

2012-2013 Assessment Snapshot for Psychology - B.A., B.S.

[Learning Outcomes](#) **2012-2013 Snapshot (read only)** [2013-14 Current Cycle](#) [2014-15 Next Cycle](#)

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Learning Outcome (s)	Assessment Tools and Procedures	Benchmarks	Findings	Curricular and Co-Curricular Changes to be Made
<p>Students should understand the broad underpinnings of thought and action, including sensation, perception, and the functioning of the nervous system. A basic grasp of these processes provides the foundation for understanding learning and cognition.</p>	<p>Direct Measure (a) Test data from MFT (Major Field Test) administered to a random sample of graduating seniors. (b) GRE scores.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior Survey data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment, and other relevant matters.</p> <p>Student Interviews We conducted a focus group with four senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general feedback and suggestions, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcome</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks Hundreds of psychology departments administer the MFT each year; ETS provides subtest scores for each domain of psychology and comparison data from other schools. Our scores in this domain should be equivalent or greater than scores from other schools in the normative sample.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding and skills those experiences provided.</p>	<p>Direct Findings We administered the Major Field test to a small sample of our senior students (6 in 2011, 9 in 2012, and 11 in 2013). Overall total MFT scores from the last three years yield a 70 percentile rank. ETS normative standards indicate that our students are scoring quite well on the portions of the MFT related to Abnormal and Clinical (80 percentile rank) and in Sensation and Perception (84 percentile rank). Scores on the Sensation and Perception (75 percentile) and developmental portion (51 percentile) portion of the MFT were lower. This is a very small sample of our students and students selected may or may not have taken upper division courses in each area.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a)Senior survey data indicate that 97% were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their education in psychology. Seniors (83%) also expressed having a good or excellent experience in the courses required for the major. (b) The Alumni survey did not yield sufficient responses to warrant inclusion in this year's assessment.</p> <p>Face-to-Face Findings Students felt that most courses related to broad understanding of thought and action. PSY 472 and PSY 444 remain the primary sources of information regarding sensation and perception and the nervous system. Students also reported additions courses as largely helping them develop a working knowledge of neurological and physiological systems.</p>	<p>While we are pleased with these outcomes, our sample sizes remain small. Intentions to engage in testing a larger number of students as they complete the senior capstone come at a significant cost. Given changes in outreach funding distribution, it is not likely we will be able to implement changes that involve collecting significantly larger samples in the near future. Our senior experience course is likely to improve student outcomes on the MFT and provide the broad summary of the field that is articulated in this learning outcome.</p>

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<p>Students should understand the fundamentals of development, and the dynamic influences of personality and situations on cognition and behavior. They should be cognizant of contemporary theory and research pertaining to psychopathology, addiction, and therapeutic intervention.</p>	<p>Direct Measure (a) Test data from MFT (Major Field Test) administered to a random sample of graduating seniors. (b) GRE scores.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior Survey data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment, and other relevant matters.</p> <p>Student Interviews We conducted a focus group with four senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general feedback and suggestions, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcome</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks Our scores in this domain should be equivalent or greater than scores from peer schools.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding and skills those experiences provided.</p>	<p>Direct Findings The MFT Sub-topics related to personality and social psychology were in the 72nd percentile and abnormal/clinical was in the 78th percentile, while the developmental percentile was lower (40th percentile). The field is broad and our curriculum provides flexibility such that students do have choices about coursework and may take more than one course in some areas, while avoiding or only gaining minimal exposure in other areas. Finally, the sample is often drawn from seniors who are most involved in the department which may include those with internships in the community (strong interest in abnormal/clinical) and/or undergraduate research assistants who may have more exposure to areas in which faculty are conducting basic research.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a)Senior survey data indicate that 97% were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their education in psychology. Seniors (83%) also expressed having a good or excellent experience in the courses required for the major. (b) The Alumni survey did not yield sufficient responses to warrant inclusion in this year's assessment.</p> <p>Face-to-Face Findings • Most students had taken courses relating to development, personality, social psychology, and abnormal psychology. Some students expressed an interest in having more courses focused on clinical psychology beyond abnormal. Learning about issues surrounding addiction and therapeutic interventions was less common, but the</p>	<p>We do not anticipate making any changes. We have offered a broad array of developmental courses that should improve scores on that sub-topic. However, there is also a likelihood that if the MFT was given as part of the senior experience course this would also provide a broader sample of students rather than those who have particular interest in research labs and internship settings. However, our ability to do this is limited by the cost of delivering the MFT to a broader sample.</p>

students who had taken PSYC 470 (Chemical Addictions) or other courses in the addictions minor felt they had a good overview of, respectively, intervention and addiction issues. Of course in conjunction with the direct findings, students do quite well in this area compared to others listed in this learning outcome.

