**Observations**

On the day I visited this class, I met for a conference with the instructor before the class. During our meeting, Ms. Bichel informed me that she will not be teaching the 1818 section next year as she will be leaving the school; and there is not another instructor on staff who meets the requirements to teach a 1818 section of this class. During our conference, Sandy indicated that the biggest obstacle she perceived was the requirement for the masters' in psychology. I did meet with the principal before leaving the school, however, to indicate our willingness to work with a replacement if there was someone who would be willing to acquire those credentials over time.

Sandy recounted that former students who have taken her 1818 section of General Psychology report back that they felt “set up for success” having taken this class and that those who did not take it for 1818 credit still found that the 1818 section prepared them very well for General Psychology classes they later took in college.

Sandy is an accomplished instructor who I have seen in action before. She is very organized, uses a variety of assignments, and manages student learning with skill. She speaks directly and clearly to students, she is a very relatable and accessible instructor. On the day I visited, I observed very creative active learning by students in which Sandy gave class time for final preparations for group presentations they started when I was there. Sandy interacted with each team before their presentations, and then facilitated their actual presentations, and then elaborated on each one with “value-added” learning that reinforced and extended content of the student presentation. All seemed seamless. The students’ presentations were demonstrations that instructors often carry out for the whole class, however Sandy scaffolded each team’s ability to conduct a more involved demonstration for their classmates. In addition, these presentations incorporated multiple modes of learning (by the instructor’s design) such that students needed to discuss key terms, provide notes for their peers, and a short quiz as well as the demonstration component itself. Impressively, Sandy’s comments at the end of each presentation demonstrated intentionality as she quite clearly had specific knowledge she wanted the students to master that applied to content learned in general (as opposed to a single sensation).

The class I observed emphasized factual knowledge, i.e., concepts, vocabulary, anatomy. The only element that I observed missing in this particular day was students’ showing more evidence of their knowledge about the science upon which the factual knowledge they were presenting was based. However, the knowledge that was on display was an important foundation for understanding more about the science which produces it. And in fact, many General Psychology instructors emphasize the “facts” because the science underlying it is fairly technical and specialized.

In addition to rich in-class activities like these, the syllabus describes a variety of active learning assignments including writing assignments in APA style and until this year a research project. She noted that the block schedule that was adopted by the school this year does not permit sufficient time to include the research project anymore.

The syllabus for this course, along with course aims and content, are similar overall to on-campus offerings of this course. The instructor expressed that she strives to teach this class in a college manner and talks to the students about her efforts in this regard.

I brought to Sandy’s attention that her syllabus was missing the name of the textbook and the 1818 academic honesty statement. Of course, as she will not be teaching this class next year, there was no future action to be taken.

**Student Involvement: What are your impressions of student interest and involvement?**

Student involvement and engagement was strong and positive. This class was a good example of peer-to-peer learning. On most teams, there was evidence that one or two students emerged as team leaders. Overall students seemed aware of what was expected of them and followed through in a mature and responsible fashion. Notably, and to the instructor’s credit, her students also seemed relaxed and positive in mood. During presentations, students laughed and seemed to enjoy their classmates’ efforts to engage them in learning that had elements of fun. All in all, Sandy achieved a very positive classroom environment for learning.
Student Assessment: Are the depth and rigor of assessments equivalent to on-campus offerings?

Please request to review some assessments for this course section.

Sandy utilizes a variety of assessments, including exams and writing assignments but also shorter in-class graded active learning exercises. For example, I was given a copy of the handouts created by each team for their presentations. Sandy also shared a sample of a creative project she uses to help students learn about the brain in which students are tasked with creating a "Brain Book" which they use compose a story in which they must include all the parts of the brain embedded into an engaging storyline with illustrations.

Instructor’s marking and grading: Does the instructor seem comfortable evaluating student work?

Sandy shared the rubric she uses for grading the "Brain Book" assignment (see above). She clearly delights in and is proud of her students' efforts to demonstrate what they are learning. Her feedback was genuine and positive on a very good example of student work from this assignment. She did not express any problems in evaluating student work.

If you had the opportunity to address the class were there any comments/questions?

We are particularly interested in items pertaining to 1818ACC policies, procedures or practices.

I was introduced at the beginning of class and given a few minutes at the end of the period to talk about research I conduct and my role as undergraduate studies director at SLU and to answer a few questions students asked about careers in psychology.

Additional Comments

N/A

Visit Summary

Is the course section consistent with an on-campus offering: □ Yes □ No

Please indicate if the Syllabus contains the content below:

- Descriptive overview of the course: □ Yes □ No
- Learning outcomes: □ Yes □ No
- Assessments: □ Yes □ No
- Calendar of due dates: □ Yes □ No
- 1818 ACC's academic honesty statement: □ Yes □ No
- Grading rubric: □ Yes □ No

SLU Departmental Liaison Signature: Janet Kuebli Date: 02/20/2014