

Assessment Plan for Undergraduate Majors in the Department of Psychology

Learning Goals for Undergraduate Majors

1. Students should know the major content areas in psychology: the social bases of behavior, the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, language, memory, individual differences, conditioning and learning, human development, stress and coping, psychopathology, therapy, research methods, the history of psychology, and applications of psychological theory and research.
2. Students should be familiar with many of the major theories of psychology especially those that are relevant to an understanding of conditioning and learning, personality, social behavior, behavior pathology, human development, health, and gender, race, and ethnicity.
3. Students should understand the biological bases of behavior. In particular, they should understand the basic principles of neuronal communication, how neurons are organized into systems that regulate behavior, the role of neurotransmitters in behavior, the neural organization of sensory systems, and the neurological bases of learning and memory.
4. Students should know and be proficient in scientific methods. In particular, they should know correlational and experimental methods and ethical principles governing research and be proficient in conducting research and writing research reports. Students should know and be proficient in descriptive and inferential statistics. In particular, they should have the ability to summarize and interpret scientific data.
5. Students should be able to solve practical problems by applying concepts and methods acquired as a Psychology major

Direct Measures	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Use of the information
Research reports are required in all advanced laboratory courses. Student performance is evaluated using an explicit rubric. (See Appendix A)				X	X	All faculty teaching advanced laboratory courses submit component scores to the Undergraduate Program Committee (UPG). The UPG reviews the data annually and makes recommendations to department for action.
Indirect Measures	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Use of the information
Open forum. All students are invited annually to attend. In	X	X	X	X	X	Data reviewed annually by the UPG for action, as above.

<p>this forum, the learning goals for the major are reviewed as is the program of studies. Students are asked to critique and make suggestions for the improvement of their undergraduate instruction.</p>						
<p>Field placement/ employer survey. Field placement supervisors are asked to assess individual student performance. In addition, suggestions/ comments are solicited regarding skills, and knowledge sets that would be useful to the employer. (See Appendix B)</p>	X	X	X	X	X	Data reviewed annually by the UPG for action, as above.
<p>Alumni survey on web. This survey targets former majors that have graduated. It asks these former students to describe how their undergraduate instruction has proved beneficial to them. It also solicits suggestions for improvements to the curriculum that would be beneficial to future students. (See Appendix C).</p>	X	X	X	X	X	Data reviewed annually by the UPG for action, as above.

Examples of Changes Based on Assessment

The Open Forum has fostered further emphasis on active learning, teaching students valuable life and professional skills, requiring students to write more essay exams, development of additional field placements and research mentorship opportunities, invitations to students to attend department colloquia and discussion groups, the hosting of multiple annual events including "Meet the Faculty" and "How to Get in to Graduate School", the creation of email reflectors for majors, minors, and intended majors, the creation of restricted email reflectors for those enrolled in specific courses, the creation of course-based web sites, the publication of the "Undergraduate Update", and the seeking of approval of Physiological Psychology (254) as a Natural Science GER.

Results of Spring 2004 Assessment

A. Rate your skill level acquired as a psychology major.

How would you rate your ability to:

- **Solve practical problems by applying concepts and methods acquired as a psychology major (circle one)**
29%(23) 60%(47) 11%(9)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Explain concepts related to the field of psychology (circle one)**
28%(22) 72%(57)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Evaluate research using concepts and methods (circle one)**
9%(7) 61%(48) 30%(24)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Conduct research (circle one)**
15%(12) 17%(13) 68%(54)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Write in general and, in particular, write in a set format (scientific writing)**
71%(56) 10%(8) 19%(15)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Deal with numbers and, in particular, reach data-based conclusions**
16%(13) 56%(44) 14%(13) 11%(9)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY
- **Understand and organize data sets for computerized statistical analysis**
15%(12) 56%(44) 15%(12) 14%(11)
EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY

How would you rate your preparation acquired as a psychology student for:

- **The job market**

17%(14) 51%(40) 32%(25)

EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY

- **Graduate or professional school _____ not applicable to me**

20% (11) 27%(15) 53%(29)

EXCELLENT VERY GOOD GOOD AVERAGE BELOW AVERAGE POOR COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY

C. Rate your satisfaction.

In general, how satisfied are you with:

- **Teaching quality in the psychology department**

46%(36) 40%(32) NEUTRAL 14%(11)

EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Advising in psychology**

44%(35) 14%(11) 28%(22) 14%(11)

EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Advising in the College of Letters & Science**

13%(10) 15%(12) 42%(32) 15%(12) 7%(6) 8%(7)
EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Psychology faculty knowledge and expertise**

9% (7) 72%(57) 13%(10) 6%(5)
EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Psychology faculty availability**

