

## STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

**SUBMITTED BY: LINDA COTE-REILLY**

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2012**

**BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHERE AND HOW ARE DATA AND DOCUMENTS USED TO GENERATE THIS REPORT BEING STORED:**

DATA AND DOCUMENTS USED TO GENERATE THIS REPORT INCLUDE:

1. Senior portfolios (on CD and uploaded onto the Psychology Department Blackboard Site) and summaries of faculty judgments of student work representing this year's assessed learning outcomes.
2. PSY 497 Presentation grading rubric.
3. Graduating Student survey – Evaluation of Preparation for the Psychology department 2011-2012, summary statistics from selected items.

All of these documents are located in computer and paper files in Dr. Linda Cote-Reilly's office, Rowley G124.

Psychology faculty ratings of these portfolios were entered directly into on-line survey software (Vovici). The data were transferred to SPSS and analyzed using SPSS. These SPSS files can be obtained from Dr. Cote-Reilly.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**List all of the program's learning outcomes:** *(regardless of whether or not they are being assessed this year)*

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Year of Last Assessment</b>	<b>Year of Next Planned Assessment</b>
1. Critical Thinking - <i>Students will demonstrate critical evaluation of a psychological topic through effective writing.</i>	2009 – 2010	2012-2013
2. Global Perspective - <i>Students will demonstrate an understanding of multiculturalism within the discipline.</i>	2009 – 2010	2011-2012
3. Ethics - <i>Students will analyze an ethical issue in psychology using ethical reasoning principles.</i>	2009 – 2010	2011-2012
4. Research - <i>Students will apply an example of the major social science research methodologies and statistical techniques to address a research question.</i>	2010-2011	2012-2013
5. Career Preparation - <i>Students will demonstrate and apply specialized knowledge within psychology and related fields, such as education, human services, business, etc., by using this training in an internship setting.</i>	2010-2011	2012-2013
6. Presentation - <i>Students will demonstrate effective presentation skills within the discipline.</i>	2010 -2011	2011-2012

**Describe how the program's outcomes support Marymount's Mission, Strategic Plan, and relevant school plan:**

The Psychology program's outcomes support Marymount's Mission as it relates to:

1. Promoting intellectual growth - *Students will demonstrate critical evaluation of a psychological topic through effective writing.*
2. Valuing diversity - *Students will demonstrate an understanding of multiculturalism within the discipline.*
3. Ethics is a hallmark of a Marymount education - *Students will analyze an ethical issue in psychology using ethical reasoning principles.*
4. Scholarship is a hallmark of a Marymount education - *Students will apply an example of the major social science research methodologies and statistical techniques to address a research question.*
5. Career Preparation - *Students will demonstrate and apply specialized knowledge within psychology and related fields, such as education, human services, business, etc., by using this training in an internship setting.*
6. Professional Development - *Students will demonstrate effective presentation skills within the discipline.*

The Psychology program's outcomes support Marymount's Strategic Plan as it relates to:

Marymount's Strategic Plan is currently under revision. Each of our departmental standards is contained in the Mission Statement so they are sure to be contained in the longer yet-to-be-developed Strategic Plan.

The Psychology program's outcomes support The School of Education and Human Service's School Plan to offer programs and learning experiences that (*please note that this will change once Marymount's Strategic Plan has been finalized*):

- a) Encourages the development of the whole person including the enhancement of the student's intellectual abilities, communication skills, and ethical decision making (especially through the learning outcomes that emphasize research, presentation skills, and ethics).
- b) Prepares students for future careers through meaningful internship experiences, collaborative activities, research, and service learning opportunities that take advantage of the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area (through the Learning Outcomes that emphasizes applying psychology to fields such as education, human services, business, etc., in an internship setting, and the research learning outcome).
- c) Encourages the development of a global perspective (through our global perspective learning outcome);
- d) Provides students with the tools to be able to adapt to career, personal, and societal change (especially through the learning outcomes that emphasize presentation skills, critical thinking, research, global perspective, and ethics).

