Program Assessment Report 2017-2018

Program Name: Psychology

Program Learning Outcome: 1).Knowledge Base in Psychology.

1. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work or outputs) that you used to assess the PLO. [Projects, papers, presentations, portfolios, exam questions, specific assignments, capstone work]

   Artifacts: Exam Questions

   Other artifact(s)

   Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Identify the instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, spreadsheets, statistical software) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. the way in which student output are analyzed).

   Instruments: Performance on standardized test questions

   Other instruments Used

   Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe program collaboration to plan, implement and use the results of assessment.

   The ETS Major Field Test in Psychology was taken online by all graduating seniors. This is a program-level assessment that the department is invested in using to make certain our graduates have broad knowledge about psychology up to national standards, and to bring to our attention any areas of weakness in the major curriculum. All department faculty are invested in the test administration (which is directly facilitated by the instructors of the spring capstone course) and in the results, which are discussed at department meetings and used for planning.

   Explain the results of the assessment activities.

We administer the ETS test every three years or so. This year all 40 of our graduating seniors took and completed the test. This year's overall results are consistent with the prior three administrations, dating back to 2010. They are good. As a group, our students performed overall at the 73rd percentile. Performance in the major test areas ranged from the 63rd percentile to the 68th. See specifics below. The comparison group is the more than 300 institutions that participate in the ETS psychology test. Since the standardized scores reported are percentiles, it is important to keep in mind that in the range around the 50th percentile only a very large difference is worth commenting about. In this case, scanning across the four administrations of the test, 2018 does not differ from prior administrations.

Percentiles reported:

	2010	2013	2015	2018
Total test and Subscores				
Overall	**75**	**72**	**76**	**73**
Learn/Cog	60	70	72	68
S&P/BNS	65	60	60	68
Clin/Abn/Personality	55	73	77	68
Dev/Social	50	65	74	63

We do not have data from most of the prior years' ETS "assessment indicators" scales. Below are the assessment indicators for this year compared to 2015.

Percentiles reported:

	2015	2018
Assessment Indicators		
Memory/Cognition	81	75
Percept/Sens/Phys	63	66
Developmental	69	45
Clinical/Abnormal	76	67
Social	74	68
Measurement/Methods	74	74

The developmental area is about ½ a standard deviation below the other areas from this year and from the prior testing. The score itself (45th percentile) is not of concern—it is average, right in the middle compared to other universities' graduating seniors.

Summary: Our majors consistently perform very well overall when compared to Psychology seniors from across the country on this reliable, valid measure of knowledge of the field. This year is no exception, and we are pleased with these results. Our curriculum covers all core areas of the field. Our students have learned a lot about psychology by the end of the senior year, based on rigorous external standards that align with the recommendations of the field's professional organizations.

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

   As a department we are investigating the relatively lower result in Developmental. A deviation of this size in the range immediately around the mean might be a random fluctuation, but we are looking into it. We have determined that all but one of the seniors did indeed take the developmental course (they can choose developmental or social, though most majors take both). The next line of inquiry is to determine whether the ETS test now includes development beyond childhood (our core course covers only childhood). The ETS aligns closely with what the American Psychological Association (APA) identifies as core knowledge. We are checking with ETS and the APA. If our majors need a core course that includes both childhood and adolescence, we will make curricular changes. That is a long process.

   In the meantime, other specific steps include: 1. Offering the Adolescence class more frequently; 2. Integrating our new Developmental hire into the department. She specializes in cognitive development in young children and will bring new, community-relevant developmental research to the department, and; 3. Setting up a new developmental lab (for the new faculty member), preferably in an empty space in the IMBM, with enough room to facilitate research that includes children from the community (more than one at a time, with room for parents/caregivers to observe). Adding more child developmental research to the options for our majors will increase their deep learning of the subject. Experiential learning via mentored research experiences should improve our majors' understanding of this important area of psychology.

Program Assessment Report 2017-2018

Program Name: Psychology

Program Learning Outcome: 2).Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking.

1. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work or outputs) that you used to assess the PLO. [Projects, papers, presentations, portfolios, exam questions, specific assignments, capstone work]

   Artifacts: Exam Questions

   Other artifact(s)

   Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Identify the instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, spreadsheets, statistical software) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. the way in which student output are analyzed).

   Instruments: Performance on standardized test questions

   Other instruments Used

   Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe program collaboration to plan, implement and use the results of assessment.

   The ETS Major Field Test in Psychology assessment indicator in the area of Measurement/Methods is closely monitored by the department because it addresses the core of scientific inquiry in psychology. Details of our collaborative approach to the collection and dissemination of ETS results are reported above (under the PLO Knowledge). Scientific Inquiry/"Research Methods" is a topic that is covered across our curriculum. There is a methods class, PSYC 330, and the topic is also included in introductory and all 200-level texts and courses in psychology.

   Explain the results of the assessment activities.

   This year's graduating seniors performed well on Measurement/Methods, at the 74th percentile. This performance is consistent with the prior ETS results in 2015. This is about 2/3 of a standard deviation above the national mean.

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

   We are doing well in this area right now but will continue to monitor it. We are launching a new integrated statistics/methods sequence that should produce even higher results for the "Methods" aspect of this ETS subtest. However, we are concerned about the future of the "Measurement" aspect due to the retirement of Dr. Hogan, who taught the most relevant course (PSYC 335: Psychological Testing) and is a national expert in this area. His line was not replaced. Development and use of reliable, valid measures is an important part of scientific inquiry in psychology.

