

**2022 ANNUAL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM**  
**(Due October 15 to the dean)****PROGRAM SECTION (Due to the dean on October 15)****Submission date:** Select date.**Submitted by:** Yasuhiro Ozuru, Professor of Psychology, yozuru@alaska.edu**Program(s) covered in this report:** Psychology BA/BS

If you selected "Other" above, please identify. (100 characters or less)

**College:** College of Arts and Sciences**Campuses where the program(s) is delivered:** ☒ Anchorage ☐ KOD ☐ KPC ☐ MSC ☐ PWSC**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):** N/A.

If explanation is necessary, such as only some of the certificates and degrees are covered by the specialized accreditation, briefly describe: N/A

**INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES**

In 2020, UAA launched a consensus-based, deliberative process to identify the key skillsets that help students achieve academic and post-graduation success. After a year-long process that included students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and employers, the UAA community identified four core competencies at the heart of a quality UAA education. Students develop mastery of these competencies through curricular (e.g., courses), co-curricular (e.g., internships, conferences), and extra-curricular (e.g., student clubs) learning experiences.

After the stakeholder-based process in AY20, UAA is phasing in the integration of the core competencies into ongoing processes, including program student learning outcomes assessment. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility (PPCR) was integrated into the AY21 Annual Academic Assessment Report. The AY22 Annual Academic Assessment Report now also integrates Effective Communication.

Question #1 below is designed to engage program faculty in thinking about how they can or already do promote student learning in these two core competencies.



1. **A. *Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility: The knowledge and skills necessary to promote personal flourishing, professional excellence, and community engagement.***

- **If last year you provided your program's current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that develops and showcases the student learning in this core competency, please discuss that implementation and any observations you have regarding how well it is working. (500 characters or less)**

The program is aimed at training students for "practicing" psychology in 1) scientific research and 2) behavioral health. For these goals, our program implements a series of research-oriented classes with hands-on experiences and practicum in behavioral health as either a requirement or an elective (practicum course). It appears that many students benefit from these courses based on admissions to graduate programs and securing jobs in the field of behavioral health.

- **If last year you *did not* identify a current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that provides students the opportunity to develop and showcase this core competency, please identify one now. (500 characters or less)**

B. ***Effective Communication: The knowledge and skills necessary to engage in effective communication in diverse contexts and formats.***

- **What would you hope a student would say if asked where in your program or support service they had the opportunity to develop proficiency in this core competency? (500 characters or less)**

PSY A261 Research Methods in Psychology and the corresponding lab section and all upper level courses involve extensive training in written and oral presentations. In addition, we (psychology department) have an annual student research conference where students present their research that was conducted in classes and independent projects. Faculty provide close supervision and support to students producing the presentations.

- **Provide your program's current or planned example(s) of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that showcases the student learning in this core competency. (500 characters or less)**

PSY A261, a required course for psychology majors, includes the creation of PP presentations about an empirical research as a required assignment. The course also has written assignments where students review the published research and propose alternative approaches that addresses the limitation of existing research. PSY 468L, another required course, includes written APA style research reports based on the research conducted in the class as required assignments.

## PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

2. Please list the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY22. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.

***Example: Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations.***

- A broad knowledge of contemporary psychology.

Based on the exit exam score in which they achieved 47th percentile at the national standardized test score based on weighted average across 2020/21 and 2021/22, the performance level is acceptable for an open enrolment institution. We also would like to note that the data indicated 7percentile improvement (50<sup>th</sup> from 43<sup>rd</sup>) in 22 compared to the last year's (21) performance which is significant positive news.

- Be able to demonstrate skills in research design and data analysis

The exit exam score in Experimental design and Statistics was the 52nd and 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile for a 2 year period (20-22). It is somewhat higher than in previous years and has been near or above 50th percentile for more than 5 years which is more than acceptable performance. In spring 2022, we managed to have an in-person student research conference in which 8 students presented their research projects in an oral format. The number of students as well as the quality of the presentations showed that students are acquiring important skills in research design and analysis.

- Have experience conducting psychological research

As indicated in the above paragraph, 8 students made sufficient progress in research projects to the extent they could report results in an oral presentation. There are some other students engaged in research even though the progress in those projects was not sufficient for the conference presentation. Given the highly restrictive environment for research activities during the pandemic, this exceeds our expectations of students participating in research activities.

- Be prepared for advanced study in psychology and related disciplines.

