

Institutional Effectiveness Report

Undergraduate Major in Psychology

Academic Year 2013-2014

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Mission and Goals

All graduates of the baccalaureate program in psychology will have developed an understanding of psychology as the science of behavior and experience and will have obtained an understanding of the major theories and issues of the discipline. The following specific areas are used to meet the overall mission of the department:

- The area of personal development of the program's goal is multifaceted: (a.) All recipients of the baccalaureate in psychology will have a broadened view of human life and the significance of individual and cultural diversity. (b.) Students will incorporate their training in psychology into personal development and career planning. (c.) Students participate in activities and course work in the service of others.
- Psychology majors will develop critical and scientific thinking skills. They will gain an understanding of psychology as a science, and an appreciation for the scientific method. They participate in all aspects of the research process, including literature review, data collection and analysis using statistical software, and presentation of findings.
- Psychology majors will be exposed to the possibilities of future graduate training as well as the diverse career options open to an undergraduate psychology major. Based on their plans for the future, they will be guided as to the optimal course work and activities they should pursue while obtaining the baccalaureate degree. This preparation, along with the general education requirements, will qualify recipients of the baccalaureate degree in psychology to pursue graduate studies and/or enter employment in entry-level positions in business, government, and human service agencies upon graduation.
- The psychology program faculty will: (a) engage in appropriate projects to further develop their scholarship with participation by undergraduates when possible and maintain active involvement with professional and scholarly associations and be active in scholarly service; (b) maintain the quality of their teaching; maintain positive ratings on University course and instructor evaluations and on the exit-interviews of graduating seniors.
- The psychology program will reflect the national interest trends in psychology careers (psychology related occupations are among the top ten most rapidly growing areas of employment, US Department of Labor Statistics, 2010).
- Program faculty and staff will maintain active involvement within both the university and the local community.

Assessment Activities

For the 2013-2014 academic year, the department continued to use two primary assessment tools for program efficacy: a 100-item in-house general examination of psychology and a survey of graduating seniors. All data for the 2013– 2014 IE report were collected in the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014. (Note that only data from the spring of 2014 was used in analyses below.)

Exit Exam

The revised exam was given in December 2013 and April of 2014. The revised exam consisted of 100 items that were selected from the previous exit exam (360-items) that was given to graduating seniors from the fall of 2000 to the spring of 2010.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of students' knowledge and skills from the fall of 2003 to the spring of 2014. This table shows that scores generally have been consistent over the last ten years. Figures 1 and 2 indicate that the performance of our students on this exam has been relatively stable ($R^2 = .007$, $R^2 = .11$) since its inception, although statistics decreased four years ago but has shown some recovery in the past two years.

Table 1. Students' Knowledge and Skills for 2002-2013 for the Department of Psychology

Area Tested	2003-2004 ²	2004-2005 ²	2005-2006 ²	2006-2007 ²	2007-2008	2008-2009 ²	2009-2010 ²	2010-2011 ²	2011-2012 ²	2012-2013 ²	2013-2014 ²⁶
Abnormal ³	74	65	79	76	71	76	70	77	86	88	86
Developmental ¹	67	65	64	75	68	72	61	67	66	75	74
Experimental Design ¹	59	87	67	64	68	84	56	66	69	76	80
Learning/Cognition ⁵	59	81	64	59	52	59	70	64	64	65	68
Personality ³	50	61	60	59	55	59	63	64	62	70	64
Biological ¹	66	80	80	74	74	70	47	64	67	66	68
Social ¹	66	93	81	70	82	79	68	61	69	78	79
Statistics ¹	66	84	78	72	79	82	76	53	52	57	59
History ⁴	66	79	78	76	70	72	45	63	63	72	75
Total	60	79	69	65	65	66	60	64	66	72	72
Required Courses	64	82	74	71	76	72	66	63	64	71	71

