

Major Field Assessment Plan

B. A. Psychology

The mission of Southeastern Louisiana University is to meet the educational and cultural needs, primarily of Southeast Louisiana, to disseminate knowledge and to facilitate life-long learning through quality instruction, research and service in a safe, student-centered environment.

The Department of Psychology attempts to foster, among all students, a grasp and appreciation of the scientific method in the study of behavior, and to stimulate interest in the field of Psychology.

Goal 1

To provide students with a broad body of knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in Psychology

A. Expected Outcome

Students completing the baccalaureate program in Psychology will compare favorably in their knowledge of general psychology with those students graduating from a national sample of psychology programs in institutions comparable to SLU.

Assessment

SLU graduating psychology majors will have an average Total Test score on the ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology which meets or exceeds the 50th percentile rank on a national sample of schools. ETS provides not only a Total Test scale score, but two subscores and several “Assessment Indicators” so that relative strengths and weaknesses of a program can be evaluated. It is expected that SLU graduating psychology majors will meet or exceed the 50th percentile in each of the following subscores: Learning & Cognition; Perception, Comparative, Sensation, Etiology & Physiological; Clinical, Abnormal & Personality; and Developmental & Social. In addition, it is expected that SLU graduating psychology majors meet or exceed the 50th percentile on each of the following “assessment indicators”: Learning, Cognition & Perception; Sensory & Physiological: Developmental; Clinical, Abnormal & Personality; Social; and Measurement & Methodology.

B. Expected Outcome

Students will have a positive opinion of the degree to which they have been exposed to a broad body of knowledge in Psychology.

Assessment

a. All psychology majors are required to take either Psychology 335. During this time they will take the “Psych 335 Questionnaire” and will rate the Department positively (i.e. above “3.0”) in terms of success in exposing them to a broad body of knowledge in Psychology and as this being more important now than when they took their first psychology course.

b. Based upon the SLU Exit Survey, students will have positive scores (i.e. an average score of above “3.0) on this goal (1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied).

c. Students taking Psych 450 (Service Learning in Psychology) will be required to submit a narrative summarizing and evaluating their experience in a human service setting. At least 80% of students will indicate in their narrative that their experience was positive and personally rewarding.

d. Students are to become aware of the importance of taking cultural background differences into account for a full understanding of human behavior. Textbooks for Psychology content courses (e.g. excluding methods courses such as statistics) incorporate relevant cultural issues in their discussions. Psychology faculty cover such issues as: culture-specific mental disorders, cultural variations in dream content, multicultural considerations in psychotherapy and assessment, cultural differences in the definition of the self, the consequences of being bicultural, cultural differences in parenting and family planning, among others.

Assessment will consist of adding relevant questions on the “Psych 335 Questionnaire”. They will rate the Department positively (i.e. above “3.0”) in terms of success in exposing them to a global/multicultural perspective in Psychology, and as this being more important now than when they took their first psychology course. In addition, on the SLU Exit Survey, students will have positive scores (i.e. an average score of above “3.0) on an item rating the major as promoting sensitivity to individual/cultural differences.

Goal 2

Foster students’ grasp and appreciation of the scientific method in psychology.

A. Expected Outcome

Psychology majors will demonstrate the application of the scientific method to an actual research question.

Assessment

In a required upper level research class (Psych 335), psychology majors will produce a written manuscript of publishable quality from beginning to end that requires the student to be able to conceptualize the targeted phenomenon into scientific research terms, and generate one or more testable hypotheses. These skills are further developed in the

elective course Psych 449 (Individual Research in Psychology). Psych 335 and Psych 449 provide students with critical thinking/statistical skills applicable to a wide variety of academic and non-academic settings and professional activities.

B. Expected Outcome

Students completing the baccalaureate program in Psychology will compare favorably in their knowledge of research methodology with those students graduating from a national sample of psychology programs in institutions comparable to SLU.

Assessment

SLU graduating psychology majors will take the ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology and meet or exceed the 50th percentile on the Measurement and Methodology "assessment indicator".

C. Expected Outcome

Psychology majors will feel confident in their abilities to conduct psychological research.

Assessment

a. Based on the "Psych 335 Questionnaire", at least 80% of those students taking Psychology 335 will rate themselves as being able to demonstrate the following skills with only minimal supervision--collect data, do background research, formulate a set of hypotheses, write up an Introduction section, write up a Methods section, graph data, use statistics, write Results and Discussion sections, and construct a Reference section in proper APA form.

b. Based upon the SLU Exit Survey, students will have positive scores (i.e. an average score of above "3.0) on this goal (1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied).

Goal 3

Students graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology should desire to and be qualified for graduate study in behavioral sciences

A. Expected Outcome

The rate of admittance into graduate schools in the behavioral sciences will compare favorably with other students graduating from a national sample of psychology programs in institutions comparable to SLU, and who apply for graduate work in the field. Once in a graduate program, the level of academic performance will compare favorably with other students graduating from institutions comparable to SLU.

Assessment

- a. SLU graduating psychology majors will have an average Total score on the ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology which meets or exceeds the 50th percentile rank on a national sample of schools
- b. On the SLU Exit Survey, students will rate the Department positively (i.e. an average score of above 3.0) on the item “How satisfied are you with the degree to which the Psychology Department prepares qualified students for further education in the Behavioral Sciences?” (1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied).
- c. On the SLU Exit Survey, at least 25% of graduating Psychology majors will indicate they are accepted in graduate school, or intend to go to graduate school

D. Expected Outcome

Psychology majors will feel that they are prepared to attend graduate school.
Assessment

- a. Students taking the “Psyc 335 Questionnaire” will have positive scores (i.e. an average score of above 3.0) on those items in which they rate their current opinion of their degree preparedness, and will rate this goal as being more important now than when they first entered the program.