

Institutional Effectiveness Report

Undergraduate Major in Psychology

Academic Year 2014-2015

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the undergraduate major is to provide students with an understanding of psychology as the science of behavior and experience, including the major theories and issues within psychology; to emphasize the role of the liberal arts in higher education and personal development; to promote an appreciation for individual and cultural diversity; to develop critical thinking skills; to develop competence with methods of scientific research and data analysis; to assure that students have the necessary research experiences and coursework to undertake graduate education; and to assist students in developing their skills in library research, scientific writing, public presentations, and computer applications. Psychology majors will become aware of the various career options related to the major. The program also provides opportunities for internships in applied settings. A major in psychology will provide students with a broad-based education that will equip them for entry-level positions in business, government, and a wide variety of human service organizations. The major also prepares students who wish to pursue further education in areas such as law, medicine, business, or seminary, as well as psychology.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will develop an understanding of psychology as the science of behavior and experience and will obtain an understanding of the major theories and issues of the discipline.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically about and analyze psychology concepts and literature. These skills involve the development of scientific reasoning and problem solving, including effective research methods.
3. Students will be able to effectively communicate psychological concepts and research in the style of the American Psychological Association
4. Students will be exposed to diverse career options open to undergraduate psychology majors and graduate training options, and will be given opportunities to engage in professional development, both to prepare them to enter the workforce and to prepare qualified students for graduate training.

Summary of Ongoing Assessment Activities

Table 1 below provides a summary of outcomes, assessments, and benchmarks.

Table 1. Student Learning Outcomes, Measures, and Benchmarks for the Department of Psychology

Student Learning Outcome	Measures	Benchmark
Students will develop an understanding of psychology as the science of behavior and experience and will obtain an understanding of the major theories and issues of the discipline.	FMU Psychology Exit exam: divided into 10 content domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% correct for domains covered by core classes • 65% correct for domains only covered by optional classes or no upper-level classes
	FMU Psychology Exit Survey questions 2-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of at least 6.0 on a 7 point scale
Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically about and analyze psychology concepts and literature.	Internal Assessment used in PSY 499	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In development
Students will be able to effectively communicate psychological concepts and research in the style of the American Psychological Association	Internal Assessment used in PSY 499	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In development
Students will be exposed to diverse career options open to undergraduate psychology majors and graduate training options, and will be given opportunities to engage in professional development	Number of students involved in research or service in collaboration with a faculty member. (Can include enrollment in PSY 270, 370, 470, 497, participation in REAL projects, and volunteer research or service with faculty)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On average 3 per full-time tenure-track faculty member. For the current year, that is 24.
	Number of student presentations at regional, national, and international conferences, and number of student publications submitted to peer-reviewed journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 per full-time tenure track faculty member. For the current year, that is 8. • 100% of publishable projects submitted
	FMU Psychology Exit Survey question 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of at least 6.0 on a 7 point scale

Student Learning Outcome 1: Understanding of Psychology

Exit Exam

The revised exam was given in December 2014 and April of 2015. The revised exam consisted of 100 items. (Similar versions of the exam have been given for the past 10 years. The exam was originally developed from a previous 360 item exam.) All full-time faculty reviewed the exit exam in August of 2014 and made modifications to a few questions based on updated information (e.g. the switch from the DSM 4 to the DSM 5 for classification of psychological disorders). Changes were made to Biological, Cognitive, Developmental, Social, and Abnormal domains.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of students' knowledge and skills from the 2009-2010 academic year to the current academic year (5 past years of data). In the rightmost column, department benchmarks are listed. All areas tested are at least equal to the benchmarks. Figures 1 and 2 indicate that the performance of our students on this exam has been increasing steadily for the past 6 years, increasing by about 2 percentage points per year.