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

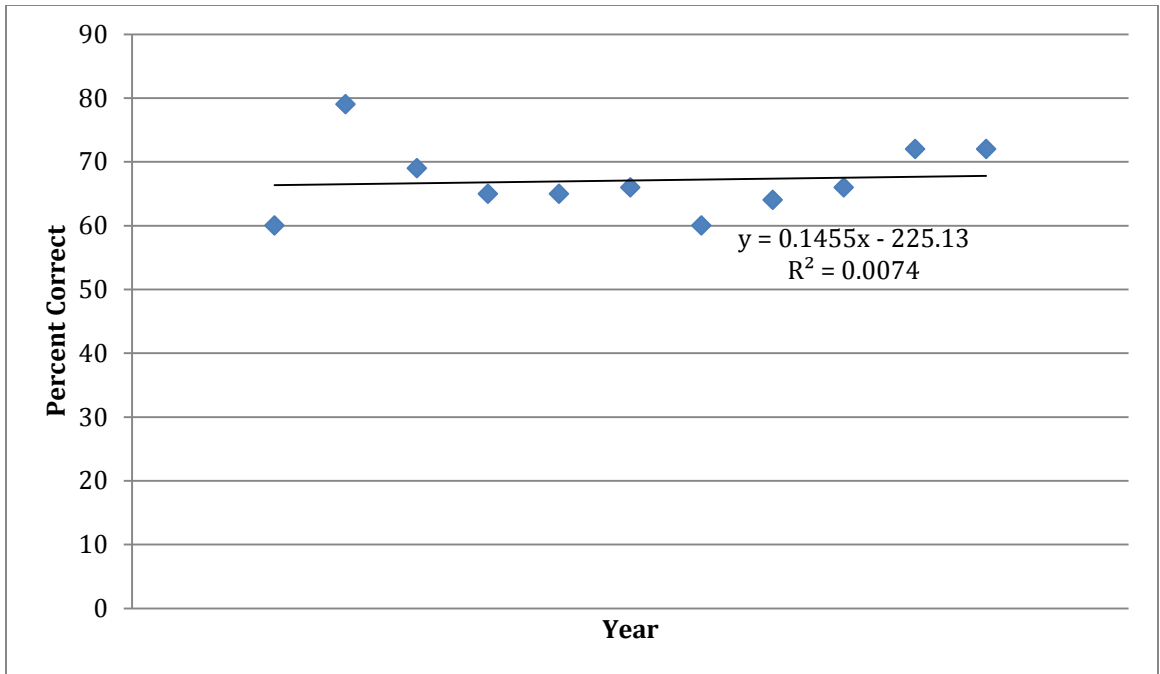


Figure 1. Performance Trend 2003-2004 through 2013-2014 for all courses.