Program Assessment Report 2017-2018

Program Name: Psychology

Program Learning Outcome: 2).Scientific Inquiry. This PLO was assessed in 2017-2018

1. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work or outputs) that you used to assess the PLO. [Projects, papers, presentations, portfolios, exam questions, specific assignments, capstone work]

   Artifacts: Specific assignments

   Other artifact(s)

   Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Identify the instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, spreadsheets, statistical software) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. the way in which student output are analyzed).

   Instruments: Performance on standardized test questions

   Other instruments Used

   Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe program collaboration to plan, implement and use the results of assessment.

The CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) test was administered online through the ORS website to all students in the PSYC 330L research methods laboratory. 330L students are majors in the Sophomore and occasionally the Junior year. The test is not norm-referenced. Instead, a passing score is required for 'certification'. The test is developed and administered by a national group dedicated to human subjects protections. The test addresses core areas of knowledge about ethical scientific inquiry with human subjects. This is crucial for scientific inquiry in psychology, and necessary before the 330L students can develop the next artifact, the IRB/DRB study proposal.

   Explain the results of the assessment activities.

   All 44 students (100%) in the PSYC 330L courses in Spring 2018 earned CITI certification. This indicates that all had adequate rote knowledge of the varied topics that must be considered in preparing a study for review by a human subjects protection board in a university or agency. This knowledge is central for understanding scientific research in psychology.

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

Program Assessment Report 2017-2018

Program Name: Psychology

Program Learning Outcome: 2).Scientific Inquiry. This PLO was assessed in 2017-2018

1. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work or outputs) that you used to assess the PLO. [Projects, papers, presentations, portfolios, exam questions, specific assignments, capstone work]

   Artifacts: Papers

   Other artifact(s)

   Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Identify the instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, spreadsheets, statistical software) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. the way in which student output are analyzed).

   Instruments: Choose an item.

   Other instruments Used

   Department Review Board (DRB) approval of the student research proposals.

3. Describe program collaboration to plan, implement and use the results of assessment.

   This year, all instructors of the PSYC 330L research methods laboratories assigned all students, in groups, to propose and attempt to conduct replication studies. Student groups developed and submitted descriptions of their studies to the Department Review Board (DRB) for human subjects review. Most members of the department serve on this board. In other words, the student proposals for the 330L course were submitted to and reviewed by the department in order to determine whether they merited DRB approval. 330L instructors recused themselves from evaluating the proposals. Proposals include a literature review and justification for the study, clear method, and consent documents.

   Explain the results of the assessment activities.

   All 44 majors (100%) in the PSYC 330L courses eventually submitted DRB proposals of high enough quality to be approved by the DRB, and were allowed to proceed with recruitment of participants.

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

Although all majors managed in the end to produce a document appropriate for scientific inquiry at this level, instructors noted that several students came into PSYC 330L woefully underprepared for this task, despite having the prerequisite PSYC 210 course. We have developed a new year-long integrated sequence for the delivery of the statistics/research methods courses to our majors. We expect it to correspond with steadier development of the basic knowledge and skills needed to actively engage in scientific inquiry.

Program Assessment Report 2017-2018

Program Name: Psychology

Program Learning Outcome: 2).Scientific Inquiry. This PLO was assessed in 2017-2018

1. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work or outputs) that you used to assess the PLO.

Artifacts: Papers

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Identify the instruments used to assess the artifact(s).

Instruments: Surveys

Other Instruments Used

Acceptance of research products for presentation and/or publication by external reviewers

3. Describe program collaboration to plan, implement and use the results of assessment.

The psychology department's Senior Exit Survey was developed two decades ago. Each year, after the surveys are administered, data are put into a table for comparison to prior years. Results are distributed to all faculty and discussed by the whole department. Results have been used in the past to spark curriculum development, refocus advising efforts, and so on. This year's focus is on the survey items related to the scientific inquiry/critical thinking PLO. These items mainly address the % of graduating majors who have contributed to papers that were accepted for presentation or publication. While 'papers' is the artifact in this case, we are not the final evaluators of the artifact. The conferences and editorial boards that accepted the papers assessed the quality of the products. The department is invested in having as many students as possible participating in research activities at that level.

Explain the results of the assessment activities.

The exit survey was completed by 39 of our 40 graduating seniors (97.5% response rate). The overall rating for opportunities to work on research was 3.21 on a 4-point scale, consistent with the Mean of 3.13 from the prior 10 years. 31% of students reported participating in FSRP (35% over the past 10 years) and 18% in undergraduate research for credit (PSYC 494; 21.3% the past 10 years). 36% presented at a conference and 5% co-authored an article or book chapter. Compared to the past ten years, there were more student conference presentations than typical (the Mean is 27.8%) and fewer publications (the Mean is 9.8%).

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

a. Ideally, the new integrated statistics/research methods sequence should correspond with increased student participation in meaningful research experiences. All students will conduct replication studies, and according to the literature on teaching of psychology, the slow, steady introduction to research should increase student liking of and confidence with it. The replication studies themselves sometimes are worthy of conference presentation.

b. Faculty are dedicated to providing research opportunities for students beyond the stats/methods courses, but the next few years are likely to be rough. We have two faculty retiring and a third leaving for a different position. Of the remaining faculty, one is on sabbatical and another serving as interim chair. We can tread water when it comes to covering classes, but for research there is no doubt we will be sorely understaffed. Dr. Hogan has been a force of nature when it comes to student presentations and publications, and Dr. Arigo has had a very busy research laboratory. We are desperately in need of replacement lines for Dr.'s Arigo and Hogan.