Table 2. Students' Knowledge and Skills for 2009-2015 for the Department of Psychology

Area Tested	2009-2010¹	2010-2011¹	2011-2012¹	2012-2013¹	2013-2014^{1,6}	2014-2015¹	Benchmark
Biological ²	47	64	67	66	68	74	70
Developmental ²	61	67	66	75	74	73	70
Experimental Design ²	56	66	69	76	80	78	70
Learning/Cognition ⁵	70	64	64	65	68	76	70
Social ²	68	61	69	78	79	71	70
Statistics ²	76	53	52	57	59	66	70
Abnormal ³	70	77	86	88	86	90	65
Personality ³	63	64	62	70	64	65	65
History ⁴	45	63	63	72	75	73	65
Total	60	64	66	72	72	74	70
Required Courses	66	63	64	71	71	74	70

*Notes: ¹Data in cells represent mean percent correct, ²Required of all majors, ³Optional course, ⁴No advanced courses offered
⁵Became required course in 2013-2014 ⁶Data from Spring semester graduates only.*

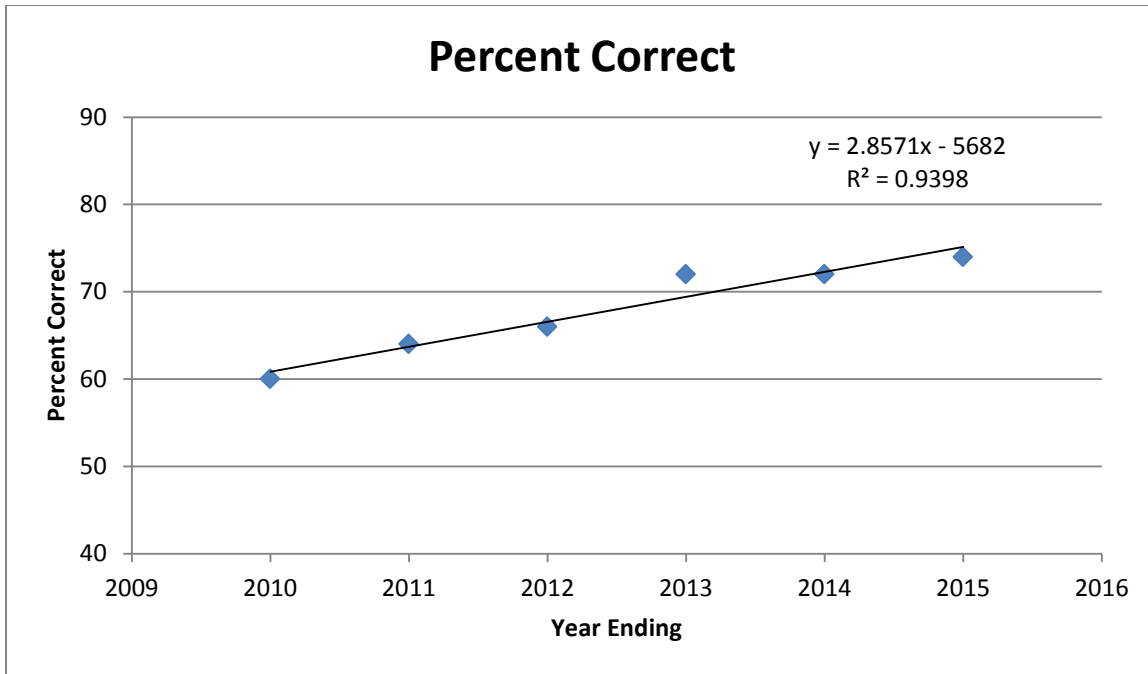


Figure 1. Performance Trend 2009-2010 through 2014-2015 for all Psychology Domains.

