

Website updates

NEW CONTENT

PLAT2002 Conference programme and registration forms available at:

http://www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/plat2002_conference.html

OTHER INTERESTING SITES

Psychology museum

<http://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/home.html>

Psychology labs and online psychological tests

<http://inst.santafe.cc.fl.us/~mwehr/labindex.htm>

Teaching effectiveness programme

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tep/>

The World Wide Web Virtual Library: Statistics

<http://www.stat.ufl.edu/vlib/statistics.html>

Psychology Teaching Tips Faculty Centre

<http://www.mgarrison.com/baron/is/bistt.html>

The Psychological Experiments Library (PXL)

<http://www.uni-mannheim.de/fakul/psycho/irtel/pxl.html>

Happy New Year!

We look forward to another active year working with departments and individuals to support excellence in the learning, teaching and assessment of Psychology across the full range of curricula and activities.

ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme: Imminent call for proposals

The call for proposals for Phase III of ESRC-TLRP will be published in January. The Programme aims to support research which will lead to improvements in the achievement of learners of all ages, in all sectors and contexts of education, training and lifelong learning throughout the UK. Phase III will focus on post-compulsory education and lifelong learning. The remit also covers people moving between learning in different sectors, including transitions from school, and teacher education. Funding available is over £11m from the HEFCE, the Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Executive.

As with earlier phases of the Programme, the core objective will be to support research which focuses on raising attainment. This will be pursued through partnerships between practitioners and policy makers with researchers in all stages of developing research projects. Three interconnected research themes have been identified.

1. Learners and learning (research questions: how are learners' identities shaped by educational and training experiences; how do learners' biographies influence their attitudes to new learning; how can learners' motivation be maximised; how can learners' image and self-confidence be enhanced; how can learners' repertoire of learning strategies and styles be extended; how can the learners' point of view be put to best use in the design and management of learning experiences; how can learners' identities, motivation, styles, strategies and perspectives be linked to enhanced learning)

2. Teachers, trainers and learning environments (which characteristics of teachers lead to effective and appropriate learning; what is effective practice and how can it be taught or otherwise spread; what are the design characteristics of effective learning environments; what characteristics of assessment systems maximise learning and what is the impact on learning of teachers' and trainers' engagement with these systems; what are the characteristics of cutting edge developments in training in different parts of the post-compulsory sector; what are the cost-effectiveness parameters of various forms of provision; what are the professional, workplace and relational considerations that enable teachers and trainers to enhance learner's outcomes most effectively)

3. Learning communities (how are teaching and learning cultures formed and shaped; how do these cultures interact with each other; how can different kinds of organisation become learning organisations and be transformed into communities with a capacity for continuous improvement; how can teachers' and trainers' capacity to enhance learning best be achieved; what are the impacts of education and training policies on organisational and individual provision for learning, and what are the cost-benefit implications; what conditions facilitate the appropriation of new learning by practitioners and learners and its embedding within everyday practices, individual identities and institutional cultures. what processes, at the individual and organisational level, maximise improvements in the professional provision for learning; how do power and conflict within learning settings affect the availability and effectiveness of opportunities for learning; how do accountability and funding structures shape teaching and learning cultures)

Further information is available from the TLRP website at:
www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP/

The LTSN team University of York

Nick Hammond, Director
n.hammond@psych.york.ac.uk

Annie Trapp, Manager
a.trapp@psych.york.ac.uk

Ben Coulthard, Web & publications
b.coulthard@psych.york.ac.uk

Kerry Martin, Information officer
k.martin@psych.york.ac.uk

Karen Criddle, Secretary
k.criddle@psych.york.ac.uk

Lucy Zinkiewicz, Research officer
l.zinkiewicz@psych.york.ac.uk

Catherine Bennett, Research officer
c.bennett@psych.york.ac.uk

University of Strathclyde

Christine Howe, Partner site director
c.j.howe@strath.ac.uk

Sarah Tweedie, Project officer
sarah.tweedie@strath.ac.uk

Emma Truswell, Project officer
emma.truswell@strath.ac.uk

Andy Tolmie, Tony Anderson & David Warden
are associated with LTSN Psychology.

LTSN Psychology Advisory Board Members

Martin Conway (Chair) representing
AHPD
M.A.Conway@durham.ac.uk

Nik Chmiel representing BPS
N.Chmiel@qub.ac.uk

Carol McGuinness representing BPS
(DTRP)
C.McGuinness@Queens-Belfast.ac.uk

Evie Bentley representing ATP
bentleve@hhc.ac.uk

Arlene Gilpin representing LTSN
Education
A.Gilpin@bristol.ac.uk

Christine Atherton representing
PsyPAG
fidget.one@lineone.net

Nick Hammond, LTSN Psychology
Annie Trapp, LTSN Psychology
Christine Howe, LTSN Psychology

Taking control of your CPD

Lin Norton, LTSN Psychology specialist coordinator in the area of pedagogical action research, recently demonstrated her enthusiasm for applying research to her teaching at a meeting organised by LTSN Psychology at Aston Business School. In the morning session Lin encouraged us all to reflect on "what's going wrong with our teaching", to make changes and then to evaluate whether (and why) the change was successful or unsuccessful. Lin's approach is essentially pragmatic and can be small-scale, manageable in a busy timetable, immediately applicable and extremely satisfying. As an added bonus we can share our findings by publishing the research and thus contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning within psychology.

