

Revised July 2000

**MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT BI-ANNUAL REPORT
B. A. PSYCHOLOGY
SPRING 1997 TO FALL 1998**

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 scale 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 several Subscores and "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, Ethology & Physiological; Clinical, Abnormal & Personality; and Developmental & Social. In addition, it is expected that SLU graduating psychology majors will 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.

Results obtained

(1) TABLE 1 -- ETS Exam Results (Spring, 1997 to Fall, 1998); see Appendix I. In summarizing the ETS data (Appendix I), all Subscores and Assessment Indicators scores are based on a table of distributions of Institutions' scores; the Total Test scale scores are presented in terms of both Institutions' and individual students' scores. Also, means scores falling between percentile intervals are reported in terms of the approximate percentile rank. With respect to the Total Test scale scores, the Department met or exceeded its goal (50th percentile) every semester, whether measured by institutional or individual student data. All mean Subscores fell above the 50th percentile, which meets the Department goal. "Assessment Indicator" means fell well above the 50th percentile for Memory & Thinking; Sensory & Physiology; and Social thus meeting Departmental goals. Mean "Assessment Indicator" scores fell below the Departmental goal (50th percentile) for the following:

Developmental; Clinical & Abnormal; and Measurement & Methodology. These data are also summarized in the "Goal Attainment Framework"; see Appendix III. ETS data suggests that, overall, the Department is meeting its goals, but significant variation exists among areas of Psychology. "Assessment Indicators" indicate relative strengths are in the three areas of: Sensory & Physiology; Memory & Thinking, and Social. Three areas of relative weakness are: Clinical & Abnormal; Developmental; 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

All psychology majors are required to take either Psychology 333 or Psychology 334. During this time they will take the "Psych 333/334 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.

Also, 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).

Results

(1) TABLE 2 -- Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Results: see Appendix II

The results of the Psyc 333/334 Questionnaire with regard to this Goal indicates that the Department was rated positively (i.e. above "3.0") in terms of success in meeting this goal from Fall, 1996 to Spring, 1999, and rated this goal as being more important now than when they took their first psychology course.

These data are also summarized in the "Goal Attainment Framework"; see Appendix III. The average ratings of "4.54" (now) and "4.0" (departmental success) place Department performance as "Much More Than Expected."

(2) On the Exit Survey, 100% of the students responded with either a "5" (55%), "4" (30%) or "3" (15%) in terms of their satisfaction that the Department achieved this goal, yielding an average score well above "3.0". (N = 40)

With respect to the Exit Survey, the Department was rated positively (i.e. above "3.0") and meets this goal with respect to students graduating in 1997 and 1998.

C. Changes in Program

In the spring semesters of 1997 and 1998, a junior-level course in Developmental Psychology was conducted as the topic of the Psyc 482/582 (Seminar in Psychology) course. Although only a total of 12 undergraduates completed these seminars, it is possible that this course helped to boost the mean Developmental Assessment Indicator from the 36th percentile (Fall, 1994 to Fall, 1996) to the current 45th percentile.

D. Planned Changes

None. Due to extensive faculty turn-over in the 1998-1999 academic year, current emphasis is on presenting the existing core courses, and therefore there are no current plans to present a junior-level developmental course again either in the seminar or as a separate course. When reasonable faculty stability returns, the possibility of offering this topic again will be brought to the faculty by this Committee.

On February 12, 1998, the Curriculum Committee in Psychology considered the possibility of adding an intermediate statistics course, but rejected this idea due to anticipated low enrollments for such a course.

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 (Psyc 333 or 334), 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.

Results Obtained

(1) The Department has continued and enforced this requirement throughout the current evaluation period. See also the "Goal Attainment Framework" in Appendix III.

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".

Results Obtained

From Table 1, the mean Measurement & Methodology "Assessment Indicator" fell at the 43rd percentile and did not meet the Departmental goal (50th percentile). The Department goal was met for two of the four semesters. Department success in achieving this goal fell at the "Less than Expected" category of the "Goal Attainment Framework;" see Appendix III.

C. Expected Outcome

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

Assessment

Based on the "Psych 333/334 Questionnaire", at least 80% of those students taking Psychology 333 or 334 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 section, and write Discussion section.

Also, 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).

Results Obtained

(1) TABLE 2 -- Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Results: see Appendix II

Using simple (non-weighted) averages, results of the Psyc 333/334 Questionnaire with regard to this Goal indicates that the Department was rated positively (i.e. above "80%") in terms of success in meeting this goal from Fall, 1996 to Spring, 1999 on only three of these skills: run subjects, collect data, and write up an Introduction section.

These data are also summarized in the "Goal Attainment Framework"; see Appendix III. The skills of "run subjects" and "collect data" were rated as "Much More Than Expected"; "writing an Introduction section" was "More Than Expected", "graph data" was "Less Than Expected", and the remaining skills were "Much Less Than Expected."