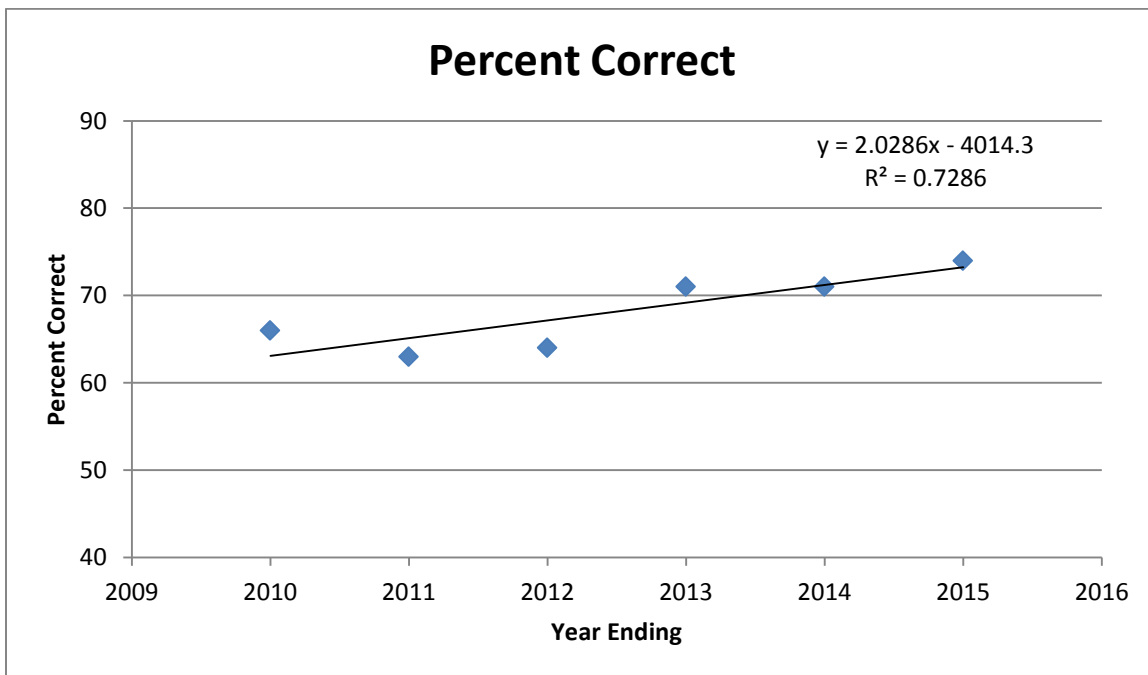


Figure 2. Performance Trend 2009-2010 through 2014-2015 for required course Psychology Domains.

Exit Survey

The senior exit survey is a 28-item questionnaire administered to graduating majors within approximately two weeks of graduation. Questions 2-7 assess students' perceptions about what they have learned from the psychology major. These items are rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is equal to *extremely unprepared* and 7 is *extremely prepared*. Question text is included below:

2. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to have an understanding of psychology as a science of behavior and experience?
3. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to understand the major theories and issues in psychology?
4. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to have a broader view of human life?
5. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to understand the significance of individual and cultural differences?
6. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to engage in scientific thinking skills?
7. To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to understand and appreciate the scientific method?

Table 3 provides means and standard deviations for students' responses to the questions regarding their perceptions of their knowledge and skills from the 2009-2010 academic year to the current academic year (5 past years of data). In the rightmost column, department benchmarks are listed. This instrument is considered reliable ($\alpha = .92$ for the 2014-2015 year). While there is some variation from year to year across the survey items, this table shows that scores generally have been consistent over the last six years. Also, all means surpassed the benchmark for 2014-2015.

Table 3. Students' Opinions of Knowledge Gained in 2009 – 2015 for the Department of Psychology

Knowledge Goals	Year						Benchmark
	2009-2010 (n = 10)	2010-2011 (n = 33)	2011-2012 (n = 43)	2012-2013 (n = 49)	2013-2014 (n = 58)	2014-2015 (n = 55)	
Nature of Psychology	5.86 (0.77)	5.75 (1.04)	5.98 (0.64)	6.10 (0.65)	6.02 (0.81)	6.15 (0.85)	6.0
Theories of Psychology	6.05 (0.72)	5.88 (0.87)	5.93 (0.51)	6.02 (0.72)	6.03 (0.94)	6.04 (0.86)	6.0
View of Human Nature	6.14 (0.89)	6.16 (1.05)	6.40 (0.66)	6.31 (0.94)	6.28 (1.00)	6.35 (0.87)	6.0
Role of Culture	5.76 (1.15)	6.06 (0.91)	6.05 (0.76)	6.12 (0.75)	5.91 (1.08)	6.11 (0.81)	6.0
Scientific Thinking	6.00 (0.98)	6.03 (0.70)	6.14 (0.77)	5.96 (0.98)	6.00 (0.97)	6.22 (0.94)	6.0
Scientific Method	5.90 (0.87)	6.00 (1.19)	5.98 (0.80)	6.10 (0.98)	6.03 (1.09)	6.18 (0.84)	6.0

Note: Numbers in cells represent: Means (Standard Deviation). Ratings were made on a 7 point scale where 1=extremely unprepared and 7=extremely prepared.

