

**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT REPORT
PSYCHOLOGY
2016-2017**

Psychology Undergraduate
(Instructional Degree Program)

B.A./B.S.
(Degree Level)

Program Mission:

The mission of the Department of Psychology is to contribute to meeting the educational and research needs in psychology; contribute to meeting the career needs in psychological services and research, as well as contribute to training for careers in education, engineering, physical and biological sciences, medicine, and other science fields; contribute to meeting the need for secondary school teacher certification in psychology; and to provide psychological and sociocultural service and expertise for the region, as well as the greater global community.

Student Learning Outcome 1:

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

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:

Grades from the applied papers assigned in Psychology 340, Developmental Psychology, Psychology 324, Abnormal Psychology, Psychology 328, Theories of Personality and Psychology 408 Drugs and Behavior will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 85% of students in those classes receiving a grade of C or better on these papers.

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	103	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	19
Total Number of Students Assessed:	122	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	84.4%

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:

Psychology students will complete a survey in which one item will allow them to evaluate how well the psychology program teaches them to demonstrate critical thinking and an understanding of psychology as applied to everyday life. Successful completion of this outcome will be demonstrated by average survey scores of juniors and seniors that the outcome was successfully completed being 5 or higher on a 7-point scale.

Summary of Data: Of the 53 upperclassman taking the survey, the average score for teaching them critical thinking was 6.26, and the average score for applying psychology

to everyday life was 6.23.

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:

Per last year's first assessment of the program as a new department we made changes to the outcomes assessment this year including direct surveys of the students. We are pleased that we *nearly met our goal* using the first means of assessment which was based on course performance data from four professors. We clearly met our goal using the second means of assessment, based on the subjective reports of the students. It is great that the upper classmen strongly believe they are getting the education they need for critical thinking and the application of psychology to everyday life. It is also notable that our program is growing and so we are having more students participating in psychology than ever.

Student Learning Outcome 2:

Be able to read, understand and critique psychological literature.

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Grades from the paper and oral presentation in Psychology 301, Psychological Research Methods will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 85% of students in the class receiving a grade of C or better on this paper.

Summary of the Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	59	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	3
Total Number of Students Assessed:	62	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	95.2%

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Grades from the final paper assigned in Psychology 405, Positive Psychology and the lab presentation in Psychology 411, Techniques in Physiological Psychology will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 85% of students in the classes receiving a grade of C or better on these assignments.

Summary of the Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	42	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	2
Total Number of Students Assessed:	44	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	95.5%

Third Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Psychology students will complete a survey in which one item will allow them to evaluate how well the psychology program teaches them to be able to read, understand and critique psychological literature. Successful completion of this outcome will be demonstrated by average survey scores of juniors and seniors that the outcome was successfully completed being 5 or higher on a 7-point scale.

Summary of the Data: Of the 53 upper-classmen taking the survey, the average scores for reading ($M = 6.00$), understanding ($M = 6.04$), and critiquing ($M = 5.78$) were all higher than 5, meeting the outcome.

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:

We met all of our goals on this outcome. Students performed quite well on this outcome according to four professors, and their subjective assessment also supported faculty performance measures.

Student Learning Outcome 3:

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

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills
- Effective Use of Technology

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:

Grades from the final paper assigned in Psychology 302, Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, and from the final projects from any students completing Psychology 499, Independent Research will be used. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 85% of students in the class receiving a grade of C or better on these assignments.

Summary of the Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	44	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	4
Total Number of Students Assessed:	48	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	91.7%

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:

Psychology students will complete a survey in which one item will allow them to evaluate how well the psychology program teaches them to design, analyze and interpret the results of an experiment, and to report the results in written form with accurate use of APA format. Successful completion of this outcome will be demonstrated by average survey scores of juniors and seniors that the outcome was successfully completed being 5 or higher on a 7-point scale.

Summary of the Data: This question was accidentally left off the survey this year, but will be placed back on next year.

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:

Students met standards of performance set by the two faculty who evaluated them on this outcome. In the future, we will be sure to measure their own assessment of how well they learned APA format in our program.

Utilization of Results:

There were a number of changes we made to the program last year. We didn't want outcomes assessment to encourage grade inflation, so we changed the percentage required to meet to 85%. We also decided to survey juniors and seniors to have them directly evaluate the effectiveness of the program, and we are pleased with the results. This year we used outcomes assessment to evaluate changes from last year.

Changes to Program Based on Results:

Because of the successful results this year, and the many changes to our program last year, we have decided not to make any major changes to our program this year.

Retention Strategies:

We think a critical piece to retention at Highlands is to make sure that students are being intensively advised. Toward that end, psychology advisors contact all of our majors at Highlands University in the Fall to encourage them to come in for individual advising sessions. Also, we intend to have group advising sessions immediately after highly-attended classes this year in computer laboratories where we can help them register for classes in the next semester, and set them on the path to degree.