

ACADEMIC SENATE
Committee on Academic Planning and Review

College	Science
Department	Psychology
Program	Psychology BA/BS
Reporting for Academic Year	2017–2018
Last 5-Year Review	2010–2011
Next 5-Year Review	2018–2019
Department Chair	David Fencsik
Date Submitted	September 17, 2018



CALIFORNIA STATE
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E A S T B A Y

ASSESSMENT REPORT

I. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT *(suggested length of 1-2 pages)*

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

List all your PLO in this box. Indicate for each PLO its alignment with one or more institutional learning outcomes (ILO). For example: “PLO 1. Apply advanced computer science theory to computation problems (ILO 2 & 6).”

The department used to have three PLOs (similar to 1, 2, and 5 below). With the transition to semesters, we updated them to the following:

1. Identify key concepts, principles, and applications of psychology’s content domains (ILO 6).
2. Apply scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena and to design and conduct basic psychological research (ILO 1 & 6).
3. Evaluate the ethics of psychological science and practice (ILO 3 & 5).
4. Demonstrate effective communication skills (ILO 2 & 4).
5. Describe career options within psychology (ILO 6).

B. Program Learning Outcome(S) Assessed

List the PLO(s) assessed. Provide a brief background on your program's history of assessing the PLO(s) (e.g., annually, first time, part of other assessments, etc.)

Previously, the department used a department-designed short written test to evaluate our three PLOs. We are continuing to develop new assessment instruments for our new PLOs. During the 2016-2017 school year, we assessed PLO 4 using the CSUEB ILO Written Communication Rubric with our advanced lab classes, now titled "Research in (Specific Topic Area)." During the 2017-2018 school year, we created a 15-question online multiple choice test (described below) to evaluate PLOs 1 and 2. This year, we will further develop the test to include more content areas.

C. Summary of Assessment Process

Summarize your assessment process briefly using the following sub-headings.

Instrument(s): (include if new or old instrument, how developed, description of content)

During the 2017-2018 school year, we created a 15-question online multiple choice test by selecting questions from practice GRE Psychology Subject tests. We focused the questions on three topic areas: research methods, social psychology, and personality psychology.

Sampling Procedure:

We focused our assessment on PSYC 2020 (now PSYC 200) and PSYC 4804 (now PSYC 491E), with the former representing students at the beginning of their psychology career and the latter representing students at the end. We provided all professors of these classes with a link to our online assessment and they shared this link with their students. Completion was anonymous and voluntary.

Sample Characteristics:

The sample included 64 respondents, 43 from PSYC 2020 and 21 from PSYC 4804. Of these respondents, 7 only completed a few questions and were eliminated from analyses (6 from PSYC 2020 and 1 from PSYC 4804). Our final sample was 57 respondents, 37 from PSYC 2020 and 20 from PSYC 4804. We did not collect any demographic information, but will this coming year.

Data Collection: (include when, who, and how collected)

The online assessment took place at the end of Spring quarter 2018. Professors provided link to their students and students completed the assessment online.

Data Analysis:

The number of correct responses (out of 15) was summed for members of PSYC 2020 and PSYC 4804. Although the PSYC 4804 students scored better ($M = 8.15$, $SD = 2.32$) than the PSYC 2020 students ($M = 7.32$, $SD = 2.80$), this difference did not reach statistical significance, $t(55) = 1.13$, $p = .27$, $d = 0.30$.

That said, some of the PSYC 4804 students had taken social psychology and some had taken personality psychology, but likely not both. Thus, we excluded PSYC 4804 students from analyses regarding the course they had not taken. Only 6 of the 4804 students had taken personality psychology and we compared them to the PSYC 2020 students on personality psychology knowledge (5 questions). The PSYC 2020 students demonstrated more knowledge ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.48$) than the PSYC 4804 students ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.24$), albeit not at a statistically significant level, $t(41) = -0.98$, $p = .33$, $d = -0.30$. Fifteen of the PSYC 4804 students took social psychology and they scored about equally ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.53$) to the PSYC 2020 students ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.60$), $t(50) = -0.34$, $p = .73$, $d = -0.10$.

On a brighter note, PSYC 4804 students scored slightly higher ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.50$) than PSYC 2020 students ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 0.64$) on the methods questions alone, albeit not at a statistically significant level, $t(55) = 1.46$, $p = .15$, $d = 0.39$.

D. Summary of Assessment Results

Summarize your assessment results briefly using the following sub-headings.

Main Findings:

Although advanced students (PSYC 4804) outperformed lower-division students (PSYC 2020) overall and on methods questions, the PSYC 2020 students outperformed advanced students on specific content knowledge in social and personality psychology.

Recommendations for Program Improvement: *(changes in course content, course sequence, student advising)*

The faculty will discuss potential changes at a future faculty meeting.

Next Step(s) for Closing the Loop: *(recommendations to address findings, how & when)*

Waiting for faculty discussion.

We discussed the results of the previous year's assessment of PLO 4 at a departmental faculty meeting on October 23, 2017 (after the assessment report and annual report had already been submitted). The results suggested that the students did best with the bigger-picture aspects of writing, such as presenting a clear thesis and audience awareness, and had difficulty with basic mechanics (e.g., grammar, sentence structure). We discussed research and anecdotal evidence that students' basic writing skills tend to suffer as they are challenged to write about more complicated ideas, a natural part of developing skills. We also discussed plans for possibly including a baseline assessment in an earlier course to help measure progress in writing skills.

Other Reflections:

The assessment questions were chosen from a bank of GRE Psychology Subject Test questions that were meant to represent specific topics within social and personality psychology and methods. That said, they were selected by only one faculty member who teaches methods and personality psychology. More extensive consultation with other faculty who teach these

courses should be conducted to capture content that is covered in all iterations of these courses and to ensure accurate representation of material taught in the program. In addition, instead of assessing PSYC 200/2020 students at the end of the term, we should assess them at the beginning to truly capture their initial knowledge.

E. Assessment Plans for Next Year

Summarize your assessment plans for the next year, including the PLO(s) you plan to assess, any revisions to the program assessment plan presented in your last five-year plan self-study, and any other relevant information.

The current plan is to further develop the online assessment we created during the 2017-2018 school year to evaluate PLOs 1 & 2. We will consult with more faculty to ensure accurate representation of the content domains already covered and the content domains we intend to add (Conditioning and Learning and Physiological Psychology).