In addition, we conducted further analysis of these results using one-independent sample *t*-tests to assess whether these means are significantly higher than the benchmark of 6. Results indicate that in some cases we are significantly exceeding the benchmark. Specifically, students were particularly satisfied with the extent to which the program helped them develop a broader view of human life and to engage in scientific thinking skills. These *t*-tests are presented below in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Results of t-test Analysis to Assess Whether Scores are Significantly Different from Benchmarks for Academic Year 2014-2015 for the Department of Psychology

Question	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Nature of Psychology	1.27	.21
Theories of Psychology	0.31	.76
View of Human Nature	2.96	<.01*
Role of Culture	1.00	.32
Scientific Thinking	1.73	.09*
Scientific Method	1.60	.12

*Note: Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 3 on page 5. Degrees of freedom = 54 for each analysis. * indicates score is significantly different from benchmark of 6.0, alpha = .10.*

We conducted additional analyses to examine whether students' perceptions of their knowledge and skills have increased significantly over time. Simple linear regression analyses were used to assess whether scores had significantly improved over the past 5 years. These analyses revealed that students' perception of their understanding of the nature of psychology has significantly improved over time, $F(1,236) = 3.89$, $p = .05$, $R^2 = .02$, $\beta = .13$.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Analysis of Psychology

Internal Assessment

The psychology department is in the process of developing an internal assessment of critical thinking about and analysis of psychological concepts. In its current form, the assessment has 7 questions, some of which assess critical thinking and some of which assess communication. Each question is rated on a 6 point scale with 1 indicating no evidence of the skill in question and 6 indicating complete mastery of the skill in question. Questions regarding critical thinking and analysis of psychology assessed the extent to which students 1) Considered context and assumptions, 2) Analyzed supporting data and evidence, 3) Used other perspectives and implications, and 4) Assessed conclusions, implications, and consequences.

This year, as a pilot study, we assessed a sample of our graduating seniors. This pilot study served three purposes: 1) to identify the ease or difficulty of using this assessment, 2) to identify whether this assessment would be relevant to all sections of PSY 499, and 3) to establish benchmarks. Table 5 below presents the means and standard deviations for each item, along with proposed benchmarks.

Table 5. Instructor Assessment of Critical Thinking about and Analysis of Psychology Concepts for 2014-2015

Skill Assessed	2014-2015 (n=7)	Proposed Benchmark
Considered context & assumptions	4.71 (0.76)	4.0
Analyzed supporting data and evidence	4.29 (1.11)	4.0
Used other perspectives and implications	4.14 (0.38)	4.0
Assessed conclusions, implications, and consequences	4.43 (1.14)	4.0

Note: Numbers in cells represent: Means (Standard Deviation).

A comparison of this sample of students with overall scores on the exit exam (to assess whether these students were representative of the sample as a whole) indicated that the sample selected for the internal assessment scored higher than the overall group for six domains (developmental, experimental design, learning and cognition, social, and history), lower than the overall group for 3 domains (biological, statistics, and personality), and roughly equal to the overall sample on one domain (abnormal). Thus, overall the sample selected for this assessment appeared to be slightly better than average, based on the only objective data we have. We acknowledge that exceeding

expectations on one learning objective does not guarantee that one will exceed expectations on another learning objective, but given the small sample size we wanted some assessment of how “average” these students were. Given the means presented here, and the knowledge that this sample may have been comprised primarily of above average students, we felt that a benchmark of 4.0 would be appropriate for these items.

One of the faculty members currently teaching PSY 499 felt the measure worked, but the other faculty did not feel this assessment fit his class as well. As such, we plan to continue to develop internal assessments of critical thinking and analysis of psychological concepts.

