Although much of the data requested from David Crook was not forthcoming, the chair decided that it was important for the group to meet and discuss the course options recommended for potential psychology majors. Given that the data correlating a prerequisite course in math and success in a psychology or social science statistics course was unavailable at this time, this item for discussion was tabled.

In evaluating which courses to recommend, the group quickly agreed that Introductory Psychology must be among the three courses put forward. The discussion that followed concentrated upon:

1. Whether to recommend a “menu option,” that is, to put forward a list of courses from which students would choose two courses versus specifying two additional courses.
2. Choosing the courses to recommend from among those most widely included in the psychology major programs at the four-year colleges, namely, abnormal, developmental, personality and social psychology.

Initial discussion parsed the language of the Board resolution. The resolution does not say that the courses recommended by the committee will become “required” but rather that these designated entry-level courses will be accepted by all the senior colleges from students transferring into the psychology major. A thoughtful conversation about the unintended consequences for recommending certain courses was useful in understanding the gravity of the committee’s charge. Matters of transferability, advisement and articulation were thrashed out.

Questions generated helped to guide the discussion.

- Will the courses recommended impact where students elect to attend a community college?
- Will the courses recommended impinge on students who opt to change majors?
- Will recommending certain courses have an effect on enrollment in these and other courses?
- Is the issue of how to properly advise students part of the committee’s charge?
- Is the issue of transfer a central one for the psychology programs at the senior colleges?

The committee went through each of the four potential course recommendations to determine the feasibility of its inclusion. Evaluation of the courses led to the elimination of developmental psychology as a choice. This is because there is great variation in the courses offered at the community colleges, some offer a lifespan courses, others offer a theoretical course, and still others offer developmental psychology across multiple semesters. This is reflected at the four-year colleges as well, plus there is the matter of the accredited programs that have different requirements for developmental psychology.

Based on what is currently offered at the community colleges, what is required in the psychology programs at the senior colleges, and what learning outcomes are recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA), it was decided that the recommendation will be that students should be advised to take Abnormal Psychology and Personality Psychology or Social Psychology. This was decided with the understanding that guidance is needed to determine if a course choice option will be permitted as part of the recommendation.
The next step is to match the learning outcomes for the areas deemed essential to the courses selected. Syllabi were collected from all of the colleges with membership on committee and distributed toward this goal. Sub-groups were established to take on this task for each of the four gateway courses as follows:

Introductory Psychology: Lakshmi Bandlamudi/LaGuardia, Robert Lanson/Queens, Robert Melara/City, Randi Shane/BCC

Abnormal Psychology: Michael Miranda/KCC, Vincent Prohaska, Lehman, Janice Walters/BMCC

Personality Psychology: Donna Chirico/York, Joe Culkin, QCC, Jason Young/Hunter

Social Psychology: Jennifer Dysert/John Jay, Glen Hass/Brooklyn, Nan Sussman/CSI

These groups will analyze the learning outcomes presented on the syllabi collected, compare these learning goals with those outlined by the APA, and put together a list of proposed course learning outcomes to present to the entire committee. In doing this, committee members were asked to sound out faculty members on their respective campuses about the courses chosen.
Initial caveat: The committee recognizes that the Psychology major affords students will a multitude of ways of fulfilling major requirements, reflecting the myriad goals that students may have in taking the Psychology major. The only required courses that all colleges share are Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, and Research Methods. The latter 2 courses, all committee members agreed, are better left as junior-level courses, given the preparation that many students need to successfully complete these challenging courses. As a result, the committee sought other options that could be recommended to students at the community colleges that would contribute to the Psychology major. The challenge is that, apart from Introductory Psychology, none of the courses taught at the colleges are universally required by all colleges’ Psychology major programs. In addition, some major programs restrict the content areas of courses that students may apply to the major to reflect the particular specializations in Psychology that different colleges in the CUNY system have (thanks, in part, to the Consortial model in divvying out the Psychology doctoral programs to different campuses.) Thus, the proposal to be developed by the Pathways Psychology Majors Committee should be viewed as Beginner courses that may be applied to the major and can be transferred to all colleges, but should not be interpreted as courses that are required for the Psychology major by all colleges. Students will continue to be advised to consult in advance the specific major requirements for the Psychology major of the college(s) to which they may be considering transferring.
Proposal A: Discussed and agreed-upon at the end of the Committee’s Nov. 11 meeting is as follows:

Component 1) Introductory Psychology

Component 2) Abnormal Psychology

Component 3) Either Personality Psychology or Social Psychology \(\textit{but not both}\)

Rationale: Based on the TIPPS sheets provided indicating course equivalencies across campuses, all of the courses in this proposal currently exist in some form that appears to committee members to be “workably transferable” into the Psychology major program at different colleges. The specific format of this proposal reflects the fact that, while all major programs accept Abnormal Psychology as contributing toward the major, some programs have a restriction that students may apply \textit{either} Personality Psychology \textit{or} Social Psychology toward the major, \textit{but not both}.

