Self-Reflective Statement
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Outlook
Teaching, service, and professional development are a functionally integrated approach I take to learning, so I would like to comment on the whole before getting to the parts. I have only been at Woodbury for four months, but I already have grown from interactions with the campus community, in getting to teach engaged students and interacting with engaged faculty. In order to continue this growth, my long term goals are (a) being an effective teacher and scholar in disseminating our pillars of learning and focusing on the learning outcomes of my program and the university and (b) continuing to engage with my field more generally to continue progress toward the ideals of the teaching scholar by bringing my scholarship outside of the university back into the classroom and Woodbury community.

Teaching
In the Fall of 2013, I taught four courses (two sections of one of them): Psyc 200: Introduction to Psychology, Psyc 210: Developmental Psychology, and Psyc 313: Social Cognition. I felt very good about the outcomes of the course, my interactions with students, and that dynamic seemed to be reflected in my teaching evaluations, the overall averages ranging from 4.5-4.7 for me as an instructor and the courses overall.

Psyc 200 (Introduction to Psychology): I have always enjoyed teaching Intro, as I get to touch on different interesting aspects of psychology and draw students into the field. But it has been especially rewarding at Woodbury because what makes us unique as compared with other universities is the integration with design. The psychology faculty have integrated the pillar of design thinking into the course in having design projects (e.g., as a final project, students have to collaborate on group projects to design a game based on psychological principles, which we play in class). Also, given that psychology is fundamentally a transdisciplinary field, this course is a good one to emphasize to students how psychology is fundamentally a wide range of fields including business, architecture, design, marketing and any field in which people are involved. Overall, I feel that the course is a successful one in exposing students not only to psychology as a field, but focusing on critical and scientific thinking. One challenge that the course presents is in the diversity of students. In particular, one of the two sections I taught of the course had a large number of international students, many of whom were very quiet in class and didn’t seem engaged with the course. So one short term goal I have for the course is to discuss with colleagues ways to better engage our international students to get them more invested in the course and integrated into the Woodbury community as a whole.

Psyc 210 (Developmental Psychology): I taught a section of Developmental Psychology, which is a lower division, lecture-based course. One challenge with the course is that it is often offered as an upper division course at many schools, and until recently at Woodbury. So I tried to make the course balanced
by offering challenging and useful content to our majors who are interested in human development but at the same time being accessible to first time psychology students. I feel that I was very successful in that regard and the course was a pleasure to teach and a good way to get to know some of our younger majors better as well as students from other programs who have an interest in psychology.

**Psyc 313 (Social Cognition):** In many ways this was one of the most rewarding courses I’ve taught at Woodbury, in that it was populated mainly with junior and senior majors, with whom I’ve been very impressed in terms of their drive and motivation, engagement with the program, and demonstration of the learning outcomes of the major. Especially as a new faculty member, it has been wonderful to get to know many of our senior majors and to see the great potential that Woodbury students have. It is a course that hasn’t been taught recently, so I was able to tailor it to my own vision of what I can contribute to an upper division psych course. My self-criticism in teaching the course is that given it was my first year at Woodbury and dealing with our upper-level majors, I underestimated how good they were. A few of them commented in the evaluations that the wished the course were more challenging, which I’m happy to hear and in the future will make my upper division courses more challenging, especially given that the program focuses on a science-based, research driven, analytical model of psychology. Even so, I felt that the course was very successful in terms of our program’s learning outcomes, including collaborative learning through in depth discussion of the material, discipline-specific writing skills in the essays on particular psychological concepts and studies, and critical thinking skills in terms of evaluating research and theoretical claims.

**University Service**

As a first year faculty member, I served on the New Faculty Learning Community as my committee responsibility. I found my participation extremely helpful to orient myself to Woodbury to gain a deeper understanding of topics like assessment (of both faculty and programs), learning outcomes, the contract renewal process, committee work, teaching effectiveness, and other topics of interest to new faculty. I cannot stress enough how valuable the experience was as a new faculty member. In addition to the important role of service in running Woodbury, I’m eager to be involved with committee work to continue to familiarize myself with the university and my colleagues. There are a number of committees I’m considering volunteering for next year, including the curriculum committee, the IRB committee, the financial analysis committee, and/or the NFLC. I’m currently consulting with colleagues about which might be most useful.

I have also strived to establish a campus presence by (a) familiarizing myself with my new community by participating in meetings and attending lectures, and (b) making myself as available as possible to students through advising, my posted office hours, engaging them outside of class, and making myself available to colleagues for discussion and advice.

**Professional and Scholarly Development**

My long term goals in professional development bridge the gap from continuing to develop as a good colleague and teacher in the Woodbury community to striving to maintain a prominent role as a
researcher in my field and making Woodbury’s presence felt there as well, in addition to my outside scholarship informing my teaching.

In terms of interacting with the professional and scholarly activity on campus, I very much benefitted from attending the faculty development meeting in August, just before the start of the semester. It was nice to be personally introduced to the faculty and be introduced to the culture of Woodbury. I’m also encouraged by programs like the faculty colloquium and intend to volunteer to give one next year. I believe a useful topic for that forum would be on some of my research on how language affects our perception of space, which would involve discussion of the perception of color and space, topics dear to my colleagues in design and architecture.

I feel it’s also essential to continue to connect with my field more broadly, not just to bring what I’ve learned back to campus, but to promote Woodbury as a serious place of research. To this end, I attended the 2013 Southern California Teaching of Psychology conference in Orange County. I plan on attending at least one research conference (maybe two) in the Spring. I also was asked to peer review a number of major research projects, including a research article for one of the best journals in my field, *Cognition*, a grant for the National Science Foundation, and abstracts for the most important international conference in my area, the *CUNY Sentence Processing Conference*. I plan to continue these external research contributions to my field and am pleased that I have a strong enough international research profile to be asked to contribute in these ways.

Additionally, even though I’ve been busy in my first semester, I was able to finish writing a research paper and submit it for publication to an excellent journal in my field: *Language and Cognitive Processes*. The paper was written with a colleague of mine who’s now a professor at MIT along with two students.

One of the challenges of my first semester at Woodbury is that with the teaching load of four courses, service work, and just getting acclimated to the university, I had less time that I hoped to establish new research, even though I was able to get a paper submitted and have done other writing. Consequently, one of my goals over the next year is to find ways to do more research rather than simply writing papers, getting students involved as well, possibly through applying for a faculty development award or an external grant. A related long term goal is to establish a psychology laboratory for the psychology faculty and students to use, as we do not currently have one.