4. Progress on Outcomes Assessment (Annual Question)

Updating this Question is Required on the Annual Plan!

Refer to the SLO Cloud to evaluate the results from your course level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and to develop actions reflected in your program review action plan (i.e. Question 10).

a. Please summarize **course SLO assessment results**. Include a discussion of whether or not the program met its target for each course SLO.
b. Please describe any course and/or instructional improvements you plan to make as a result of the course SLO assessment(s).
c. What objective(s) or action step(s) will you add to Question 10 as a result of the SLO assessment(s)? If none, please explain.

The Psychology program remains active in assessing student learning outcomes at the course and program level, and engaging in dialogue that leads to continuous improvement in course structure and content, pedagogy and student learning.
Examples of such improvements include:

- Institution of a Research Paper writing Rubric that emphasizes APA format standards in PSYCH 100, 101, 102 and 111. Further modifications will occur as student needs and gaps in learning proficiency are identified.
- Piloting of Reading Apprenticeship
- Strengthening partnerships with the English department and library resources to address student performance gaps in reading, academic writing and conducting scholarly research.

Progress continues in the assessment of SLOs across courses and sections in the Psych Program. Department dialogues among Psychology faculty relating to learning gaps have repeatedly addressed the challenges of students who struggle with basic skills in language and math that become obstacles to success. A secondary obstacle identified by faculty involve the numbers of students who struggle with employing active and effective learning and management strategies in various permutations. These would include issues with time management, frequent absenteeism from class, proactive learning and study strategies, critical thinking, and identifying/utilizing appropriate learning resources as necessary. One monumental obstacle that has only increased over time would be the "cyber-coccoon" that many students have constructed around their dependency on their smart phones and other internet-connected devices. Many of the same students who struggle with college-level reading and math skills, who do not employ effective learning strategies, also display a particular preoccupation for their devices and are less engaged in (or prepared for) in-class activities. While these issues may be seen as peripheral to the achievement of learning outcomes, they play a significant factor in the discussion regarding learning achievent and success in all our courses in Psychology.

A current issue that the Psychology Faculty has discussed in department meetings over the past few semesters involves reviewing the current collection of course-level Student Learning

Outcomes found in the SLO Cloud and revising them in order to better align with current course outline objectives, and to achieve greater coherence.

In spite of these challenges, student performance across courses on SLOs reflected strong levels of student achievement, with limited exceptions. For instance, over a three-year span, Students achieved a 88% proficiency (defined as a 3 or better on the rubric)over a variety of courses on the outcome statement : "Student can identify and describe the historical trends, theoretical views, values of the field, concepts, methods, techniques and research associated with psychology." However, an ongoing challenge identified by the assessment data across courses reveals that about 61% of students are proficient in the outcome: "Students can use library & online resources effectively to locate current research related to specific topics psychology." In response, faculty have incorporated a variety of changes to pedagogy that is designed to bring about improvement in student achievement of this outcome. For instance, one instructor includes a library tour and makes available a growing collection of online research resources. Another instructor has broken down the research paper project as a sequence of progressive assignments that lay the foundation for a sound research paper. Yet another instructor employs a comprehensive research paper rubric that articulates the specific requirements that a paper must address.