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University College of Alberta

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4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis)

Planning Guide for 2010-11

Application Deadline: April 15, 2010

PLANNING GUIDE for 2010-11

4-Yr Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (Applied Emphasis)

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PLANNING GUIDE for 2010-11
 4-Yr BA in PSYCHOLOGY (Applied Emphasis)
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I. INTRODUCTION

This Planning Guide is a resource only. The Academic Calendar takes precedence concerning requirements. Please contact the Student and Enrolment Services Office at 780-479-9220 regarding these requirements.

This Guide is intended to help psychology students at Concordia make decisions about the type of undergraduate program they want to take. If you are considering applying for admission to the 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis), you should begin now. This admission requires a separate application, even if you are currently enrolled at Concordia. Students typically apply to the 4-Yr BA **during the second year** of their degree. Students who have completed the 3-Yr BA can also apply for entrance to the four-year program.

A. Types of Psychology Degrees at Concordia

1. Three-year degree

This degree gives you an excellent general education. Students who choose this undergraduate program often plan to earn another degree or diploma in a related field such as law, education, or business. The three-year psychology degree has no practicum component. Rather, it is a general liberal arts degree.

2. Four-year degree - Applied Emphasis - BASIC Program

(One field placement - Psy 486)

Both of the four-year psychology degrees offered at Concordia have an Applied Emphasis. This means that the focus is on applying psychological theory to help solve real-world problems. This degree is meant to prepare you for work in the field of psychological service and/or to continue in graduate training in programs such as counselling or clinical psychology.

If you are accepted into the 4-Yr BA in Psychology, you will take at least one full year field placement. Doing a field placement, or practicum, gives you an opportunity to gain experience by working in a community agency or organization where you can apply psychological knowledge to real life situations. Students in the Basic program complete specialized course work and a one-year practicum.

3. Four-year degree - Applied Emphasis - ENHANCED Program

(Two field placements - Psy 486 & 496)

If you were successful in your first field placement, and want to enhance your skills, you can take a second full year placement (Psy 496). The Enhanced program also requires an additional 6 credits in psychology, along with the requirements for the Basic program.

B. Advantages of the Applied Emphasis

This program can give you a chance to see what it's like to use psychology in a practical setting. You might give prison inmates an IQ test, work on a suicide crisis line, talk to teens struggling with crystal meth addiction, teach a person with schizophrenia to play volleyball, help a group of teen mothers discuss their problems, or teach a pre-schooler how to ask for a cookie without yelling. All of these experiences give you opportunities to make connections between the psychology courses you take and real people with real problems.

Most undergraduate psychology programs offer only the academic component of this subject area. In the 4-Yr BA (Applied Emphasis), you have an opportunity to explore the practical side of the discipline of psychology. Specialized courses are designed to support and deepen your experiences in the field placement. The program is also designed to help you and your classmates bond as a group. Students have opportunities to share their experiences with each other and also to consult with their professors.

The Applied Emphasis in psychology helps you identify and practice "micro-communication skills" such as observing, listening, paraphrasing, and responding to others in an effective way. These skills are emphasized in your field placement, seminar, and in specialized courses such as Communication and Counselling. They are the foundation necessary for later becoming a psychologist - a profession that requires a minimum of a Master's degree. If you are planning to go to graduate school, you must have a four-year degree.

The communication skills you learn and the experience you gain also give you the qualifications to do a variety of jobs after your BA. Some of the jobs graduates from this program have done include the following: youth worker in a teen emergency shelter, family support worker (educate and teach parents at risk of abusing or neglecting their children), psychologist's assistant (administer and score IQ tests), front line worker at a prison, behavioral specialist (e.g. working one to one with an autistic child), research assistant to a professor or psychologist (e.g. summarize research articles, phone and invite parents of ADHD children to participate in a survey), suicide distress line follow-up worker, and worker in a halfway house for women trying to leave the sex trade.

Former students have said the "package" of courses and field placement(s) in this program gave them valuable contacts in the work place and good credentials for graduate school. The 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis) can give you a head start in acquiring the practical skills needed for the human services field.