**Provide a brief description of the assessment process used including strengths, challenges, and planned improvements:**

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1. Senior Portfolios/Direct measure: The Undergraduate Psychology Department previously established six standards (i.e., reflecting the six psychology Learning Outcomes listed above). The senior portfolios, a requirement in the Senior Seminar (capstone) course, are designed so the students demonstrate their mastery of these standards as they matriculate through college. The seniors submitted a work product (a recommended assignment from a psychology course) that they believed exemplified their successful mastery of each outcome.

Six full-time psychology department faculty members reviewed portfolios of 36 students from Summer 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012 semesters. Please note that the contents of one portfolio were in a format that could not be opened by faculty members and therefore, it was not judged (so the maximum number of portfolios that could be rated was 35). If students submitted a paper that was not from a Psychology course, that paper was not rated (because we are assessing the Department of Psychology and not MU courses generally). Identifying information was removed from each portfolio. Portfolios were randomly assigned so that each portfolio was judged by two reviewers. These portfolios were uploaded to the Psychology Faculty Blackboard site, allowing reviewers to access the documents at their convenience.

Each student's work product for Learning Outcome 2 (Global Perspective) was evaluated on a 5-point rubric (see Appendix A). Learning Outcome 3 (Ethics) was evaluated on a 5-point rubric with 3 levels of evaluation and an Overall score (see Appendix B). Faculty reviewers recorded their judgments using on-line survey software made available by the MU *Office of Institutional Effectiveness*. This on-line survey software converts data to Excel, which was then converted to SPSS so that the raters' scores could be summarized and analyzed.

2. Psychology Department Presentation Grading Rubric/Direct measure Course-embedded assessment was used to assess students' Presentation skills (Learning Outcome 6) exhibited in their capstone course (PSY 497 Senior Seminar). The grading rubric used was approved by the Department of Psychology and is used by all members of the Department of Psychology when grading students' oral presentations throughout students' years at Marymount (Appendix C).
3. Graduating Student Survey/Evaluation of Preparation/Indirect measure This survey is administered and analyzed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Responses to pertinent items for two of the three Learning Outcomes (a total of 4 items) were summarized. Note that no items on this survey relate to multiculturalism, global perspective, or diversity.

## STRENGTHS OF THIS YEAR'S PROCESS

This portfolio review process in Psychology made improvements over past years' reviews in several ways:

1. A combination of Direct and Indirect Measures were used to assess student learning; these data together provide a comprehensive picture of student learning.
2. Six full-time Psychology faculty members judged the portfolios completed in AY 2011-12, with each portfolio being reviewed by 2 full-time faculty members. This is the first time the revised grading rubric was used for the Ethics Outcome.
3. Interrater agreement was assessed using average (mean) standard deviations so that we could see how well the revised rubric for the Ethics Outcome is working.
4. Statistical analyses were conducted in SPSS and in such a way that we could assess the number of students who met expected levels of proficiency when they submitted the ideal project in comparison to what students actually submitted.

## CHALLENGES AND PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

1. In past assessments (2008-9, 2009-10, 2010-11), students were having difficulty identifying and collecting appropriate and exemplary work products to assess their outcomes throughout their college years. With respect to the Global Perspective outcome, students are still having difficulty selecting appropriate work; only 49% of students submitted the recommended assignment. In the past few years the Department has identified specific courses and assignments that we recommend students use as exemplars of each outcome (typically in 300-level or higher courses), and we became more explicit that students should submit a specific assignment (and embedded this in the syllabi for the specific courses). However, for the Ethics outcome, only 80% of students submitted their ethics paper from PSY 270, even though 100% of students took PSY 270 and wrote the ethics paper. This year the Department pilot tested the use of TaskStream, asking students in each of the identified courses to purchase TaskStream and deposit their specific assignment into it. We found that students balk at the cost of TaskStream, many do not purchase it, and too many students submit something other than the recommended assignment (many simply do not keep their work even though the instructors of courses with recommended assignments tell them to). The Presentation outcome uses course-embedded assessment, and 100% of student work products were the recommended assignments. Thus, the Department has agreed that we will now use course-embedded direct assessment for all 6 outcomes. Use of course-embedded direct assessment for all 6 outcomes will insure that the specific assignments the Department has identified will be available for assessment and will alleviate

the need for faculty to grade the same papers twice (once as the professor of the course and again for University assessment).