57%(45) 11%(9) 32%(25)
EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Psychology graduate teaching assistant knowledge and expertise**

27%(21) 29%(23) 26%(21) 16%(13) 2%(1)
EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

- **Psychology graduate teaching assistant availability**

31%(24) 54%(43) 10%(8) 5%(4)
EXTREMELY VERY SOMEWHAT NEUTRAL SOMEWHAT VERY EXTREMELY
SATISFIED SATISFIED DISSATISFIED DISSATISFIED

Appendix A

Rubric for Laboratory Reports

Ratings: 0=F 3=D 6=F 9=B 12=A
 Fail.....Poor.....Pass.....Good.....Excellent

	Weight	Rating	Score		Weight	Rating	Score
Title Page				Results			
APA format	1			APA format	1		
Expression	1			Findings	5		
Subtotal	2			Statistics	4		
				Fig/Tables	5		
Abstract				Expression	5		
APA format	1			Subtotal	20		
Problem	2						
Method/Results	4			Discussion			
Expression	3			APA format	1		
Subtotal	10			Summary	4		
				Implications	3		
Introduction				Generality	3		
APA format	1			Limitations	3		
Lit review	9			Expression	6		
Purpose	4			Subtotal	20		
Expression	6						
Subtotal	20			References			
				APA format	2		
Method				Complete	2		
APA format	1			Subtotal	4		
Subjects	3						
Apparatus	3			Manuscript appearance			
Procedure	4			Subtotal	2		
Expression	6						
Subtotal	17			Appendix			
				Subtotal	2		

Total Core = _____/100

Grade = _____

Appendix B

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Field Placement in Psychology Final Evaluation Form

For Summer, Fall, and Spring Semesters, complete form during the last week of the semester.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Supervisor Name _____ Date _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

**Indicate student's performance level by circling an appropriate number (see rating scale below)

**Briefly comment in the appropriate area on the ratings given

**After considering the relative importance of each item, give a recommendation for the grade the student should receive

**DISCUSS evaluation with the student

Rating Scale:

5-Outstanding Demonstrates consistently effective performance; clearly and consistently exceeds expectations. No need for improvement, but small amount of improvement is possible.

4-Very Good Dependably does a good job; consistently meets and sometimes exceeds expectations. A small amount of improvement is possible.

3-Good Demonstrates acceptable performance; usually meets expectations. Some improvement is desirable.

2-Fair Is close to meeting expectations. Improvement is necessary.

1-Poor Frequently performs below acceptable standards; usually fails to meet expectations. Improvement is imperative.

Exhibits professional behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Comments:

Demonstrates independence and self-direction in activities.

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Comments

Recognizes areas in which supervision is needed; seeks and uses supervisor's help appropriately, and integrates this knowledge/feedback in other experiences.

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Comments

Displays a "good attitude" in all areas of placement role.

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Comments

Handles workload adequately; organizes work schedule; is prompt and dependable on completing tasks

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Comments

Circle the final grade the student should receive.

A A- B+ B B- C+ C C- D+ D D- F

Are there particular skills or knowledge sets that you feel would benefit future students in this position?

Are there particular skills or knowledge content that you feel that this or other UWM Psychology students lack?

We have discussed this evaluation together.

Student signature

Date

Supervisor signature

Date

Appendix C

UWM Psychology Alumni Survey

As a former UWM Psychology major, your feedback concerning your undergraduate studies in Psychology and your current level of success is important to us as we update and modify our curricular offerings.

Please take a few moments to answer this brief survey. Your identity will be protected and will never be disclosed.

1) When did you graduate from UWM with a degree in Psychology? Please place an X next to the appropriate answer.

_____ 1-2 years ago _____ 3-5 years ago _____ 5-10 years ago _____ more than 10 years ago

2) Please indicate your current type of employment.

3) Do you feel that your degree in Psychology helped you obtain your present source of employment? _____ Yes _____ No

4) Do you feel that your degree in Psychology helped you prepare for your present source of employment? _____ Yes _____ No

5) Do you feel that the concepts and methods that you learned as a Psychology major help you to solve practical problems both in and out of the workplace? _____ Yes _____ No

6) Are you able to explain to others concepts related to the field of Psychology? _____ Yes
_____ No

7) Are you able to evaluate research using concepts and methods acquired as a Psychology major? _____ Yes _____ No

8) Are you able to evaluate statistical data and/or organize datasets for statistical analysis?
_____ Yes _____ No

9) In a few sentences, please indicate what you believe were the most valuable pieces of knowledge or skills that you acquired as a Psychology major?

10) In a few sentences, please indicate what courses or skills you feel were not adequately

covered or taught in the Psychology major.

Thank you very much for your assistance.