Compared with the Fall 1994 to Fall 1996 period, current students rated themselves as less confident with respect to all of the skills, except that their confidence regarding their ability to collect data remained substantially the same.

(2) On the Exit Survey, 97.5% of the students responded with either a "5" (50%), "4" (32.5%) or "3" (15%) in terms of their satisfaction that the Department achieved this goal, yielding an average score well above "3.0". ($N = 40$)

With respect to the Exit Survey, the Department was rated positively (i.e. above "3.0") and meets this goal with respect to students graduating in 1997 and 1998.

D. Changes in Program

None. On February 12, 1998, the Curriculum Committee in Psychology considered the possibility of adding an intermediate statistics course, but rejected this idea due to anticipated low enrollments for such a course.

E. Planned Changes

Due to substantial faculty turnover in the 1998-1999 academic year, Departmental planning will focus on maintaining current academic standards as much as possible, and curriculum innovation will have to wait for relative faculty stability. Faculty will be made aware of these results and any faculty suggestions will be considered by the Committee.

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. In the Undergraduate Alumni survey, at least 25% of psychology majors will indicate that they are currently pursuing an advanced degree in the Behavioral Sciences.
- b. SLU graduating psychology majors will have an average Total Test scale score on the ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology which meets or exceeds the 50th percentile rank on a national sample of schools
- c. 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).
- d. 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.

Results Obtained

- (1) The results of the 1997 Undergraduate Alumni survey include 21 respondents who graduated in the academic years of 1994/1995 and 1995/1996. All (100%) of the respondents indicated that they either have (9.5%) obtained a graduate/professional degree, or are currently enrolled (57.1%) or are "likely" to enroll in a degree program in the future (33.4%). This places Department achievement on the "Much More Than Expected" category in the "Goal Attainment Framework"; see Appendix III.
- (2) From Table 1, the mean Total Test scale scores exceeded the Departmental goal (50th percentile); the mean institutional Total Test scale score fell at the 67th percentile, and the mean Individual student Total Test scale score fell at the 61st percentile.
- (3) On the Exit Survey, 97.5% of the students responded with either a "5" (45%), "4" (35%) or "3" (17.5%) in terms of their satisfaction that the Department achieved this goal, yielding an average score well above "3.0". ($N = 40$). With respect to the Exit Survey, the Department was rated positively (i.e. above "3.0") and meets this goal with respect to students graduating in 1997 and 1998.
- (4) On the 1996-97 SLU Exit Survey, 84.38% of those respondents who graduated after June 1996 had been either already accepted into graduate school (12.5%) or intended to go to graduate school (71.88%) ($N = 32$).

On the 1997-1998 SLU Exit Survey 90% had either already been accepted into graduate school (7.5%) or intended to go to graduate school (82.5%) ($N = 40$). The non-weighted average of 87% has Departmental achievement as falling in the "Much More Than Expected"

category in the "Goal Attainment Framework"; see Appendix III.

With respect to the Exit Survey scores, the Department met or exceeded its goal (25%) every semester during the 1997-1998 time period.

B. Expected Outcome

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

Assessment

- a. Students taking the "Psych 333/334 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.
- b. On the Undergraduate Alumni survey, 80% of psychology majors who are attending graduate school will be satisfied with the instruction they received at SLU.

Results obtained

- (1) On the Psych 333/334 Questionnaire, students rated the Department as meeting its goal of preparing students for the Behavioral Sciences (see also the "Goal Attainment Framework," Appendix III) and also rated this goal as being more important than when they first entered the program.
- (2) The results of the 1997 Undergraduate Alumni survey include 21 respondents who graduated the academic years 1994/1995 and 1995/1996. Of the 14 individuals with graduate school experience, 85.7% of the respondents indicated that they were either "Effectively" or "Very Effectively" prepared for graduate school, which places Departmental achievement in the "Much Better than Expected" category in the Goal Attainment Framework; see Appendix III.

Available data suggest that students perceive the Department has having done a good job of preparing them for graduate study, and that, for the current time period, 87% indicate an expectation that they will further their education. It is quite possible that they are intending less research-oriented programs, and therefore their lack of confidence in performing specific research skills (see Goal 2) is not seen as a significant impediment.

C. Changes in Program

None.

D. Planned Changes

None.

