

## Part 1. General Information

Program(s) Discussed:	Psychology
Current Semester:	Spring 2023
Date of Assessment Meeting(s):	regularly discussed, but primary agenda item during January 31, 2023, meeting
Participants in Assessment Meeting(s):	
	Angela Canda, Ph.D. (Department Chair, Associate Professor)
	Tom Frazier, Ph.D. (Full Professor)
	Tracy Masterson, Ph.D. (Associate Professor)
	Helen Murphy, Ph.D. (Full Professor)
	John Yost, Ph.D. (Associate Professor)
	Sheri Young, Ph.D. (Associate Professor)

All Annual Assessment Reports are available to the appropriate Associate Dean, Dean, and the Provost, as well as to other administrators for institutional effectiveness and accreditation purposes. Please indicate the degree to which your program would like this information more widely shared.

### On-Campus Users

- Freely available
- Available upon request
- Unavailable

### Off-Campus Users

- Freely available
- Available upon request
- Unavailable

## Part 2. Assessment Process

### 2A. Learning Goals

*Prompt:* Paste your program learning goals here, then, address the following questions in a sentence or two: Did you gather data on all of your program's student learning goals? If not, which student learning goals did you measure in this assessment cycle?

- 1. A fundamental knowledge base in the core areas of psychological science;**
2. Critical thinking skills and their application;
3. Proficiency in the use of the language of psychological science in both written and verbal form;
4. Expertise in the methods of information gathering, organization, and synthesis as applied to psychological science;
5. Mastery of the experimental method and statistical analysis as practiced by psychologists;
- 6. An understanding of the ethics and values of the discipline;**
7. A readiness for graduate study or for transition into the workforce; and
8. Recognition of how psychological science contributes to the understanding of human diversity.

Data were collected on all learning goals; however, the department only discussed two this assessment cycle (bolded above). Student exit surveys addressed all of the

learning goals, but we chose to focus on those goals that included objective (and external) measures of learning.

## 2B. Measuring Learning

*Prompt:* In one or two paragraphs, describe your assessment process. What tools did you use to attempt to measure student learning? Where and how were they administered? Who scored them?

### 1. A fundamental knowledge base in the core areas of psychological science

During their final semester, psychology majors must pass the Major Field Test (MFT) in psychology. The MFT is a standardized, comprehensive exam that is divided broadly into four sections: (1) Learning, Memory, & Cognition; (2) Sensation, Perception, & Physiology; (3) Clinical, Abnormal, & Personality; (4) Developmental & Social; these sections map onto our department's 4 core areas of required psychology coursework. The test is published by Educational Testing Services (ETS), the same company that publishes Advanced Placement (AP) exams, the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), and other widely-used tests. Two faculty members proctor the exam; scoring is done by ETS. Of note, Spring 2022 was the first time we required the MFT since the pandemic began.

### 6. An understanding of the ethics and values of the discipline

All psychology majors are required to complete the Basic course in the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) as part of the PS 301 class. This is an online program that provides a high quality, peer-reviewed, web-based educational course in research, ethics, regulatory oversight, responsible conduct of research, research administration, and other similar topics. Students are tested on their learning of the material via an online questionnaire after each module.

## Part 3. Findings

*Prompt:* Describe, in words, what your program learned about student learning during this assessment cycle. What were your strengths? In what ways did students fail to meet the goals you set for them? Along with this report, please submit the data charts the program used during the assessment meeting.

### 1. A fundamental knowledge base in the core areas of psychological science

In resuming use of the MFT, we found that our graduating students are doing well in all core areas of psychology. Below is a table comparing JCU scores to those nationally between September 2019 and June 2021; these are the metrics provided by ETS for comparison. More than 5800 students from 183 institutions took the exam during that time.

	<u>National Data</u>		<u>JCU Students</u>		Average score range (overall)	% JCU students at or above average range
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>		
<b>Overall</b>	<b>156.1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>145-167</b>	<b>90.7</b>
Learning/Memory/Cognition	56.7	15.1	62	12	46-69	<b>88.9</b>
Sensory/Perception/Physiology	55.9	15.8	63	13	47-69	<b>92.6</b>
Clinical/Abnormal/Personality	56.1	15	64	12	47-71	<b>88.9</b>
Developmental/Social	55.1	14.5	58	11	46-67	<b>88.9</b>

The final two columns illustrate that our students are performing above the average nationally. Average score range (overall) indicates the middle 50% of scores for the exam. Overall, more than 90% of our students are performing at or above the average range nationally. Given each

of the component areas, our students do particularly well on the sensory/perception/physiology core area of psychology, with 92% scoring at or above the average range; for the other subtests, 88.9% of our students were at or above the average range.

Students whose overall score falls below the average range are required to retake (and pass) any subsection of the test that was below the average range. For this exam, each student who had to retake a portion passed it on their first retake.

#### **6. An understanding of the ethics and values of the discipline**

As noted above, all psychology students enrolled in PS 301 must complete CITI training. All students must achieve a minimum score of at least 85% correct in order to pass the training. They receive certificates of completion, which are logged by the John Carroll University Institutional Review Board.

### **Part 4. Planned Changes to the Assessment System**

#### **4A. Changes to the Assessment System**

*Prompt:* What changes, if any, do you need to make to your assessment system? (Questions to consider include: 1) Do your measures and processes provide useful data with a reasonable amount of effort? and 2) Are your measures reliable, valid, and sufficient?) On which student learning goals do you plan to focus your attention during the next assessment cycle? Do you need to implement additional formative assessment tools to better understand some of your findings? If so, describe those here.