C. Is the 4-Yr BA for You?

Although this program can be very rewarding, the academic and practical demands are intense. Grade point averages alone do not predict success and you will need additional personal qualities to get the most out of the program. Consider the following questions when deciding whether or not this program is right for you:

- Do you have an enthusiastic, positive attitude?
- Are you willing to work hard?
- Do you complete all your assignments and papers on time?
- Is your attendance excellent?
- Are you willing to sacrifice your personal time (e.g. sports, socializing) for school?
- Do you get along well with all types of people?
- Are you a good listener?
- Do you readily admit when you have made a mistake?
- Do you handle conflicts and misunderstandings in a mature, neutral manner?
- Do you have a professional appearance?

Do you have a criminal record?

(If you have a criminal record you are **ineligible** for the 4-Yr BA in Psychology at Concordia unless you have obtained a pardon. **Pardons take a minimum of two years.**)

D. Forensic Courses and Forensic Studies Minor

The Psychology Department also offers forensic courses and a Forensic Studies Minor. These courses have been developed in response to interest in forensic psychology and job opportunities in corrections.

Psy 350 Corrections and Forensics: Criminal Behavior - open to **ALL** students who have completed both Psy 104 and Psy 105 OR Soc 100. The course will give an overview of the criminal justice system, corrections and criminal behavior, and aspects of psychological assessment and treatment of criminal offenders.

Psy 452 Forensic Psychological Assessment - open **ONLY** to students in the 4-yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis). This course covers present practices on forensic psychological assessment and treatment, including how to read a warrant and the Criminal Code of Canada, prepare hospital file summaries, administer a complete fitness for trial evaluation, as well as teach the basics of risk and criminal responsibility assessment. Further details are in the Academic Calendar.

Forensic Studies Minor - open **ONLY** to students in the 4-yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis). Students in this minor will learn about forensic assessment, criminal behavior, and the corrections system in Canada. **Psy 350 Corrections and Forensics: Criminal Behavior** and **Psy 452 Forensic Psychological Assessment** are required for this minor. Details for the Forensic Minor and a Sample Program are on pages 12 and 13.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE 4-Yr BA in PSYCHOLOGY (Applied Emphasis)

A. Field Placement I and II (Psy 486 and 496)

Field Placement I (Psy 486) and Field Placement II (Psy 496) are full year university courses. They are worth 6 credits each towards a psychology degree. All students in the Applied Emphasis psychology degree take Field Placement I. If you choose to complete the Basic Applied degree, you would **not** continue on to the second field placement. If you have credit in Psy 486 and want to complete the Enhanced Applied degree, you would go on to do Field Placement II, which is a second consecutive full year practicum. The two field placement courses involve both field work and a weekly seminar.

Students doing Field Placement I (Psy 486) will be either in the third year of their degree program or their fourth year. Students doing their second consecutive placement (Field Placement II, Psy 496) will be in the fourth and final year of their degree program.

1. Field work

The field work component involves spending time at an agency or organization that gives you an opportunity to develop communication and/or research skills related to psychology. A Field supervisor is assigned to oversee your learning at the agency. You would spend 160 hours (approximately 8 hours per week) at your placement during the academic year.

2. Seminar

A weekly seminar accompanies each field placement course. The seminars, led by the professor or instructor in charge of the course, are designed to support your work in the field. The seminars for Psy 486 and Psy 496 are combined when there is a speaker or other special event.

3. Workshops and Field Trips

During the first semester there is a Suicide Prevention workshop on a Saturday. There may be additional Saturday workshops and field trips (e.g. tour of prison) during the academic year.

4. Psy 486 and Psy 496 Evaluation and Grades

Grades for Psy 486 and Psy 496 are “Pass (P)” or “Fail (F)”. You will need to complete all components of the course (field placement, seminar attendance and discussion, assignments, workshops) satisfactorily in order to pass.

B. Additional First Semester Required Courses: Psy 305 and Psy 332

When you take Field Placement I (Psy 486), you also take Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology (Psy 305) and Communication and Counselling Skills (Psy 332) during the first semester. The Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology class helps you develop the reasoning skills needed to make good decisions in the field. The Communication and Counselling class gives you the opportunity to practice basic listening and interviewing skills.

C. Mandatory Attendance

Attendance at seminar classes, workshops, field trips, ethics classes, and communications and counselling classes is mandatory. This ensures that all students receive the necessary training. It also gives you and your classmates multiple opportunities to develop a sense of camaraderie. If you do not participate in all the required activities you may be asked to withdraw from the program.

