

## ASSESSMENT REPORT 2020-2021

**Psychology Graduate**  
(Instructional Degree Program)

**M.S.**  
(Degree Level)

### **Program Mission:**

It is the mission of the Master's program in Psychology at NMHU to train master level psychologists who can utilize critical thinking skills, demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method, and apply their knowledge of major disciplines of psychology to their work as teachers, researchers, or practitioners. The program is designed to prepare students for either work as Master level clinicians or continued study in psychology at the doctoral level. This mission is achieved through a high level of professor-to-student interaction, ample opportunities for research and practical experience, and exposure to a multicultural community setting.

### **Student Learning Outcome 1:**

Develop hypotheses based on a body of research, and design and implement a research methodology to test those hypotheses and present the results in both written and oral form.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1**

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

### **First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

Grades from the Psychology 6020, Behavioral Research Methods final project will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of students will receiving a B or above on this project.

### **Summary of Data:**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 7 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 7 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

### **Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

Composite scores from the midterm and final exams in Psychology 6010, Data Analysis and Statistics will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 85% of students receiving a C or above on this composite score.

**Summary of Data:**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 8 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 8 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:**

All of our students met both requirements. Our department feels confident that this SLO that is crucial for developing strong research skills that will serve graduate students in future doctoral programs and science-oriented careers is being met.

**Student Learning Outcome 2:**

Prepare students to be M.S. level counselors or doctoral candidates in other graduate institutions.

**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:**

We conduct an annual survey of alumni who received their degrees three years prior to the year the survey is administered. The survey includes a question regarding employment status. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of our alumni demonstrating employment or graduate studies in some area of Psychology.

**Summary of Data**

7 out of 8 (87.5%) alumni surveyed indicated that they were employed in the field of Psychology.

**Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:**

For those students who take a state exam to become a licensed counselor, we expect a 90% rate of passing. We will obtain this information from the self-report of our alumni.

**Summary of Data:**

5 out of 5 (100%) of surveyed alumni reported that they had passed the licensing exam.

**Third Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:**

Grades from the final paper in Psychology 6710, Advanced Psychopathology will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of students receiving a B or above on this paper.

**Summary of Data:**

|                                       |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 8 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0 |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|

|                                    |   |  |      |
|------------------------------------|---|--|------|
| Total Number of Students Assessed: | 8 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: | 100% |
|------------------------------------|---|--|------|

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:**

Students are meeting this SLO as well which gives the department confidence that their education at NMHU is leading them to careers in Psychology.

**Student Learning Outcome 3:**

Adopt a high standard for ethical behavior and work performance.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3**

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

**First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Each year the department will compile data from the “Faculty Review of Graduate Students.” This form is completed at the end of the first two semesters of graduate work. It reflects a consensus opinion of the Psychology faculty regarding the student’s performance. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by 80% of students receiving at least a 4 out of 5 on the items “Overall job performance” and “Professionalism” at the end of their second semester in the program.

**Summary of Data**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 6 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 6 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

**Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors’ review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was considered above average by their supervisors and with no students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was below average or worse.

**Summary of Data**

|                                       |    |   |     |
|---------------------------------------|----|---|-----|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 9  | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 3   |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 12 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 75% |

**Third Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

The final grade in Psychology 6510, Professional Ethics and Issues will be used for this

assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of students receiving a final grade of 90% or better.

**Summary of Data:**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 9 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 9 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:**

Students met expectations for job performance and professionalism within the department and ethical behavior overall. However, we did find that outcomes fell short in the Field Supervisor’s ratings.

One potential explanation for this is that Field Supervisors who had not had NMHU Psychology graduate students before may not have had developmentally appropriate expectations for them. These supervisors may have had expectations of our students that was more appropriate for doctoral level students rather than Masters. This was the first semester that graduate students had gone to practicum since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

These potential issues were noted mid-semester in the Fall and faculty worked with Field Supervisors and graduate students to align expectations. Issues with those specific Practicum sites were largely resolved by Spring 2021. However, as a program, we will continue to stay in communication with Field Supervisors, particularly those who are taking graduate students for the first time.

**Student Learning Outcome 4:**

Apply knowledge of cross-cultural differences to the understanding and practice of psychology.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 4**

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

**First Means of Assessment for Outcome 4:**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors’ review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving comments indicating that their practicum involved work with diverse populations and that they performed well in these settings.

**Summary of Data**

|                                       |    |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|----|---|---|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 11 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0 |
|---------------------------------------|----|---|---|

|                                    |    |  |      |
|------------------------------------|----|--|------|
| Total Number of Students Assessed: | 11 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: | 100% |
|------------------------------------|----|--|------|

**Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 4:**

The final grade in Psychology 6770, Multicultural Psychotherapy will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of students receiving a final grade of B or better.

**Summary of Data**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 6 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 6 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 4:**

We believe that our program has been strong in meeting this SLO and are happy that the Field Supervisors are pleased with their work in this domain as well.

**Student Learning Outcome 5:**

Apply theoretical knowledge and interpersonal skills to therapeutic relationships.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 5**

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

**First Means of Assessment for Outcome 5:**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors' review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Final evaluation of the semester. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was considered above average by their supervisors and with no students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was below average or worse.

**Summary of Data**

|                                       |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 7 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 0    |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 7 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 100% |

**Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 5 (5.2):**

Students in the Clinical/Counseling program are required to take PSYC 6720 Introduction to Counseling and Therapy course. In this course students complete 3-4 mock therapy sessions. These mock sessions simulate clinical situations and require students to demonstrate basic clinical skills, motivational interviewing skills, Cognitive

Behavioral Therapy (CBT) skills, and if time permits, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). This means of outcome assessment would be measured by students' average performance on mock sessions. Successful completion of the outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of the students receiving an average mock session grade of B (80%) or higher.

**Summary of Data:**

|                                       |   |   |     |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----|
| Number of Students Meeting Criterion: | 4 | Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion: | 6   |
| Total Number of Students Assessed:    | 6 | Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:    | 67% |

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 5:**

We are confident that our program is training students in the requisite clinical skills as evidenced by their Field Supervisor's ratings. Students fell short of our desired outcomes on their mock sessions. The department will re-evaluate how this means of assessment is calculated as a score later in the semester may be more indicative of whether student are meeting this criteria instead of an average across the entire semester. Indeed, if the score from the student's final mock session were the marker for the criteria, six out of six would have met the outcome.

**Utilization of Results:**

We will utilize this outcome report to further strengthen the program in areas where we are successful, especially outcomes 1, 2, & 4. We plan to evaluate a few of our assessments to determine whether more clarity or specificity is needed.

**Changes to Program Based on Results:**

Since our last Outcomes Assessment report, our department made one key change to our assessment strategies. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (OIER) had previously collected data on graduates for Outcomes Assessment reports. This is now done within the Psychology department which has led to more rapid results and gives us more control over what questions are being asked to our alumni.

As we review this Outcomes Assessment report, we will be evaluating making changes to surveys from Field Supervisors and whether our Means of Assessment need more clarity and specificity.

**Retention Strategies:**

Since we have added a non-thesis option to our program, our graduation and retention rates have become stronger. This now allows students different options to graduate from our program and gives motivation to stay registered in coursework to that end. Our program appears to be strong and organized though the COVID-19 pandemic did present some challenges. However, our AY 2020-21 cohort remains intact and we look forward to continuing to assess whether our program is serving them to its full potential.