We plan to identify a better breadth of courses (and, thus, instructors) to draw data from when not relying on external assessment measures. This year, we focused on using external assessment measures because there was some concern with some department-level measures used before. For example, the majority of course data in last year's report were from the same instructor; the problem noted below (5A) illustrates an example of that concern.

We will resume the a pre- and post-test in Experimental Design and Analysis courses again. This tool was used in the past to assess LG 5 (mastery of the experimental method and statistical analysis as practiced by psychologists). Due to the confluence of changes in departmental chair, assessment coordinator, and PS 301 instructors, this assessment tool was not used this past academic year.

#### **4B. Changes to the Program in Response to Data**

*Prompt:* What changes, if any, do you need to make to your program in response to what you now know about student learning? (Possibilities include changes to learning goals, pedagogy, assignments in particular classes, activities, and curricular requirements and/or structure.) What is your anticipated timeline for both implementation and assessment of the planned changes?

Given the data assessed this cycle, there does not seem to be a need for programmatic change. Students demonstrated a high level of proficiency.

### **Part 5. Institutional Assessment Committee Interactions**

#### **5A. Feedback from IAC**

*Prompt:* Briefly summarize the feedback you received from the Institutional Assessment Committee about your last report.

In the last feedback report, assessment of Goal 8 was pointed out as problematic. There were concerns regarding the measure used, a survey designed to inform an appreciation of diversity of thought.

In the feedback report from the year preceding that, the same goal was used as an example in pointing out that some of our learning goals may be hard to assess.

## 5B. Response to Feedback

*Prompt:* Briefly describe how your program has made use of the feedback.

The department intends to revisit all of our learning goals to (1) ensure they reflect the most important goals and (2) are worded and considered in a way that makes them conducive to assessment. For example, we are considering breaking our first learning goal (a fundamental knowledge base in the core areas of psychological science) into a separate goal for each core area. This will be happening at the same time as we consider our curriculum. Thus, we anticipate that we'll spend the next two semesters considering curriculum and learning goal revision. Goals may change – and any changes made to wording of current will be made with ensuring they're conducive to assessment in mind.

Plans for changing assessment (4A) will address concerns related to specific measures used for some of our LGs.

## 5C. Request for Feedback

*Prompt:* Do you have questions or concerns you would like the IAC or the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to address?

Information regarding the number of learning goals that different departments/majors have would be useful. We currently have eight learning goals, but are considering breaking up the first learning goal into separate goals for each of the four core areas. However, we do not want to try to have too many learning goals. We would like to know the range and average number of goals, as well as whether there is a generally accepted “magic number” of learning goals, as we work to revise ours.

## Part 6. Evidence

### 6A. Of Changes

*Prompt:* Look at previous Annual Assessment Reports to see what changes that the program planned to make at that time. If the changes have been made, please submit evidence of the change (department meeting minutes, syllabi or Bulletin pages from before and after the change). If you have decided to not make change, please provide your rationale.

As planned, we resumed use of the MFT. Data reported in Part 3 of this report serve as evidence.

### 6B. of Impact of Changes

*Prompt:* Consider the changes reported in Part VI of this and previous reports. What impact has the change had? When the impact of the changes has been assessed, discuss whether changes have had the intended impact and how you know. If the change is too recent or assessment is ongoing, you may wait for a future report.

Resuming the MFT has demonstrated our students are successfully learning from core areas in psychology. Further, resumption of the MFT has spurred discussion on whether our learning goals should be revised.

### 6C. Academic Program Review Action Plan Update

*Prompt:* If your program has completed an Academic Program Review since 2011, please review your Action Plan from your most recent Academic Program Review, and add a column indicating the progress made on each item. Attach your update to this report.

Below are action plan items from the 2016 APR and progress reported in last year's assessment report:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Progress (from 2022 report)</b>
<p>The primary resource we needed was <b>human resources</b>. We were a department of 9, down, from 13 faculty just two decades ago. Visiting faculty, who typically taught four courses per semester, had allowed us to address some of the shortage in covering courses, but are not able to help long term. In the brief years in which Visiting faculty were hired, the rate of turnover was typically annual, even for faculty with three year appointments.</p>	<p>Since the 2016 review, two new full-time faculty members were hired (Anthony Tarescavage and Thomas Frazier) and three full-time faculty members retired (Beth Martin, Abdul Imam, and Elizabeth Swenson)</p>
<p><b>Updated lab space.</b> While our lab spaces are still relatively new, some of our equipment requires replacing. It is more difficult to conduct reaction time studies, for example, without touch screen stimuli. The only touchscreen equipment we have is more than a decade old, and requires the use of an outdated CRT monitor</p>	<p>Approximately 30 computers in department lab spaces were updated</p>
<p>The investment of faculty would allow us to consider developing a graduate level program. Drs. Abdul Imam and Tracy Masterson are currently working toward certification in BCBA, as noted above. Dr. Imam, whose area of study is Behavior Analysis, has agreed to serve as the director of a certification program in BCBA, which can be offered to undergraduates. However, the introduction of at least 2 additional faculty would allow us to offer a <b>graduate level program in BCBA</b>.</p>	<p>Dr Imam has retired and Masterson is still pursuing certification in BCBA. This area is within the scope of expertise of the newest faculty hire (Thomas Frazier). The department still needs resources to develop a BCBA program, and we submitted a proposal to develop one to the strategic planning committee for new programs. We are meeting with institutional development to determine how fund raising could be used to pay for the additional resources.</p>

Changes in progress since last year's report:

1. Human resources: One faculty member has resigned (Anthony Tarescavage); we now have 6 full-time faculty in the department.
2. Updated lab space: no changes
3. Graduate Level BCBA: A new program has been proposed and faculty vote on it is underway. We are currently interviewing applicants for a director for the program.