D. Strongly Recommended Courses: Psy 433, Psy 434, and Psy 435

You should make every effort to take Psy 433 (Personality Assessment) and Psy 434 (Intellectual Assessment) during the course of your degree. Personality Assessment is offered every Winter term and Intellectual Assessment is offered every other year. Students who complete these courses have the skills to work as psychological assistants and this can be an advantage when looking for work and/or applying to graduate school. These courses are required in order to be **eligible** for some placements.

Psy 435 (Clinical Psychology) acts as a capstone course to the four-year degree and should be taken if at all possible. It examines counselling theories and their application to a broad range of real-life problems. Students have an opportunity to integrate their course work and field experiences as they work with case studies.

E. Summary of First Semester Requirements

Following is a summary of your requirements during the first semester of the 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis). You will take all three required courses together during the fall.

- 1) Psy 486 (Field Placement I)
 - Field work - 8 hours per week at an agency (total of 160 hours Sept-April)
 - Weekly seminar class – 1 hour 15 minutes (led by an instructor)
 - Suicide Prevention Workshop - one Saturday (additional Saturday workshops may be required)
- 2) Psy 305 (Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology)
- 3) Psy 332 (Communication and Counselling Skills)

III. FIELD PLACEMENTS

The Psychology Department has an ongoing relationship with agencies and organizations to provide you with training opportunities related to psychology. Each agency has a Field supervisor who works with you personally. The **Field supervisors are all volunteers** who donate their time and energy to students as a community service.

The range of available field placements varies from year to year. You can get a list of current placements from either the Student and Enrolment Services Office or the Psychology Department. Following are some examples of field placements: distress line, women's jail, assistant to neuropsychologist on children's cancer ward, pre-school for children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Effects, treatment centre for troubled teens, psychologist's office (administer and score IQ tests), forensic psychiatry, and rehabilitation ward for patients with schizophrenia.

IV. APPLICATION PROCESS - APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 15, 2010

It takes some planning to make sure you have the courses required to be eligible for the applied psychology program. A sample program is outlined on page 11. The **Academic Calendar** (available at the Student and Enrolment Services Office) takes precedence regarding course requirements. Your other source of information is the **application package**, also available at the Student and Enrolment Services Office. It includes an Application Form and 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis) Admission Application Supplement. Before you register for your second year, check the current Academic Calendar and make sure that you will have all of the necessary requirements by the end of the school year.

*REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS BEGINS IN FEBRUARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 ADMISSION;
APPLICANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY EARLY.*

A. Separate Application for 4-Yr BA

The four-year program is a competitive entry program and requires a separate application, even if you are currently enrolled at Concordia. Students typically **apply during the second year** of their course work. (There are some students who apply while completing the 3-Yr BA in Psychology. They can do so in the Winter semester of their third year.) Assessment of applications commences in early February, so you are encouraged to apply early. Applying early gives you the widest selection of courses for the upcoming year. It also enables an Admissions Advisor to give you quick feedback if you have missed a course or requirement in your application, allowing you to make up any deficiencies in time for September.

Christmas break is a good time for you to **begin preparing your application**. The current Calendar lists the application deadline (April 15, 2009 for September 2009 admission). Read all the application information in the Calendar, Application Form, and 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis) Admission Application Supplement.

1. Volunteer/Work Experience Record and Additional Training Record

This information demonstrates your commitment to the field of human services and the experience you might bring to a field placement. Relevant experience can include working at a summer camp, volunteering at a hospital, being a receptionist in a doctor's office, helping in a school, or coaching volleyball for inner city children. Contact an Admissions Advisor or the Field Placement Coordinator in the Psychology Department for a list of volunteer opportunities.

2. Suggestions for Statement of Intent

This essay is very important for your acceptance into the program. To be successful, you will need to write a number of drafts. Address the essay "To Whom It May Concern." The acceptance committee consists of all members of the Psychology Department, and naming them all is unnecessary.

The Planning Guide 2010-11 is a resource manual only. Check the Academic Calendar and/or contact the Student and Enrolment Services Office at 780-479-9220 for requirements. (Revised Sept/09)

The body of the essay should be specific. Outline your reasons for wanting to enter the program so that your readers have a good understanding of your intentions. Describe the strengths and experience you have that make you a good candidate for the program. Describe what you expect to gain from the training in your course work and field placement. Describe your understanding of the knowledge base and personal qualities required to be a worker in a helping profession. Identify the key elements of professionalism. Give reasons why you think you would be an effective helper in the human-services field.

