

Society for the Teaching of Psychology - 2011 Presidential Task Forces

1. Empowering Teachers Taskforce

Charge: To generate practices and initiatives to empower and connect teachers of psychology across the spectrum.

Specific target groups include:

Early career and minority teachers, special interest groups (SIGS) across divisions, psychology departments, Council of Undergraduate Psychology,

Specific activities could include ways to: Establish STP department spokespeople, develop a national undergraduate database of teachers around the nation, expand the STP mentoring service, establishing STP division liaisons, guidelines to ensure a slot for explicit-diversity/SoTL/early career faculty on STP programs, develop and expand ToPIX to provide more user-friendly resources to facilitate teaching, and establish personal contact with all new members.

2. Advancing Pedagogical Science Taskforces

APST- I Charge: Develop criteria and procedures to establish an annual STP-SoTL Writing Workshops where we invite faculty who have data on teaching/learning and equip them to leave with a manuscript.

APST-II Charge: Develop practices and materials to support those doing and using SoTL for gaining jobs, getting tenure and promotion.

Specific activities could include: Creating an online SoTL Lesson, and exploring further outlets for SoTL (e.g., with Div. 15, Education and APS), collecting published evidence that faculty using an SoTL approach can demonstrate enhanced learning, show how SoTL makes a difference in student learning outcomes.

3. Strengthening Psychological Literacy Taskforce

Charge: Develop practices and materials to foster the assessment of skills for each APA learning outcome and debunk myths about psychology.

4. Model Teaching Competence Taskforce

Charge: Develop teaching competencies to guide, inspire, and reward teachers of psychology.

Specific activities could include: Developing criteria for a 'Master Teacher Certificate', creating teacher-training modules (short online guides to using different pedagogies or techniques successfully), establishing adjunct teaching awards, and 'Conference Toolkits' –Guides to develop and host local workshops for teachers to develop skills and learn best practices.



Empowering Teachers Task Force
Sue Frantz & Maureen McCarthy, Co-Chairs

Date: 5/16/2011

Charge: To generate practices and initiatives to empower and connect teachers of psychology across the spectrum.

Division of Task Force. We divided the task force into two subcommittees.

The individual subcommittee led by Sue Frantz examined ways to connect individual faculty with other faculty. Members: Kathryn Morris and Laura Lunsford

The organizational subcommittee led by Maureen McCarthy examined ways to connect faculty at the organizational level. Members: Roxanne Sullivan, Janine Buckner, and Melissa VanderKaay Tomasulo.

The co-chairs would like to thank the members of the task force for their thoughtful work.

Task Force Recommendations: Individual Level

At the individual level, the task force has recommendations in four main areas: Just-in-time teaching support, mentoring and learning communities, conference communication, and social networking.

Just-in-time teaching support

We frequently see on the teaching of psychology listservs faculty calling for help with a teaching issue or content question. For those who are willing to post in a public forum, this works well. Not surprisingly we rarely see emails from faculty who are seeking help with a problem colleague or department chair. How can we better serve faculty who have issues or concerns best addressed in a less public forum?

Ask an Expert (anonymous, public response)

People who have specific questions could ask an expert who would respond rather directly than post their issue publicly on the listserv. This might be an alternative for people who don't want to express a particular issue to an entire list, or for people who don't have an ongoing mentor relationship.

How it might work

"Ask an Expert" button on the STP website generates a web-form where a person could ask a question. Optional form field asks for email address if the person would like a personal response.

"Ask an Expert" editor receives the request. The editor maintains a list of volunteers with identifiable expertise in different issues related to teaching, such as conflict resolution with students or colleagues, dealing with difficult students, coping with a class that has staged a rebellion.

The editor identifies someone willing to craft a response. A version of the question masking any information regarding the instructor or their institution and the response is posted to the STP blog.

Indicate that questions will be answered in a particular time period (a week?) on the STP blog. It might also drive more individuals to read the STP blog.

Resource People (personal response)

Market the current mentoring service as a list of resource people, rather than as a source of mentors. These are people a person would contact directly for a one-time or specific question. Since those who are most likely to seek out mentoring are graduate students and new faculty, they generally have multiple issues they would need a mentor to address. Seeking out a mentor for each issue is not tenable.

Rationale: Mentoring research suggests that expecting a protégé to contact an unknown person listed on a web site may not be the best way to promote mentoring relationships (see below for further development of these ideas). However, having a list people who could provide expert resources might be quite useful.

Consider listing examples of types of questions (maybe they scroll down the page on the side) as a way to encourage individuals to query the experts. Ideally the expert would respond through the STP system in such a way that the question asker could rate the helpfulness of the response. Alternatively there might be discussion boards that are monitored by experts, although with a rating of how helpful the response was. Apple has this, for example, on their FAQ and Tech Support discussion boards. We could have a teacher support discussion board?

