

Undergraduate baccalaureate program in psychology

Annual Program Report Template

Year:	2022 – 2023 Academic Year
Program:	Undergraduate Baccalaureate Psychology Program
Contact Person (include email & phone#)	Jeremy Shelton, sheltonious@gmail.com , 880-7839

Summary of Continuous Improvement Efforts since Last Report

Provide a brief description of how assessment results have been used for program improvement. Point to a specific example of how an assessment provided the program with data it could use for improvement and what that improvement was, if possible, also show evidence of the improvement. You may look at data from the two previous academic years to support this case.

Respond here: The primary concern the department has about the undergraduate program assessment results is scores on the ACAT exam. In the 20-21 assessment, only scores on the Statistics portion of the ACAT failed to meet the performance goal. Unfortunately, ACAT scores declined further in the 21-22 assessment period. The department is not sure why scores are declining because we have not systematically changed how we approach teaching within our undergraduate program. One *possible* contributor is a dramatic increase in the percentage of online courses (rather than face to face) offered in the department. This change occurred 2 years ago, which would correspond with the most recent assessment cohort. The department chair is currently working to transition courses from online back to in person by replacing online instructor positions with on campus faculty. This change should help improve ACAT performance on some sections of the test within the next 2 years.

What prior data told us

From 2020 – 2022 two performance goals were not met: 1) Students in PSYC 4330 did not meet the benchmark for critical thinking for 2020 – 2021; 2) Performance on the ACAT was too low for experimental design, statistics, and the overall score.

Improvement Efforts since Last Report

Following the 21-22 academic year, the Department Chair explored possible changes to the ACAT administration procedures. Unfortunately, it is not logistically feasible to administer the ACAT during final exams (when all students are present). The Department Chair also pursued returning more courses in Statistics and Research Methods back to their original face-to-face status. Over the last few years (i.e., from 2020 – 2022) those courses have had more online sections than is typical. This undoubtedly lowered student performance on those sections of the ACAT.

Results of Improvement Efforts

Since 2021 it has been difficult to return many courses to their original face to face format. This is a slow process that requires hiring additional faculty. For that reason, it has not had much effect yet on ACAT performance in 2022 – 2023.

Future Improvement Efforts

The department will continue to work on switching more classes from online to face to face format. We believe this is an important contributor to the lower ACAT scores.

Program Highlights Since Last Report

Identify and briefly discuss any programmatic curriculum changes made since the last report (e.g. new courses, course changes, SLO changes, course deletions).

Respond here: There have not been any programmatic curriculum changes made.

Table 1. Assessment Results and Analyses for Current Cycle.

STAGE 1: PLAN				STAGE 2: DO		STAGE 3: STUDY
Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome	Assessment	Assessment Method/Location	Benchmark Expectations	Data Results	Actions/Goals Based on Data Results* What do the data tell you? How will you use this data? How were data from the last cycle used to make changes during this cycle, and What were the results of those changes?
Knowledge of basic critical concepts across a range of sub-disciplines within Psychology.	Students completing the undergraduate baccalaureate program in psychology will compare favorably in their knowledge of general psychology with students graduating from a national sample of psychology programs.	ACAT standardized national testing in field of Psychology	The Lamar Psychology Department uses the ACAT (http://www.collegeoutcomes.com/default.htm) as a direct assessment of student learning. Students take the ACAT usually the semester in which they graduate—PACAT Inc. does the scoring and provides feedback data to the department.	Students will achieve an overall score of 50 th percentile on the entire ACAT.	Overall performance = 38 th percentile.	These data suggest our students' knowledge was not as thorough as we would like it to be; although, it is difficult to determine the true cause of this result. One possibility is that the quality of instruction is not sufficient to meet the target goal. There is some doubt that this is the reason; however, because students have met the target in prior assessment years. Another reason is that student motivation to do well on the exam is lacking. The exam does not impact a student's grades at all; therefore, students are not likely motivated to do well on the exam. The exam is also administered late in the semester, a time when students are very busy with other academic responsibilities. The department will evaluate what we can do to solve these weaknesses with the assessment method.
Knowledge of critical thinking and how to apply it when analyzing claims and supporting information.	Students graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology should display evidence of critical thinking.	#1. AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking	Methods in Psychology and Experimental Psychology final papers are evaluated by faculty (not those who teach	Students will show incremental increases in critical thinking: at least 1.5 on Methods papers, 2.0 on Experimental Psychology	PSYC 3302 research papers = 2.13 PSYC 4330 proposals = 3.22	This data clearly show that student critical thinking levels are steadily increasing as they progress through our upper- level Research Methods course, and Experimental Psychology course. Based on these results, we do not see the need to make any changes to our

