

**Assessment Plan
Department of Psychology
Park University**

The assessment approach adopted by the Department of Psychology stems from the mission of Park University to prepare learners to think critically, communicate effectively and engage in lifelong learning while serving a global community. The overarching goal of the department is to ensure that psychology graduates possess the requisite skills and knowledge to pursue ongoing endeavors in their careers and/or graduate school. The following assessment plan reflects the Psychology Department's commitment to connecting discipline specific learning goals to the mission of a liberal arts education.

Psychology Department Outcome Goals	Park University Mission Targets	Evidence of Effectiveness
An understanding of major theoretical approaches, conceptual bases, and trends in psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course data • Individual project performance assessment • Summative performance assessment • Archival measures
An understanding of research design, data analysis, statistical interpretation, and application of findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to think critically • Preparing learners to communicate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual project performance assessment • Course data • Summative performance assessment • Collaborative work • Archival measures
Demonstrate the ethical application of psychology to personal, social, and organizational issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to think critically • Preparing learners to engage in lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective self-assessment • Interviews and surveys • Individual project performance assessment
Demonstrate the ability to effectively utilize information technology to gather, assess, and communicate about psychological issues and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to communicate effectively • Preparing learners to engage in lifelong learning • Preparing learners to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course data • Individual project performance assessment • Collaborative work • Reflective self-assessment • Archival measures
Utilize skeptical inquiry, critical thinking, and scientific approaches to understand behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to engage in lifelong learning • Preparing learners to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual project performance assessment • Collaborative work • Course data
Show an awareness and understanding of cultural diversity and individual differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective self-assessment • Collaborative work • Individual project performance assessment

Demonstrate effective written and oral communication within the language of the discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to communicate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course data • Individual project performance assessment • Reflective self-assessment • Collaboration with faculty
An understanding of increased self-awareness and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to engage in lifelong learning • Preparing learners to communicate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective self-assessment • Interviews and surveys
An understanding of psychological roles, professional settings, and career opportunities related to psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing learners to engage in lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews and surveys • Reflective self-assessment • Individual project performance assessment

Within each of the outcome goals, the department has specified relevant learning objectives. The learning objectives serve the dual purpose of guiding program development and providing a measurement by which the department can gauge its effectiveness. In addition, these learning objectives may be incorporated into the goals and objectives of specific courses to ensure an integrated, comprehensive educational experience in psychology. The specific assessment indicators are designed to provide insight on the effectiveness of the department and specific psychology courses in meeting the relevant learning objectives.

Psychology Department Outcome Goals	Learning Objectives	Specific Assessment Indicators
An understanding of major theoretical approaches, conceptual bases, and trends in psychology	<i>Students will be able to:</i>	
	Explain and distinguish among the major theoretical approaches in at least three of these areas of psychology: biological, psychoanalytic, cognitive, behavioral, humanistic, social, and developmental.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior comprehensive exam
	Demonstrate an understanding of psychology in relation to natural sciences, social sciences, and applied disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theory and research in learning and cognition • theory and research in personality and social processes • theory and research on developmental changes in human thought and behavior • the history of psychology • individual differences in behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course exams in core degree courses
	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of at least one applied area of psychology, such as clinical, industrial/organizational, or health psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course exams in elective degree courses
Evaluate the scientific approach as a tool for understanding human thought and behavior.		

An understanding of research design, data analysis, statistical interpretation, and application of findings	Locate relevant research, theory, and information necessary to plan, conduct, and interpret results of research studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405
	Formulate a testable research hypothesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405
	Design basic studies to address psychological questions using different research methodologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405
	Under appropriate supervision, collect, analyze, and report data designed to answer a psychological question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405
	Apply APA ethical guidelines in the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of psychological research. Demonstrate understanding of APA guidelines for the ethical treatment of human and nonhuman research participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405 • Term paper in 305
	Apply and interpret basic descriptive and inferential statistics. Demonstrate understanding of the appropriate use of various data analytic techniques for addressing different types of questions and hypotheses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405

