

Assurance of Student Learning Reflection 2024-2025	
<i>Ogden College of Science and Engineering</i>	<i>Psychological Sciences</i>
<i>M.S. in Psychology (0469)</i>	
<i>Katrina Burch & Diane Lickenbrock</i>	
Is this an online program? ☐ Yes ☒ No	Please make sure the Program Learning Outcomes listed match those in CourseLeaf. Indicate verification here ☐ Yes, they match! (If they don't match, explain on this page under Evaluation)

Instructions: For the 2024-25 assessment, we are asking you to reflect on the last three-year cycle rather than collect data. It's important to take time to look over the results from the last assessment cycle and really focus on a data-informed direction going forward. In collaboration with your assessment team and program faculty, review each submitted template from 2021-2024 and consider the following for each Program Learning Outcome, add your narrative to the template, and submit the draft to your **ASL Rep** by **May 15, 2025**.

Program Student Learning Outcome 1	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Students will demonstrate core knowledge in a basic or applied area of psychological sciences, proficiency in research design and methodology, and expertise in research communication.
Evaluation	Using the last three assessment cycles, is this program learning outcome still relevant, or should it be changed? If it has recently changed, please explain. Other things to examine: Is the outcome measurable? Is it double or triple barreled? Does it include measurable verbs following Bloom's Taxonomy? Do you have the appropriate numbers of SLOs to measure regularly? Please consider choosing the most important. As an MS program in Psychological Science, the core training aspects are demonstrating knowledge of the discipline, research design and methods, as well as communicating research. This foundational training is essential to students as they move forward into the workforce and/or doctoral programs. We objectively assess SLO 1 regularly. Measurement Instrument #1 is assessed every semester when students are in the program. Measurement Instrument #2 is measured twice during the students' second year of the program. Measurement Instrument #3 is measured at the end of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd semesters of the program.
Measurement Instruments	Are the measurement instruments actually measuring the outcome? If you change the SLO, is this still the best instrument to use? Is this a direct or indirect measure? Is your artifact appropriate? If not, what other options are there? Will the rise in the use of AI affect the assignment and measurement? If there are rubrics, do they need to be altered to better fit the learning outcome? Does the rubric (if using) work or does it need to be adjusted? For this learning outcome, we have three instruments that directly measure this outcome 1) Research Practicum Presentation Evaluation (via Rubric completed by faculty), 2) Thesis Proposal Evaluation Rubric (via Rubric completed by thesis committee members), and 3) Graduate Student Progress Report-Research & Data Analysis Competencies (formative assessment completed by both students and faculty). The rubrics seem to be fine and match the learning outcome, and are appropriate artifacts. We do not plan to change the SLO, but these instruments are still the best to use to measure it. The rise of AI might need to be considered when it comes to students developing their practicum presentation and theses. Of course we will monitor student performance on the assessments for irregularities that suggest otherwise.
Criteria & Targets	Does Criteria for Success (level of performance students will have achieved for your program to have been successful--ex., students will

	have earned 4/5 for documentation and citation on capstone essays) need to be changed? What about targets? If you have successfully made your targets consistently, consider a more challenging target. For Measurement Instrument #1: our target is that 80% of students will receive an average grade of 85% or higher on the standard rubric for research presentations. For Measurement Instrument #2: our target is that 80% of students rated as good or excellent on each dimension. For Measurement Instrument #3: our target was recently changed last year to be that 85% of students rated as meeting or exceeding expectations for level of experience. These targets have consistently been met each year.
Results & Conclusion	Results: Are the results what was expected or not? What stood out in the assessment cycle over the past three years? Explain For this learning outcome, we consistently find that students do well in their research practicum presentation and thesis proposal. However, there is a little variability in the formative assessment. The adjustment to graduate school can be challenging for some students, so we try to evaluate them every semester in order to try to intervene early and often if needed. These results are not at all surprising. Reflecting on them now and certainly during last year's program review, we feel that our program offers MS students a rigorous experience that is second to none in the state. Conclusions: What worked? What didn't? Why do you think this? For example, maybe the content in one or more courses was modified; changed course sequence (detail modifications); changed admission criteria (detail modifications); changed instructional methodology (detail modifications); changed student advisement process (detail modifications); program suspended; changed textbooks; facility changed (e.g. classroom modifications); introduced new technology (e.g. smart classrooms, computer facilities, etc.); faculty hired to fill a particular content need; faculty instructional training; development of a more refined assessment tool. Over the past three years, we have seen consistency in student performance in these domains as well as some variability. The instruments do seem to capture variability that may emerge from the evolution of student motivation post-COVID as well as the change that we made to make the GRE recommended but not required. We recently underwent our academic program review, and the rigor of our MS program was recognized by the review committee. This rigor stems from our purposeful choice to engage our students in the science of psychology, including the development of a research thesis. Given that we evaluate the assessment each year, the instruments remains relevant and offers us useful information each year about our students' progress.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	As we work hard to improve our assessment practices and make them more meaningful and effective, it's important each program craft a three-year plan for the following assessment cycle (2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28) – this process assists in “closing the loop.” For example, you may decide to: • collect a more appropriate artifact • create new program outcomes • adjust targets because they are consistently exceeded or not met • need to reconstruct your curriculum map • sequencing of classes might need to be adjusted, or additional class(es) provided Whatever your plan is, provide a narrative, in future tense, that indicates how you will approach future assessments. You will be expected to implement any needed changes before the next assessment cycle. Instrument 3: Graduate Student Progress Report-Research & Data Analysis Competencies (formative assessment completed by both students and faculty) has only been done by the Psychological Science Concentration Faculty and Students. For next year (2025-2026), the Industrial/Organizational Concentration Faculty and Students will start doing this.

