

**Assessment Report
Applied Psychology Program
2014-2015**

I. Introduction

History

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences added the Bachelor of Science in Applied Psychology on the Klamath Falls campus 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. The program has also included an opportunity for students to choose one of three primary areas of interest: human services, pre-education, and organizational development. Approval to offer the Applied Psychology degree at the Wilsonville campus was received June, 2014. A significant revision of the curriculum was undertaken during the 2014/15 academic year and will be implemented with the incoming 2015/16 students.

Enrollment trends

Enrollment for the Applied Psychology major started very high, with 195 students enrolled in the Fall of 1997. Enrollment declined after 1997, but remained relatively stable between 2002 and 2013 with consistent number of students, totaling between 125 and 157 students actively enrolled each year. Enrollment in Fall 2014 decreased to 118 students in Klamath Falls. It is not clear why the enrollment in the Applied Psychology program has declined. It is possible that the growth in other majors has provided potential students with more choice and the opportunity to seek a degree that more appropriately aligns with their interests.

Graduation rates

The Applied Psychology program has graduated between 30-56 students annually with 36 students graduating during the 2014-2015 academic year.

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 skills to 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 who 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 to apply their psychological 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

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and be able to use major research methodologies in psychology, including design, data analysis, and interpretation
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant ethical issues including a general understanding of the APA Code of Ethics.
3. Students will demonstrate basic counseling
4. Students will demonstrate effective writing conventions by using APA style effectively in empirically based reports, literature reviews and theoretical papers.
5. Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g. group discussion, debate and lecture).

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

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

Program Learning Outcomes	2009/ 2010	2010 /11	2011 /12	2012 /13	2013 /14*	2014 /15
Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of and be able to use major research methodologies in psychology, including design, data analysis, and interpretation.			X			
Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant ethical issues including a general understanding of the APA Code of Ethics.	X			X		
Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills.		X				
Students will demonstrate effective writing conventions by using APA style effectively in empirically based reports, literature reviews and theoretical papers.						X
Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g. group discussion, debate and lecture).						

Table 1. Assessment Cycle

- Assessment activities suspended to conduct DQP mapping

IV. Summary of 2014-15 Assessment Activities

The Applied Psychology faculty met on September 17, 2014 to review the program assessment plan. The 2014-15 assessment addresses PSLO 4: *Students will demonstrate effective writing conventions by using APA style effectively in empirically based reports, literature reviews and theoretical papers.* Assessment data were collected in the spring term in PSY 313- Psychological Research Methods I.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Students will demonstrate effective writing conventions by using APA style effectively in empirically based reports, literature reviews and theoretical papers.

Direct Assessment

The faculty assessed this outcome in PSY 313, Psychological Research Methods, in the spring 2015 term. Individual research paper assignments were scored using the OIT Technical and Research Writing Rubric. There were 13 sophomore, junior, and senior students involved in this assessment. Two faculty (one psychology, one outside Oregon Tech faculty) rated the proficiency of students using the performance criteria described in Table 2.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results (highest score)	Results (average score)
1. Topic	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	100%	100%
2. Audience	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	85%	15%
3. Development	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	54%	31%
4. Organization	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	46%	15%
5. Writing Style	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	54%	15%

6. Research	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	77%	31%
7. Documentation	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	85%	31%
8. APA format	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	85%	31%
9. Conventions	Research Paper Assignment, Rubric	Limited Proficiency = 1; High Proficiency = 4	70% at 3 or 4	61%	15%

Table 2. Assessment Results for SLO 4, PSY 313, Spring 2015

Strengths: When looking at the higher score of two independent raters, the majority (85%) of students demonstrated proficiency using APA format (criterion 8). Students also demonstrated proficiency on criteria 1 (Topic), 2 (Audience), 6 (Writing Style), and 7 (Documentation).

Weaknesses: When looking at the higher score of two independent raters, the majority of students did not demonstrate proficiency on criteria 3 (Organization), 4 (Writing Style), 5 (Organization) and 9 (Conventions). In addition, when looking at the average score of two independent raters, most students in most categories (2-9) performed below optimal level. This indicates that at best, one faculty rated them at a 3 and one faculty rated them at a 2.

Plans for improvement: The APA Manual will be added as a required text for the PSY 313 course. The OIT Technical and Research Paper Rubric will be reviewed and made available to students and used to provide feedback on early drafts of the research paper. It is suggested that more APA instruction and research development should be implemented in lower level classes. Instructors in the PSY program are working on scaffolded research assignments in the program curriculum to help boost research (and in turn, research-related writing) skills. Finally, faculty should consider adding WRI122 as a prerequisite for the course, or evaluating writing at a higher capstone level of the PSY curriculum (e.g., PSY314 or PSY475).

Indirect Assessment

Students enrolled in PSY 313 – Research Methods I, spring term, were asked to complete the IDEA center evaluations which includes an item asking students to: *Describe the amount of progress you made on the following objective: Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing.*

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

Twelve (12) students completed the evaluation. Results are presented in Table 2.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Progress on - Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing	IDEA center evaluation	No Apparent Progress = 1; Exceptional Progress = 5	70% at 4 or 5	42%

Table 4. Assessment Results for SLO 4, Spring 2015 IDEA student ratings of instruction data

Strengths: Results indicate that students were inconsistent in rating the progress made on developing writing skills. This is consistent with the inconsistent performance across criteria on the direct assessment of writing. Students may be aware that writing is a weakness.

Weaknesses: Fewer than half the students reported substantial or exceptional progress on writing skills.

Plans for improvement: The APA Manual will be added as a required text for the PSY 313 course. The OIT Technical and Research Paper Rubric will be reviewed and made available to students and used to provide feedback on early drafts of the research paper.

V. Summary of Student Learning

Students were able to use the APA format for writing a research paper. Although students are required to complete a minimum of two writing courses at Oregon Tech, the quality of their writing is highly variable.

Plans for Improvement: The research methods course will make the APA manual a required textbook for the course. The OIT Technical and Research Writing Rubric will be reviewed and provided to students and integrated into the feedback and grading process for writing assignments. Faculty will explore additional ways to support and strengthen the quality of student writing throughout the program.