

Institutional Effectiveness

2024-2025

Program: Psychology BS

College and Department: College of Education & Human Sciences, Counseling & Psychology

Contact: Stephanie Kazanas

Mission:

The Department of Counseling and Psychology includes the mission of offering a strong undergraduate academic program in psychology. The undergraduate psychology program is designed to develop skills that will lead to life-long success in many professional fields including graduate study in psychology, and is designed to develop effective communication, critical thinking, and life-long learning skills in the context of acquiring knowledge in the field of psychology. The undergraduate program includes a two-semester culminating senior thesis project that every student completes under the supervision of a faculty member to further develop these critical thinking and communication skills. Instruction is a major component of the academic mission of the department. A committed faculty serves the program through instruction, scholarly activity, and service aimed at providing high quality academic experiences for students. The department is strongly supportive of an environment that protects and promotes human welfare and equal opportunity. The department also serves the wider University Community, Upper Cumberland region, State, and Nation through research and public service.

Attach Curriculum Map (Educational Programs Only):

Attached Files: See Appendix 1

SLO 1: Develop knowledge of psychology

Define Outcome:

Students in the baccalaureate program in psychology will develop knowledge of psychology.

Students completing the baccalaureate program in psychology will compare favorably in their knowledge of psychology with graduates of undergraduate programs in the state, region, and nation (scoring within one standard deviation of the national average for psychology).

Assessment Methods:

ETS major field test in psychology – The major field test is administered to every graduating psychology major. This test assesses senior level student's knowledge of psychology in a variety of areas and provides a national benchmark for comparison.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Scores from students graduating from our program should be within 90% of the national norm on the ETS major field test in psychology (in overall score and across sub-scores).

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

2.B Research, Scholar, Intellect, and Creativity, 4.B Programs, Certificates, and Training

Results and Analysis:

Overall scores for psychology majors remain within 90% of the national norm on the ETS major field test, as shown below. In the 2024-2025 academic year our data exceeded or matched the national norm in 5 of 6 subareas. In the five subareas our ratios exceeded 100%.

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
TTU	152	154	154	156	151	148	154
National (SD)	156 (15)	157 (15)	156 (12)	156 (15)	156 (15)	156 (15)	156 (15)
Ratio	98%	98%	99%	99%	96%	95%	98%

In previous years, ETS also provided subscore data for 4 subscores, as shown below.

Subscore		2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Learning & Cognition	TTU	53	56	54	52
	National (SD)	56 (15)	57 (15)	57 (12)	56 (15)
Percept/Physio	TTU	53	52	53	50
	National (SD)	56 (15)	57 (15)	56 (12)	55 (15)
Clinical & Abnormal	TTU	55	54	52	52
	National (SD)	56 (15)	57 (15)	56 (12)	56 (15)
Developmental & Social	TTU	53	54	59	60
	National (SD)	56 (15)	56 (15)	55 (12)	55 (15)

Currently, ETS data are provided for 6 subscores. Together, the overall and subscore data meet or exceed our criteria for success.

Subscore		2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Memory & Cognition	TTU	48	46	54
	National	54	53	53.4
	Ratio	89%	87%	101%
Perception, Sensation, & Phys	TTU	53	51	51
	National	48	48	48
	Ratio	110%	106%	106%
Development	TTU	48	48	50.5
	National	54	53	53.1
	Ratio	89%	91%	95%
Clinical & Abnormal	TTU	60	61	61
	National	62	62	61
	Ratio	97%	98%	100%
Social	TTU	57	57	63
	National	61	61	60.7
	Ratio	93%	93%	104%
Measurement & Methodology	TTU	44	43	48.5
	National	47	47	46.5
	Ratio	94%	91%	104%

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

Our 2024-2025 major field test scores remain within our established criteria for success. The overall score on the ETS exam was 98% of the national norm. All of the subscores were within our goal of 90% of the national norm. However, the developmental subscore is generally our

lowest scoring subscore. We believe one of the causes of this is the lack of a developmental psychologist in our undergraduate faculty. We have added a new developmental psychologist that will start fall 2025. This will allow us to offer more developmental coursework and provide developmental research opportunities for our students, with the hope of improving the developmental subscore.

SLO 2: Students will develop research skills

Define Outcome:

Students in the baccalaureate program in psychology will develop research skills.

Students completing the baccalaureate program in psychology will be capable of planning, implementing, and presenting an original research project.

