APS Conference 2013
Learning and Teaching Symposium

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Majoring in psychology – is it worthwhile?

- There is a growing recognition that graduates from a 3 year degree in psychology are questioning the value of such degrees.
- Is it OK to offer so many undergraduate places in psychology in the absence of sufficient professional training places?
Student Lifecycle (Lizzio 2011)

- a framework to guide an integrated response to our students’ experiences and outcomes across the years of their degree program from entry to graduation and beyond
Aim of Griffith approach

- To enable students to understand what they are gaining from a psychology degree,
- to apply this knowledge to their own lives and
- to exit with as psychologically literate citizens
Psychological literacy

Psychological literacy

psychologically literate citizens “use their knowledge of psychology to problem-solve in ethical and socially responsible ways that directly benefit their communities”

(McGovern, 2010, Cranney & Dunn, 2011)
How does the student lifecycle work?

A developmental model of the evolution of student *identity*.

We adopt a *stage-responsive* approach that will encourage:

- Better student engagement and learning
- Stronger links between staff and students
- ↑number of satisfied and effective graduates

Will this improve the PL of our graduates, and assist them to gain meaningful employment?
• STUDENT LIFECYCLE

• TRANSITION TOWARD UNIVERSITY
Aspiring & Exploring

Clarifying & Choosing

Joining & Engaging

Committing & Preparing

Working for Early Success

Building on Success

• TRANSITION IN

• TRANSITION THROUGH

• TRANSITION TOWARD
Aspiring & Exploring
Clarifying & Choosing
Joining & Engaging
Committing & Preparing
Working for Early Success
Building on Success
Focusing Future Success
Partnering & Continuing

• STUDENT IDENTITY

• POTENTIAL STUDENT IDENTITY

• GRADUATE IDENTITY

• PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY
What is the identity of a 3 year psychology graduate in Australia?

Do academics care?

Are students getting what they sign up for?
What are the implications of student lifecycle thinking?

1. Students’ identities, needs and expectations evolve and mature.
2. The markers they use to judge ‘quality’ correspondingly change.
3. Effective programs are responsive to and facilitate student maturity.
4. The domains of evolution are reasonably predictable and amenable to intervention.
One roadmap......
The ‘Five-Senses’ of Evolving Success

- Sense of Identity
- Sense of Connectedness
- Sense of Resourcefulness
- Sense of Capability
- Sense of Purpose
5 Senses of success

- Sense of capability – developing your sense of efficacy, knowledge, proficiency and mastery
- Sense of purpose – why study psychology, what do you hope to be able to do with this degree?
- Sense of resourcefulness – we will help develop your sense of resilience
- Sense of connection – with fellow students, work in teams
- Sense of identity – as a psychology graduate
Student Lifecycle: Evolving identities, needs and contributions

School of Applied Psychology: Griffith University
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Layers of the lifecycle

• Program Lifecycle
Layers of the lifecycle

- Program Lifecycle
  - Course Lifecycles
Layers of the lifecycle

- Program Lifecycle
  - Course Lifecycle
    - Task
      - Task
        - Task
Can we map Psychology Graduate Attributes with the meta framework of student lifecycle?

- Graduate Attribute 1:
  - Core knowledge and understanding of psychology
- Graduate Attribute 2:
  - Research methods in psychology
- Graduate Attribute 3:
  - Critical thinking skills
- Graduate Attribute 4:
  - Values, research and professional ethics
- Graduate Attribute 5:
  - Communication skills
- Graduate Attribute 6:
  - Learning and the application of psychology
What is the identity of a 3 year psychology graduate in Australia?

Are the Graduate Attributes the ‘best’ ones for our 3 year graduates?

Are our programs/courses what 3 year graduates need?

Are we truly developing psychologically literate graduates with a sense of purpose and mastery and with realistic employment options?
What are we doing to foster student identity?

- Through the following:
  - Connections with FYC, SSA, UG Program convenor, 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} year leaders, tutors and mentors
  - Psychology and Life series
  - Undergraduate student council
  - Psychology Student Association
  - Student subscribership of Australian Psychological Society
Where are we up to?

- Early days
- Program review/curriculum renewal
- Developing agreed philosophy and program coherence
- Mapping Psychology Graduate Attributes and Senses of Success
- Bigger picture of AQF/ APAC Standards, Global citizen, psychological literacy/Griffith rules and regulations
- Enlisting/encouraging staff – attitude change
How can we measure this?

- Survey all students across the years (end October)
- Measure the senses of success
- Measure psychological literacy
- Focus groups (in early 2014)
- Destination survey (of 3 year graduates)
- Follow up in 2014 of 3 year graduates
Student Partnerships: Better Outcomes

Quality student-centred *relationships* in conjunction with product *quality* enhances the likelihood of students recommending our programs.

Students *identification* with their School is strongly predicted by their perceptions of the quality of their *fair treatment*.

Alumni *engagement* is predicted by the recollected quality of treatment as a student.
But……

- Will our students be getting a decent deal?
- Will we succeed in graduating psychologically literate citizens and help create a better society?
Where is the data?

Hopefully we’ll be able to answer these questions next year!

See you in Tasmania!