

2004 Annual Academic Assessment for Psychology

Schreiner University

1. State the educational purpose of the assessment program:

The Schreiner University psychology graduate demonstrates higher order thinking skills in the application of psychological knowledge and principles to new problems and situations. She uses her knowledge of psychological facts and theories to interpret and understand the behavior of herself and others, and synthesizes and integrates new information and ideas with prior learning. He draws appropriate inferences from observations, and can explain the theoretical and factual basis for his inferences. The psychology graduate understands the many factors that influence human behavior. She demonstrates a willingness to examine her own behavior, attitudes, experiences, and beliefs.

2. Educational goals, assessment for each goal, performance standards, and findings:

Upon graduating with a major in Psychology, a student will be able to:

Goal # 1 : (Research) describe, compare, and contrast the major research methods used in psychology. Is an intelligent consumer of research reports, distinguishes between fact and opinion, and evaluates the appropriateness of conclusions drawn from research. Is able to use electronic data bases to research information. Satisfactory performance (C or better) in Research Methods I, Research Methods II, Research Methods II Project, and Senior Seminar.

2000-2001	Res. Meth. I 72% (C or better) Res. Meth. II 92% Res. Meth. II Project 100% Senior Seminar 100%
2001-2002	Res. Meth. I 75% Res. Meth. II 83% Res. Meth. II Project 83% Senior Seminar 100%
2002-2003	Res. Meth. I 88% Res. Meth. II 100% Res. Meth. II Project 79% Senior Seminar 100%
2003-2004	Res. Meth. I 78% (C or better) Res. Meth. II 94% Res. Meth. II Project 72% Senior Seminar 100%

Curriculum : Papers and reports need to focus more specifically on empirical journal articles and references. Research methods and statistics continue to be integrated within the Research Methods courses. More up-to-date computers and software are needed for research simulations. The Psychology Lab needs a network line to be run for access to online research assignments. We are currently working with the tech department to update computers and eventually get the computer lab online for web-based instruction and data collection.

Faculty Development: Faculty would like to receive support for attending research based conferences to stimulate and guide collaborative projects with students as possible.

Out of class experience: Area needs support to take best students to research based conferences for wider exposure to academic and professional psychology.

Goal # 2 : (Human Development) describe the major factors influencing human development and the effect these factors have on future behavior; is able to explain the interplay between circumstances and choices and the factors affecting choices. Satisfactory performance (C or better) in Life Span Development, Child Development, and/or Adulthood and Aging.

2000-2001 Child Develop. 100% (C or better)
2001-2002 Life Span Develop. 100%
Adulthood and Aging 100%
2002-2003 Child Develop. 100%
Life Span Develop. 88%
2003-2004 Life Span Develop. 78%
Adulthood and Aging 100%

Curriculum: Lower division Life Span Development course continued last year to strengthen this goal. Students are benefiting from the addition of this lower level course. It better prepares them for upper level developmental courses.

Faculty Development: Faculty would like support to attend conferences and workshops in this field.

Out of class experience: Greater contact with local child care and elder care facilities could be explored to encourage student volunteerism and projects.

Goal # 3: (Schools of Psychology) describe, compare, and contrast the major schools of thought in psychology; can interpret human behavior from each theoretical perspective; is able to analyze, evaluate, and discuss a case study from different psychological perspectives.

Satisfactory performance (C or better) in Theories of Personality, History and Systems, Life Span Develop., Child Develop. and /or Adulthood and Aging

2000-2001 History and Sys. 100% (C or better)
Child Develop. 100%
2001-2002 Theories of Pers. 91%
Adulthood and Aging 100%
Life Span Develop. 100%
2002-2003 History and Sys. 100%
Child Develop. 100%
2003-2004 Theories of Pers. 90%

Adulthood and Aging 100%
Life Span Develop. 78%

Curriculum: A decision was made to replace History and Systems with the Biological Bases of Behavior as a capstone course and offer the History of Psychology as a Topics Course in the future.

Faculty Development: Support for attendance at relevant conferences and expanded library holdings should be encouraged.

Out of class experience: Guest speakers/presenters of differing therapeutic or research schools could be brought to campus, or students could visit local hospitals for presentations.

Goal # 4 (Statistics) derive, understand, and summarize in tabular and graphical form basic descriptive statistics used in the behavioral sciences; is able to compute, understand, and interpret the results from both parametric and non-parametric inferential statistics; has gained familiarity with at least one data analysis software program (SPSS). Satisfactory performance (C or better) in Research Methods I Research Methods II, and Research Methods II Project.

2000-2001 Res. Meth. I 72% (C or better)
Res. Meth. II 92%
Res. Meth. II Project 100%
2001-2002 Res. Meth. I 75%
Res. Meth. II 83%
Res. Meth. II Project 83%
2002-2003 Res. Meth. I 88%
Res. Meth. II 100%
Res. Meth. II Project 79%
2003-2004 Res. Meth. I 78%
Res. Meth. II 94%
Res. Meth. II Project 72%

Curriculum: Support needed to purchase more and up-to-date, hardware and software for Research Methods lab. The addition of SPSS statistical package is a good start. The lab requires network connection so that students can participate in online data collection and analysis and perform simulation experiments that are currently only available in web-based formats. This would help us reach a goal of having students present data-based class projects.

