

Psychology Department Student Assessment Plan

Updated Spring 2020

Student Learning Goals

In the [*APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major*](#), approved by the American Psychological Association in 2013, the APA's Council of Representatives identified five learning goals and outcomes for undergraduate Psychology majors. (Please see *APA Guidelines for Majors 2.0* for a full description of these learning goals or *APA Learning Goals Infographic* for an abbreviated version.)

- (1) **Knowledge base.** Students should be able to
 - (1.1) describe key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology,
 - (1.2) develop a working knowledge of psychology's content domains, and
 - (1.3) describe applications of psychology.
- (2) **Scientific inquiry and critical thinking.** Students should be able to
 - (2.1) use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena,
 - (2.2) demonstrate psychology information literacy,
 - (2.3) engage in innovative and integrative thinking and problem solving,
 - (2.4) interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research, and
 - (2.5) incorporate sociocultural factors in scientific inquiry.
- (3) **Ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world.** Students should be able to
 - (3.1) apply ethical standards to evaluate psychological science and practice,
 - (3.2) build and enhance interpersonal relationships, and
 - (3.3) adopt values that build community at local, national, and global levels.
- (4) **Communication.** Students should be able to
 - (4.1) demonstrate effective writing for different purposes,
 - (4.2) exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes, and
 - (4.3) interact effectively with others.
- (5) **Professional development.** Students should be able to
 - (5.1) apply psychological content and skills to career goals,
 - (5.2) exhibit self-efficacy and self-regulation,
 - (5.3) refine project-management skills,
 - (5.4) enhance teamwork capacity, and
 - (5.5) develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation.

The Department endorses the above aims and views them as being very much in keeping with the mission and purposes of the College as a whole. Consequently, we seek to inculcate in our students the qualities and capacities outlined in the above learning goals.

Curriculum Mapping

		<i>Knowledge Base</i>	<i>Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking</i>	<i>Ethical & Social Responsibility in a Diverse World</i>	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Professional Development</i>
PSYC 110	Introduction to Psychology	I/D	I	I	I/D	I
PSYC 165	Comp Animal Behavior in the Tropics	I	I	D	I	I
PSYC 185	Sleep and Dreaming	D	D	I	D	I
PSYC 220	Brain and Behavior	I	I	I	I	D
PSYC 230	Social Psychology	I	I	D	D	D
PSYC 240	Childhood and Adolescence	I	I	D	D	D
PSYC 245	Adult Development and Aging	I	I	D	D	D
PSYC 255	Stereotyping & Prejudice	D	D	D	D	D
PSYC 260	Human Sexuality	I	I	I	I	D
PSYC 280	Introduction to Psychopharmacology	D	D	I	I	I
PSYC 290	Statistics	I	I/D	I	I/D	I/D
PSYC 295	Research Methods (w Lab)	D	D/M	D	D	D
PSYC 300	Comparative Animal Behavior (w/ Lab)	D	D/M	I	D	D
PSYC 320	Cognitive Psychology (w/Lab)	D	D	D	D	D
PSYC 323	Human Memory	D	D	D	D	D
PSYC 330	Learning	D	D	I	D	I
PSYC 335	Sensation and Perception	D	D	I	D	I
PSYC 340	Psychological Assessment	D	M	M	D	M
PSYC 351	Health Psychology	D	D	D	D	D
PSYC 352	Social Cognition	M	D	M	D	D
PSYC 355	Evolutionary Psychology	D	D	D	M	D
PSYC 360	Behavioral Neuroscience (w/Lab)	D	M	I	D	I
PSYC 363	Cognitive Neuroscience w/Lab	D	M	I	D	I
PSYC 366	Emotions	D/M	D/M	D	D	I
PSYC 366	Behavioral Endocrinology	D/M	D	D	D	D/M
PSYC 367	Psychology and Law	M	D	M	D	D
PSYC 370	Personality	D	D	D	D	D
PSYC 380	Psychology Practicum	D	D	M	M	M
PSYC 385	Abnormal Psychology	D	D	M	D	D
PSYC 390	History and Systems	D	M	M	M	M
PSYC 400	Psychology of Gender	D	M	M	M	M
PSYC 480	Advanced Research	D/M	M	I/M	M	D/M

Annual Collection of Assessment Data

A. The Department will annually administer the Major Field Test in Psychology to its senior majors. This will be the principal means through which the Department will ensure that its majors are gaining a solid knowledge base within the discipline.

B. The Department will keep annual records of the number of students presenting posters and papers at state, regional, and national meetings. This will allow us to determine how many students are gaining the opportunity to improve their oral communication skills by presenting research before their peers. In addition, the number of papers and posters presented at meetings is a good gauge of whether students have mastered research methodology and are able to pursue their research interests in depth.

C. The Department will annually keep a record of how many students do oral presentations during class. Similar to what was mentioned in B., this will allow the Department to determine if students have sufficient opportunities to hone their oral communication skills in their coursework.

D. The Department will maintain a record of how many students gain “W2” credit in departmental Writing-Intensive courses. This measure will be a rough gauge of how many students have demonstrated good written communication skills specifically in psychology courses.

E. The Department will keep a record of how many students complete internships each year, both through the departmental practicum course, Psychology Practicum, and through Career Development. This information will be helpful in assessing whether students are gaining practical experience in the application of psychology. In addition, these data will prove useful in determining whether our majors have experiences that expose them to human diversity.

F. The Department will maintain a record of how many students are admitted to the local Psi Chi Chapter. The number of majors who earn membership in the discipline’s primary honor society is a good indication of how many students are gaining distinction in psychology. Moreover, the number of students in Psi Chi is also a good gauge of the extent to which students are invested in the discipline and are seeking ways to more closely identify with it. Finally, tracking membership in this organization will allow us to see how many of our majors are gaining leadership and service experience outside the classroom.