Program Student Learning Outcome 2

Program Student Learning Outcome	Students will apply knowledge of recognized ethical principles in psychological research to a basic or applied research project.
Evaluation	Using the last three assessment cycles, is this program learning outcome still relevant, or should it be changed? Other things to examine: Is the outcome measurable? Is it double or triple barreled? Does it include measurable verbs following Bloom's Taxonomy? Understanding and upholding ethical principles in psychological research is a core element of the American Psychological Association guidelines. Therefore, it is upmost importance for students in the MS program to apply this knowledge to their own research. SLO 2 is measured directly twice while students are in our program.
Measurement Instruments	Are the measurement instruments actually measuring the outcome? If you change the SLO, is this still the best instrument to use? Is this a direct or indirect measure? Is your artifact appropriate? If not, what other options are there? Will the rise in the use of AI affect the assignment and measurement? If there are rubrics, do they need to be altered to better fit the learning outcome? Does the rubric (if using) work or does it need to be adjusted? For this student learning outcome, we have two instruments that directly measure this outcome 1) Students will achieve a score of 80% or higher on all modules in both CITI courses (which is established by the CITI training as indicative of passing) and 2) Students will present their proposed thesis research to the WKU Institutional Review Board or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, if applicable, and will provide documentation that this research was reviewed and approved by the relevant committee. Students who conduct archival research or research involving statistical modeling and are not required to obtain IRB or IACUC approval for these projects. These are appropriate artifacts. We do not plan to change the SLO, but these instruments are still the best to measure it. The rise of AI should not be a concern when it comes to these instruments.
Criteria & Targets	Does Criteria for Success (level of performance students will have achieved for your program to have been successful (ex., students will have earned 4/5 for documentation and citation on capstone essays) need to be changed? What about targets? Considering how important upholding ethical principles is to psychology as a science, our targets for both of these measurement instruments is that 100% of students will achieve both of these.
Results & Conclusion	Results: Are the results what was expected or not? What stood out in the assessment cycle over the past three years? Explain. Yes, the results were expected. Conclusions: What worked? What didn't? Why do you think this? For example, maybe the content in one or more courses was modified; changed course sequence (detail modifications); changed admission criteria (detail modifications); changed instructional methodology (detail modifications); changed student advisement process (detail modifications); program suspended; changed textbooks; facility changed (e.g. classroom modifications); introduced new technology (e.g. smart classrooms, computer facilities, etc.); faculty hired to fill a particular content need; faculty instructional training; development of a more refined assessment tool. Six courses in the graduate curriculum contain content on ethical principles in psychological research (i.e., PSYS 510 Advanced Research Methods in Psychology, PSYS 570 Job Analysis and Compensation, PSYS 581 Professional Issues and Ethics in Psychological Science, PSYS 599 Thesis Research and Writing, PSYS 670 EEO, Law, and Ethical Considerations, and PSYS 673 Advanced Training in Business and Industry). The online CITI courses that students must successfully complete and the IRB or IACUC approval of their proposed research provide objective, external evidence that they are meeting the criterion for success for SLO 2. Consequently, no changes in the instructional program are planned at this time.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	As we work hard to improve our assessment practices and make them more meaningful and effective, it's important each program craft a three-year plan for the following assessment cycle (2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28) – this process assists in “closing the loop.” For example, you may decide to: • collect a more appropriate artifact