	Demonstrate knowledge of different research methodologies employed by psychologists, including an understanding of the appropriate use of various research designs for addressing different types of questions and hypotheses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405 • Classroom assessment strategies in 305
	Place research questions in an appropriate theoretical context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research projects in 306, 390 • Individual research projects in 405
	Evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions presented in disseminated research relevant to psychology.	
Demonstrate the ethical application of psychology to personal, social, and organizational issues	Describe the role of psychology in addressing human problems, both individually and collectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term paper in 407
	Explain behavior using different psychological theories or models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term paper in 315, 407
	Formulate how major principles of psychology can be applied to career choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment techniques in 101, 404
	Construct examples of how psychological theories and principles relate to everyday life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term paper in 407 • Student journals in 407, 390
	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their own field experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student journals in 407
	Analyze alternative solutions to problems or issues encountered in real-world settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term paper in 407 • Student journals in 407
	Design an action plan for improving a circumstance for an individual or group. This involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Knowledge</i>. Define a problem in need of change. • <i>Comprehension</i>. Describe what needs to be changed. • <i>Application</i>. Apply psychological theories and principles to the specified problem. • <i>Analysis</i>. Compare and contrast different perspectives for the solution of the problem. • <i>Synthesis</i>. Design and formulate an ethical plan of action. • <i>Evaluation</i>. Assess the effectiveness of the plan and solution(s) employed. 	

	Treat individuals in applied settings according to the APA ethical guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor evaluation in 407
	Recognize unethical application of psychological principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student journals in 407
Demonstrate the ability to effectively utilize information technology to gather, assess, and communicate about psychological issues and research	Demonstrate these minimum skills: using a personal computer, making and transferring files, avoiding viruses, using basic word processing programs, using and accessing email, and browsing the Web.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework assignments in all courses
	<p>Demonstrate information competence at each stage in the following process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulating a topic. Choosing a topic and restating it in narrower and broader terms. • Determining the types of information needed. Identifying sources of information from multiple media and describing their relationship to the chosen topic. • Locating appropriate sources by searching electronic and traditional databases and providing evidence of the search. • Gathering appropriate sources from multiple media and retrieving information from distant and local sources. • Differentiating between primary vs. secondary sources, empirical vs. non-empirical sources, and peer-reviewed vs. professional vs. other sources for multiple media. • Evaluating the quality and appropriateness of the identified sources regardless of the media, including evaluating its value and accuracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term papers in upper division courses
	Organize and report information by using appropriate software to produce understandable reports of the psychological literature, methodology, and statistical analyses in APA or other appropriate style, including graphical representations of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research project in 306, 390
	<p>Use information and technology ethically and responsibly, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving examples of and identifying examples of plagiarism. • Discussing why plagiarism is unethical. • Using citations correctly for a variety of media sources. • Knowing the limitations of statistical techniques and data collection methods. • Knowing the limitations of one's own understanding of the literature, statistics, and methodology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research project in 306 • Classroom assessment strategies in 101

	Use technology to communicate with others in the field, including using email and creating web pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email communication in all courses Web pages in 315, 404
Utilize skeptical inquiry, critical thinking, and scientific approaches to understand behavior	Demonstrate critical thinking skills and abilities acquired through training and experience in scientific methodology, including the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, describe, and compare major scientific methods for gathering and analyzing information and for explaining behavior. Use knowledge of research design to justify and challenge research conclusions. Support conclusions with reasoning and evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term papers in all upper division courses Oral presentations in 404
	Evaluate the merit of information, including the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate fact from fiction. Differentiate the probable from the improbable. Recognize and evaluate the source and context of information. Identify and explain inappropriate assertions. 	
	Approach problems effectively, including the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate problems clearly. Generate multiple solutions to problems. Recognize and defend against common thinking fallacies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom assessment strategies in 390
Show an awareness and understanding of cultural diversity and individual differences	Work and communicate effectively and sensitively with people from a diverse range of backgrounds and varying demographic characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group work in 306, 315, 390, 404
	Examine the major cultural components which have influenced their own identity.	
	Demonstrate understanding of how their own identity influences their beliefs, values, and interactions with others.	
	Demonstrate understanding of the impact and issues of power, privilege, and oppression and their relationship to prejudice, discrimination, and inequity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom assessment strategies in 301
	Examine and challenge their own prejudicial attitudes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom assessment strategies in 301 Homework assignments in 301

