

Study finds differing interests of psychology students and their professors could impact retention

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What is the best way to keep psychology students from switching majors? According to a study published in the journal *Teaching of Psychology*, putting off intensive science courses may help. The study was conducted by Jeffrey Holmes, associate professor of psychology at Ithaca College.

Holmes compared the views and interests of [college students](#) and instructors with regard to the [psychology](#) discipline, and then examined the implications of the differential interests.

He found that instructors strongly endorse psychology as a science, while students reported a weak endorsement of psychology as a science and showed greater interest in psychology practitioner activities. He says that this difference between educator and student views about how best to understand human behavior could create student dissatisfaction, leading to reduced student retention in the psychology major.

Holmes suggests that college psychology educators attempt to strike a curricular balance between scientific emphasis and student satisfaction by delaying the introduction of intense scientific coursework and move practice-oriented courses earlier in the curriculum, in order to better match the interests of students and keep them in the major.

More information: *Teaching of Psychology*,

top.sagepub.com/content/41/2/104

Provided by Ithaca College

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