Student Learning Outcome 3: Effective Communication

Internal Assessment

The psychology department is in the process of developing an internal assessment of communication skills. In its current form, the assessment has 7 questions, some of which assess critical thinking and some of which assess communication. Each question is rated on a 6 point scale with 1 indicating no evidence of the skill in question and 6 indicating complete mastery of the skill in question. Questions regarding communication include 1) Summarized problem, question, or issue, 2) Communicated own perspective, hypothesis, or position, and 3) Communicated effectively.

This year, as a pilot study, we assessed a sample of our graduating seniors. This pilot study served three purposes: 1) to identify the ease or difficulty of using this assessment, 2) to identify whether this assessment would be relevant to all sections of PSY 499, and 3) to establish benchmarks. Table 6 below presents the means and standard deviations for each item, along with proposed benchmarks.

Table 6. Instructor Assessment of Communication Skills for 2014-2015 for the Department of Psychology

Skill Assessed	2014-2015 (n=7)	Proposed Benchmark
Summarized problem, question, or issue	4.42 (0.79)	4.0
Communicated own perspective, hypothesis, or opinion	4.57 (0.79)	4.0
Communicated effectively	4.00 (1.29)	4.0

Note: Numbers in cells represent: Means (Standard Deviation).

A comparison of this sample of students with overall scores on the exit exam (to assess whether these students were representative of the sample as a whole) indicated that the sample selected for the internal assessment scored higher than the overall group for six domains (developmental, experimental design, learning and cognition, social, and history), lower than the overall group for 3 domains (biological, statistics, and personality), and roughly equal to the overall sample on one domain (abnormal). Thus, overall the sample selected for this assessment appeared to be slightly better than average, based on the only objective data we have. We acknowledge that exceeding expectations on one learning objective does not guarantee that one will exceed expectations on another learning objective, but given the small sample size we wanted some assessment of how “average” these students were. Given the means presented here, and the knowledge that this sample may have been comprised primarily of above average students, we felt that a benchmark of 4.0 would be appropriate for these items.

One of the faculty members currently teaching PSY 499 felt the measure worked, but the other faculty did not feel this assessment fit his class as well. As such, we plan to continue to develop internal assessments of communication skills.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Exposure to Career Options

Student Involvement in Faculty-Sponsored Research/Service

A key aspect of preparing students for graduate school and helping students decide whether they want to pursue graduate school is to be involved in faculty-sponsored research and/or service. For research projects this may include assistance with project development, data collection, data entry, data analysis, writing, or any other part of the research process. Service projects may include activities such as volunteering with local organizations providing psychological services, such as Homeless Connect and Lighthouse Ministries.

The 2014-2015 academic year is the first year that the psychology department has directly tracked the number of students engaged in these types of opportunities. Table 7 below presents the total number of students engaged in these opportunities and the number of students participating per faculty member.

Table 7. Student Involvement in Faculty-Sponsored Research/ Service for 2014-2015 for the Department of Psychology

	2014-2015	Proposed Benchmark
Number of students involved	42	24
Average students per faculty member	5.25	3

Student Presentations at Conferences and Manuscripts Submitted

A key aspect of preparing students for graduate school is for them to present their research, either at a conference or in a journal. The 2014-2015 academic year is the first year that the psychology department has directly tracked the number of students who are engaged in these types of opportunities. Overall our students were quite active this year. Table 8 below presents the raw number of students engaged in these opportunities and the number of students participating per faculty member.

Table 8. Student Presentations at Conferences & Manuscript Submitted for 2014-2015 for the Department of Psychology

	2014-2015	Proposed Benchmark
Number of presentations	8	8
Average presentations per faculty member	1	1
Number of students who presented	10	8
Average number of students per faculty member	1.25	1
Number of manuscripts submitted	2	1

Below, we present highlights of our students' presentations and manuscripts. This list is not exhaustive.

Citation information for conference presentations (* indicates undergraduate author):

*Cardona, C.T., *Dance, L.N., *Wheeler, E.A., Hardy, T.K. & Hill-Chapman, C.R. (2015, May). *Construct Validity of the Defensive Pessimism Inventory-Teen: Classifying Individuals as Defensive Pessimists, Strategic Optimists, or Aschematics*. Poster presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, New York City, NY.