We had at least 5 Psychology students accepted into the M.S. program in Clinical Psychology at UAA. Additionally, at least 1 student was accepted into graduate programs (Masters level) at a university outside Alaska. This represents slightly less than 10% of graduates this academic year. Further this is based on somewhat incomplete data because the information is gathered via informal communication between faculty and students (students notify faculty who wrote letters of recommendation); the actual count is likely to be higher. Hence, we believe that the expectation was met on this criterion.

**3. Describe your assessment process in AY22 for these Program Student Learning Outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings. (750 characters or less)**

Of the four Learning Outcomes, the first two are primarily based on a standardized exam taken right before the student's graduation. There are 8 topic areas in the exam, and these areas are covered by at least one required course. The exam scores can be compared with the nation-wide sample as the exam is standardized. There are some challenges in interpreting the data of the exit exams due to changes in administration (from proctored exam to online exam at home). Therefore, we discuss the meaning of the performances carefully in faculty meetings. The other two learning outcomes are based on communication between faculty members and students; the number of publications, research presentation, and graduate school acceptances.

**4. What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program? (750 characters or less)**

Overall, students are learning the skills and knowledge that the BA/BS programs are aimed to provide. In particular, we feel that students did much better this year compared to last year on the exit exam. Overall, the score improved from 43<sup>rd</sup> to 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, with scores in most subfields improving. We are particularly happy to see this upward trend this year when some face-to-face classes resumed. While it may be premature to attribute the improvement to increased on-campus activities with more faculty-student interactions, we believe that student-faculty interaction is critical for learning in our program for many reasons such as research, motivation, and better communication skills.

**5. Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please describe the recommended action, what improvement in student learning the program hopes to see with this change, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision. (750 Characters or less)**

We considered possible changes in the assessment of our program due to the pandemic. However, given the re-opening of the campus with more normal activities and with the annual assessment results that are similar to prior years, we do not plan to make any significant changes in the assessment. One change we considered is the possible inclusion of a measure that assesses student preparedness to pursue behavioral health careers right after graduation. This is due to the observed trend of increased demand in behavioral health-related jobs and with increased student interest in the field.

**PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSING IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING**

6. In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Course curriculum changes
- ☐ Course prerequisite changes
- ☐ Changes in teaching methods
- ☐ Changes in advising
- ☐ Degree requirement changes
- ☐ Degree course sequencing
- ☐ Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])
- ☐ Changes in program policies/procedures
- ☐ Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
- ☐ College-wide initiatives (e.g., High-Impact Practices)
- ☐ Faculty, staff, student development
- ☒ Other
- ☐ No changes were implemented in AY22.

**If you checked "Other" above, please describe. (100 characters or less)**

Allocation and distribution of online and face-to-face teaching format across the courses/semesters.

7. Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this. (750 characters or less)

We continuously monitor these improvements. The effect appears to be complex. Online courses are important for increased access and faster progress towards degree completion for many students. On the other hand, some student learning seems to decline in an online modality depending on the course. Thus, gaining a good understanding requires monitoring for an extended period of time.

8. PROGRAMS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO RESPOND TO QUESTION #8 FOR THEIR REPORT DUE ON OCTOBER 15, 2022. IT IS HERE JUST FOR THEIR REFERENCE.

9. Do you have any examples of post-graduate success you want to highlight? For example, major scholarships, the percent of students who pass licensure examinations, the percent of students accepted to graduate programs, the percent in post-graduation employment in the field or a related field. (750 characters or less)

In 2021-22, at least 6 students were accepted to Master's Programs. This is consistent with recent trends in our program. More students are assumed to be accepted into graduate programs a few

years after graduation. This is informally confirmed based on private communications between the graduates and faculty. Given that many jobs in the field of psychology require at least some graduate training, the number of acceptances to graduate school this past year is a reasonably good performance.

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**DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)**

**1. Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward? (750 characters or less)**

The program is encouraged to document careers that recent graduates pursue with a BA/BS degree as well as those who go on to advanced degrees. Additionally, the program might consider adding an accelerated Master's program if this might provide more career opportunities for students. The assessment report could benefit from more specificity with regards to which courses were assessed. As an aside, it might be interesting to pursue the observation mentioned here that the return to face to face courses was beneficial to student success.

**2. What is the program doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes, the closing of equity gaps, or addressing the core competencies? (750 characters or less)**

The use of a national standardized exit exam ensures students are learning skills of contemporary psychology (as defined by the national society). Student achievement in these exams has risen in recent years, which is promising. The use of two required courses at various levels provides a thorough and consistent evaluation of student achievement.

Dean's signature:

Jenny McNulty

Date: 1/9/2023