			the evaluated course) for evidence of critical thinking using an adapted version of the AACU VALUE rubric for Critical Thinking.	proposals, and 3.0 on Experimental Psychology reports.	PSYC 4330 final reports = 3.46	curriculum in how we focus on critical thinking.
		#2. Faculty developed Rubric	A faculty developed rubric is used to score student performance. We assess thesis statements, quality of the idea, and organization of the introduction for student papers in Research Methods (3302), and Experimental Psychology (4330)	PSYC 3302 papers should average at least 2.0 on rubric dimensions thesis statement, quality of idea, and organization of introduction. PSYC 4330 research proposals should average at least 2.5. PSYC 4330 final reports should average 3.0.	PSYC 3302 research papers = 2.84 PSYC 4330 proposals = 3.50 PSYC 4330 final reports = 3.52	This data clearly show that students are successfully learning how to clearly state their paper thesis, develop a well-reasoned research paper, and organize that paper in a logical and understandable way when explaining their topic. The results show continuous improvement, across all 3 criteria, as students progressed through our upper-level Research Methods course, and Experimental Psychology course. Based on these results, we do not see the need to make any changes to our curriculum in how we focus on critical thinking.
Knowledge of using scientific method to pose and answer research questions.	Students will understand and appreciate the use of the scientific method in psychology.	#1. Faculty developed rubric	A faculty developed rubric is used to score student performance. We assess thesis statements, quality of the idea, organization of the introduction, style/grammar, organization, reference quality, & APA style for student papers in	PSYC 3302 papers should average at least 2.0 across all rubric dimensions (thesis statement, quality of idea, organization of introduction, style/grammar, organization, reference quality, & APA style) PSYC 4330 research proposals should average at least 2.5 across all	PSYC 3302 research papers = 2.70 average across all rubric dimensions PSYC 4330 proposals = 3.49 average across all rubric dimensions PSYC 4330 final reports = 3.61 average across all rubric dimensions	This data clearly show that students are successfully learning <u>all the skills necessary</u> to write a literature review paper (PSYC 3302), an experimental proposal paper (PSYC 4330), and an experimental report (PSYC 4330 final project). These results show continuous improvement as students progressed through our upper-level Research Methods course, and Experimental Psychology course. Based on these results, we do not see the need to make any changes to our curriculum in how we focus on critical thinking.

			Research Methods (3302), and Experimental Psychology (4330)	rubric dimensions (thesis statement, quality of idea, organization of introduction, style/grammar, organization, method, reference quality, & APA style). PSYC 4330 final reports should average 3.0 across all rubric dimensions (thesis statement, quality of idea, organization of introduction, style/grammar, organization, method, results, discussion, reference quality, & APA style).		
		#2. ACAT standardized national testing – Statistics & Methodology subsections	The ACAT includes subsections that measure knowledge of scientific methodology and statistical analysis; scores on these subtests are used to assess students' knowledge of methodology.	Lamar graduating psychology majors will average a 60th percentile rank on the ACAT Methodology subtests.	Experimental Design = 58th percentile rank Statistics = 63rd percentile rank	Although students did not quite reach the target for the Experimental Design section, they were very close. The comments made above in reference to performance on the other ACAT assessment apply in this case too.

Table 2. Continuous Improvement Results Since Last Report

Stage 4: ACT		
Actions/Goals Based on Data Results <i>*Copy last cycle's actions/goals and report on progress toward continuous improvement on those here.</i>	Status <i>C=Complete P=Progressing N=No Action Taken</i>	Discussion of Status <i>If C, describe efforts that led to accomplishment of actions/goals. If P, provide update on progress made toward accomplishing actions/goals and what tasks remain If N, discuss why action toward accomplishing actions/goals has been delayed and what work will be initiated toward accomplishment.</i>
Returning more online courses back to in person format This should help improve overall ACAT scores	Progressing	The department plans to hire a new on-campus instructor to begin in the Fall 2023 or Spring 2024 semester. A second new on-campus instructor may be hired for the Spring 2024 semester.
We will increase benchmark expectations for all dimensions that students have successfully met over the most recent 3 assessment periods (i.e., 2020 – 2023).	Progressing	• The critical thinking benchmarks will each increase by .10 so that the new benchmarks for 2023 – 2024 will be: 1.60, 2.10, 3.10 • The thesis/idea quality/organization of paper benchmarks will each increase by .10 so that the new benchmarks for 2023 – 2024 will be: 2.10, 2.60, 3.10 • The overall paper score benchmarks will each increase by .10 so that the new benchmarks for 2023 – 2024 will be: 2.10, 2.60, 3.10