*Dance, L.N., *Wheeler, E.A., *Cardona, C.T., Hardy, T.K. & Hill-Chapman, C.R. (2015, May). *Comparing Psychometric Properties of the Defensive Pessimism Inventory and Defensive Pessimism Inventory-Teen*. Poster presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, New York City, NY.

Sargent, J., *Kellis, D., *Howell, D., *Fletcher, D., Richmond, L., & Zacks, J. (2014, November). *The influence of doorways and walls on spatial memory formation*. Poster presented at the 55th annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society, Long Beach, CA.

*Wheeler, E.A., *Cardona, C.T., *Dance, L.N., Hardy, T.K. & Hill-Chapman, C.R. (2015, May). *Construct Validity of the Defensive Pessimism Inventory-Teen: Correlations with Related Constructs*. Poster presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, New York City, NY.

Citation information for submitted manuscripts (* indicates undergraduate author):

Herzog, T.K., Hill-Chapman, C. R., Hardy, T.K., *El-Khabbaz, & Wrighten, S. (2015). *Trait Emotion, Emotional Regulation, and Parenting Styles*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Exit Survey

The senior exit survey is a 28-item questionnaire. Question 8 assesses “To what extent has the psychology program enabled you to have an awareness of the various types of career options for a psychology major?” This item is rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is equal to *extremely unprepared* and 7 is *extremely prepared*. Means and standard deviation information for the past 5 years plus the current year is presented in Table 9 below. For the 2014-2015 academic year, we did not meet our benchmark on this question. Students felt they were slightly underprepared, relative to our benchmark, in terms of their awareness of career options for psychology majors. However, it should be noted that further analysis comparing students’ reports to the benchmark using a one-independent sample *t*-test revealed that this number was not significantly lower than the benchmark, $t(54) = -1.61, p > .10$.

Table 9. Student Perceptions of Awareness of Career Options for 2009-2015 for the Department of Psychology

	Year						
	2009-2010 (n = 10)	2010-2011 (n = 33)	2011-2012 (n = 43)	2012-2013 (n = 49)	2013-2014 (n = 58)	2014-2015 (n = 55)	Benchmark
Awareness of Career Options	5.76 (0.81)	6.00 (0.98)	6.16 (0.84)	6.06 (0.85)	6.16 (0.97)	5.73 (1.25)	6.0

Other Assessment Information

In addition to assessing student learning outcomes, the exit survey also assesses students' perceptions of the program more generally. This is assessed both through likert-scale questions regarding the quality of the program and the quality of the faculty, as well as open-ended questions about the program. Means and standard deviations for the past 5 years are presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Students' Attitudes and Opinions for 2010 – 2015 for the Department of Psychology

	Year					Benchmark
	2010-2011 (n = 33)	2011-2012 (n = 43)	2012-2013 (n = 49)	2013-2014 (n = 58)	2014-2015 (n = 55)	
Quality of Program (α for 2014-2015 = .87)						
Availability of Courses	4.67 (1.11)	4.98 (1.24)	5.20 (1.26)	5.17 (1.30)	5.07 (1.20)	6.0
Setting Objectives	5.88 (0.91)	5.79 (0.74)	6.12 (0.78)	6.10 (0.81)	5.96 (0.77)	6.0
Meeting Objectives	5.75 (1.02)	5.60 (0.88)	6.04 (0.84)	5.91 (0.80)	5.91 (0.82)	6.0
Instruction Quality	5.97 (0.86)	5.74 (0.79)	5.88 (0.75)	5.93 (0.79)	5.85 (0.93)	6.0
Fairness of Grading	5.97 (0.97)	5.72 (0.83)	5.86 (0.79)	5.74 (0.93)	5.91 (0.82)	6.0
Quality of Courses	6.00 (0.95)	6.14 (0.68)	5.96 (0.82)	6.19 (0.76)	6.16 (0.69)	6.0
Quality of Faculty (α for 2014-2015 = .86)						
Knowledge of Material	6.31 (1.15)	6.51 (0.63)	6.53 (0.71)	6.48 (0.68)	6.51 (0.69)	6.0
Conduct of Class	5.91 (1.15)	5.88 (0.73)	6.10 (0.77)	6.12 (0.80)	6.11 (0.76)	6.0
Treatment of Students	5.63 (1.48)	5.70 (1.08)	5.86 (1.04)	6.00 (1.06)	6.27 (0.89)	6.0
Approachability of Faculty	5.78 (1.10)	5.81 (1.16)	6.04 (0.94)	6.10 (1.05)	6.22 (0.81)	6.0
Quality of Advising	6.00 (0.98)	6.16 (0.84)	6.06 (0.85)	6.16 (0.97)	5.93 (1.02)	6.0

Note: Numbers in cells represent: Means (Standard Deviation). Ratings were made on a 7 point scale where 1=very insufficient and 7=excellent.