In the afternoon, we were encouraged to identify five problems in teaching and learning encountered by our students or ourselves and share these with the group. From these lists two problems were chosen and, using Lin's ITDEM model, developed as collaborative research projects. By the end of the day, the group were in no doubt that Lin's enthusiasm for researching one's own teaching is infectious! More information about Lin's approach, and an example of how it is being used in improving teaching practice, can be found in the first issue of LTSN Psychology's new journal, Psychology Learning and Teaching.

Further meetings to identify and develop research projects are planned. If you would be interested in hosting such a meeting in your department, or if you would be interested in joining a special interest group for action research in the teaching and learning of psychology, please contact a.trapp@psych.york.ac.uk.

Wanted! LTSN Specialist co-ordinators

The deadline for the next round of applications for specialists (and miniprojects) is fast approaching (31st January 2002). The role of a specialist co-ordinator is to stimulate discussion and debate in particular areas of teaching and learning and to encourage the collation and sharing of expertise in particular areas or methods of teaching. There are currently twelve LTSN Psychology specialists working within the network (for details see <http://www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/specialists.html>).

We would particularly encourage applications from specialists interested in:

- topic areas, for example: social psychology, developmental psychology
- issues relating to widening participation and accessibility
- curriculum design issues, accreditation and modularisation
- generic skills, in particular oral communication training within psychology degrees. The current emphasis on generic skills means that training in oral communication is a growing feature of Psychology degree courses. This raises a number of issues for departments, for example, how should such training best be approached, how should it be co-ordinated with the delivery of course content, and how should it be assessed?

For further details of how to apply see: http://ctiwebct.york.ac.uk/LTSNPsych/Webdocs_not_nof/Experts_applic_form.htm

PLAT2002 Conference

18th - 20th March 2002, University of York
Earlybird registration closes Monday 18th February

PLAT 2002 registration is now open

Registration is now open for PLAT 2002, the Psychology Learning and Teaching Conference, which will be held at the University of York in March this year. PLAT is an international conference series, sponsored by LTSN Psychology, and serves as a forum for the discussion and exchange of information on research, development and good practice relevant to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning of psychology.

Keynote speakers

We are pleased to welcome two influential keynote speakers to PLAT 2002: Professor Stephen Newstead, University of Plymouth, will consider the question "Examining the examiners: why are we so bad at assessing students?" and Professor Robert J Sternberg, Yale University and APA President -Elect, will close the conference with a talk on "Teaching psychology for successful intelligence".

Conference topics

The conference topics will provide a forum for the transfer and take-up of knowledge and practice within Psychology learning and teaching. Papers, panel discussions, posters, workshops, tutorials and presentations from invited speakers will cover issues concerning:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Research and Theory
- Departmental Issues
- Policy in Higher Education

Visit the PLAT 2002 Website

The draft conference programme will be available from the conference Website from 10th January. Full details of PLAT 2002, including conference registration fees, information about evening social events and an online registration form, can also be found on our Website:

http://www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/plat2002_conference.html

Integrating Research Into Teaching Practice in Psychology (R2P) Project

In October last year LTSN Psychology received funding from the LTSN Development Fund for a one-year research project focussing on how psychology research and knowledge (such as psychological theories, or research on particular groups of students) can be applied to various problem areas in psychology teaching practice. The R2P Project, as we've dubbed it, has three parts, the first two of which are underway:

- A review of the literature on research-based psychology teaching practice (as opposed to content);
- Consultation with teaching staff about the main problems encountered in psychology teaching; and
- Case studies of research-based psychology teaching initiatives within the UK that touch upon some of these problems.

A recent email sent round the LTSN Psychology contact list asking about teaching problems encountered resulted in a small number of responses (more would be appreciated!), with a number of problems raised in each.

LTSN Psychology Specialists

Renée Bleau, Research Methods and Statistics

Angela Clow, Psychobiology, Physiological Psychology, Psychophysiology

Paul Gardner, Research Methods and Statistics

Siobhan MacAndrew, Innovative Assessment Methods

Lin Norton, Pedagogical Action Research in Psychology

Paul Kenyon, Authoring web-based lecture support materials

Kevin Silber, Virtual Learning Environments

Humphrey Swann, Experiential Learning

Michael Lewis, Teaching demonstrations in Cognition and Perception

Joe Levy, Teaching demonstrations for theories in Cognitive Psychology and the Psychology of Language

Rosaleen McCarthy, Neuropsychology and Cognitive Neuropsychology, Neuropsychiatry and Neuroscience.

