SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): Experimental Psychology Ph.D. (note: because we do not offer a terminal Master's degree, the "M.S. to Ph.D." and "Ph.D. programs are not assessed separately)

Department: Psychology

College/School: Arts & Sciences

Date: 6-29-18

Primary Assessment Contact: Kimberly K. Powlishta, Ph.D.

1. Which program student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

We assessed elements of three learning outcomes this year: 1. students will become competent in the conceptualization, design, conducting, analysis, and reporting of psychological research; 2. students will display broad professional knowledge in the field of Experimental Psychology and more specialized knowledge in their area of concentration (i.e., cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology, or social psychology) and in their topic of research expertise, and 3. students will display an understanding of diversity and ethics issues as they apply to psychological research, teaching, and professional development as an Experimental Psychologist. Each of these outcomes was assessed using multiple specific concrete indicators designed to assess whether specific elements of each multifaceted outcome were mastered.

2. What data/artifacts of student learning were collected for each assessed outcome? Were Madrid student artifacts included?

As described further in number 4 below, data included ratings on the "Olson Ballots" (comprised of twenty 5-point rating scales) completed independently by 3 faculty members comprising the student's thesis or dissertation committee at the time of the thesis/dissertation defense (outcome 1), ratings of research quality/progress (outcome 1) and academic quality/progress (outcome 2) provided by faculty mentors (based on feedback from all program faculty) following an annual student evaluation meeting, number of professional presentations and publications achieved (outcome 1; for students receiving their Ph.D. only), performance on the test following CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiating) training on the ethical use of human subjects (outcome 3), and grades in required research methods and statistics courses (outcome 1), specified core content courses (outcome 2), and ethics and diversity courses (outcome 3).

Madrid student artifacts were not included, as the Madrid campus does not offer a graduate program in Experimental Psychology.

3. How did you analyze the assessment data? What was the process? Who was involved?
NOTE: If you used rubrics as part of your analysis, please include them in an appendix.

The program director compiled and analyzed the data, based on ratings provided by faculty (on Olson Ballots and annual review forms) and a review of student transcripts. Copies of the Olson Ballots and annual student evaluation forms, which comprise major parts of the data collection process, are attached.

4. What did you learn from the data? Summarize the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.

NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.

The first learning outcome is that **students will become competent in the conceptualization, design, conducting, analysis, and reporting of psychological research**. This outcome was assessed during the 2017-2018 academic year by addressing the following four questions:

1. For students who defended their Master's thesis or dissertation from the summer of 2017 through the spring/early summer of 2018, what were the average ratings given by the 3 faculty committee members on the "Olson Ballots", which consist of 20 five-point rating scales (see attached) assessing multiple aspects of each of the major sections of the thesis/dissertation (total scores can range from 20 to 100)?

   Five students defended their thesis and eight defended their dissertation (although data are missing for one of the eight dissertation students) in the previous year. For the thesis: Mean rating = 85.4. For the dissertation: Mean rating = 86.0.

2. For first-year graduate students, how did they perform in the three required research methods and statistics courses?

   Average grades (where A = 4.0) were 3.80 for PSY 5080 (Quantitative Research Methods), 4.00 for PSY 5790 (Univariate Statistics), and 4.00 for PSY 6500 (Multivariate Statistics) among Experimental Psychology students taking these courses during the current academic year.

3. For the 7 students who received their Ph.D. degrees in Fall 2017 (1), Spring 2018 (5), or summer 2018 (scheduled; 1), how many first-authored research presentations at peer-reviewed conferences and how many peer reviewed publications (regardless of authorship position) had they produced during their time in the program? At least 1 such presentation or publication for each graduate is considered a successful outcome.

   Mean number of conference presentations per student =16.71 (9.43 first authored)
   Mean number of peer-reviewed publications per student = 2.43 (.86 first-authored)
   Mean number of other publications per student = 1.43 (.29 first-authored)

   100% of students had at least one first-authored peer-reviewed conference presentation and/or one peer-reviewed publication (regardless of authorship position) which, again, is our working definition of "success".

4. For all students, how were they evaluated on "research quality" and "research progress" by the Experimental Psychology faculty as a whole during the end-of-year student evaluation meetings (3-point scales: inadequate, adequate, exceptional)?

   All 27 students were rated as adequate or above in both "research quality" and "research progress during the Spring 2018 meeting (an additional one student had received her Ph.D. in December of 2017 and one had withdrawn from the program in January of 2018 following a 2-year leave of absence, and so were not formally rated during this meeting).

The second learning outcome is that **students will display broad professional knowledge in the field of Experimental Psychology and more specialized knowledge in their area of concentration (i.e., cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology, social psychology) and in their topic of research expertise.** For this academic year, this outcome was assessed in the following two ways:

1. Grades in the four required "core" courses in Experimental Psychology -- PSY 5120 (Memory and Cognition), PSY 5130 (Neuropsychology), PSY 5250 OR PSY 5260 (Cognitive Development or Social Development), and PSY 5300 (Advanced Social Psychology).