Clarify how one gets listed as a resource person – Consider inviting the APA Div 2 Fellows to so serve as they have already been vetted as experts.

Highlight the resource people by including a few quotes that showcase recent questions and answers.

Mentoring/learning community program

We propose two programs that would provide ongoing support: One-on-one mentoring and faculty learning communities.

One-on-one mentoring

Mentees would be recruited from new members and graduate students in the STP. This program will target graduate students and new teachers (high school or college) who have less than 3 years of teaching experience. Invitations might be issued twice a year to reduce the logistical burden of matching mentees and mentors. Mentees would complete a short online form that identifies their needs of a mentor, it may have a series of check boxes covering common issues faced by faculty, each with space for additional comments.

Mentors would be recruited from among the STP membership who have 5 or more years teaching experience. Mentors would complete a short online form to identify areas in which they would be comfortable mentoring others, e.g. teaching high school; learning new technology, navigating tenure. After the first year a drop down list of common needs and strengths could be identified.

Program Expectations.

- Duration: individuals agree to commit to 12 months of contact on weekly/monthly basis?
- Time Commitment: About 1 hour per week.
- Mentee Goals: Within the first month the mentee and mentor develop a professional development plan that focuses on mentee goals for the coming year to be achieved with support and guidance from the mentor.
- Complete a year end survey to assess the program.

Matching: A mentor coordinator would match a mentee with a mentor based on the sorts of issues the mentee would like guidance on and the institutional type, e.g. high school versus four-year college).

Coordinator Role: The coordinator would maintain a database of the matches and send quarterly reminders to see how things are going, if there needs to be a change, etc. At the end of 12 months the pairs would be surveyed about the success of the program.

Learning Communities

Small groups (5-8 persons) would be formed based on common interest. The learning community coordinator could create the groups based on interests expressed by those seeking a learning community or the person could advertise the creation of a few learning communities. For example, “We’re convening 4 learning communities targeting these topics: Teaching large sections, exploring different technologies in teaching, working with undergraduates in research, and getting a job at a community college.”

Each learning community would be provided with a facilitator selected by the learning community coordinator. Each group would decide how often they would like to meet and by what means, e.g., email, monthly conference call, bi-weekly web conference. Learning communities would be encouraged to produce a document of resources related to their topic to OTRP but it would not be a requirement.

Expectations of time commitment need to be explicit (e.g., one year) for both learning community facilitators and participants.

Conference communication

While conferences have always been powerful networking tools, they can be intimidating for new attendees. Are there ways to better connect individuals with each other? Can conference presenters better connect with their audience? Given the state of budgets at educational institutions, can we better connect with the people who are unable to physically attend or who are attending an online conference?

Ways to connect individuals who are physically present at a conference

Consider making use of technology such as BackChan.nl that would allow audience members to communicate with the presenters and each other using their mobile devices.

Ways to connect individuals who aren’t physically present at a conference

Volunteer bloggers could provide live updates from STP conferences, such as Best Practices. During STP’s web conference, provide a way for participants to communicate with each other or with the people who are physically attending. Provide a mechanism for synchronous or asynchronous discussion to continue post-conference.

Social networking

When we asked for comments from members of the PsychTeacher, TIPS, and PT@CC listserv, the majority of the 30+ respondents said that they didn't particularly want to check one more place for teaching of psychology communication (see <http://titanpad.com/IQVEJRPvEo> for all of the comments). Of those who are on Facebook, they wanted to keep it for personal use. Twitter users thought a daily twitter feed would be useful. The small number of respondents also speaks to the lack of interest.

While social networking for the sake of social networking isn't a popular idea, targeted social networking, such as an STP book club through GoodReads, may be a popular service among some of our members.

Task Force Recommendations: Organizational Level

We discussed connecting at the **regional level**. Regional connections continue to be a significant challenge due in part to the limited direct connections for interaction with STP on a regular basis. STP recently revised the regional coordinator for programming. We anticipate that STP will continue to expand teaching related programming through the newly revised position. Programming is central to the mission of STP, so these efforts will continue to empower teachers.

Connecting across organizations can also be a significant challenge. In 2009, the Council of Teachers of Undergraduate Psychology (CTUP) successfully merged with STP and this unification helped to strengthen the single voice for teachers of psychology. We are recommending that renewed efforts to unify the voice of teachers of psychology might be undertaken through connections with additional organizations.

