Department: Psychology

Assessment Coordinators: Alex Czopp

Departmental Mission: The WWU Department of Psychology provides an exemplary educational program based on the scientific study of psychological processes. The department represents the comprehensive scope of psychology including its historical, developmental, biological, cognitive, social and cultural foundations. Through pedagogy, scholarship and service the faculty emphasizes scientific methodology to enhance critical thinking, writing, research skills, and promote the application of psychological knowledge to the world’s needs and problems.

Department Student Learning Outcomes: Upon graduation, Psychology majors will be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of psychological theory across a broad range of content areas
2. design and implement theoretically based and methodologically sound research projects
3. evaluate data and draw appropriate conclusions
4. recognize applicability of psychological theories and principles in real world settings
5. communicate effectively
6. demonstrate critical thinking
7. recognize the importance of individual differences
8. view their education in psychology as relevant to their lives post-graduation

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed:

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<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<td>End of quarter surveys, senior exit surveys</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>In response to student/faculty feedback and enrollment/waitlist data, the department recently voted to amend the major requirements to allow students more freedom to choose their 400-level seminars. Previously, students were required to take one seminar from a Cognitive/Neuroscience block and one seminar from a Developmental/Social/Abnormal block. Students in 400-level seminars this year (prior to the change) completed a survey asking their perceptions of how much choice they currently have and would ideally have over the content of the two required seminars. In addition, student rated the importance of choice of seminars and the relative value of depth versus breadth of classes.</td>
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<td>Pre-test/post-test rankings, post-test surveys</td>
<td>7, 4; GUR Competencies 7, 8, 11</td>
<td>In collaboration with the Center for Cross Cultural Research, we have begun to examine the extent to which our two largest GUR courses (PSY 101 and PSY119) effectively introduce and integrate cultural awareness in their pedagogy. Students in these classes completed a ranking test at the start of the quarter and indicated their perceived relevance of 3 culture-related GUR competencies (7, 8, 11) and 3 non-culture-related...</td>
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competencies (1, 5, 6). The same ranking test was administered at the end of the quarter along with a survey on the extent to which the class was effective in these goals. These data are currently being analyzed and will be examined as part of the next year’s (2013-2014) assessment cycle.

Changes Based on Assessment:

- The results of the seminar surveys suggest that students currently feel they have less choice over their seminars relative to the level of perceived importance of choice.
- Furthermore, when asked directly, students indicated they would prefer to be able to choose any two seminars from the 5 content areas (the new requirement) over being required to take one from two separate blocks (the previous requirement).
- However, and somewhat contradictorily, students also felt that the current requirements sufficiently allowed them to specialize in a specific area of psychology (i.e., no difference between perceived ability to specialize and the importance of specializing).
- Based on these results, the department will continue to monitor enrollment and waitlist data for the various seminar areas(blocks throughout the next year. In addition, we will continue to ask graduating seniors their perceptions of their ability to specialize to compare with current (pre-test) levels.