2. During this academic year we will consider revising the “global perspective” rubric.

**Describe how the program implemented its planned improvements from last year:**

*The status of the planned improvements based on our assessment findings from last year are reported below:*

1. As highlighted in last year’s assessment, stronger efforts are needed to support students’ identification and collection of appropriate work products throughout their college years, so they have exemplary work to submit for each performance outcome.  
→ 49% for global perspective, 80% of student work products for this cycle were appropriate for ethics, and 100% for presentation.
2. PSY 325 Cultural Psychology now required for all Psychology majors to insure that they are learning about global perspectives as part of the curriculum in their major. This is consistent with University requirements for undergraduate students.
3. Over the summer the Psychology department substantially revised their Ethics, Critical Thinking, and Research grading rubrics using AAUP standards as a guide. Our departmental goal is that when faculty assign any assignment that they consider to be “ethics”, “research”, or “critical thinking” that the rubrics that we use for the key assignments for assessment would be what is used to rate these other assignments (so that we can look at the developmental progression of student learning if we wish to).

**Provide a response to last year’s University Assessment Committee review of the program’s learning assessment report: (List each recommendation and provide a specific response to each).**

The University Assessment committee stated that the 2010-2011 report “met” all criteria and was a “An excellent example of a concise, well-crafted assessment report. Keep up the exemplary work!” Last year’s report was accepted as submitted with no revisions necessary, and no recommendations were made for this year’s assessment report.

**Outcome and Past Assessment**

**Learning Outcome 1: Global perspective**
**Is this outcome being reexamined? X Yes  No**

If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

Previous results: When this standard was assessed for AY 2009-2010, the same direct measure described below was used (Appendix A). At that time the mean rating of student work was 3.35, and the “adequate” level we expected (3.0) was achieved by greater than 75% of the students. At that time the outcome was more broadly defined as “diversity” (i.e., “Students will demonstrate an understanding of human diversity within the discipline (e.g., through an analysis of ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, culture, or language”) rather than global perspective. We changed the standard back to global perspective (i.e., multiculturalism) because it is more consistent with the University’s Mission (Vision, and ultimately Strategic Plan).

**Assessment Activity**

<b><u>Outcome Measures</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Data Collection</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis</u></b>
Direct assessment: 2 full-time Psychology faculty rated students work using the grading rubric in Appendix A.	An acceptable level of performance is a mean of 3.00 on the 5-point rating scale, with 66% (2/3 majority) of students earning ratings of 3.00 or above.	Six full-time psychology department faculty members reviewed portfolios of 35 students from Summer 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. Portfolios were divided so that each portfolio was reviewed by 2 faculty. Faculty were instructed to only rate papers that involved global perspectives and were from Psychology courses. 27 out of 35 students (77%) submitted a paper relevant deemed relevant to global perspective by one reviewer, and 17 out of 35 students (49%) submitted a paper deemed relevant to global perspective by both reviewers.	<p>In the summer of 2012, six psychology faculty members conducted a blind review using a 5-point rubric. The two subscales were combined into one Overall score. Faculty recorded their judgments on the on-line version of the rubric and those results were electronically summarized.</p> <p>When we look at all papers rated by at least one reviewer (indicating that some reviewers did not see some of these products as appropriate to global perspective), results of raters’ judgments of the 27 (77%) student-supplied examples of work demonstrating global perspective in psychology were as follows:  Mean = 2.80  Standard Deviation of ratings = 1.09  63% of students met the benchmark mean rating of 3.0 or above.</p> <p>When only those papers (N = 17, 49%) that two raters agreed were appropriate to global perspective were analyzed, results were as follows and indicated slightly better performance:  Mean = 2.97  Standard Deviation of ratings = 0.98  65% of students met the benchmark mean rating of 3.0 or above.</p>

