

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR:

Psychology
(Instructional Degree Program)

B.S. & B.A. Major
(Degree Level)

2009-2010 Academic Year
(Period Covered)

October 15, 2010
(Date Submitted)

MISSION AND GOALS

Department's/Program's Goal(s) in Support of Institutional Mission:

The mission of the Department of Behavioral Sciences is to: a) contribute to meeting the educational and research need in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and related fields; b) contribute to meeting the career needs in psychological and social services and social sciences, as well as contribute to training for careers in education, engineering, physical and biological sciences, medicine, and other science fields; c) contribute to meeting the need for secondary school teacher certification in sociology and/or anthropology; and d) provide psychological and socio-cultural service and expertise for the region, as well as the greater global community.

Intended Educational Outcome 1

Demonstrate critical thinking and an understanding of psychology as applied to everyday life.

A. First Means of Assessment for the Educational Outcome 1

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Grades from the applied research project and paper assigned in Psychology 340, Developmental Psychology, and on alternate years, grades from the applied research project in Psychology 324, Abnormal Psychology or in Psychology 328, Theories of Personality. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 80% of students in the class receiving a grade of B or better on this paper.

Summarization of results from data collected: Grades from the applied case conceptualization and paper assigned in Psychology 324, Abnormal Psychology were used this year. 84% of students achieved a B or better on the paper. *In all, 19 psychology majors were assessed on this outcome, and this objective was achieved.*

B. Second Means of Assessment for Educational Outcome 1

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Every five years the program will complete a survey of alumni. The survey will include information on occupational status.

Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of our alumni indicating employment in some area of psychology.

Summarization of results from data collected: The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness began surveying student alumni beginning in the summer of 2008. Only one response was collected. For this reason this activity was not completed.

C. Use of Results for Educational Outcome 1

The results from the applied projects and paper assignments continue to be highly encouraging as a measure of this outcome. Our next step is to improve reliability of this measurement by creating a standardized critical thinking rubric that would be adopted across our program for use on applied projects and papers. With regard to the continued difficulties obtaining alumni data, we need to re-design our plan to add other measures to the survey instrument.

Intended Educational Outcome 2

Be able to read, understand and critique psychological literature.

A. First Means of Assessment for the Educational Outcome 2

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Grades from the literature review assignment in Psychology 301, Research Methods and Analysis. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 80% of students in the class receiving a grade of B or better on this paper.

Summarization of results from data collected: 100% of the students who were assigned literature reviews for Psychology 301 achieved the criterion of 80% or better on this paper. This represents a 23% increase since last year, indicating marked improvement on this outcome.

B. Second Means of Assessment for Educational Outcome 2

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Grades from the final paper assigned in Psychology 405, Positive Psychology. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 80% of students in the class receiving a grade of B or better on this paper.

Summarization of results from data collected: The paper in Positive Psychology (PSY 405) was used this year. 71% of students achieved a B or better, indicating that this objective was not achieved but only narrowly missed.

C. Third Means of Assessment for the Educational Outcome 2

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Psychology 329, Techniques of Personality Research (every other year), was not taught this year.

Summarization of results from data collected: The results from the applied projects and paper assignments in 301 and 405 are encouraging with 100% success on the 301 measure and 71% success on the 405 measure. The 23% improvement in 301 may reflect the instructor's particular efforts this year to encourage greater participation in the online class, to deal early with emergent plagiarism issues, and to work with the 301 TA more intensively to insure that students are clear about the expectations of the literature review assignment (e.g., appropriate length, correct grammar, thoughtful argument, and correct citations.).

D. Use of Results for Educational Outcome 2: Our next step is to improve reliability of this measurement by creating a standardized critical thinking rubric that would be adopted across our program for use on applied projects and papers. With regard to the continued difficulties obtaining alumni data, we need to re-design our plan to add other measures to the survey instrument.

Intended Educational Outcome 3

Ability to design, analyze, and interpret the results of an experiment, and to report the results in written form with impeccable use of APA format.

A. First Means of Assessment for the Educational Outcome 3

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Grades from the final paper assigned in Psychology 302, Research Methods and Analysis II. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 80% of students in the class receiving a grade of B or better on this paper.

Summarization of results from data collected: While the final paper in Psychology 302, the Literature Review, was completed by students, the instructor on record did not grade the papers. Therefore, we are unable to assess this outcome for 2009-1010.

Use of Results for Educational Outcome 3

A number of improvements have been made to the Psy 301/302 methods and analysis sequence which enables continued success on this indicator. Most importantly, major candidates now have an entire year to design and execute a study. We believe the longer time frame is critical given the undergraduate students' limited background in experimental design and analysis before this sequence.

Intended Educational Outcome 4

Demonstrate knowledge in at least three psychology sub-disciplines.

A. First Means of Assessment for the Educational Outcome 3

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success: Successful completion of the major.

Summarization of results from data collected: Seventeen students received their baccalaureate degrees in psychology during the 2009-2010 academic year.

A. Use of Results for Educational Outcome 4

We need a more sensitive measure of this outcome. We have begun discussing the benefits and costs associated with a standardized nationally normed measure in our discipline.