

**Assessment Report
Applied Psychology Program
2010-11**

I. Introduction

History

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences added the Bachelor of Science in Applied Psychology in 1997. The program has become well established and continues to grow and evolve. A minor in Psychology is also available to students. The Applied Psychology program serves students in the major, students in the minor, and serves General Education by providing courses that fulfill social science requirements.

Enrollment trends

Enrollment for the Applied Psychology major started very high, with 195 students enrolled in Fall of 2002. Enrollment has declined steadily each year, with 127 students enrolled in Fall 2007. The enrollment trend is not surprising as there was initially a backlog of individuals interested in the degree. Students in the program tend to be local; therefore it is not surprising that enrollment trends have dropped somewhat since the initial offering of the program. Enrollment may also be affected by the addition of the Communications major to the OIT curriculum. It should also be noted that many students transfer into the program as juniors or seniors, having completed the general education requirements within another major or at another college (e.g., KCC). Graduation rates for this same period are somewhat more constant, with smaller fluctuations than fall term enrollment. This is most likely a reflection of the impact of students who transfer into the major as juniors or seniors.

Graduation rates

Graduation rates have remained steady since the inception of the program, averaging 46 graduates per year (54-42) over the past five years.

The Applied Psychology Minor was approved in 2001. Initially, very few minors were awarded (1-3). The number of minors awarded has grown in the past four years, with an average of 11 per year (9 – 13).

II. Program Purpose, Objectives, and Student Learning Outcomes

Applied Psychology Program: Mission Statement

The mission of the Applied Psychology program is to enable students to apply general knowledge of psychology and in-depth knowledge and skill in specific areas of psychology to communicate effectively, think critically, behave ethically and with cultural awareness, and work interpersonally with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Applied Psychology Program: Objectives

1. To produce graduates with effective interpersonal skills that can work in a variety of practical settings
2. To enable students to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for immediate employment and/or graduate study in psychology and related areas
3. To provide opportunities for students who wish to apply psychology training to employment in business and human service related organizations or to prepare for graduate programs in related areas
4. To serve as a minor to complement other programs on campus

Applied Psychology Program: Outcomes

NOTE: These Program Student Learning Outcomes are currently under review by program faculty. We will update the PSLO's as we make changes. New PSLO's are marked in italics.

1. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical approaches, findings, and trends in psychology
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and be able to use major research methodologies in psychology, including design, data analysis, and interpretation
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of applications of psychology to personal, social, and organizational problems and issues
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant ethical issues including a general understanding of relevant ethics codes
5. *Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills.*

III. Three-year Cycle for Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes

The three learning outcomes will be assessed on a three-year cycle as demonstrated in Table 1.

Program Learning Outcomes	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical approaches, findings, and trends in psychology			
Students will demonstrate an understanding of and be able to use major research methodologies in psychology, including design, data analysis, and interpretation			X
Students will demonstrate an understanding of applications of psychology to personal, social, and organizational problems and issues	X		
Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant ethical issues including a general understanding of the relevant ethics codes	X		
<i>Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills.</i>		X	

IV. Summary of 2010-2011 Assessment Activities

The Applied Psychology faculty met three times during the 2010/11 academic year. We agreed that we will continue to focus assessment efforts in the courses that make up the core of the Applied Psychology curriculum, including the required Emphasis Electives. The free elective psychology courses will not be included in our program assessment. Our decision is based on the following – those courses typically have lower enrollment so the samples would be small and not necessarily representative of the outcomes of the program as a whole. We will include web sections of target classes. See Appendix A for Course by SLO matrix with 2010-11 target courses. (NOTE – this may change as we continue to revise the PSLOs)

The Applied Psychology faculty agreed that the focus of the 2010/2011 program assessment should be on operationalizing the first Program Objective – “To produce graduates with effective interpersonal skills that can work in a variety of practical settings.” This objective is addressed, primarily in PSY 301 Basic Counseling. Therefore, it was agreed that we would add a fifth program outcome to the PSLO’s – “Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills.” We also agreed that Program Outcome 1 - “Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical approaches, findings, and trends in psychology” – requires further refinement as it is too broad to assess adequately as currently stated. Given that the program continues to be

short-staffed, it was agreed that we will address this particular issue when we have at least three full-time faculty available.

Program Outcome 5: Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills.