### **Interpretation of Results**

**Extent this Learning Outcome has been achieved by students** (*Use both direct and indirect measure results*):

Results of the direct assessment suggest that:

1. students are still having difficulty identifying work to submit for assessment
2. students are not quite meeting expected levels of performance for this standard
3. we were unable to measure students' global perspective-taking abilities indirectly because the Graduating Student Survey does not ask students anything about global perspectives.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

The biggest problem with this standard is that although in the past we have recommended that students submit their term paper from PSY 325 Cultural Psychology, not all of our students have taken this course. Thus, we did not have a required course in the major that assessed this standard.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

Last year we passed through the Curriculum and Instruction Committee a curriculum change for the Department of Psychology, such that beginning with this year's incoming freshmen and transfer students (AY 2012-2013 catalog), all Psychology majors must take PSY 325 Cultural Psychology as one of their required courses, so that there will be no doubt that students have taken a Global Perspective course *in the major* and have an appropriate product for assessment purposes. Students will be allowed to substitute study abroad coursework in place of PSY 325 on a case-by-case basis.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness might consider adding an item or two that asks about students' ability to understand cultures different from their own (i.e., global perspective) to the Graduating Student Survey (because this is a part of the University's Mission).

**Outcome and Past Assessment**

**Learning Outcome 2: Ethics**
**Is this outcome being reexamined? X Yes  No**

If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

Previous results: When this standard was directly assessed for AY 2009-2010, the mean rating of student work was 2.95 (below the acceptable mean of 3.00), however, more than 75% of students achieved acceptable levels of performance (a rating of 3.00). *At that time a different rubric was used than the one we used this time (see Appendix B for current rubric).* When indirectly assessed in AY 2009-2010 (i.e., the Graduating Student Survey from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness), the standard was achieved (i.e., 100% of students rated their ability to *Determine the most ethically appropriate response to a situation* as “Good” or “Excellent”, and 96% of students rated their ability to *Understand the major ethical dilemmas in your field* as “Good” or “Excellent”). Thus, students nearly achieved or achieved acceptable levels of performance on this measure that last time it was assessed.

**Assessment Activity**

<b><u>Outcome Measures</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Data Collection</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis</u></b>
Direct assessment: 2 full-time Psychology faculty rated students work using the grading rubric in Appendix B.	An acceptable level of performance is a mean of 3.00 on each of the three 5-point rating scales (Appendix B) and a mean of 3.00 Overall (all three subscales combined), with 66% of students earning ratings of 3.00 or above.	Six full-time psychology department faculty members reviewed portfolios of 35 students from Summer 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. Portfolios were divided so that each portfolio was reviewed by 2 faculty. 28 out of 35 students (80%) submitted the appropriate product (i.e., the ethics paper from PSY 270) even though 100% of students took PSY 270 and wrote the ethics paper.	In the summer of 2012, six psychology faculty members conducted a blind review using the rubric in Appendix B. They recorded their judgments using an on-line version of the rubric and those results were electronically summarized.  Using our new rubric (Appendix B), on the subscale Ethical Issue Recognition, students scored $M = 3.16, SD = .83$ , with 71% of students meeting the acceptable level of performance of 3.00. On the subscale Application of Ethical Perspectives, students scored $M = 3.11, SD = .84$ , with 64% meeting the acceptable level of performance of 3.00 or greater. On the subscale Evaluation of Different Ethical Perspectives, students scored $M = 3.14, SD = .84$ , with 71% meeting the acceptable level of performance of 3.00 or greater. Finally, Overall, students scored $M = 3.14, SD = .73$ , with 64% of students meeting the acceptable level of performance of 3.00. Thus although in a few cases the % of students meeting the benchmark of 3.00 was slightly lower than we would have liked, overall students did very well, particularly considering that this rubric was different from the one used in PSY 270 to grade the same paper.