In addition, further analysis of these results using one-independent sample *t*-tests to assess whether these means are significantly different from the benchmark of 6 indicates that the only mean

significantly lower than the benchmark was for availability of classes. This is a reoccurring trend: availability of courses is typically the area in which the department has received the lowest ratings. These lower ratings may be due to an increase in the number of students enrolled as psychology majors (See graduating class sizes in Table 12 page 17) and therefore more competition to get into classes. The average number of graduating seniors from 2007-2010 was 18.5. From 2011-2015 the average number of graduating seniors was 47.6, they still indicate that more courses need to offered.

Furthermore, these analyses reveal that in several areas, means are significantly higher than our benchmark. Specifically, students were particularly satisfied with the overall quality of courses, faculty's knowledge of the material, faculty's treatment of students in the classroom, and faculty's availability. These t-tests are presented below in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Results of t-test Analysis to Assess Whether Scores are Significantly Different from Benchmarks for Academic Year 2014-2015 for the Department of Psychology

Question	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Availability of Courses	-5.73	<.001*
Setting Objectives	-0.35	.73
Meeting Objectives	-0.97	.34
Instruction Quality	-1.16	.25
Fairness of Grading	-0.82	.42
Quality of Courses	1.77	.08*
Knowledge of Material	5.47	<.001*
Conduct of Class	1.06	.29
Treatment of Students	2.27	.03*
Approachability of Faculty	2.00	.05*
Quality of Advising	-0.53	.60

*Note: Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 10. Degrees of freedom = 54 for each analysis. * indicates score is significantly different from benchmark of 6.0, alpha = .10.*

Additional analyses examined whether students' perceptions of the quality of the program and quality of the faculty increased significantly over time. Simple linear regression analyses were used to assess whether scores had significantly improved over the past 5 years. These analyses revealed that students' perception of the quality of advising has significantly improved over time, $F(1,236) = 3.00$, $p = .09$, $R^2 = .01$, $\beta = .11$. We feel that this shows we are making progress towards meeting this benchmark, even though scores are still be slightly (although not significantly) below the benchmark. Furthermore, these analyses revealed that students' perception of faculty's conduct of class has significantly improved over time, $F(1,236) = 2.97$, $p = .09$, $R^2 = .01$, $\beta = .11$, and that students' perception of faculty's approachability has significantly improved over time, $F(1,236) = 6.91$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .03$, $\beta = .17$.

The exit survey also contains a number of open-ended questions. Several themes were evident in these responses, and are reflective of why students were less satisfied than we would have liked with several aspects of the program. Open-ended responses again indicated student frustration with course availability, class size, and course scheduling. Of the 41 students who mentioned a weakness of the department, 19 mentioned the limited availability of psychology courses and 7 mentioned the need for more faculty. Of the 41 students who suggested a way in which the department could be improved, 25 mentioned the need for greater availability of psychology courses or more faculty members.

It should be noted that continuing the trend from the previous 2011 – 2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 academic years, this academic year there were more undergraduate courses taught by adjunct professors than in prior years. In addition, this year, for the third consecutive year, the ratio of full-time faculty to part-time faculty was greater than 1:1. Hence, we have too few faculty to adequately meet department goals and student expectations, and in comparison to other departments we have a lower faculty to student ratio.

Action Plan

Student Learning Outcome 1: Understanding of Psychology

Exit Exam

Means for all domains except statistics equaled or exceeded our benchmarks. While this is promising, there is still considerable deviation among the domains. For 2015-2016 we are investigating the feasibility of adding a pre-test to PSY 220. PSY 220 is one of the earliest psychology courses that majors take. This will allow us to assess how much our students improve from the beginning of the psychology major to the end. It is possible that students are gaining an equal amount of knowledge in all domains but start the program with less knowledge in some domains (e.g. statistics) than in others (e.g. abnormal).