End the Statement of Intent by thanking the recipients for their time in considering your application. Write in prose and, if you are not sure about your writing ability and grammar, get someone skilled in writing to read your letter. Writing that is filled with grammatical and spelling errors makes a bad impression and you want to avoid this.

3. Suggestions for Confidential Assessment Forms

a) choice of references: 2 general referees and 1 academic referee (teacher/professor)

Give a lot of thought to your choice of referees: the knowledge, training and experience of your referees have an impact on the overall quality of your application. For example, a good reference from a doctor who has observed you work part-time in his or her office will be given more weight than a good reference from a neighbor who has observed you interact with his or her children. If your references are not relevant (e.g. boyfriend, cousin) you will not be as competitive as other applicants.

Choose people who know something about your work ethic and your character. Employers, supervisors at an agency where you do volunteer work, and pastors are some examples of people you might approach.

Only three references will be considered in your application. **ONE** of your three referees must be an instructor or professor at a post-secondary institution or a high school teacher/principal at a school you attended. Instructors and professors in the Psychology Department at Concordia **cannot** give you a reference.

b) contacting references

Call each person and ask if he or she would be willing to give you a positive reference. Do not assume that a reference will be positive.

Send each person a reference package consisting of:

- i) a letter thanking them for their time
- ii) a Confidential Assessment Form from the Application Package (or Confidential Assessment Form - Academic)
- iii) a stamped envelope addressed to the Student and Enrolment Services Office at Concordia.

Each person you have selected must mail his or her Confidential Assessment Form directly to the Student and Enrolment Services Office. This ensures confidentiality. If you deliver the reference in person to the Student and Enrolment Services Office,

only sealed reference forms with the referee signature on (or over) the flap of the seal of the envelope will be accepted.

About two weeks after you have sent out the reference packages, **call your referees back** to see if they have completed the package and mailed it to Concordia. Remember to thank them again.

B. Selection Process and Interview

Your application will be evaluated based on your academic standing, Volunteer/Work Experience Record, Statement of Intent, and Confidential Assessment Forms. Following the initial review of applications, qualified applicants will be invited for an interview. This interview will assess your non-academic qualifications, such as degree of maturity and motivation, initiative, ability to communicate, personal qualities and interests, and overall suitability.

C. Security Clearance Check

If you are offered admission to the program, you will be required to complete a Security Clearance Check. This check authorizes the police to search their database and provides written confirmation that you do not have a criminal record.

You should **SUBMIT YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE TO THE EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE (OR RCMP) IN MID-JUNE**. It can take six weeks or longer to process. You cannot be issued a confirmation schedule or take any courses in the Applied Emphasis program unless your returned security clearance is on file. Instructions for completing the Security Clearance Check form will be given at the time of the offer of admission.

Applicants with a **criminal record** are **ineligible** for a Psychology degree with Applied Emphasis unless they have obtained a pardon. Pardons take a minimum of two years.

D. Early Registration for Third Year Courses

You are encouraged to participate in early registration. However, you cannot register in the 4-Yr BA courses until you have been accepted into the program. As a result, during early registration you should choose courses that fulfill the 3-Yr BA requirements, especially Psy 405 (Special Topics in Psychology). This enables you to complete a degree even if you are not admitted to the Applied Emphasis program. If you are admitted to the 4-Yr BA, you will then make the necessary course changes and register in the restricted courses (Psy 486, Psy 305, Psy 332) for the fall.

V. IF YOU ARE ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM

A. Contact the Field Placement Coordinator

The Field Placement Coordinator (FPC) is the liaison between the Psychology Department and various community agencies and organizations. If you are accepted into the 4-Yr BA in Psychology you will be asked to contact the FPC before the deadline given in your acceptance letter. Otherwise, the Psychology Department will assume you are no longer interested in the program. You will need to stay in touch with the coordinator throughout the summer until your practicum assignment has been finalized.

B. Check your E-mail and Contact your Field Supervisor Promptly

You will be give a list of field placements and asked identify your interests. The FPC will talk to you about your preferences, experience, goals. You will then be matched to an organization according to its requirements. Be sure to check your e-mail for messages from the FPC. After you have been referred to an agency, **contact your Field supervisor promptly** for an interview. Failure to do so could jeopardize your eligibility for a placement.

