

# University of North Carolina Wilmington

## Educational Program Assessment Plan and Report

(Psychology)

Assessment Plan for 2008-2009

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### BA Psychology

Program Outcome UNCW Strategic Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>PO 1: That students receive a high quality education in the diverse discipline of psychology and the skills in communication and critical thinking expected of an individual with scientific training.</p> <p>UNCW Strategic Goal Creative the most powerful learning experience</p>	<p>American Psychological Association curriculum standards and guidelines; Comparison with benchmark institutions through the Committee on Graduate Departments of Psychology (COGDOP).</p>	<p>Undergraduate curriculum committee meets throughout the year and makes recommendations to the department. The committee reviews the UNCW curriculum for effectiveness and reviews curriculum standards and recommendations from the American Psychological Association and leaders in the field to determine that UNCW is providing a state-of the art psychology curriculum. The department chair tracks enrollment trends for majors.</p>	<p>The Undergraduate committee recommended that the department develop names for its category requirements, to consider whether all areas are well covered and to better map the categories to APA curriculum recommendations</p>	<p>Department charged the committee to develop specific curriculum proposals for review.</p>
<p>PO2: That majors are exposed to applied, active learning experiences in psychology involving research and service.</p> <p>UNCW Strategic Goal Creative the most powerful learning experience; Regional Engagement and Outreach</p>	<p>Annual reviews of the number of students who are enrolled in Counseling Practicum, Directed Independent Study, and Honors Projects. We also determine the number of student authorships in refereed journals and conference presentations. Faculty Annual Reports and Digital Measures are used</p>	<p>The department chair compiles these data and the Undergraduate committee reviews them and reports to the department.</p>	<p>Four students were co-authors on articles in refereed journals and 42 were co-authors on presentations at scientific meetings. It was determined that many students who could benefit from Directed Independent Study are ineligible to participate because they lack Junior standing</p>	<p>The department created a new Directed Independent Study course (PSY 291) designed to provide applied learning opportunities for students who lack Junior standing. A course proposal has been submitted to the CAS Curriculum Committee</p>

<p>PO3: That majors are prepared to take their place as working citizens and to pursue further education in psychology and other professions and academic disciplines.</p> <p>UNCW Strategic Goal Creative the most powerful learning experience</p>	Data are collected informally from Faculty Annual Reports and student self reports regarding graduate, professional school, and career placement.	The department chair compiles these data	Very little can be said because of the incomplete nature of these data	none
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Student Learning Outcome UNCW-wide Learning Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>SLO 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically about and to analyze psychology concepts and literature.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal: Critical Thinking</p>	Student papers and presentations in Senior capstone courses are evaluated using the attached assessment instrument. Items <a href="#">1, 2 &amp; 6 of the instrument</a> are used to assess SOL1.	Faculty teaching the capstone courses and members of the Undergraduate Curriculum committee <a href="#">conduct the evaluations</a> every January and the department chair compiles data for departmental review at the May department meeting.	Discussion of <a href="#">outcome data</a> led to concerns about the sequence of courses that students currently choose.	The Undergraduate Steering committee is charged with studying the possibility of creating new 200-level courses to increase exposure to the natural science side of psychology earlier in student's programs. A group advising program was developed to standardize information presented to our majors to assure that they select courses appropriate to their goals.
<p>SLO 2: Students will be able to effectively communicate psychological concepts and research in the style of the American Psychological Association.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal: Thoughtful Expression</p>	Student papers and presentations in Senior capstone courses are evaluated using the attached assessment instrument. Items <a href="#">3 &amp; 4 of the instrument</a> are used to assess SOL2.	Faculty teaching the capstone courses and members of the Undergraduate Curriculum committee <a href="#">conduct the evaluations</a> every January and the department chair compiles data for departmental review at the May department meeting.	<a href="#">outcome data</a> No major concerns were raised	

<p>SLO 3: Students will be able to present and interpret quantitative data in psychological research.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goals Foundational Knowledge; Inquiry</p>	<p>Student papers and presentations in Senior capstone courses are evaluated using the attached assessment instrument. Items <a href="#">5 &amp; 6 of the instrument</a> are used to assess SOL3.</p>	<p>Faculty teaching the capstone courses and members of the Undergraduate Curriculum committee <a href="#">conduct the evaluations</a> every January and the department chair compiles data for departmental review at the May department meeting.</p>	<p>Discussion of <a href="#">outcome data</a> led to some concerns about retention and application of statistical skills.</p>	<p>The Undergraduate Steering committee is charged with studying the possibility of requiring majors to take STT 215 to improve statistics skills or alter the focus or sequence of PSY 225 and 355 to enhance application of quantitative methods.</p>
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### Outcome Assessment Data--Spring 2009

#### Capstone Courses

Rating	Lit review	critical thinking	writing	APA	stat	interpret
1	6	5	5	4	13	8
2	19	16	9	19	27	26
3	35	34	34	36	26	25
4	21	29	26	26	14	20
5	19	16	26	15	20	21

## Outcome Assessment Data--Spring 2008

### Capstone Courses

Rating	Lit review	critical thinking	writing	APA	stat	interpret
1	4.5	6.5	2	2	4.5	2
2	20	21.5	19.5	15.5	30	26
3	45.5	46	41	56.5	39	41.5
4	12.5	13	21.5	17.5	13	15
5	17.5	13	16	8.5	13	15

Shown above are the results from the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 reviews and the complete instrument is provided below. Each table above presents a frequency distribution showing the percent of students attaining the indicated rating (rows) for each of the six criteria (columns). The table labeled Capstone courses presents the results for undergraduate students. So for example, 6% of students were rated 1 (significantly below expectations) with respect to their ability to perform a relevant review and integration of the literature on an advanced topic in psychology. The department noted that undergraduate ratings were normally distributed with over 70% performing at or above expected levels on most measures. Performance was weakest on items 5 & 6 involving quantitative presentation and interpretation of scientific data. Some concerns about these scores led to discussion and ideas for remediation.

## **Learning Outcomes Assessment for Psychology Majors**

### **Procedures**

All Psychology majors are required to complete a capstone laboratory course that is generally taken during the Senior year (either 410, 412, or 417). General Psychology, Psychological Statistics, and Experimental Psychology are all prerequisites for the capstone courses, so all students are well advanced in their academic program by the time they enroll. Students in each capstone course write one or more papers and may give talks or present posters. These activities require students to integrate many of the skills developed during the student's prior coursework in psychology with those specific to the particular course and thus provide ideal products for assessment departmental learning outcomes. Course instructors in each capstone course will rate these products with respect to expected levels of performance regarding the departmental goals.

### **Goals**

All Psychology majors will demonstrate:

1. Critical thinking and analysis of psychology concepts and literature.
2. Effective communication of psychological concepts and research in the style of the American Psychological Association.
3. Presentation and interpretation of quantitative data in psychological research

## Assessment Instrument

Rate this student's work in comparison to your expectations for a well qualified psychology graduate using the following scale:

5: Significantly exceeds expected levels of performance

4: Exceeds expected levels of performance

3: At expected levels of performance

2: Below expected levels of performance

1: Significantly below expected levels of performance

1. Relevant review and integration of the literature.
2. Demonstrates understanding and critical analysis of problems in literature reviewed.
3. Paper is clearly and grammatically written.
4. Paper conforms to APA style requirements.
5. Appropriate graphical and/or statistical analysis of data
6. Appropriate interpretations of data presented.