G. The Department will collect indirect assessment data from graduating seniors during the Spring semester before graduation in the form of a Senior Survey. This information will be helpful in assessing whether students see themselves as having met the learning objectives laid out in this assessment plan. Please see *2019 Psychology Senior Survey* for the complete survey.

H. The Department will collect information on the number of Experiential Learning projects that are completed during the year. Depending on the type of project, this information will be helpful in assessing a number of the learning objectives laid out in this assessment plan.

Psychology Department's Cycle of Assessment

Year	Knowledge Base	Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking	Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World	Communication	Professional Development
19-20		2019-20		2019-20	
20-21	2020-21		2020-21		2020-21
21-22		2021-22		2021-22	
22-23	2022-23		2022-23		2022-23
23-24		2023-24		2023-24	
24-25	2024-25		2024-25		2024-25
25-26		2025-26		2025-26	
26-27	2026-27		2026-27		2026-27
27-28		2027-28		2027-28	
28-29	2028-29		2028-29		2028-29
Direct	Major Field Test (ETS) in Psychology	Major Field Test (ETS) in Psychology			
	Professional presentations by students	Professional presentations by students	Professional presentations by students	Professional presentations by students	Professional presentations by students
	In-class oral presentations by students			In-class oral presentations by students	In-class oral presentations by students
				Students earning Writing 2 credit in coursework	
	Internships and Practicum		Internships and Practicum	Internships and Practicum	Internships and Practicum
	Experiential Learning Projects	Experiential Learning Projects	Experiential Learning Projects	Experiential Learning Projects	Experiential Learning Projects
Indirect	Senior Survey	Senior Survey	Senior Survey	Senior Survey	Senior Survey

Please see *Psychology Assessment Cycle* for a digital version of this table.

The rubric we created during the 2018 Fall Faculty Conference to assess the learning goal of Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking follows.

Rubric to Assess Learning Goal #2: Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking

Category	Basic	Competent	Exemplary
Basic Knowledge of Scientific Methodology (content, vocabulary, steps, research design)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can recognize the language of research - Beginning to comprehend the scientific method - With help, can identify and acquire appropriate sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competent in the language of research; - Comprehends the scientific method - Able to identify and acquire appropriate sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands and can apply the language of research independently and with ease -Strong comprehension of the scientific method -Able to identify and acquire the most relevant sources
Application and Extension based on scientific research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to understand or make superficial connections across multiple sources of information and contexts when provided - Able to understand hypothesis testing and recognize its application - Is satisfied with understanding presented material, without further questioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes some connections between multiple sources of information or contexts - Able to devise, measure, and assess hypotheses - Questions learned material further, but in unsophisticated ways (e.g., let's not use college students in future research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Frequently able to make meaningful connections across multiple sources of information and contexts -Demonstrates ability to independently devise, measure, and assess novel hypotheses -Uses knowledge gained to generate sophisticated follow-up questions
Critical thinking skills (particularly those related to being an informed consumer of knowledge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can recognize that not all sources are equally credible - Struggles to summarize and integrate sources of information - Often relies on intuition and personal experience to make decisions in research contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to effectively analyze source credibility - Able to summarize multiple sources of information, but struggles with integration - Empirical orientation and openness to considering diverse viewpoints based on conflicting theories and data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ability to effectively analyze source credibility and think critically about quality of source content -Able to summarize multiple sources of information and integrate them to develop new understanding -Makes decisions that are empirically supported and can see how diverse viewpoints can be reconciled

Vision for Student Learning and Psychology Departmental Goals Map

Our students engage in rigorous inquiry and informed deliberation by:		Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
I1	· investigating and researching underlying causes and connections		X			
I2	· synthesizing evidence from multiple sources	X	X	X	X	X
I3	· designing ways to answer their questions	X	X	X		X
I4	· acquiring the skills to evaluate arguments and evidence critically	X	X			
I5	· developing independent, nuanced, and thoughtful analyses	X	X	X	X	
I6	· making connections among different bodies of knowledge	X	X	X	X	X
I7	· communicating their findings effectively and persuasively through written, oral, experiential, visual, or other appropriate methods				X	
I8	· reflecting on their studies and being prepared to engage with the world based on their inquiry and deliberation	X	X	X		X
Hendrix College students actively and reflectively engage with multiple communities by:						
MC1	· understanding the past, present, and future needs of the earth and of humanity, and of the challenges of our interdependence			X		
MC2	· considering ethical conundrums from conflicting perspectives		X	X		
MC3	· bringing their experiences in the wider community back to the classroom to enhance their course of study				X	X
The Hendrix College community supports these goals by:						
C1	· fostering an awareness of different cultures through a commitment to diversity and inclusion		X	X		X
C2	· providing opportunities for students to confront the diverse challenges and needs of our shared communities in order to inspire them to lead lives of service		X	X		X

The college community provides opportunities for students to develop as whole persons in their personal and professional lives by:		Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
WP1	· guiding students in examining their abilities and strengths		X			X
WP2	· helping them recognize how their skills can work for them and for the good of others, both now and in the future		X	X		X
WP3	· providing tools and opportunities to prepare our students for their prospective professional lives	X	X	X	X	X
WP4	· striving to inspire students to lead lives of accomplishment as both leaders and team members		X	X	X	X
WP5	· encouraging their development into individuals who are independent, responsible, and attentive to their own mental and physical well-being	X		X		X
WP6	· nurturing their life-long love of learning, both about themselves and about the world as curious, creative, and active participants in life and in their communities.	X	X	X		X