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<p>Students should be able to move, intellectually and ethically, between theory/research and real-world applications of psychology in domains such as organizations/business, technology, health, forensics, and interpersonal/group relations.</p>	<p>Direct Measure Performance in projects in relevant course projects and practicum experiences.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior Survey Data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment and other relevant matters.</p> <p>Student Interviews We conducted a focus group with four senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general feedback and suggestions, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcome</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks At least two thirds of students should be evaluated as reliably meeting this objective by instructors and practicum supervisors.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding and skills those experiences provided.</p>	<p>Direct Findings The MFT scores in the area of research and methodology does encapsulate ethics and research methods. Scores in this section indicate a 72nd percentile rank. This is on target and we seem to be doing well on for this learning outcome.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a) Senior survey data indicate that most (96%) of students who graduated (2011-12) were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses. Graduating seniors indicated they were engaged in original research outside of the classroom (66%). Over a third (38%) of students indicated they had completed an internship. (b) The alumni survey had too few respondents from which to compile summary data.</p> <p>Face-to-Face Findings Students wanted more opportunities to engage through internships and indicated they had only heard about the option from other students. They also felt the research opportunities were key to their feeling successful with regard to this learning outcome. They also wished there were more field trips. However, they also realize that there are significant legal and ethical issues in taking field trips to mental health facilities or other institutions that serve vulnerable populations.</p>	<p>We have centralized the internships through a single faculty member and agreed that faculty should continue to encourage students to find opportunities that would fit their individual interests. In addition, we hope that hiring a person who will have more time to devote to internships and advising might address this student concerns. On the whole we feel confident that we are doing well here and do not anticipate making any substantial changes beyond those mentioned above.</p>

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<p>Students should understand both the common biological and social heritage they share with their fellow humans, and the individual differences (in age, culture, gender, abilities, ethnicity, etc.) that make each of us unique, interesting, and valuable. They should acknowledge human flaws and limitations, but also celebrate human capabilities and potential.</p>	<p>Direct Measure (a) Test data from MFT (Major Field Test) administered to a random sample of graduating seniors. (b) GRE scores.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior Survey data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment and other relevant matters.</p> <p>Student Interviews We conducted focus groups with senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general feedback and suggestions, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks Our scores in this domain should be equivalent or greater than scores from peer schools.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding and skills those experiences provided.</p>	<p>Direct Findings The MFT does not directly measure this learning outcome, though scores in clinical and social inherently address challenges and opportunities when working with diverse populations. Scores from the physiological based sub-fields also address the common experiences shared among all people.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a) The senior survey indicated that 71% of students felt they had developed the skills to relate well to people of different races, nations, cultures, and religions. (b) Our alumni survey had too few respondents to allow compilation of responses in a meaningful way.</p> <p>Face-to-Face Findings The students in our focus group judged the program to be meeting this goal well, in a variety of contexts and courses. Notably courses that focus on development, social psychology and addictions were particularly useful in understanding how individual differences and commonalities fit with other course material. There was also a feeling that this approach was key to developing critical thinking skills.</p>	<p>We will continue to offer our normal curriculum and expect the new curriculum which is inclusive of Am. Diversity and International Courses will boost the senior survey responses in the future.</p>