<p>Indirect assessment: 2011-2012 Graduating Student Survey – Evaluation of Preparation</p>	<p>Students rated their responses to each item on a 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale. Expected level of performance is a mean of 3 on each item, with 66% of students rating the item as good or excellent.</p>	<p>30 students responded to this survey from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The following 2 questions from this student survey were pertinent to our research standard: 9) <i>Determine the most ethically appropriate response to a situation,</i> 10) <i>Understand the major ethical dilemmas in your field.</i></p>	<p><math>N = 30</math> for all responses described herein. Ratings on item 9) <i>Determine the most ethically appropriate response to a situation</i>, <math>M = 4.47</math>, <math>SD = .73</math>, with 86.7% of students rating their abilities on this item as good to excellent; and for item 10) <i>Understand the major ethical dilemmas in your field</i>, <math>M = 4.60</math>, <math>SD = .56</math>, with 96.7% of students rating their abilities on this item as good to excellent. Thus, using this indirect assessment, the department has exceeded expectations with respect to the ethics standard.</p>
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### **Interpretation of Results**

#### **Extent this Learning Outcome has been achieved by students *(Use both direct and indirect measure results):***

The results of the direct and indirect measures suggest that students have met expectations with respect to the ethics standard. Although in a few cases the percentage of students meeting the benchmark of 3.00 was a little bit lower than we would have liked, students' mean ratings indicated that they met our departmental expectations; this is noteworthy because this rubric was different from the one used in PSY 270 to grade the same paper (so there was not a 100% match between the assignment and the rubric used to grade that assignment).

#### **Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

The results of this assessment indicate that developing students' ethical awareness is a strength of the Psychology program and is not in need of improvement.

#### **Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

Although in a few cases the percentage of students meeting the benchmark of 3.00 was a few percentage points lower than we would have liked, using all other methods of assessment students met or exceeded our benchmarks, which is noteworthy considering that this rubric was different from the one used in PSY 270 to grade the same paper. Thus, no radical curricular or program improvements are planned based on this year's assessment. The Department will continue to use the current rubric (Appendix B), which was adapted from the AAUP rubric and guidelines for developing and assessing students' ethical thinking, to evaluate students' ethical thinking. Furthermore we will use course-embedded assessment for this standard in the future so that we will get the appropriate product from 100% of students (which will lead to more accurate assessments of student learning).

**Outcome and Past Assessment**

**Learning Outcome 3: Presentation**

 Is this outcome being reexamined?  Yes  No

If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

This standard was last assessed 2010-2011 and before then it was last assessed in 2006-2007. The 2010-2011 assessment was the first time that the Psychology Department’s multidimensional presentation grading rubric (Appendix C) was used to assess this standard. It is a direct course-embedded assessment of students’ presentation skills in Senior Seminar, their capstone course. For the 2010-2011 assessment, 94.1% of students scored 15 or above on the presentation rubric, indicating that the department exceeded expectations with respect to the presentation standard; we wanted to see whether that successful trend would continue.

