Important: As early as possible, students planning to apply to the Honours program must discuss a course plan that adequately prepares them for the Honours thesis, and subsequent career goals, with either the Department Chair or a full-time Faculty Member in the Department of Psychology. Students interested in applying for the Honours program in Psychology should submit to the Chair of Psychology by January 31 of their third year:*

## Revised Text (with new admission requirements highlighted in yellow):

### **ADMISSION**

Students who wish to complete an Honours degree in Psychology normally apply to the Department Chair by January 31 of the academic year before one plans to begin the Honours program. At this time, students apply, in writing, describing their probable area of focus for the Honours thesis project. **Usually, students accepted to the Psychology Honours program will have a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher for the last 60 credit hours (in all courses, including those taken in the Winter term in which they are applying).** Given the workload of the Honours Program, students with a cumulative GPA lower than 3.7 are encouraged to seek the advice of the Department Chair before applying.

Successful applicants will normally meet the following criteria:

- a. completion of Psyc 1013 and Psyc 1023 (or their equivalents);
- b. completion of Psych 2013 and Psyc 2023 (or their equivalents), with a minimum grade of B and no grade lower than a C+ in any Psychology course;
- c. completion of Psyc 3933 and Psyc 3943 (or their equivalents), with a minimum grade of A- and no grade lower than a C+ in any Psychology course;
- d. indication of interest in pursuing a research-based graduate degree, or a career involving research skills, following graduation from St. Thomas University;
- e. indication that two or more full-time faculty members in the Psychology Department have expressed interest in supervising the student in a thesis project.

***Important:*** *Students planning to apply to the Honours Program must discuss a course plan that adequately prepares them for the Honours thesis, and subsequent career goals, as early as possible in their program, with either the Department Chair or some other full-time faculty member.*