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<p>Students should be capable of evaluative thinking, and understand that conclusions should be supported with evidence. They should have the ability to be critical consumers of popular accounts related to psychological phenomena, to be skeptical of overly broad and unsupported claims about behavior and cognition.</p>	<p>Direct Measure Performance in relevant course assignments.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior Survey data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment, and other relevant matters.</p> <p>Student Interviews We conducted a focus group with senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general feedback and suggestions, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks At least two-thirds of students should be mastering assignments and correctly answering questions relating to this outcome.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding and skills those experiences provided.</p>	<p>Direct Findings We have identified several key assignments that provide students with an opportunity to learn and demonstrate the importance of critical thinking and evaluation of evidence. We have not yet devised a plan to collectively evaluate these assignments as they are fairly diverse. We do have in our collected syllabi descriptions of these assignments that clearly have criteria and expectations that students will engage in this work.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a) Senior survey data indicate that 91% of students felt that their capacity to think critically was enhanced moderately (38%) or greatly (53%) during their undergraduate education. (b) Alumni survey data responses were too few to compile effectively for this assessment cycle.</p> <p>Face-to-Face Findings Focus group students reported PSY 218 and PSY 320 were particularly key at encouraging critical thinking and questioning of research findings presented in media. In addition, all students indicated they now viewed many situations and tried to take a variety of perspectives when encountering new information. Students also noted that this would be particularly useful as they pursue the helping professions.</p>	<p>We are continuing to consider how our effort in assessment might be best spend for this learning outcome. The Senior Capstone History of Psychology course may provide another moment to assess this learning outcome from the breadth of our majors rather than only in particular courses.</p>

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<p>Students should have an undergraduate mastery of descriptive and inferential statistics. They should be able to conduct research (at the level of the tools we have provided). They should be able to defend an intellectual position, and to integrate information from the diverse areas of the field into coherent arguments.</p>	<p>Direct Measure (a) Test data from MT (Major Field Test) administered to a random sample of graduating seniors. (b) GRE scores.</p> <p>Indirect Measure (a) Senior survey data. (b) Alumni surveys to assess graduate school attendance, employment, and other relevant matters.</p>	<p>Direct Benchmarks Our scores in this domain should be equivalent or greater than scores from peer schools.</p> <p>Indirect Benchmarks Most respondents should report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our offerings and courses, the understanding, and skills, those experiences provide.</p>	<p>Direct Findings The MFT indicates we have a 72% ranking for measurement and methodology which is inclusive of statistics and general understanding of research tools.</p> <p>Indirect Findings (a) The senior survey data indicate that the majority (57%) of students felt that the level of statistics coverage was appropriate. Seniors reported they had a good or excellent experience in Statistics (48%) and research experiences (34%). (b) The alumni survey response rate was too low to allow an effective compilation of results.</p>	<p>We have a new faculty member who is now teaching the key course (PSY 218) and look forward to seeing the outcome of her efforts as those students enter their senior year and our assessment process. There is little we can do about the STAT 251 course and it remains the most appropriate offering outside of the department to address this learning outcome.</p>
	<p>Student Interviews We conducted a focus group with senior psychology majors. In addition to asking for general suggestions and feedback, we asked how well they achieved each of our learning outcomes.</p>		<p>Face-to-Face Findings In the focus group, PSY 218 was mentioned as the primary source of this information. There was some discontent with STAT 251 as two of the students felt they learned to use a software program (i.e., "R"), but remained unclear about the underlying statistical theory or even understanding what can be concluded from the results. PSY 218 remained the key opportunity to learning to write well within the discipline.</p>	

Evaluation Questions

Discuss your progress on the actions identified in your Assessment plan for 2011-12.

The changes that we made previously may have only just begun to have some impact in terms of involving students in research and internships. We have centralized internships with one faculty member. In addition, we intend to implement assessment in the senior experience course once that option is in the curriculum and that first cohort goes through their senior year. We have identified what some possible assignments that could be used to provide assessments beyond the MFT, but continue to work on determining how best to quantify these assignments.

In what ways were the changes you made in 2011-12 effective in improving your program?

We do seem to have more students feel they are able to engage in internship opportunities, when they want them. Although we need to find a better way to get the message to students. This is communicated in PSY 201 which all majors take and again in advising. We have also revamped our advising program so that all students are assigned a faculty adviser AND can see a peer adviser in their 1st and 2nd years. We also have a new administrative assistant who is able to efficiently make changes to our website and work with the CLASS media to get news releases out about former students and graduates students which may appeal to our current students and encourage them to engage in more hands on research experiences.

Files Uploaded Between October 16, 2012 and October 15, 2013

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