**Assessment Activity**

<b><u>Outcome Measures</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Data Collection</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis</u></b>
Direct assessment: Mean ratings on the MU Psychology Department Presentation Evaluation Form	Each item is rated from 0 (unsatisfactory) to 2 (excellent) and then ratings are summed. Ratings of 1 on each item are “satisfactory”, and there are 10 items, so a mean rating of 10 or above indicates an acceptable level of performance.	Data from 19 student presentations in PSY 497 Senior Seminar, Psychology’s capstone course, were evaluated by the course instructor (course-embedded evaluation) for Spring 2012, of these data only 15 were used in the assessment because there was no sound for 4 presentations. Summer 2011 data were assessed in last year’s report and Fall 2011 data could not be located due to our office move (N = 9).	Ratings can range from 0 to 20 when the full evaluation form is used. Because beginning in the Spring of 2011 students uploaded their presentations to Blackboard with voiceover rather than presenting them in class (it is an on-line course), two items were omitted from the evaluation form ( <i>eye contact</i> , and <i>audience engagement</i> ; highlighted in yellow in Appendix C). Thus the maximum score a student’s presentation could receive was 16.  When only presentations for which there was sound were considered (N = 15), mean ratings were 14.13, SD = 1.92, with 93% of students scoring 10 or above on the presentation rubric. When all presentations were considered including those with no sound (N = 19), mean ratings were 11.16, SD = 6.16, with 74% of students scoring 10 or above on the presentation rubric. Thus, the department has exceeded expectations with respect to the presentation standard.

<p>Indirect assessment: 2012 Graduating Student Survey – Evaluation of Preparation</p>	<p>Students rated their responses to each item on a 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale. Expected level of performance is a mean of 3 on each item, with 66% of students meeting the expected level.</p>	<p>30 students responded to this survey. The following 2 questions from this student survey were pertinent to our research standard: 7) <i>Deliver a coherent oral presentation</i>, and 14) <i>Use technology effectively in a workplace environment</i> (because students had to make a PowerPoint presentation).</p>	<p>N = 30 for these ratings, the maximum score is 5 on a 1 to 5-point scale. Ratings on item 7) <i>Deliver a coherent oral presentation</i>, was <math>M = 4.23</math>, <math>SD = 0.86</math>, with 90% of students rating this item good or excellent. Ratings on item 14) <i>Use technology effectively in a workplace environment</i>, was <math>M = 4.20</math>, <math>SD = 0.71</math>, with 83% of students rating their abilities on this item as good to excellent. These results are similar to or better than the results of the 2011 Graduating Student Survey. Thus, using this indirect assessment, the department has exceeded expectations with respect to the presentation standard.</p>
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**Interpretation of Results**

**Extent this Learning Outcome has been achieved by students** (*Use both direct and indirect measure results*):

Results of the direct and indirect measures indicate that students have exceeded expectations with respect to the presentation standard.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

The results of this assessment indicate that developing students' presentation skills are a strength of the Psychology program. The rating scale that is now used to assess this outcome is a huge improvement over the previous one; because the presentation rating scale adopted by the Psychology program is multidimensional, students can identify exactly which aspects of their presentations are strong and which are in need of improvement (and thereby work on the aspects of their presentations that need improvement). This outcome is not in need of improvement at the present time.

However, due to the move, we only had data for 68% of students, which indicates an opportunity for improvement. The Department Chair will collect these course-embedded assessments immediately after final grades are due and scan them in to her office computer for storage on Blackboard to guard against data loss.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

Because students exceeded expectations on all methods of assessment (direct and indirect) for this learning outcome and showed the same strong results as the last time this outcome was assessed, the only program improvement we will institute based on this year's assessment is to continue to encourage all adjunct faculty teaching psychology courses to use the MU Psychology Department Presentation Evaluation Form to grade presentations in their classes. (Full-time faculty already use this form). This is a strong rubric and it assesses all aspects of students' oral presentation skills that the Department of Psychology has agreed are important presentation skills. By using this scoring rubric repeatedly throughout students' careers, they will learn the skills necessary for a strong oral presentation.

In order to insure that all data are available for assessment, the instructor for PSY 497 will be asked to scan the presentation rubrics and store them in the Department of Psychology's Blackboard site. The rubrics will then be there for the Chair to do the yearly assessments.

*A complete student learning assessment report includes appendix of rubrics, survey questions, or other relevant documents and information.*