Demonstrate effective written and oral communication within the language of the discipline	Demonstrate effective writing skills in multiple formats (e.g., essays, graphs and tables, correspondence, technical papers, and note taking) and for multiples purposes (e.g., defending, explaining, persuading, arguing, teaching).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term papers in all upper division courses • Web pages in 315, 404 • Poster presentations at professional conferences • WCT exam
	Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in multiple formats (e.g., group discussion, debate, lecture) and for multiple purposes (e.g., defending, explaining, persuading, arguing, teaching).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in upper division courses • Group research presentations in 306 • Oral presentations at professional conferences
An understanding of increased self-awareness and interpersonal skills	Identify their own values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 101, 301, 315
	Demonstrate self-awareness of their own feelings, emotions, motives, and attitudes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 315
	Use psychological theory to provide insight and understanding of their own behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework assignments in 101, 301, 315 • Student journals in 390
	Demonstrate the ability to reflect on experience and find meaning in it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student journals in 390, 407
	Use psychological theory to understand interpersonal and group behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 301, 390
	Identify the impact of their own behavior on others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 301, 390
	Demonstrate appropriate, effective relationships with others in diverse settings, such as work, family, and social settings.	

	Develop knowledge-based interpersonal skills that foster sensitivity and expand self-knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student journals in 407
	Demonstrate interpersonal awareness and sensitivity to differences and similarities in the way people are treated due to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, class, and sexual orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework assignments in 301
	Demonstrate communication skills, such as interviewing, active listening, and empathic listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 206
	Demonstrate group facilitation and interaction skills.	
	Demonstrate conflict resolution skills.	
	Demonstrate understanding of the importance of life-long learning and maintaining currency in one's field.	
An understanding of psychological roles, professional settings, and career opportunities related to psychology	Identify range of career options in psychology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 101, 404
	Differentiate between various graduate degrees in psychology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 101, 404
	Locate relevant information to pursue graduate education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assessment strategies in 404
	Define career paths and develop skills relevant to pursuing them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework in SS100

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Psychology Department, key indicators and related success criterion have been designated. At the completion of each academic year, the department will examine their progress in relation to these measures to evaluate student learning, examine departmental strengths and weaknesses, provide suggestions for program and course improvement, and identify departmental needs.

Psychology Department Outcome Goals	Key Assessment Indicator	Success Criterion
An understanding of major theoretical approaches, conceptual bases, and trends in psychology	Senior comprehensive exam	75% of students will score 70% or higher on the senior comprehensive exam
An understanding of research design, data analysis, statistical interpretation, and application of findings	Group research projects in 306	
Demonstrate the ethical application of psychology to personal, social, and organizational issues	Term paper in 407	80% of students will receive ratings of satisfactory or higher on the term paper

	Supervisor evaluation in 407	80% of students will receive supervisor evaluation ratings of satisfactory or higher
Demonstrate the ability to effectively utilize information technology to gather, assess, and communicate about psychological issues and research	Term paper in 404, 408	75% of students will score 70% or higher on term paper
	Web pages in 315	75% of students will score 70% or higher on web page
Utilize skeptical inquiry, critical thinking, and scientific approaches to understand behavior	Term paper in 315	75% of students will score 70% or higher on term paper
Show an awareness and understanding of cultural diversity and individual differences		
Demonstrate effective written and oral communication within the language of the discipline	Group research presentations in 306	75% of students will score 70% or higher on group research presentation
	Student presentations at professional conferences	3% of psychology majors will present their research findings at a professional conference
An understanding of increased self-awareness and interpersonal skills	Student journals in 407	80% of students will receive a rating of satisfactory or higher
An understanding of psychological roles, professional settings, and career opportunities related to psychology	Senior exit survey	80% of students rate their preparation for post-graduation role as satisfactory or higher

Note: Portions of the Park University Department of Psychology Assessment Plan were adapted from the materials of the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology, the Psychology Department at Kennesaw State College, and the Psychology Department at Mansfield University.