Georgia State University
Assessment Data by Section
2012-2013 Psychology BA, BS
As of: 2/24/2014 12:12 PM EST
(Includes those Action Plans with Budget Amounts marked One-Time, Recurring, No Request.)

Mission / Purpose
The department offers a general undergraduate degree program aligned with the American Psychological Association’s guidelines for a baccalaureate in psychology and that is integrated with the broader liberal arts education goals of the College of Arts and Sciences. The department’s undergraduate mission is to teach scientific thinking about behavior, the skills related to the conduct of research and the values that reflect psychology as both a science and an applied discipline, and to convey knowledge, skills, and values consistent with liberal arts education that are further developed in psychology.

Goals
G 1: Knowledge Skills and Values Specific to Psychology
[Comment for reviewers: As a member of the Undergraduate Assessment Committee I have reviewed Weave reports from several departments and have noticed that many reporters use the level of Assessment Goals as established in the Weave system differently. I thought it would be useful to say a bit about how we in the Psychology Department are using Weave and how this aligns with American Psychological Association standards for undergraduate degree program learning outcomes. The APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (see document repository) outline ten learning objectives, each of which falls under one of two broad categories: Knowledge, skills and values consistent with the science and application of psychology; and knowledge, skills and values consistent with a more general liberal arts education that are further developed in psychology.] The first category represents objectives that provide hallmarks of psychology education. The general goal is to foster knowledge, skills and values consistent with the science and application of psychology, specifically. Five specific objectives are associated with this broad goal.

G 2: Knowledge, Skills, and Values Consistent with Liberal Arts Education that are Further Enhanced by Psychology
This broad goal describes specific outcomes that are usually a part of a general education program or liberal arts education, and which are enhanced by the discipline of Psychology. Conversely, liberal arts training in these areas contributes to a better understanding of the scientific study of behavior.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives
SLO 1: Knowledge Base of Psychology (G: 1) (M: 1, 2)
Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

6.0 Students effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, and/or spatial relationships develop, persist, and/or change.

**Standard Associations**

1 Outcomes of educational programs, including student learning outcomes (3.3.1.1)

**SLO 2: Research Methods in Psychology (G: 1) (M: 3)**

Students will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis and interpretation.

**SLO 3: Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology (G: 1) (M: 4)**

Students will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.

**SLO 4: Information and Technological Literacy (G: 2) (M: 5)**

Students will demonstrate information competence and the ability to use computers and other technology for many purposes.

**SLO 5: Communication Skills (G: 2) (M: 4)**

Students will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of formats.

**Measures, Targets, and Findings**

**M 1: PSYC1100 Learning Survey (O: 1)**

Students are asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 their own knowledge in 8 different areas of the course once at the beginning of the semester, and once at the end. The course areas are listed below. A copy of the learning survey can be found in the document repository. General Knowledge of Psychology 1) What biological psychology is about 2) The theory of evolution through natural selection Knowledge in Specific Areas of Psychology 3) Neurons and how they work 4) The brain and the nervous system 5) Vision 6) Audition 7) Learning and memory 8) Schizophrenia 9) Language

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

**Target for O1: Knowledge Base of Psychology**

Our target for this measure is significant improvement in the average, total score on the survey, with a moderate or better effect size.

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

On the post-course survey students reported significantly greater understanding of concepts generally (M=36.31, SD=5.65) than on the pre-course survey (M=21.32, SD=7.06). This difference was significant, t(64)=16.23, p<.001, with a very large effect size, Cohen's d=2.036

**M 2: PSYC1101 - Mastery Test (O: 1)**

In all sections of PSYC1101, Introduction to Psychology, instructors are asked to include twenty
questions on their final exam. These twenty questions constitute a mastery test which we use to measure progress toward outcome 1, Knowledge Base. Our performance target for this measurement is greater than 70% average score. A copy of the mastery test can be found in the document repository.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target for O1: Knowledge Base of Psychology**

70% of students should pass the mastery test (70% or better).

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

We sampled 211 students in PSYC1101 with a mastery test. Of these, 155 (73.45%) answered at least 70% of the questions correctly. 133 (54.29%) scored 80% or better.

**M 3: PSYC3530 Quantitative Methods Questions (O: 2)**

PSYC3530 covers advanced statistical analysis as well as critical thinking through writing. A series of 14 questions testing knowledge, understanding and application of advanced statistics is administered to all students in all sections of PSYC3530.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

**Target for O2: Research Methods in Psychology**

Seventy percent of students should score 70% or better on the 14 question test.