C. Plan Your Schedule Carefully

If you are accepted into the 4-Yr BA in Psychology, you will need to keep outside commitments (e.g. work, sports) to a minimum in order to manage the combined course work and field work required during the first semester. Plan your schedule so that you have large “blocks” of time available for your placement. Many students book all their classes for Tuesdays and Thursdays, when the required courses Psy 486, Psy 305, and Psy 486 are usually scheduled.

Some placements require weekday evening shifts and/or weekend shifts. If you have a flexible schedule with large blocks of time free for field work, you will have a greater variety of field placements to choose from.

You can get more information about the 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis) in the Field Placement Student Guide available at the bookstore.

VI. PLANNING YOUR DEGREE

A. Sample Program: 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis)

Below is an example of a recommended course sequence for the 4-Yr BA in Psychology. This is just an example of the most efficient use of time and other programs that fulfill program requirements are acceptable.

YEAR ONE - Fall	Winter
Psy 104 (Basic Psy Processes)	Psy 105 (Indiv & Social)
YEAR TWO - Fall	Winter
Psy 211 (Statistics)*	Psy 319 (Research Design)
Psy 233 (Personality)	Psy 339 (Abnormal Psy)
Psy 275 (Brain & Behavior)	
Psy 281 (Behavior Change)	Psy 385 (Applications of Learning)
YEAR THREE - Fall	Winter
Psy 305 (Ethics)	
Psy 332 (Communication Skills)	
Psy 486 (Placement I - full year)	Psy 486 (Placement I - full year)
Psy 431 (Psychometrics)	Psy 433 (Personality Assess) or Psy 434 (Intellectual Assess) (Psy 434 offered every second year)
Psy 311 (Intermediate Stats)	Psy 333 (Group Counselling)
YEAR FOUR - Fall	Winter
Psy 496 (Placement II - full year)	Psy 496 (Placement II - full year)
Psy 433 or Psy 434 (Psy 434 offered every second year)	Psy 435 (Clinical Psychology)
	Psy 321 (Qualitative Research)

*The **Psychology Department strongly recommends that students take Psy 211** (Statistics) rather than an equivalent course. If at all possible, you should take Psy 211 **during the Fall term of your second year**. Many students find this course challenging. A grade of C- is required for admission to the 4-Yr BA in Psychology (Applied Emphasis). Registering in the Fall term gives you the option of repeating the course in the Winter term if this is necessary to achieve a satisfactory mark. Psy 211 is not always offered in Spring and Summer Session.

B. Forensic Studies Minor: Requirements

Course	Title	Credits	Pre-requisite	Co-requisite
Required Courses 18-24 credits required, to include:				
Psy 433	Personality Assessment	3	Psy 339 & Psy 431	NA
Psy 350	Corrections and Forensics: Criminal Behavior	3	Psy 104 & Psy 105 OR Soc 100	NA
Psy 452	Forensic Psychological Assessment	3	Psy 350	Psy 433
Soc 225	Criminology	3	Soc 100	NA
Soc 327	Criminal Justice Administration in Canada	3	Soc 225	NA
One of:				
Soc 224	Sociology of Deviance & Conformity	3	Soc 100	NA
Soc 321	Youth, Crime, & Society	3	Soc 100 & Soc 225	NA
Soc 377	Sociology of Youth	3	Soc 100	NA

C. Sample Program: Forensic Studies Minor

This minor is available **ONLY** to 4-Yr BA Psychology students. Please note that this is just a sample program. There are variations in electives that would fulfill the requirements. Please contact the Student and Enrolment Services Office for details.

	Fall Semester	Winter Semester
Year 1	Eng-100 level Rel-100 Psy 104 Science LOE	Eng-100 level Soc 100 Psy 105 Science LOE
Year 2	Fine arts-100 or senior level Psy 211 Psy 233 Soc 224 Rel 100 or 200 level	Phil-100 or senior level Psy 319 Psy 339 Psy 275 Soc 225*
Year 3 (Applied Emphasis)	Psy 305 Psy 332 Psy 431 Psy 311 Psy 486	Psy 350* Psy 333 Psy 433* Psy 435 Psy 486
Year 4	Soc 327* Psy 321 Psy 377 Rel-senior level Psy 496 *indicates core course for minor	Psy 452* Soc 377 Psy 434 Writing 300 Psy 496