APPENDIX I

TABLE 1 -- ETS Exam Results, means and percentiles (Spring, 1997 to Fall, 1998):

	Spring 1997	Fall 1997	Spring 1998	Fall 1998	Mean Percentile Rank
SLU N	25	15	20	19	
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SLU Means [National Percentile Rank for Individual Students' Test Scores]					
Total Test	166.0[74th]	159.0[55th]	160.7[62nd]	158.3[53rd]	61st
SLU Means [Institutional National Percentile Rank]					
Total Test	166.0[91st]	159.0[56th]	160.7[67th]	158.3[52nd]	67th
Subscores:					
(SLU Mean % Correct) [Institutional National Percentile Rank]					
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Learning & Cognition	69.8[95th]	66.7[90th]	63.6[79th]	62.5[73rd]	84th
Percept/Comp/Sens/ & Ethology/Physio.	68.8[95th]	67.7[91st]	69.6[95th]	69.6[95th]	94th
Clin/Abn/ & Personality	64.6[88th]	56.3[41st]	56.7[43rd]	55.2[33rd]	51st
Developmental & Social	64.0[86th]	56.0[46th]	60.4[50th]	55.2[39th]	55th
Assessment Indicator:					
(SLU Mean % Correct) [Institutional National Percentile Rank]					
<hr/>					
Memory & Thinking	47.0[89th]	43.9[78th]	41.3[63rd]	42.1[69th]	75th
Sensory & Physiology	46.4[94th]	44.8[93rd]	45.8[94th]	47.4[96th]	94th
Developmental Clinical &	49.4[75th]	42.5[34th]	44.9[48th]	40.4[24th]	45th
Abnormal	61.7[87th]	53.5[43rd]	53.2[42nd]	49.6[20th]	48th
Social	69.6[87th]	61.5[53rd]	67.2[80th]	61.6[52nd]	68th
Measurement & Methodology	44.0[61st]	35.3[23rd]	43.3[59th]	38.3[28th]	43rd

Notes: Percentiles are in brackets.

Percentiles of decimal scale scores are approximate (e.g. tables provide the percentiles of Total scale scores of 162 and 163, but the percentile of a Total scale score of 162.5 would have to be estimated). Mean Percentile Rank is a simple (i.e. non-weighted) average of percentiles across the five semesters included.

Unless otherwise noted, percentile ranks are based upon the national norms provided by latest ETS Comparative Data Guide available for that year.

APPENDIX II

TABLE 2 -- Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Results:

1. Summary of Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Fall 1996, Spring 1997 n=39

Scale: 1 extremely unimportant - 5 extremely important

Goal A: To provide students with a broad body of knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in Psychology.

- 18. 3.63 (first day of Psych 101)
- 19. 4.68 (present view)
- 20. 3.49 (success of Department)

Goal B: To foster students' grasp and appreciation of the scientific method in Psychology.

- 6. 4.17
- 7. 4.51
- 8. 3.94

Goal C: To train students in practical research skills.

- 15. 3.49
- 16. 4.43
- 17. 3.46

Goal D: To develop students' skills in critical thinking.

- 12. 3.46
- 13. 4.91
- 14. 3.49

Goal E: To prepare qualified students for graduate school in Behavioral Sciences.

- 24. 3.00
- 25. 4.80
- 26. 2.22

Goal F: To stimulate students' interest in the study of Psychology.

- 9. 3.51
- 10. 4.54
- 11. 3.86

Question 27: % of students who feel that he/she can do the following with minimal supervision.

- a. run subjects-----88.6
- b. collect data-----85.7
- c. do background research-----77.1
- d. formulate a set of hypotheses-----82.9
- e. write an introduction-----80.0
- f. write a methods section-----88.6
- g. graph data-----51.4
- h. use simple statistics (e.g. t-test)-----54.3
- i. use advanced statistics (e.g. ANOVA)-----34.3
- j. write results section-----68.6
- k. write discussion-----62.9

Percentage of students who answered either "likely" or "extremely likely" about applying to graduate school: 54.3%

2. Summary of Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Fall 1997, Spring 1998 n=29

Scale: 1 extremely unimportant - 5 extremely important

Goal A: To provide students with a broad body of knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in Psychology.

- 18. 3.86 (first day of Psych 101)
- 19. 4.31 (present view)
- 20. 4.21 (success of Department)

Goal B: To foster students' grasp and appreciation of the scientific method in Psychology.

- 6. 3.14
- 7. 4.59
- 8. 4.14

Goal C: To train students in practical research skills.

- 15. 2.69
- 16. 4.14
- 17. 4.07

Goal D: To develop students' skills in critical thinking.

- 12. 3.59
- 13. 4.55
- 14. 4.14

Goal E: To prepare qualified students for graduate school in Behavioral Sciences.

- 24. 3.66
- 25. 4.52
- 26. 3.93

Goal F: To stimulate students' interest in the study of Psychology.

- 9. 3.86
- 10. 4.48
- 11. 4.24

Question 27: % of students who feel that he/she can do the following with minimal supervision.

