

Approved October 22, 2008 by Psychology  
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## **Department of Psychology Assessment Plan**

### **A. A. Degree**

#### ***A. Goals***

1. Students will demonstrate basic knowledge in introductory, child, social, and abnormal psychology.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to make a decision as to whether they wish to obtain a BA degree in psychology.

#### ***B. Assessment Instrument***

Students will be sent an exit questionnaire concerning their knowledge of child, social, and abnormal psychology, whether the AA degree helped in achieving their educational or career goals, and their intent to continue in the BA degree in psychology or a related field.

(Measures Goals 1 and 2)

#### ***C. Evaluation of the A.A. Degree***

The analysis of the assessment measures for the Associate Degree will be undertaken annually by the Department Assessment Committee, which will use the information to modify the program to better meet the goals, if necessary.

### **B. A. Degree**

#### ***A. Goals***

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical approaches, findings, and historical trends in psychology.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the major research methods in psychology, including ethical standards, design, data analysis, and interpretation.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and to use the scientific approach to understanding behavior.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply concepts, information, and skills learned in psychology courses to their lives and work.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively locate and evaluate sources of information.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to express themselves effectively in the discourse of the discipline.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand people from a diverse range of backgrounds and varying demographic characteristics such as age, race, disability, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, religion, and cognitive abilities.

8. Students will demonstrate the ability to make decisions about future employment or graduate education.

### ***B. Assessment Instruments***

1. Major Field Test in Psychology (Measures goals 1 & 2)

The Major Field Test (MFT) is a nationally-normed test measuring content knowledge in the discipline of psychology (and is available for many other disciplines), constructed and scored by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). It generates one overall score, and four subscores: 1. learning & cognition; 2. sensation, perception, physiological, comparative & ethology; 3. clinical, abnormal personality, and 4. developmental & social. It also provides reports for six assessment indicators, for the purposes of program outcomes assessment: 1. memory and thinking; 2. sensory and physiology; 3. developmental; 4. clinical and abnormal; 5. social; and 6. measurement and methodology.

All graduating psychology majors will be required to take the Major Field Test in their senior year, and to score above a certain minimum score in order to be certified to graduate.

2. Evaluation of Seniors' Papers (Measures goals 3, 5, and 6)

All graduating seniors will be required to submit one research paper at the time they come to the department to sign up for the exit exam. Preferably, this will be a paper written during the senior year. The students will be asked to submit the paper that they believe best represents their abilities to locate and use information on a topic in psychology, to think critically, to understand the scientific approach, to write effectively, and to use APA style.

Although we will request a paper submission at the time of signing up for the exit exam (typically in the middle of the last semester), students will be given the opportunity to replace that paper with another that they complete by the end of their final semester.

The papers submitted may be written for any psychology class, but must be either a term paper using scholarly sources, a research proposal using scholarly sources, a paper written in the research methods course (PSY 203), or an honors thesis.

Every three years, a sample of 30 of these papers will be selected randomly from the preceding three years' papers, and will be evaluated by members of the Assessment Committee, using rubrics and a scale developed for this purpose. Each paper will be independently rated by two members of the assessment committee. The department secretary will assign each paper a number and remove student names before the papers are given to the members of the committee.

3. Survey of Majors (May measure any of the goals of the B.A. degree. It will always include items to measure goals 4, 7, & 8)

The department will conduct a survey of a random sample of at least 35% of currently enrolled majors every three years and at the time of departmental program review. Program review is typically done every seven years. Should the normal three-year cycle for the survey of current students lead to the survey being done two years in a row, it will be postponed one year to match the program review cycle.

This extensive survey will assess students' evaluation of many aspects of their education, and their satisfaction with the program and services (especially advising) provided by the department.

This survey will be adjusted and modified each time it is administered, in order to gain information needed by the department at that time, but will always include items to measure goals 4, 7, & 8.

4. Survey of Alumni (May measure any of the goals)

At the time of departmental program review (typically on a 7-year cycle) the department will undertake a survey of alumni. This survey will be constructed to meet departmental needs at the time of program review, and may measure any of the goals above. Data from this survey may be included in the department's assessment report at the time it is conducted.

**C. Table Linking Goals and Assessment Instruments**

Goals	Assessment Instruments			
	MFT	Senior Papers	Major Survey	Alumni Survey
1. Knowledge	§		*	*
2. Understand Research Methods	§		*	*
3. Critical Thinking		§	*	*
4. Apply to Life and Work			§	*
5. Locate Information		§	*	*
6. Communicate		§	*	*
7. Diversity			§	*
8. Plan Future			§	*

§: Definitely measures goal

\*: May measure goal

**D. Evaluation of the Bachelor's Degree**

The Department Assessment Committee will report on progress annually. Each of the measures above will be reported and analyzed in a three-year cycle, focusing particularly on the information gained from the measure about how the program is meeting the goals outlined above.

Year One<sup>1</sup>: Major Field Test as Exit Exam

Year Two: Paper Assessments

Year Three: Survey of Current Majors.

At the time of Departmental Program Review: Surveys of current majors and alumni.

The Department Assessment Committee will use the information to modify the program to better meet the goals, if necessary.

### **Evaluation of the Usefulness of the Assessment Plan**

At the time of departmental Program Review the Department Assessment Committee will undertake a review of the usefulness of the Assessment Plan, and will modify the plan at that time, if necessary.

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<sup>1</sup>Spring 07; Spring 10; Spring 13