Mark Turner, Educational Psychology

For further details see:

www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/specialists.html

LTSN Psychology Miniprojects

HowToGuides: a help facility to aid students' use of SPSS and Minitab

Psychology Applied Learning Scenarios

Increasing inter-university student collaboration

Essays are not the only way: an evaluation of the efficacy of two innovative assessment methods

Developing psychology students' ability to read and write about primary resources

The effectiveness of psychology seminars delivered via WebCT as compared with traditional methods

Are tutorials over videoconferencing a viable alternative to traditional face-to-face tutorials?

Introducing interactivity into an on-line health psychology resource

Fostering critical thinking and autonomy - the learning self achievement record (LASER)

Developing guidelines for the supervision of undergraduate qualitative research in Psychology

For further details see www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/miniprojects.html

These problems fell into four main themes:

- System-wide issues, such as large numbers and heterogeneity of students, lack of resources, and modularisation;
- Problems relating to the teaching of specific fields or topics in psychology, such as research methods, cognitive psychology, and factor analysis (perhaps due to the fact that these areas focus on process rather than content?);
- Problems relating to teaching methods, such as overreliance on and structuring of lectures, student placements, and groupwork; and
- Issues to do with student understanding and learning, such as lack of motivation, difficulties with symbolic and abstract thinking, lack of understanding of the nature of psychological theorising and models and of the nature of scientific research and analysis, and lack of open-mindedness and curiosity.

Interestingly, the fourth category dominated the responses, and in many ways are the most challenging issues that psychology teachers have to address, and the ones which most could benefit from the application of psychological research and knowledge.

The third part of the study focuses on a small number of psychology teaching initiatives — new teaching practices, forms of assessment, classroom activities, or course structures — based on psychology research and knowledge. These may be quite recent innovations, thoroughly established, or even coming to an end. We plan to thoroughly document and evaluate these projects, so that they can serve as models for subsequent initiatives. If you're involved in such a project, or are interested in becoming involved, I'd love to hear from you.

Findings from the project will be broadly disseminated in the form of reports, articles, and presentations, with a presentation planned for the PLAT conference in March. Hope to see you there!

Lucy Zinkiewicz (l.zinkiewicz@psych.york.ac.uk)
R2P Project Officer

Reviewers wanted

Reviews of the following texts and their supplementary materials will be published in forthcoming issues of Psychology Learning and Teaching (PLAT). Please contact Kerry Martin (k.martin@psych.york.ac.uk) if you wish to review any of the following:

- Davidson, G.C. & Neale, J.M. **Abnormal Psychology**, 8th Edition
- Fraser, C. and Burchell, B. **Introducing Social Psychology**, 1st edition
- Glassman, W.E. **Approaches to Psychology**, 3rd edition
- Huffman, K. Vernoy, M. & Venroy, J. **Psychology in Action**, 5th Edition
- Levy, B. & Servan-Schreiber, E, **Secrets of the Mind**, (plus 2 CD-ROMs)
- Moore, D.S. & McCabe G.P. **Introduction to the Practice of Statistics**, 3rd edition (plus CD-ROM)
- Moore, D.S. **The Basic Practice of Statistics**, 2nd edition (plus CD-ROM)
- Scott, P. & Spencer, C. **Psychology: A Contemporary Introduction**, 1st edition
- Weiten, W. **Psychology - Themes & Variations**, 5th edition
- Wollfolk, A. **Educational Psychology**, 8th edition (Plus CD-ROM)

Forthcoming Events

If you are interested in attending any of the events below, look at the **LTSN Psychology web site** or contact Karen Criddle for further details:
k.criddle@psych.york.ac.uk

FDTL4 bid preparation meeting

Wednesday 9th January, LTSN Psychology, University of York

PLAT 2002 Conference

Psychology Learning and Teaching: integrating research and practice

18th - 20th March 2002, University of York

PLAT is an international conference series, sponsored by LTSN Psychology. PLAT 2002 serves as a forum for the discussion and exchange of information on research, development and good practice relevant to the teaching and learning of psychology.

Keynote Speakers:

Professor Robert J. Sternberg,
Yale University
Professor Stephen Newstead,
University of Plymouth

Registration at: http://ctiwebct.york.ac.uk/LTSNPsych/PLAT2002/Registration_Details/registration_details.html

Contact details

LTSN Psychology
Department of Psychology
University of York, York YO10 5DD
Email: itsnpsych@york.ac.uk
Web: www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)1904 433154
Fax: +44 (0)1904 433181

LTSN Psychology, Strathclyde
Centre for Research into Interactive Learning
Department of Psychology
University of Strathclyde
40 George Street, Glasgow G1 1QE
Tel: +44 (0)141 548 2582
Fax: +44 (0)141 552 6948

Don't forget that the deadline for proposals for the next round of LTSN Psychology miniprojects is 31st January 2002.

For details see:
<http://www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/miniprojects.html>