Of the 23 passing grades received in these four courses in the 2017-2018 academic year, 20 were A, 2 were A-, and 1 was a B+ (for an overall GPA of 3.94). In addition, there was one F grade, which reflects an unresolved incomplete that the student is working to change.

2. Ratings of "academic progress" and "academic quality" (on 3-point scales: inadequate, adequate, exceptional) provided by the Experimental Psychology faculty during the end-of-year student evaluation meetings.

Out of 27 students evaluated during the spring 2018 faculty meeting, 27 (100%) were rated as adequate or above in both the "academic progress" and "academic quality" categories.

The third learning outcome is **that students will display an understanding of diversity and ethics issues as they apply to psychological research, teaching, and professional development as an Experimental Psychologist.** For this academic year, this outcome was assessed in the following two ways:

1. Successful completion of the CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiating) training on the ethical use of human subjects (for new graduate students).

100% of first-year graduate students have successfully completed this training (as reflected in a "passing" score received from the exam administrators).

2. Grades in the following two required courses: PSY 6030 (Human Diversity) and PSY 6800 (Ethics and Professional Issues).

Nine students completed PSY 6030 and seven completed PSY 6800 during the 2017-2018 academic year, all receiving a grades of A (GPA = 4.0).

5. How did your analysis inform meaningful change? How did you *use the analyzed data to make or implement recommendations for change* in pedagogy, curriculum design, or your assessment plan?

Based on last year's report and feedback concerning it, we are currently revising our learning outcomes and assessment plan, and clarifying how we define "success" for each of the assessed outcomes, although we were not able to complete that process in time for the current report.

6. Did you follow up ("close the loop") on past assessment work? If so, what did you learn? *(For example, has that curriculum change you made two years ago manifested in improved student learning today, as evidenced in your recent assessment data and analysis?)*

Last year's assessment report was shared with all faculty members in the Experimental Psychology program and indirectly with graduate students (by way of the Experimental Psychology graduate student representative). As noted in item 5 above, based on these results, we have begun discussions of ways to simplify our assessment outcomes and data collection.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any revised/updated assessment plans to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.

Olson Awards Ratings Ballot

Instructions: Please complete both sides of this form. When you are finished, enclose your ballot in a sealed envelope and return to the chairperson of the student's thesis or dissertation committee.

Date of Oral Defense_____

Circle one: Thesis Dissertation

Student's Name: _____

Title: _____

_____

_____

	Poor				Superior
I. Introduction					
1. Originality of the Problem	1	2	3	4	5
2. Importance and significance of the Problem	1	2	3	4	5
II. Literature Review					
1. History of the Problem	1	2	3	4	5
2. Theoretical formulations relation to the Problem	1	2	3	4	5
3. Critical review of the literature	1	2	3	4	5
4. Clarity of conceptual hypotheses and problem statement	1	2	3	4	5
III. Method					
1. Clarity of research design	1	2	3	4	5
2. Originality including justification for departures from or agreement with traditional research design	1	2	3	4	5
3. Appropriateness of methods used (operationalization of variables, sample, research setting, timeline, attention to ethical research practices etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
IV. Results					
1. Appropriateness of statistics employed	1	2	3	4	5
2. Adequacy of statistical analyses	1	2	3	4	5
3. Clarity of results presentation	1	2	3	4	5

V. Discussion	
1. Interpretation of statistical results	1 2 3 4 5
2. Description of how results fit with other research findings	1 2 3 4 5
3. Consideration of study limitations, alternative explanations and identification of improvements in design	1 2 3 4 5
4. Extent to which the research makes a contribution to the empirical literature	1 2 3 4 5
VI. Formal	
1. Overall clarity of ideas expressed	1 2 3 4 5
2. Synthesis, organization, and integration of material	1 2 3 4 5
3. Sources adequate, current and/or primary	1 2 3 4 5
4. Overall exposition (conformity to APA style, sufficient conciseness of expression, spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL (100 points)	

Experimental Psychology Program
Graduate Student Evaluation Form

Student Name: _____

Date of Evaluation: _____

Based upon the faculty's discussion you were rated in each of the following dimensions. (Inadequate: Not meeting expectations, not progressing; Adequate: Meeting expectations, making sufficient progress; Exceptional: Exceeding expectations, exceptional progress).

	Inadequate	**Adequate**	**Exceptional**
Academic Quality			
Academic Progress			
Research Quality			
Research Progress			
Professional Skill Acquisition			
Personal and Professional Development			
Fulfillment of Assistantship Duties (if applicable)			

Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Signatures:

Student: _____ Advisor: _____
Date: _____ Date: _____

ver. 2/2015