Saint Louis University
Program Assessment Annual Reporting

It is recommended program assessment results be used to celebrate achievements of student learning as well as to identify potential areas for future curriculum improvement.

Please email this completed form as an attachment to Thatcherk@slu.edu
CAS PROGRAMS: Please email this completed form by July 1 to Donna LaVoie lavoiedj@slu.edu

1. Degree Program(s) included in this report: graduate programs in Experimental Psychology (note: because we do not offer a terminal Master’s degree, the MS and Ph.D. programs are not assessed separately at this time).
2. Department: Psychology
3. School/Center/College: College of Arts & Sciences
4. Name(s): Kimberly K. Powlishta, Ph.D., Experimental Psychology Graduate Program Director
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Instructions: Please answer the following five questions to the best of your ability for each degree program offered within your department.

1. Summarize your assessment activities during the past year for each degree program and how this work relates to the established assessment plan (e.g. what program outcomes were assessed, faculty discussions, new survey design, data collection, revised assessment plans or learning outcomes, etc.). Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.

   During the Fall semester (2015), the faculty and graduate student representative worked together to develop preliminary program outcomes and means of assessing them. The program also began the process of tabulating individual student data (that were already being collected) to reflect program-level outcomes for several of these outcomes.

   Madrid courses or programs were not involved, as there is no comparable graduate program on the Madrid campus.

2. Describe specific assessment findings related to the learning outcomes assessed for each degree program, including any pertinent context surrounding the findings. Please include the learning outcomes themselves. (e.g. Our goal was that 75% of students performed at the “proficient” level of competency in problem solving, using a new scoring rubric. 81% of students performed at the “proficient” level in problem solving, exceeding our expectations.) Do not include student-level data. Data included in this report should be in aggregate. Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.
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 2015-2016 academic year by addressing the following four questions:

1. For the 5 students who defended their Master’s thesis or dissertation from the summer of 2015 through the Spring of 2016, what were the average ratings given by the 3 faculty committee members on the “Olson Ballots”, which consist of 20 5-point rating scales assessing multiple aspects of each of the major sections of the thesis/dissertation (total scores can range from 20 to 100)?

   3 students defended their thesis and 2 defended their dissertation in the previous year (including Summer 2015). For the thesis: Mean rating = 74.3 (SD = 13.5). For the dissertation: Mean rating = 77.5 (SD = 14.2).

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 3.84 for PSY 5080 (Quantitative Research Methods), 3.84 for PSY 5790 (Univariate Statistics), and 4.0 for PSY 6500 (Multivariate Statistics) among Experimental Psychology students taking these courses during the current academic year.

3. For the 4 students who received their Ph.D. degrees in the Spring of 2016 (or are scheduled to receive the Ph.D. in August of 2016), how many first authored research presentations at peer-reviewed conferences and/or peer reviewed publications had they produced during their time in the program? At least 1 such presentation or publication is considered a successful outcome.

   Mean number of first-authored conference presentations per student = 4.5
   Mean number of peer-reviewed publications per student = 2.75 (.75 for first-authored)

   100% of students had at least one first-authored peer-reviewed conference presentation and/or one peer-reviewed publication.

4. For all students, how were they evaluated on “research performance” 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 students were rated as adequate or above in these categories during the Spring 2016 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 10 grades received in these four courses in the 2015-2016 academic year, 9 were A and 1 was A- (for a GPA of 3.97)

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.

   All students were rated as adequate or above in these categories during the Spring 2016 meeting.

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).

   Five students completed the diversity course and seven completed the ethnic course during the 2015-2016 academic year, with all receiving grades of A (GPAs = 4.0)

The fourth learning outcome was not assessed this year.

Madrid courses or programs were not involved, as there is no comparable graduate program on the Madrid campus.

*Please attach any tables, graphics, or charts to the end of this report.
3. Describe how assessment feedback has been provided to students, faculty, and staff. *(e.g. report for faculty, executive summary for the dean, web page for students, alumni newsletter, discussion with students in class or club event, etc.)*

Students receive individual-level feedback on these outcomes as they occur (e.g., when grades are received or annual evaluations are completed). However, because these reports have just been created, feedback regarding these aggregate data have not yet been provided to faculty or students. Such feedback and discussion will occur during Fall semester at Experimental Psychology faculty meetings and during monthly program meetings involving all Experimental Psychology faculty and graduate students in the program.

4. In what ways have you used assessment findings to celebrate student achievements and/or to improve the curriculum this past year? *(e.g. prizes to students, hosting student parties, changes to curriculum, student projects, learning goals, assessment strategies, etc.)*

Because these assessment findings have just been compiled, they have not been used yet (for “celebration”, improvement, or other purposes).

During Fall faculty meetings (with input from the graduate student representative) a primary goal will be to better define “success” for each of the assessed outcomes and to refine those outcomes and how they are measured.

5. Describe any changes to your assessment plans, or any challenges or educational experiences with the assessment process this past year that you would like to share.

Challenges include the fact that resources are not provided to aid in the compilation of this information (the program has essentially no administrative support) or to “celebrate” accomplishments (the program has no funds available for prizes or parties, as we have a budget of zero)

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