Faculty Development: Support to attend relevant conferences and workshops re: statistical packages and psychology software in general.

Out of class experience: Support for field trip(s) to San Antonio research labs or Psychological Corporation site.

Goal # 5 (Communication) write a documented research paper using APA style; is able to write and speak about a psychological topic using appropriate terminology. Satisfactory performance (C or better) in Research Methods I, Research Methods II, Research Methods II Project, Senior Seminar, Theories of Personality, History and Systems, Social Psychology, and/or Adulthood and Aging.

2000-2001	Res. Meth. I 72% (C or better)
	Res. Meth. II 92%
	Res. Meth. II Project 100%
	History and Sys. 100%
	Social Psyc. 100%
	Senior Seminar 100%
2001-2002	Res. Meth. I 75%
	Res. Meth. II 83%
	Res. Meth. II Project 83%
	Theories of Pers. 91%
	Adulthood and Aging 100%
	Social Psyc. 60%
	Senior Seminar 100%
2002-2003	Res. Meth. I 88%
	Res. Meth. II 100%
	Res. Meth. II Project 79%
	History and Sys. 100%
	Senior Seminar 100%
2003-2004	Res. Meth. I 78%
	Res. Meth. II 94%
	Res. Meth. II Project 72%
	Senior Seminar 100%
	Social Psyc. 100%
	Theories of Pers. 90%
	Adulthood and Aging 100%
	Senior Seminar 100%

Curriculum: Increased emphasis on learning and using APA style, and attempt to institute Senior Seminar and /or Research Methods public presentation. Require students to seek help in formatting research reports in Schreiner's new writing lab.

Faculty Development: Support for attending conferences /sabbaticals.

Out of class experience: Need to bring speakers/presenters to campus or be able to take students to conferences.

Goal # 6: Beyond the above goals, students may acquire more of the skills and knowledge necessary for graduate study in psychology through additional course work and individual study.

Satisfactory performance should be attainment of the Norm Mean Total Score on the Major Field Exam in Psychology, and/or a score of 70% or better on the Schreiner Psychology Departmental Senior Exam.

2000-2001 Major Field Exam Mean Total = 142.0 (Norm = 156.8)

Psych. Dept. Senior Exam Mean = 60%

2001-2002 Major Field Exam Mean Total = 155.1 (Norm = 156.8)

Psych. Dept. Senior Exam Mean = 70%

2002-2003 Major Field Exam Mean Total = 159.3 (Norm = 157.1)

Psych. Dept. Senior Exam Mean = 76%

2003-2004 Major Field Exam Mean Total = 150.6 (Norm = 156.8)

Psych. Dept. Senior Exam Mean = 71%

Curriculum: Sustain the greater breadth and depth of offerings. Four new regular courses have been added in last two years – three new Topics courses.

Faculty Development: Joint projects and/or travel with students to conventions can be encouraged. Out of class experience: Volunteering experiences for counseling/clinical focused students can be encouraged and made easier.

Attendance at conventions and visiting speakers can stimulate research interested students.

EXPLANATORY NOTES:

- 1) Re: '01-'02 Social Psyc "C" rate of only 60% - (below 70% standard): This is a somewhat misleading statistic due to the following factors: There were only five students in the class, and the distribution was bimodal: three "As", and two "Ds". If the (sixth actual) Honors student is included (a fourth "A"), then the "C" or better rate rises to 67%, not significantly below 70%. It is also important to note that the two "D" students each had over 21 absences during the semester (22 and 25), not surprisingly resulting in poor test performances.
- 2) Re: below norm performances on the 2003-2004 Departmental Senior Exam and the Major Field Exam: We have not yet settled on a way to prepare our students to take these tests very seriously. Having such small numbers of

graduates each year, variations in “annual quality” of senior classes are likely to lead to greater fluctuation of scores than outcomes based on larger samples. It should also be recognized that it is a somewhat ambitious goal to expect our students to score at the norm on the National Major Field Exam, in which they are competing with students from major research universities with psychology departments as large or larger than our entire faculty, housed in buildings with more labs and facilities than our Moody Science Bldg. Even the smaller schools almost all have at least twice our number of faculty, many three or four times our number.

- 3) In the future we plan to incorporate as part of the curriculum for senior seminar a component that would allow students to practice taking the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and the Subject Test for Psychology. This would serve to help our students who plan to apply to graduate schools and will be taking those tests anyway, and it should also serve as a bit of a review for the Major Field and Senior Exams. This should be taken more seriously by students and will hopefully benefit them in more ways than one where their success beyond Schreiner is concerned. Both the Major Field and the Departmental Exams are objective (multiple-choice) types of tests. Our students, partly because of our low instructor-to-student ratio, have more opportunities to be assessed using broader criteria and just don't become polished multiple-choice test takers the way students at larger institutions might. We see this as a good thing and part of the appeal of Schreiner. The down side of personalizing their academic experience is that we are seeing our student fare poorly on tests that have been standardized on the experience one might have had at one of these large public institutions. We are concerned and working on this problem because we are experiencing an increase in the number of graduates interested in pursuing graduate level training.