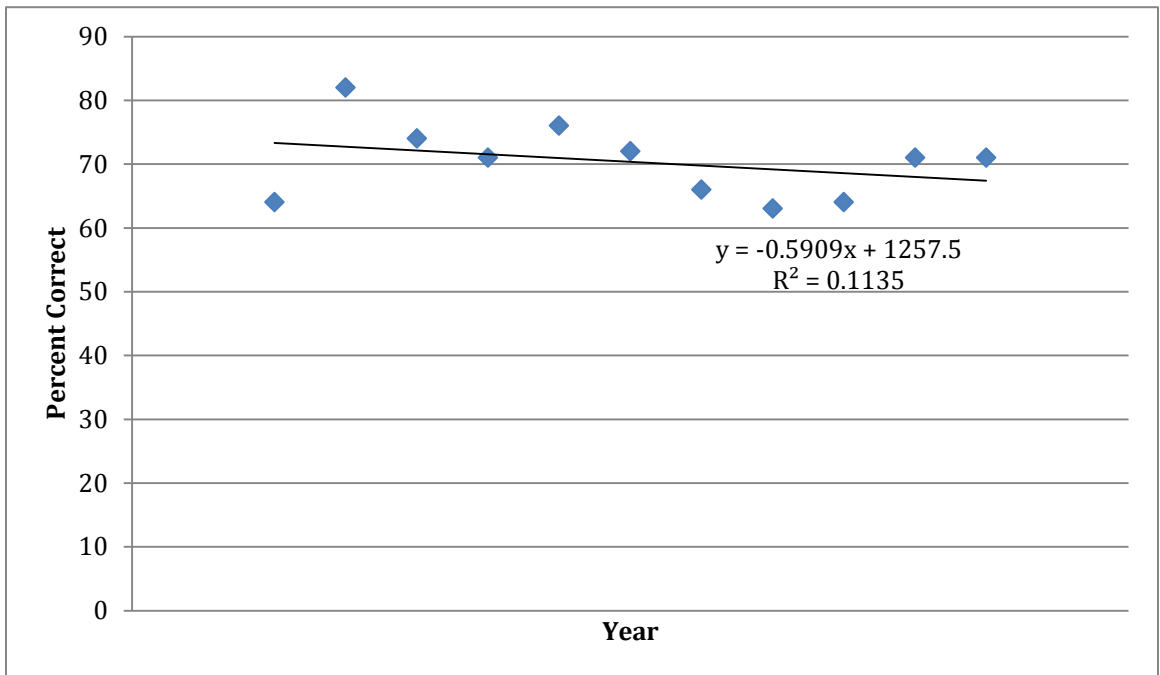


Figure 2. Performance Trend 2003-2004 through 2013-2014 for required courses.

Exit Survey

The senior exit survey is a 28-item questionnaire. The first 18 items are rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is equal to *extremely unprepared* and 7 is *extremely prepared*. The final 6 items are open-ended items to which students are asked to provide qualitative data regarding program strengths, weaknesses, program improvements, and other comments. This instrument is considered reliable ($\alpha = .91$). While there is some variation from year to year across the survey items, there were no statistically significant changes across time. Essentially, the students gave the department high ratings in all but one area. Several themes regarding the strengths of the Psychology Department were evident. In general, students commented on the knowledge of the faculty, approachability of the faculty, and the quality of teaching. However, similar to the last two years, the lowest ratings for this year were on the availability of courses. While these lower ratings may be due to another increase in the number of students enrolled as psychology majors from last year, it still depicts that this year there was lower satisfaction with the departmental offerings. 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, 20 mentioned the limited availability of psychology courses, 5 mentioned the need for more faculty, and 2 mentioned overcrowded classrooms. In addition, open-ended responses indicated general dissatisfaction with the number and quality of part-time faculty they encountered en route to their undergraduate degrees. Of the 37 students who suggested a way in which the department could be improved, 17 mentioned the need for greater availability of psychology courses, 10 mentioned the need for more faculty, and 4 mentioned reducing crowdedness in classrooms. It should be noted that continuing the trend from the previous 2011 - 2012 and 2012-2013 academic years, this academic year there were more undergraduate courses taught by adjunct professors than in prior years. In addition, this year, for the second 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.

Table 2. Students' Attitudes and Opinions for 2005 – 2013 for the Department of Psychology

