Program Assessment Plan
American University
Academic Program: CAS: Psychology - MA

Contact Person for Assessment: Tomy Ahrens

Program Mission: Students seeking professional careers in Psychology greatly benefit from (and are expected to have) specialized and advanced classroom and laboratory experience. The MA program in Psychology provides these experiences and prepares students for positions in specialized research and applied fields within Psychology and/or entry into Clinical and Experimental doctoral programs. Advanced classes in clinical theory and practice as well as in behavioral neuroscience are small and intensive, and a variety of research opportunities (both in-house and at surrounding institutions) provide students with serious mentoring in research design and analysis in such topics as clinical psychopathology, addictive behaviors and neuropsychology. Virtually all of our students enter Psychology-related careers upon graduation.

Unit Website Address: http://www.american.edu/cas/psychology/
Unit's Primary Department: Psychology
Are there any changes in your assessment method?: No

Learning Outcome: Research Issues
Students should be able to competently evaluate research issues.

Outcome Year: 2009-2010
2010-2011
2011-2012
2012-2013

Outcome Status: Active Learning Outcome

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Schedule/Cycle</th>
<th>Active</th>
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<td>Research Review Exam: MA students’ ability to evaluate research will be assessed by having a sample of 15 students in their 2nd year critically evaluate a research paper in their general field of interest. The specific questions posed are listed below.</td>
<td>All students will perform satisfactorily on each question related to the research article.</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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1) Describe the research issue under investigation,
2) Describe the specific research methodology utilized in the paper,
3) Describe the primary variables of interest,
4) Describe the interpretation of the results in light of the original hypothesis
5) Discuss the limitations and to describe additional issued not raised by the author of the paper.
6) Generate a research question that extends the original one posed in the paper and to provide a research methodology to answer this question

Measure Type:
Quiz/ Exam

Learning Outcome: Ethical Issues
Students should be able to identify and act on ethical issues in research and practice.

Outcome Year: 2009-2010
2010-2011
2011-2012
2012-2013

Outcome Status: Active Learning Outcome

Assessment Plan
### Assessment Plan

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<td>Ethics Certification: MA students were required to demonstrate that they have acquired specific training in the ethical principles of psychology. This was accomplished by having each student complete on-line training in the ethical principles of research sponsored by the NIH office of Extramural Research or the CITI on line course for research ethics.</td>
<td>All MA students should complete the certification.</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Measure Type:** Quiz/ Exam

### Learning Outcome: Career training and placement

Provide relevant and effective pre-doctoral training

**Outcome Year:** 2011-2012

2012-2013

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

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<td>We will develop and apply a new survey that assesses the relevance and success of the specific MA training that we currently provide. Part of the mission of our MA program is to provide relevant and effective pre-doctoral training. This training is designed both technically and pedagogically to provide our MA students with coursework and laboratory experiences that are directly relevant to subsequent work in their chosen fields, e.g., clinical practice, graduate school, research positions. <strong>Measure Type:</strong> Alumni Feedback</td>
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<td>We expect that 80% of graduating students will rate their experiences in the program as very relevant (average of 6 on an 8 point scale) to their securing a psychology related job or gaining admission into a doctoral program. We have collected data on a small number of students using this measure, and overall the average was 6.1.</td>
<td>This will be done yearly. Specifically, students recently graduated form our MA program will be sent a follow up survey related to the relevance of their specific training to their subsequent degree objectives, e.g., getting into a Ph.D. program, obtaining a Psychology related position. The relevance will be tracked by an examination of the specific classes available as well as the laboratory and mentoring experience received.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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We will develop and apply a new survey that assesses the effectiveness of the specific MA training that we currently provide. Part of the mission of our MA program is to provide relevant and effective pre-doctoral training that is instrumental in getting these students into doctoral programs or obtaining Psychology-related work

**Measure Type:** Job/Grad School Placement

We expect that 75% of graduating students will secure a psychology related job or gain entrance into a doctoral program. This will be done yearly. Specifically, students recently graduated form our MA program will be sent a follow up survey to track their success in getting into doctoral programs or work positions in their chosen field. Yes