Exit Survey

Means for all items surpassed the benchmark. Furthermore, means for all items were higher than in the previous academic year. No direct actions will be taken regarding this part of the exit survey, but we hope to see continued improvement in all items.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Analysis of Psychology

This year, only a sample of graduating students was assessed on critical thinking and analysis of psychological concepts. Students overall seemed to score well on this assessment, but conclusions must be cautious as some information indicates these students may have been above average. For the 2015-2016 academic year we will continue to develop our assessment of this outcome.

Student Learning Outcome 3: Effective Communication

This year, only a sample of graduating students was assessed on communication skills. Students overall seemed to score well on this assessment, but conclusions must be cautious as some information indicates these students may have been above average. For the 2015-2016 academic year we will continue to develop our assessment of this outcome.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Exposure to Career Options

Overall, many students participated in research and service projects with faculty members. For the 2015-2016 academic year, we will have two additional faculty members, meaning our benchmark will increase to 30 students involved in projects with faculty. While the high number of students involved in research is promising, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are many more students who are interested in doing research. Several students have expressed interest in research but have not found a faculty member available. As faculty are already supervising many more than our benchmark, asking faculty to supervise more students in research does not seem to be a viable option. Rather, we feel this will need to be addressed through the addition of more full-time faculty.

Although we met our benchmarks in terms of number of students involved in collaborations with faculty, we did not meet our benchmark with respect to students' perception of their awareness of career options for psychology majors. We plan to place more emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum in PSY 220 (Careers in Psychology) for the 2015-2016 academic year. We also plan to assess students' perceptions earlier. We currently assess their perceptions as they're graduating (which is also around the time they are finishing their internships). We would also like to assess this in PSY 220, when students are first introduced to careers relevant to psychology. It is possible that students were aware of career options just after taking PSY 220 but have forgotten that they were made aware of this information by graduation.

Other Assessment Information

Our more general assessment of student perceptions of the psychology program revealed a number of ways in which we can improve. First, it seems obvious that the current staffing level (8 full-time faculty) is insufficient. We have begun to address this issue. For 2015-2016 we will have 10 full-time faculty. Hopefully this will alleviate some problems with class availability but we do not expect it to completely resolve the problem. In 2012-2013 we also had 10 faculty, yet students still expressed considerable dissatisfaction with course availability. Clearly the psychology undergraduate program is popular as the number of graduates continues to grow. However, staffing levels have fallen over the past several years: the department had 11 faculty until 1999, when it dropped to 10. See Table 12 below which compares the number of full-time faculty to the number of graduating seniors.

Table 12. Faculty and Graduating Seniors in the Department of Psychology

	Academic Year Ending								
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
# graduating	22	12	30	10	33	43	49	58	55
# full time faculty	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	8

Additional full-time faculty are likely required to see adequate levels of student satisfaction with course availability. The department has tried to cope with this problem by hiring more adjunct professors. In fact, for the 2014-2015 academic year there were 2.625 part-time faculty for every full-time faculty member in the department. Furthermore, of the 57 undergraduate courses (excluding 1 credit hour courses such as 216, 220, and courses that do not count towards faculty's teaching load, such as 270, 370, and 470) taught in Fall and Spring semesters of 2014-2015, 24 (42.1%) were taught by an adjunct professor or tenure-track professor on overload. This further decreases student satisfaction as 1) classes taught by adjunct faculty are primarily taught at night and students dislike taking night classes as it interferes with work and family life, 2) reliance on adjunct faculty, rather than hiring additional full-time faculty, means that current full-time faculty have to take a larger role in other tasks (e.g. more advisees per faculty member) which decreases the time they can devote to each student, and 3) reliance on adjunct faculty, rather than full time faculty, provides students with fewer opportunities to be involved in research as fewer faculty are available for collaboration. Thus, the department plans to continue asking the administration for more full-time faculty as we do not feel we have fully resolved the staffing problem that leads to dissatisfaction with the availability of courses.