- a. run subjects-----82.7
- b. collect data-----79.3
- c. do background research-----69.0
- d. formulate a set of hypotheses-----72.4
- e. write an introduction-----75.9
- f. write a methods section-----79.3
- g. graph data-----51.7
- h. use simple statistics (e.g. t-test)-----48.3
- i. use advanced statistics (e.g. ANOVA)-----44.8
- j. write results section-----69.0
- k. write discussion-----79.3

Percentage of students who answered either "likely" or "extremely likely" about applying to graduate school: 75.9%

3. Summary of Psych 333/334 Questionnaire Fall 1998, Spring 1999 n=14

Scale: 1 extremely unimportant - 5 extremely important

Goal A: To provide students with a broad body of knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in Psychology.

- 18. 4.00 (first day of Psych 101)
- 19. 4.64 (present view)
- 20. 4.29 (success of Department)

Goal B: To foster students' grasp and appreciation of the scientific method in Psychology.

- 6. 3.43
- 7. 4.43
- 8. 4.21

Goal C: To train students in practical research skills.

- 15. 2.57
- 16. 4.21
- 17. 4.29

Goal D: To develop students' skills in critical thinking.

- 12. 4.57
- 13. 4.57
- 14. 4.29

Goal E: To prepare qualified students for graduate school in Behavioral Sciences.

- 24. 3.50
- 25. 4.43
- 26. 3.36

Goal F: To stimulate students' interest in the study of Psychology.

- 9. 4.07
- 10. 4.50
- 11. 4.07

Question 27: % of students who feel that he/she can do the following with minimal supervision.

- a. run subjects-----85.7
- b. collect data-----92.9
- c. do background research-----78.6
- d. formulate a set of hypotheses-----64.3
- e. write an introduction-----85.7
- f. write a methods section-----64.3
- g. graph data-----64.3
- h. use simple statistics (e.g. t-test)-----50.0
- i. use advanced statistics (e.g. ANOVA)-----14.3
- j. write results section-----64.3
- k. write discussion-----71.4

Percentage of students who answered either "likely" or "extremely likely" about applying to graduate school: 78.4%

APPENDIX III
GOAL ATTAINMENT FRAMEWORK

B.A. Psychology
Department of Psychology

Academic Years 1997 & 1998

Expected Outcome	Much Less than Expected	Less than Expected	Expected	More than Expected	Much More than Expected
Mean percentile rank of students on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology	< 40	40-49	50th	51-60	> 60 61st
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Memory & Thinking Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49	50th	51-60	> 60 75th
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Sensory & Physiological Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49	50th	51-60	> 60 94th
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Developmental Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49 45th	50th	51-60	> 60
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Clinical & Abnormal Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49 48th	50th	51-60	> 60
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Social Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49	50th	51-60	> 60 68th
Mean percentile rank among institutions on the Major Field Achievement Test in Psychology Measurement & Methodology Assessment Indicator	< 40	40-49 43rd	50th	51-60	> 60
Ratings on the "Psych 333/334 Questionnaire" 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.	< 2.0-2.49	2.5-2.99	3.0-3.49	3.5-3.99	4.0-5.0 4.54(now) 4.0(succes s)

In a required upper level research class (Psyc 333 or 334), 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			100% All students who pass meet this criterion.		
% students rating themselves as being able to demonstrate the following skills with only minimal supervision--(a) run subjects (b)collect data, (c)do background research, (d)formulate a set of hypotheses, (e)write up an introduction section, (f)write up a methods section, (g)graph data, (h)use simple statistics, (i)use advanced statistics, (j)write results section, and (k)write discussion section, based on the "Psych 333/334 Questionnaire"	< 75 74.9(c) 73.2(d) 55.8(g) 50.9(h) 31.1(i) 67.3(j) 71.2(k)	75-79.9 77.4(f)	80%	80.1-85 80.5(e)	> 85 85.7(a) 86.0(b)
% of alumni who are currently pursuing an advanced degree in the Behavioral Sciences, according to the SLU Undergraduate Alumni Survey	< 15	15.1-24.9	25%	25.1-40	> 40 100%
% of students who indicate they are accepted in graduate school, or intend to go to graduate school, on the SLU Exit Survey	< 15	15.1-24.9	25%	25.1-40	> 40 87%
Average score on the "Psyc 333/334 Questionnaire" on those items in which they rate their current opinion of their degree preparedness	< 2.0-2.49	2.5-2.99	3.0-3.49 3.17(success on Goal E)	3.5-3.99	4.0-5.0
% of alumni who are attending graduate school, satisfied with the instruction they received at SLU, according to the SLU Undergraduate Alumni Survey	< 75	75-79.9	80%	80.1-85	> 85 85.7%

Notes: Percentiles in bold represent Mean Percentile Ranks as a simple (i.e. non-weighted) average of percentiles for Spring and Fall of 1997 & 1998 and questionnaire scores from Fall, 1996 to Spring, 1999, with type of rating in parenthesis.