Indirect Assessment

Students enrolled in PSY 301 – Basic Counseling, spring term, were asked to complete the IDEA center evaluations which includes an item asking students to describe the amount of progress made on the following objective.

Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.

Students rated their progress on a 5 point scale

1. No apparent progress
2. Slight progress; I made small gains on this objective
3. Moderate progress; I made some gains on this objective
4. Substantial progress; I made large gains on this objective
5. Exceptional progress; I made outstanding gains on this objective

Students completed the evaluation at the end of spring term, the results are presented in Table 2 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Develop skills, etc	Rating scale	1-5	80% at 4 or 5	100%

Table 2: Indirect Assessment of PSLO 5; PSY 301 Spring 2011

Strengths: Students gained significant improvement in their factual knowledge; understanding and application of fundamental principles; and their development of specific skills necessary for the counseling profession. Additionally, they displayed a significant strength in their ability to apply those skills as a team member, and they developed a better understanding and commitment to their personal values. No weaknesses were reported.

Direct Assessment

The faculty assessed this outcome in PSY 301 in Spring 2011 using a Basic Counseling Skills Rubric developed by Dr. Neighbours.

All students in PSY 301 in spring term 2011 (20 students) were required to make a tape of themselves in a mock counseling session. The tape was graded and included as part of the student's grade. Results can be found in Table 3 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
1. Informed consent/boundaries	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	100%
2. Attending behaviors	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	95%
3. Identification of presenting problem	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	95%
4. Reflect content and feelings.	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	90%
5. Establishment of rapport and nonjudgmental empathy	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	95%
6. Exploratory open ended questions	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	95%
7. Collaboration on specific goals	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	85%
8. Listening openly without roadblocks	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	100%
9. Identifying strengths	Basic Counseling Rubric	1 – 4 scale	70% at 3 or 4	90%

Table 3: Direct Assessment of PSLO 1 Spring Term 2011 in PSY 301.

Strengths: Student performance exceeded acceptable performance levels on all criteria. The data indicate that students have demonstrated basic counseling skills, most notably in establishing informed consent and listening.

Weaknesses: Student performance was strong in all areas, no particular weaknesses were identified.

Actions Taken: none needed

V. Student Learning Improvement Plan

Applied Psychology Program Student Learning Outcome 5: *will demonstrate effective basic counseling skills.*

The results from the assessments indicate that students are demonstrating basic counseling skills as they complete PSY 301. The students appear to be proficient in these skills and no specific weaknesses were identified. We will assess this PSLO in three years.

VI. Changes resulting from assessment.

Assessment results from 2008/09 suggested that the Applied Psychology PSLOs may be too broad. Faculty have begun the process of reviewing the PSLOs and modifying them. During 2009/10 we added PSLO 4; this PSLO specifically addresses ethical issues related to Psychology, an area that has been addressed throughout the curriculum but not assessed previously. In 2010/11 we added PSLO 5; this PSLO specifically addresses basic counseling skills, and is directly related to Program Objective 1 (effective interpersonal skills). We will continue to review the PSLOs to ensure that they reflect the key elements of the Applied Psychology curriculum.

Assessment of PSLO 2 during 2008/09 suggested that we need to address the statistics portion of the Applied Psychology curriculum. A teaching assistant was recruited to assist with the development of a statistics review unit to be added to PSY 313. The review unit was not completed however, the textbook has an appendix focused specifically on statistics and students are referred to the appendix for additional help. We will continue to collaborate with the Math department and look for additional statistics support for our students.

Appendix A

Applied Psychology

Program Learning Outcomes x PSY Core Course/Emphasis Core Course Matrix for
2010/11 Assessment

Program Learning Outcome

Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills

	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year
Fall	PSY 201	PSY 215 PSY 220	PSY 301 PSY 313 PSY 317 PSY 334 PSY 341 PSY 347 PSY 360 PSY 410	PSY 420 PSY 421
Winter	PSY 202	PSY 216	PSY 311 PSY 313 PSY 317 PSY 330 PSY 335 PSY 342 PSY 347 PSY 361 PSY 410	PSY 420 PSY 422
Spring	PSY 203	PSY 220	PSY 301 PSY 312 PSY 317 PSY 331 PSY 339 PSY 347 PSY 410 PSY 416	PSY 420 PSY 423