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

Of the 245 students sampled, 189 (77.14%) scored above 70, and 133 (54.29%) scored above 80.

**M 4: CTW Writing Assignments, PSYC3530/4800 (O: 3, 5)**

Students in PSYC3530 submit several writing assignments over the course of the semester. They are given at least a few opportunities to revise their writing according to detailed feedback from instructors. Two writing assignments, one early submission and one later, are compared on two metrics, one for the expression of critical thinking, one for writing mechanics. PSYC 4800 is a senior seminar; each section focuses on a different topic. As such, the types and topics of the CTW posttest writing assignments vary across sections. Below is a brief description of the different assignments for which student examples have been provided, organized by section. PSYC 4800, Section 1 (4800-1) Each student will complete a weekly short reaction essay (approximately two well-formed paragraphs) on the article or chapter assigned for discussion. Early and late writing samples are compared, as above. The rubric used to score these assignments appears in the document repository.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target for O3: Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology**

Significant improvement from an earlier to a later writing sample, with a moderate or better effect size.

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

Students scored significant better on the later writing sample (M=13.81, SD=3.22) than on a later writing sample (M=10.09, SD=3.07), t(223)=14.83, p<.001. The effect size was large, Cohen's d = -.99.
**Target for O5: Communication Skills**

Significant improvement in writing mechanics from an earlier to a later writing assignment, with a moderate or better effect size.

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

Students scored significantly better on the later assignment ($M=10.87$, $SD=2.42$) than on the earlier assignment ($M=9.2$, $SD=3.07$), $t(223)=10.66$, $p<.001$.

**M 5: PSYC3530 - PORT Quiz (O: 4)**

The Psychology Online Research Tools tutorial was developed by Kim Darnell, Lyn Thaxton and Chris Goode as an online tutorial to introduce students to the computer-based library research tools available for psychology. Students taking PSYC3530 - Advanced Research Design and Analysis take the tutorial near the beginning of the semester. A 20 point quiz is given to assess the effectiveness of the tutorial. A copy of the quiz can be found in the document repository.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target for O4: Information and Technological Literacy**

Seventy-five percent passing with a grade of 75% or better.

**Findings 2012-2013 - Target: Met**

Of the 391 students sampled, 309 (79%) scored above 75% on the quiz. 250 (63.9%) scored above 85.

**Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

**Schedule Tracking of APA Learning Outcomes**

In response to feedback from the UAC we have decided not to try to measure progress toward all 10 APA learning objectives every year. Rather, we will measure progress toward select objectives with rotation to try to cover the most relevant APA-mandated objectives regularly. Over the coming year, our UPC will work together to develop a schedule of which objectives we will measure progress toward, and what measures we will use for those objectives.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High
- **Implementation Description:** schedule measures of APA learning objectives
- **Responsible Person/Group:** Chris Goode/UPC
- **Additional Resources:** none

**Use learning outcome data to compare online/hybrid/traditional classes**

We intend to use learning outcomes collected in PSYC3530 to compare two methods of instruction: hybrid and traditional.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High
Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers

ACADEMIC PROGRAM QUESTION 1:
What changes in the assessment process has your degree program made since last year's assessment report? (e.g. revised learning outcomes, measures, targets, etc.) Why were these changes made? What changes and improvements in the assessment process will you make in the coming academic year?

We plan to reexamine the mastery test questions in the coming year to align them with the CLEP exam for introductory psychology, as we will be offering credit in PSYC1101 for those scores. Based on feedback from the Undergraduate Assessment Committee we have limited the number of APA outcomes for which we reported data this year.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM QUESTION 2: What is the impact of the data obtained from assessment findings on your educational degree program? What changes and improvements to your educational program will be made based on this year's assessment data? (e.g., revised curriculum, courses, sequence, etc.) If changes to curriculum or courses are made for other reasons, please explain.

We are using these learning outcomes data to confirm that students taking the CLEP exam reach the same goals as in our own PSYC1101 course. We are also sharing the mastery test questions with PSYC1101 instructors at Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) as part of a new degree qualifications profile program called project Lumina, funded by a grant to the Provost's office. We plan to use learning outcomes data from PSYC3530 to compare hybrid online/in-class and traditional sections of the course.