PROPOSAL FOR LOWER DIVISION GE SCIENCE REQUIREMENT
NATURAL SCIENCES (B2)

PROPOSED COURSE: PSYC 1000: (INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY)
DEPARTMENT: PSYCHOLOGY
DATE: 2-24-05

Proposal Requirements:

1. Course Syllabus (please see enclosed copy)

2. Narrative Description:

Students should be able to demonstrate broad science content knowledge in the life sciences and be able to describe fundamental concepts in the life sciences that distinguish them from the physical sciences.

Psychology 1000 is a survey course of the entire field of psychology that includes broad content from both the social sciences and the life sciences. Much emphasis is placed on the physiological basis of behavior, and the evolution of physiological structure and behavior throughout the animal kingdom (note the “songs of canaries” topic mentioned in the syllabus!) Evolutionary Psychology is dealt with in the section on Heredity and Kinship and Development. The structure of the brain and nervous system is dealt with in regard to Sensation and Perception, Conditioning and Learning, Memory, and Abnormal Psychology.
Assessment of knowledge of these topics will be done by class exams.

Students should be able to demonstrate the application of quantitative skills (such as statistics, mathematics, the interpretation of graphical data, etc.) to life sciences problems.

The course begins with a section on Research methods, including statistical analysis. Data are consistently presented in graphical form and students are expected to interpret these graphs. Student’s ability to understand statistical concepts and interpret graphs will be tested in class exams.

Students should be able to demonstrate a general understanding of the nature of science, the methods involved in scientific investigations, and the value of those methods in developing a rigorous understanding of (living systems?) Students should be able to identify the difference between science and other fields of knowledge. Students should be able to distinguish science from pseudoscience.
The scientific method is emphasized in Psychology 1000, and there is constant attention paid to the value of this method in contrast to the more traditional ways of thinking about human behavior and perception. Different types of research methodologies used to conduct scientific experiments are dealt with.

Belief in pseudoscience is possibly more prevalent regarding the subject matter of psychology than in any other natural science. Psychology 1000 deals with these beliefs directly; for example the section on Sensation and Perception deals with the topic of extra-sensory perception. Students understanding of these issues will be tested in class exams.