	Mean (SD)							
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012 (n = 43)	2012-2013 (n = 49)	2013-2014 (n = 58)
Knowledge Goals (α for 2013-2014 = .89)								
Nature of Psychology	6.00 (.50)	6.25 (.62)	6.29 (.61)	5.86 (.77)	5.75 (1.04)	5.98 (.64)	6.10 (0.65)	6.02 (0.81)
Theories of Psychology	5.89 (.68)	5.67 (.98)	5.86 (.54)	6.05 (.72)	5.88 (.87)	5.93 (.51)	6.02 (0.72)	6.03 (0.94)
View of Human Nature	6.22 (.73)	6.42 (.79)	6.43 (.76)	6.14 (.89)	6.16 (1.05)	6.40 (.66)	6.31 (0.94)	6.28 (1.00)
Role of Culture in Behavior	5.94 (1.11)	6.67 (.65)	6.00 (1.1)	5.76 (1.15)	6.06 (.914)	6.05 (.76)	6.12 (0.75)	5.91 (1.08)
Scientific Thinking	5.94 (.94)	6.17 (.84)	6.21 (.58)	6.00 (.98)	6.03 (.695)	6.14 (.77)	5.96 (0.98)	6.00 (0.97)
Scientific Method	5.72 (1.13)	6.08 (1.16)	5.93 (.73)	5.90 (.87)	6.00 (1.19)	5.98 (.80)	6.10 (0.98)	6.03 (1.09)
Career Options	5.06 (1.66)	5.42 (1.50)	5.57 (1.6)	4.90 (1.5)	5.31 (1.53)	5.79 (.97)	6.00 (0.89)	5.91 (1.06)
Quality of Program (α for 2013-2014 = .86)								
Availability of Courses	5.56 (1.04)	5.17 (.84)	5.07 (1.1)	5.24 (.60)	4.67 (1.11)	4.98 (1.24)	5.20 (1.26)	5.17 (1.30)
Setting Objectives	5.83 (.86)	5.50 (1.09)	5.71 (.61)	5.48 (.95)	5.88 (.91)	5.79 (.74)	6.12 (0.78)	6.10 (0.81)
Meeting Objectives	5.50 (.98)	5.50 (1.43)	5.57 (.94)	5.48 (.85)	5.75 (1.02)	5.60 (.88)	6.04 (0.84)	5.91 (0.80)
Instruction Quality	5.72 (.96)	5.58 (.99)	6.00 (.78)	5.52 (.85)	5.97 (.86)	5.74 (.79)	5.88 (0.75)	5.93 (0.79)
Fairness of Grading	5.83 (.92)	5.92 (.79)	6.43 (.51)	5.43 (.79)	5.97 (.97)	5.72 (.83)	5.86 (0.79)	5.74 (0.93)
Quality of Courses	5.94 (.94)	5.83 (.94)	6.07 (.62)	5.90 (.81)	6.00 (.95)	6.14 (.68)	5.96 (0.82)	6.19 (0.76)
Quality of Faculty (α for 2013-2014 = .83)								
Knowledge of Material	6.71 (.59)	6.81 (.52)	6.64 (.50)	6.29 (.88)	6.31 (1.15)	6.51 (.63)	6.53 (0.71)	6.48 (0.68)
Conduct of Class	6.06 (.75)	6.67 (.65)	6.36 (.63)	5.57 (1.05)	5.91 (1.15)	5.88 (.73)	6.10 (0.77)	6.12 (0.80)
Treatment of Students	6.18 (.81)	5.50 (.52)	6.43 (.51)	5.33 (1.13)	5.63 (1.48)	5.70 (1.08)	5.86 (1.04)	6.00 (1.06)
Availability of Faculty	6.35 (.70)	6.08 (.99)	6.14 (.66)	5.52 (.81)	5.78 (1.10)	5.81 (1.16)	6.04 (0.94)	6.10 (1.05)
Quality of Advising	5.81 (1.22)	6.08 (.84)	5.71 (1.5)	5.76 (.81)	6.00 (.98)	6.16 (.84)	6.06 (0.85)	6.16 (0.97)

Seven point scale 1=very low to 7=very high

Issues and Actions for 2007-2014 Cycle

Issues of Concern	Actions Taken
Research workbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a research workbook for use in Psychology 302 and 303 has begun. • Discussion of structure and collection of topics and articles was begun in 2008-2009. • Work continues for 2014 – 2015.
Research Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More students are requesting extracurricular research experiences. • Several faculty have written QEP projects and research grants to allow students the opportunity to engage in research and attend conferences to present student findings. • Work continues for 2014-2015.
Student Concerns with Psychology 220	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2013-2014, a graduate teaching assistant took over the teaching of the <i>Careers in Psychology</i> course with oversight by Dr. Teresa Herzog. This course will continue to be taught by a graduate teaching assistant. • Major modifications to Psychology 220 workbook involving the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce sessions with professor interviews ○ Add unit on study skills and test taking ○ Formalize four year class plan ○ Develop formal statement of a plan for professional training and a plan for immediate employment • Work continues for 2014-2015.
Graduating Seniors' Concerns with Employment & Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifications to Senior Seminar (Psychology 499) include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure differentiation in what job offerings are <i>possible</i> versus <i>job placement</i> in Senior Seminar. ○ For students not attending graduate school, require students to begin to identify five or more entry level jobs for which they may apply during the beginning of the semester in which they graduate. ○ Require attendance at the University Career Fair that is sponsored by the Office of Career Development every semester. ○ Require students in senior seminar to look at other graduate programs besides psychology for continuing or professional education. ○ A unit was added during the 2010-2011 academic year on applying to graduate school. Detailed instruction was provided on how to choose a graduate school, how to write a curriculum vitae, how to write a personal statement, and how to obtain letters of recommendation. Students also were provided timelines for application to graduate school. ○ A unit was added during the 2010-2011 academic year on job search strategies for those not continuing on to graduate school. Students were provided a list