Graduate program in Applied Psychology

Annual Program Report Template

Year:	2022 – 2023 Academic Year
Program:	Graduate Masters in Applied Psychology Program
Contact Person (include email & phone#)	Jeremy Shelton, sheltonious@gmail.com , 880-7839

Summary of Continuous Improvement Efforts since Last Report

Provide a brief description of how assessment results have been used for program improvement. Point to a specific example of how an assessment provided the program with data it could use for improvement and what that improvement was, if possible, also show evidence of the improvement. You may look at data from the two previous academic years to support this case.

Respond here:

What prior data told us

From 2020 – 2022 only two performance goals were not met: 1) Not all students passed their qualification exams (7/8 passed); 2) Clinical student performance on client notes was too low (2.10/3.00).

Improvement Efforts since Last Report

Following the 21-22 academic year, the department instituted a few efforts to improve student performance in qualification exams. Faculty began more openly discussing the qualification exams with students prior to the exam date. Faculty also focused more on helping students better understand the types of concepts that will, and will not, be covered on the exam. In addition, faculty helped guide students in how to prepare for the exams (e.g., providing feedback on student created study materials, providing study guides).

The lower performance on the Clinical student client notes assessment was clearly due to the new Clinic Director not being aware of the rubric used. Following the 21-22 department assessment, the department chair met with the Clinic Director and explained the assessment rubric used for client notes. The Clinic Director then adjusted how she taught the clinical students to format their client notes.

Results of Improvement Efforts

Performance on qualification exams for the 2022 – 2023 academic year still did not meet the target. Six of 8 students who took qualification exams passed in 2023. One of these students suffered from extreme test anxiety and the other student struggled to earn a passing grade in 2 courses.

The actions taken by the Department Chair and Clinic Director in response to low client note scores improved overall scores on client notes from 2.10 (2021 – 2022) to 2.61 (2022 – 2023). This resulted in the program meeting its target performance level for this measure.

Future Improvement Efforts

The only target not met in the 2022 – 2023 assessment period was the passing rate for qualification exams. Immediately after qualification exams concluded, the Department Chair had a candid conversation with both students who did not pass. From those conversations the Department Chair learned that one student attributed her poor performance to crippling test anxiety. The other student felt overwhelmed by the amount of material covered in the qualification exams. Based on this feedback the Department Chair has directed the student suffering from test anxiety to seek treatment at the department clinic (free of charge). The other student will audit classes that cover sections she struggled with on the qualification exams. In addition, faculty will continue to provide students more detailed information about how to prepare for qualification exams as outlined above.

Program Highlights Since Last Report

Identify and briefly discuss any programmatic curriculum changes made since the last report (e.g. new courses, course changes, SLO changes, course deletions).

Respond here: There have not been any programmatic curriculum changes made.

Table 1. Assessment Results and Analyses for Current Cycle.

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Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome	Assessment	Assessment Method/Location	Benchmark Expectations	Data Results	Actions/Goals Based on Data Results* What do the data tell you? How will you use this data? How were data from the last cycle used to make changes during this cycle, and What were the results of those changes?
Knowledge of research methods, statistical analysis of data, and how to clearly communicate information in a written format.	Students will demonstrate acceptable levels of research knowledge and critical thinking as assessed on their research report.	#1. Faculty developed Rubric	A faculty developed rubric is used to score student performance. Students in PSYC 5323 write a research report. We assessed this paper on several criteria: research thesis statement, quality of the idea, grammar, introduction, method, results, discussion, reference quality, and APA style.	PSYC 5323 research papers should average 3.0 across all rubric dimensions.	PSYC 5323 research papers = 3.34 average score across all rubric dimensions	This data clearly show that graduate students are demonstrating high levels of research methodology and writing knowledge. Based on these results, we do not see the need to make any changes to our curriculum in how we focus on instructing graduate students in writing a research report and using experimental methodology to effectively test research questions.
		#2. AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking	Faculty assess research reports written by graduate students enrolled in PSYC 5323 for evidence of critical thinking using an adapted version of the AACU VALUE	Mean of at least 3.0 on a 4-point AACU rubric measuring critical thinking.	PSYC 5323 research papers = 3.10 average score on critical thinking.	This data clearly show that student critical thinking levels are at an appropriate level within the graduate program. Based on these results, we do not see the need to make any changes to our curriculum in how we focus on critical thinking.