We are recommending that the President contact the **Association of Heads of Departments of Psychology (AHDP)** to consider how STP might partner with AHDP to offer a more substantial network of Heads of Departments of Undergraduate Psychology. AHDP currently offers an annual meeting for Heads, but attendance is largely dominated by Heads on the east coast. It might be worthwhile to consider how this offering can be expanded to reach Heads/Chairs nationally. It may also be useful to consider how community college heads (e.g., coordinators) might be involved in this meeting. If STP can offer the infrastructure to expand the meeting, AHDP might be receptive.

We also recommend connecting with the **Council of Undergraduate Psychology Programs (CUPP)** to see if they might be interested in a similar type of connection with STP. This Task Force cited the need for additional department data to aid with program review. STP is partnering with the APA Education Directorate to collect data from departments. CUPP may be interested in working with STP to facilitate this effort in a unified way.

Finally, we recommended that STP explore a relationship with the **Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD)**. (<http://www.podnetwork.org/>)

EXECUTIVE MEETING AGENDA



Saturday, August 6, 2011

8:00am – 9:50am

Renaissance Hotel

Meeting Room 6

In Attendance: Pam Ansborg, Ted Bosack, Norine Jalbert, Diane Finley, Elizabeth Yost Hammer, David Kreiner, James Freeman, Linh Littleford, Sue Frantz, Ann Ewing, Ruth Ault, Dana Dunn, Regan Gurung, Eric Landrum

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Gurung at 8:02am.

2. Comments from the Executive Director

Managing the membership of STP is a larger responsibility than it has ever been. APS provides a link for its members to join STP; unfortunately, there is a complicated billing process in working with APS and APA membership rosters.

Membership initiatives add complexity to accurately tracking STP members; initiatives include invitations out to people to get free memberships from STP, and perhaps discounted dues for other divisional dues. Targeted efforts to increase diversity members are valued but could be complicated in working with APA Member Services. There is a budget line item in place for membership, but the tracking logistics need to be worked out. Affiliated members are tracked differently from APA fellows and associates. Database tracking must be accurate for us to have accurate reporting.

Diane Finley asked about TOPSS and PT@CC – could there be dues reductions for these affiliates? APA Member Services does not track the memberships in STP as linked to TOPSS and PT@CC membership. Tracking memberships will be a logistical challenge. Discussion followed about just giving the free memberships (as opposed to offering rebates)? Would rebates be a better route? Implementation of a W-9 for a rebate to individual members might be necessary. Would it be preferable to cut a check to divisions to avoid individual payments to new members. Linh Littleford reported some increased interests from specific ethnic psychologists groups.

Membership issues have mushroomed to prevent archivist/historian work by the Executive Director (ED). It was recommended that someone else has to have a specific task or duty to complete archivist/historian functions, with some of the tasks likely including collaborating with

APA archives, scanning, and storage. The STP Secretary could assist in performing archivist duties.

3. Empowering Teachers Taskforce Report

Task Force co-chair Sue Frantz reported on the activities of the Empowering Teachers Task Force. Diane Finley stated that APA has launched a social networking initiative. Currently STP has a FAQ feature on its website. Discussion followed about the task force-recommended “Ask an Expert” feature. APA may have some existing resources that can assist in these efforts. Diane Finley mentioned existing infrastructure through APA. About 65% of current STP members are not APA members.

There was some discussion about one-on-one mentoring and potential overlap with STP Mentoring program; however, it appears that no one is currently using the mentoring program. Mentors must take care when offering advice about confidential issues. Sunsetting the current mentoring program was discussed.

Motion: I move to revamp the mentoring program in line with the recommendations of the report from Empowering Teachers Task Force.

[Secretary’s Note: The entirety of the task force recommendations can be found in the 2011 STP APA Executive Committee meeting book, pp. 134-137.]

Moved: Elizabeth Yost Hammer

Second: Norine Jalbert

Motion passed unanimously.

Linh Littleford reported that she wanted to be part of the mentoring with regard to diversity initiatives. CUPP should be contacted to be made aware of STP resources. President Gurung plans to reach out to these types of organizational leaders regarding undergraduate programs.

Norine Jalbert mentioned stepping stones programs—with one application to look at undergraduate standards and APA Guidelines. These types of resources could be shared with the Association for Heads of Departments of Psychology conference held in Atlanta in November as well as CUPP.

4. Vice Presidents for Awards Proposals

Pam Ansburg reported on her progress to completely survey current STP grants and awards committee chairs and to consider the development of standardized application and award procedures. One proposal to be discussed regards whether an applicant must be a STP member to be eligible for grant funds. Perhaps EC members should not be eligible to receive awards.

Discussion followed about Recommendation Item #3 to the “Proposed Policies to Include in Policies and Procedures Manual for All STP Grant Programs”—