	<p>of job titles that were relevant to individuals who had obtained a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Students were taught how to update their résumé and how to write a cover letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work continues for 2014-2015.
Quality of Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While we have maintained our success in all academic areas, we have not shown any growth in performance. We will attempt to evaluate each of the following issues related to academic performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider if action should be taken to increase performance ○ Evaluate linkage between course content and examination. ○ Evaluate the validity of our in house examination against a nationally standardized examination in the 2012-2013 academic year. ○ Re-orientation of curriculum • Four new electives have been added to the undergraduate curriculum including: Introduction to Behavioral Genetics, Introduction to Pediatric Psychology, Psychology of Relationships, and Psychology of Gender. • Work continues for 2014-2015.
Quality of Adjunct Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the option of hybrid courses whereby course lectures are delivered via the internet by full time faculty. • Consider assigning a departmental faculty mentor to part-time instructors to assist in improving course content and student learning. • Work began in fall 2013. • Work continues for 2014-2015.

Resolved Issues of Concern	Actions Taken
<p>Coordination of course requirements in Psychology 302 (Statistics I and Measurement) and 303 (Statistics II and Design) Issue of concern has been resolved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions taken in 2006-2007 did not alleviate the problems with coordination of these two courses. • A new series of discussions with more explicit changes in content and methods was begun in the spring of 2008. These workshops/discussions continued during the fall of 2008. • The coordination of these courses with the upper-level content/research courses was added to the discussions during the spring of 2008. • During extended discussions during the fall of 2008, the department agreed to a common standard for the required work in Psychology 302 and 303.
<p>Remodeling of laboratories to meet requirements in graduate and undergraduate research/instruction and faculty research. Issue of concern has been resolved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for remodeling was approved but only new offices have been completed. • Plan has been revised and first priority is to convert former child research room into a graduate/senior student workroom and an advanced clinical laboratory. • Plan has been revised to turn Room 229D into a classroom for introductory psychology lab and a counseling/therapy session room. • Plan has been finalized and completion waits funding as of the spring of 2009. • Renovations have been carried out. • Awaiting delivery of furniture and equipment; should be able to begin formal operation of laboratory and group room in the fall of 2010. • Renovations on a new social laboratory have been completed.
<p>Graduate and senior student access to advanced data analysis system. Issue of concern has been resolved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A \$5000 grant through the QEP budget was used to establish a Quantitative Data Analysis Laboratory. • The new laboratory consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work station ○ All major SPSS modules ○ File storage ○ Log book ○ Statistical manuals • Laboratory will be operational for the fall of 2008. • Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis Laboratory is open and operational.
<p>Use of iClicker for feedback in class. Procedure validated as valuable instructional tool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of the department now use this system. • Need to evaluate its effectiveness. • Offer intra-departmental training • Expansion of use of iClicker continued throughout 2008-2009 and work continued during 2009-2010. • Students consistently rate the iClicker of value in most classes. Recommend continued support of its use.

<p>Psychology Club</p> <p>Issue of concern has been resolved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students only rated the functioning of the Psychology Club negatively. • Club was closed in the spring of 2008. • Evaluation and planning for revitalization of the Club to begin in the fall of 2008. • New strategy has been developed in which seniors will have their own club and underclassmen a separate organization. Will begin use in the fall of 2010. • As of the fall of 2010, there are now two separate organizations with which students can affiliate.
<p>Degree Goals</p> <p>Program review has been completed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reevaluation of program goals was completed based on <i>APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major</i> (American Psychological Association, 2007) • As of the spring 2013, the psychology program reworked the major to increase the speed of program completion.