			rubric for Critical Thinking.			
Knowledge of critical foundation concepts across a variety of psychology sub-disciplines.	Students will demonstrate broad-based knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in the discipline of psychology.	Comprehensive Qualification Exams	After common coursework and coursework specific to program tracks, all graduate students take comprehensive examinations at the end of their first year in the program. Comprehensive examination content varies from year to year within established areas that include: Research Design and Methodology, Psychometrics, and Multivariate Research Techniques. Students in the I/O track take additional coursework in Personnel and Social/Organizational Psychology; Clinical track students take coursework in Psychopathology and Psychotherapy.	Students will achieve at least a 75% average on each subtest of the comprehensive exams following written and oral evaluations.	I/O track Students: 1 of 3 met the target Clinical track Students: 5 of 5 met the target	It is extremely rare to not meet this performance target. In only 2 of the past 20 years have any graduate students not met the comprehensive qualification exam performance target. After qualification exams concluded, the Department Chair met with each of the 2 failing students to discuss reasons for their low performance. One student reported extreme test anxiety. The other reported feeling overwhelmed by the scope of the relevant material. Faculty plan to improve on prior efforts to help improve student performance on qualification exams. 1) Faculty will talk with students earlier, and more frequently, about qualification exams so that students know what to expect and can voice any concerns or questions they have. 2) Tests administered in courses relevant to qualification exam content will utilize the same format as the qualification exam. This should help familiarize students with the qualification exam format in advance. 3) Faculty will candidly discuss the “philosophy” of the qualification exams, which is to emphasize foundational and critical knowledge/skills rather than esoteric content. This should help students develop a better sense of what content to focus their study efforts on. 4) Any students who suffer from test anxiety will be advised to seek help from the Psychology Department Clinic. 5) Any students

						who may need testing accommodations will be advised to consult with the ARC.
Possess knowledge of professional standards and best practices.	Students who complete a psychology master's degree at Lamar will be prepared to enter a pre-professional position.	Faculty developed rubric for IO Practicum Reports & Clinical Client Notes	Faculty evaluate students' I/O Psychology Practicum Research reports. I/O Psychology students' report will reflect their research project for their host organization; Faculty also evaluate Clinical Psychology students' session reports with clients.	Students will achieve at least 80% on the rubric	The average score across all rubric measures was 87%.	Clearly the prior efforts between the Department Chair and the Clinic Director helped improve performance on this dimension. The Clinic Director was able to adjust her instruction to clinical students so that the format of their clinical notes matched that of the assessment rubric.

Table 2. Continuous Improvement Results Since Last Report

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Candid discussion of qualification exams with students prior to the exam date. (e.g., types of concepts covered, guiding student preparation) - Faculty will candidly discuss qualification exams with students far in advance of the exam date (e.g., philosophy of the exam, types of concepts covered, guiding student preparations). - Tests in courses relevant to qualification exam will have same format as qualification exam. - Any students with severe test anxiety will be assisted by the Psychology Department Clinic. - Students needing testing accommodations will be assisted by the ARC.	Progressing	For the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters faculty have been discussing the qualification exams with students (in a group and 1 on 1) both inside and outside of the classroom.
Discussion about Clinical student notes rubric with Clinic Director	Complete	The department chair reached out directly to the Clinic Director to familiarize the director with the clinical client notes rubric.
We will increase benchmark expectations for all dimensions that students have successfully met over the most recent 3 assessment periods (i.e., 2020 – 2023).	Progressing	- The PSYC 5323 overall paper score benchmark will increase by .10 so that the new benchmark for 2023 – 2024 will be: 3.10 - The PSYC 5323 critical thinking benchmark will increase by .10 so that the new benchmark for 2023 – 2024 will be: 3.10 - The client notes average score benchmark will increase by .10 so that the new benchmark for 2023 – 2024 will be: 2.50

		• The I/O practicum report average score benchmark will increase by .10 so that the new benchmark for 2023 – 2024 will be: 3.30
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