	• create new program outcomes • adjust targets because they are consistently exceeded or not met • need to reconstruct your curriculum map • sequencing of classes might need to be adjusted, or additional class(es) provided Whatever your plan is, provide a narrative, in future tense, that indicates how you will approach future assessments. You will be expected to implement any needed changes before the next assessment cycle. Both Measurement Instruments for this SLO will be assessed in either Fall or Spring semester (varies by student).
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Program Student Learning Outcome 3	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Students will integrate knowledge gained from training to independently complete a basic or applied research project that contributes to the understanding of behavior.
Evaluation	Using the last three assessment cycles, is this program learning outcome still relevant, or should it be changed? Other things to examine: Is the outcome measurable? Is it double or triple barreled? Does it include measurable verbs following Bloom's Taxonomy? One major point of pride of our MS program is the requirement of the completion of a research thesis. In addition, students present their research findings at conferences, which is a major part of the profession. This SLO is imperative to our program. The outcomes below are directly measureable.
Measurement Instruments	Are the measurement instruments actually measuring the outcome? If you change the SLO, is this still the best instrument to use? Is this a direct or indirect measure? Is your artifact appropriate? If not, what other options are there? Will the rise in the use of AI affect the assignment and measurement? If there are rubrics, do they need to be altered to better fit the learning outcome? Does the rubric (if using) work or does it need to be adjusted? For this student learning outcome, there were two instruments that directly measured student learning: 1) Theses submitted by students completing the program are scored by thesis committee members according to a rubric, and 2) students will author or co-author a journal article or a professional conference presentation of poster (that is presented to accepted for presentation). Given that this SLO is focused on independent research, these artifacts are appropriate. The rise of AI might need to be considered when it comes to students developing their research projects. However, considering that actual data has to be collected or analyzed, this is less of a concern. Of course we will monitor student performance on the assessments for irregularities that suggest otherwise.
Criteria & Targets	Does Criteria for Success (level of performance students will have achieved for your program to have been successful (ex., students will have earned 4/5 for documentation and citation on capstone essays) need to be changed? What about targets? The criteria for success for Instrument 1 is that students will receive a rating of "good" or excellent" on each of the five dimensions by each committee member (quality and appropriateness of 1-literature review and rationale for the research, 2-the design and methodology, 3-the method(s) of analysis and description of the results, 4-the interpretation and discussion of the results, and 5-the overall quality of writing). The program success target for this is that 85% of student will be rated as good or excellent on each dimension, which over the last 3 years we have exceeded this target. The criteria for success for Instrument 2 is that by the time they complete the program, students will author or co-author at least one of the following: a journal article that is published or accepted for publication, a technical report on an applied research project, or an oral or poster presentation at a national or international professional conference in their area of study. The program success target for this is that 65% of the students will meet the criteria for success. Over the last 3 years, we have also exceeded this target. In sum, because we have exceeded the program success targets, we should consider increasing them.

Results & Conclusion	Results: Are the results what was expected or not? What stood out in the assessment cycle over the past three years? Explain Yes, our results were as expected. Our percentages of program achieving target has been consistently exceeding our program success targets (even after increasing them last year by 5%). Conclusions: What worked? What didn't? Why do you think this? For example, maybe the content in one or more courses was modified; changed course sequence (detail modifications); changed admission criteria (detail modifications); changed instructional methodology (detail modifications); changed student advisement process (detail modifications); program suspended; changed textbooks; facility changed (e.g. classroom modifications); introduced new technology (e.g. smart classrooms, computer facilities, etc.); faculty hired to fill a particular content need; faculty instructional training; development of a more refined assessment tool. The success for this target is largely due to faculty members providing excellent, targeted mentoring to their students throughout the entire research process. In addition, most students present at least one conference a year, but many are motivated to find multiple conferences to present at each year. Presenting at conferences is imperative for their professional and research development; it is essential to have external conference presentations at national and/or international conferences to make students competitive for the workforce and doctoral programs. Travel support through various sources (external grant funding, graduate school/studies, and department) definitely helped students prepare/present conference presentations/posters. For example, many of our students received full funding from KY INBRE to attend/present at their regional KY INBRE research conference for the last 2 years (Spring 2024 and Spring 2025). However, this year (2024-2025) no students received funding from the college, which, is extremely unfortunate. If this trend, coupled with the ever increasing difficulties of securing external grant funding continues, students will either be forced to present not at all, less, or at a financial burden. We would really like to increase the target for presenting at conferences. However, due to lack of funding support from the college, we do not feel like that is a good idea.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	As we work hard to improve our assessment practices and make them more meaningful and effective, it's important each program craft a three-year plan for the following assessment cycle (2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28) – this process assists in “closing the loop.” For example, you may decide to: • collect a more appropriate artifact • create new program outcomes • adjust targets because they are consistently exceeded or not met • need to reconstruct your curriculum map • sequencing of classes might need to be adjusted, or additional class(es) provided Whatever your plan is, provide a narrative, in future tense, that indicates how you will approach future assessments. You will be expected to implement any needed changes before the next assessment cycle. Data from our alumni surveys report the value of completing a research thesis and authoring/presenting papers/presentations. They report that they gained valuable skills, such as oral presentation skills, critical thinking, writing, organizing and synthesizing literature, decision making, project management, data management, and data analysis, that helped them transition to Ph.D. programs and/or the workforce. Because of the vital focus on skill and competency development through this learning objective and learning instrument, we do not feel like this assessment needs to be changed. However, we will continue to monitor closely.

To add more outcomes, if needed, select the table above and copy & paste below.