

NITOP 2020
Participant Idea Exchange

Addressing Enrollment and Retention in the Psychology Major

The number of traditional aged college students is decreasing. While the psych major has always been popular, the major is not immune to demographic changes. Psychology programs also find themselves under attack due to their connection to the liberal arts and concern regarding the practicality of a bachelors in psychology. Psychology departments must be prepared to encounter these challenges.

Many psychology departments do not have an explicit plan to recruit and retain students because it has traditionally been a popular major. The changing demographics will mean that we need to be more proactive in recruiting and retaining majors.

The purpose of this participant idea exchange is to examine the enrollment and retention numbers of psychology majors and discuss the implications of these changes on the major. Topics of discussion will include trends in enrollment, recruiting psychology majors, how effectively to graduate transfer students and those that declare the major late, and the benefits and limitations of offer areas of concentration or tracks in the undergraduate psychology major.

- Are there any noticeable changes in enrollment patterns within your major? How do you attract, retain, and best serve underrepresented minorities and first-generation students?
- Are your majors coming in declared or do they declare or transfer to the major later in their college career? How does this impact retention, curriculum, and advising?
- Do you have tracks, concentrations, or emphasis areas within your major? Do you have any interdisciplinary programs within your department? If so, how have these opportunities benefited your majors?