PROS: Since these courses already appear to be transferable, this would require no changes at any colleges in the courses offered.

CONS: Concern was expressed that this proposal appears to give Abnormal Psychology disproportionate emphasis. In addition, Kingsborough indicated it currently does not offer Social Psychology, and Queensborough has not offered its course recently though it is in the catalog and could be re-activated. Members of the committee stated a strong preference to include Developmental Psychology in the proposal.
Proposal B:

Component 1) Introductory Psychology

Component 2) Either Abnormal Psychology or Personality Psychology *(but not both)*

Component 3) Either Social Psychology or Lifespan Development or Child Development *(advised to take no more than one of these)*

**Rationale:** Developed in response to concern that Developmental Psychology should be part of the proposal, as well as to reduce the appearance of undue emphasis on Abnormal Psychology as a recommended course.

**PROS:** Recommended components 2 and 3 are considered to better represent a cross-section of approaches in Psychology, as the Abnormal/Personality option emphasizes individual differences, whereas the Social/Lifespan/Child option emphasizes common processes.

**CONS:** The primary challenge with Proposal 2 is also its strength. While including some form of Developmental Psychology specifies greater breadth in the Beginner courses, there is no one version of Developmental Psychology that is taught at all colleges, and no one form that is accepted in all Psychology major programs (i.e., some only accept Child Psychology as contributing toward the major, others only accept Lifespan Development). These differences reflect the differing specializations among the Psychology major programs across CUNY. For this proposal to be workable, Pathways would need to accept that these recommended courses come with a list of the specific schools that will accept (and those that will not accept) that version of the course as contributing toward the major. The other option is to develop a single course that pulls learning objectives from both Child and Lifespan that would be accepted in all colleges’ major programs. The committee is currently investigating the feasibility of this option, which would also need to be vetted by the faculty of the different Psychology major programs. In addition, while the Kingsborough CC catalog includes a course on Child and Adolescent Development, it is not regularly offered.
Proposal C:

Component 1) Introductory Psychology

Component 2) Any one of the following courses: Abnormal Psychology or Personality Psychology or Social Psychology

Component 3) A math preparatory course to serve as a prerequisite to Psych Statistics

Rationale: Proposed with 2 goals in mind: 1) it would provide useful math preparation to increase likelihood of successful completion of the required Psychological Statistics course and 2) avoid the limitations of Proposals A and B by sidestepping undue emphasis on Abnormal (Proposal A) and sidestepping the challenges incurred by incorporating Developmental into the list of recommended Beginner courses. (Proposal B) Note—this is not to imply that Developmental is not valued as a Beginner course, but instead recognizes that the existing different versions of Developmental serve diverse and valuable purposes that cannot feasibly be melded into a single course.

PROS: Apart from sidestepping the logistical and pedagogical challenges of identifying a single Developmental Psychology course, this Proposal would provide equal emphasis on a number of areas of Psychology which students could apply to their Psychology major. Equally importantly, while only some psychology major programs currently require a specific math prerequisite for their Psychology statistics course, emphasizing such a preparatory course could be beneficial by highlighting to students the critical role of having a statistics aptitude to successfully complete the Psychology Statistics course (perhaps the single most challenging course for most Psychology majors). By alerting them to the role of math by incorporating a math prep course into the list of Beginner Psychology courses, students may arrive at Psychology major programs better prepared and more cognizant of the challenges involved in the Psychology Statistics course (and also in the Research Methods course, which requires students to apply their statistical knowledge as they complete research-based assignments). In addition, if taken at the community college, transfer students would save a semester of preparation often currently required once they arrive at those major programs that do have a math prerequisite for the Psych Stat course.

CONS: While the committee seeks to avoid any proposals that would implicate changes in any college’s Psychology major requirements, including a math prep course among the Beginner courses technically would require all colleges to identify (or develop) a math prerequisite for the major (or at least for the Psych Stat course). In addition, the specific math prep courses that would be considered eligible would need to be determined. Some may feel that the quantitative
requirement under consideration as part of the Pathways Common Core could suffice, but the emphasis in the Psychology proposal would need to emphasize only those math courses felt relevant to preparing students to use and apply statistics and probability.