Assessment Methods:

1. Senior Thesis Post-Test Data - Students are required to orally present their research proposal to a group that includes all faculty supervising senior thesis projects. Students are also required to submit an APA style manuscript of their thesis study. The work is evaluated by a common rubric that evaluates effective planning, implementation of study, and effective oral and written communication.
2. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – The NSSE includes questions on the survey that provide an indirect measure to evaluate student perceptions about whether their program of study required class presentations, prepared two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in, worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas and information from various sources, and participated in culminating senior thesis. This survey is administered to a stratified random sample of freshmen and senior level students at TTU.

Attached Files: See Appendix 2

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

See Appendix 2 for attached thesis rubric.

Two NSSE items pertain to this SLO; the 'making a class presentation' and 'participating in a culminating senior thesis' should exceed the TTU and National means.

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

1.A Experiential Learning, 1.D High Impact Practices, 2.B Research, Scholar, Intellect, and Creativity

Results and Analysis:

NSSE Question:		2021	2024	2025
Making a Class Presentation	PSY Senior	2.6	2.9	!
	TTU Senior	2.5	2.6	!
	Carnegie Peer	2.5	*	!
Participating in a Culminating Senior Thesis	PSY Senior	83%	100%	!
	TTU Senior	49%	54%	!
	Carnegie Peer	<49%	*	!

* Peer data not yet available

! Data not collected this year

NSSE data were not collected for the 2025 academic year. Previously collected data show that PSY Seniors outperformed all other TTU Seniors in both making a presentation and participating in a culminating senior thesis.

	2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024 -2025	
Rubric Competencies	Thesis I Mean	Thesis II Mean	Thesis I Mean	Thesis II Mean	Thesis I Mean	Thesis II Mean	Thesis I Mean	Thesis II Mean
Creativity	6.39	7.73	6.94	7.44	6.89	7.50	7.47	8.23
Reasoning & Critical Thinking	7	7.91	7.69	7.89	7.27	7.72	7.47	8.50
Theoretical Connections and Applications of Research	6.17	7.36	6.69	7.11	6.75	7.27	7.16	7.82
Statistical Proficiency	5.94	6.68	6.44	6.11	6.17	6.52	6.29	7.05
Intellectual Resilience	7	8.27	8.25	8.78	7.79	8.04	7.95	8.81
Flexibility	7.17	8.82	8	7.89	7.83	8.00	7.71	8.50
Communication with Faculty and Peers	7.11	8.27	7.81	8.11	7.62	7.82	7.58	8.73
Professional Skills	7.28	7.82	7.38	7.89	7.23	7.80	7.45	7.73
Communication Style	6.78	7.91	7.56	7.89	7.24	7.39	7.36	7.98
Structure and Organization	7.11	8.45	7.69	8.22	7.38	7.75	7.79	7.82
Time Management	6.33	7.64	7.44	8.33	6.86	7.16	7.34	7.73
Professional Resources and Support Services	6.94	7.77	6.63	7.22	7.47	7.00	7.21	8.05

Senior Thesis self-report outcomes across all areas of our rubric are strong and encouraging. These data highlight the large improvements students observe in the planning, implementation, and communication of their project as they continue from Thesis I to Thesis II.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

We aim to continue data collection across these students. In 11 of the 12 competencies, we saw increases from Thesis I to Thesis II, with the only exception occurring within the professional resources and support services subarea.

SLO 3: Students will think critically, communicate authentically, learn on their own, and work with others

Define Outcome:

Students graduating will demonstrate the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, learn on their own, and work effectively with others.

Assessment Methods:

1. California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) - A mandatory requirement for graduation, the CCTST measures some skills related to critical thinking including formal logic and deduction.
2. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – The NSSE includes questions on the survey that provides an indirect measure to evaluate student perceptions of whether the institution helped them learn how to learn on their own, think critically and analytically, work effectively with others, and speak clearly and effectively. This survey is administered to a stratified random sample of freshmen and senior level students at TTU.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Given our curriculum, CCTST scores should exceed the TTU and CCTST means.

Results from the NSSE items pertaining to 'thinking critically and analytically', 'working effectively with others', and 'speaking clearly and effectively' should all exceed TTU and National means.

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

1.A Experiential Learning,1.D High Impact Practices,2.B Research, Scholar, Intellect, and Creativity

Results and Analysis:

NSSE Question:		2021	2024	2025
Thinking Critically and Analytically	PSY Senior	3.5	3.2	!
	TTU Senior	3.3	3.29	!
	Carnegie Peer	3.3	*	!

Working Effectively with Others	PSY Senior	3.1	2.8	!
	TTU Senior	3.1	3.11	!
	Carnegie Peer	3	*	!
Speaking Clearly and Effectively	PSY Senior	2.8	3	!
	TTU Senior	2.9	2.94	!
	Carnegie Peer	2.8	*	!

* Peer data not yet available

! Data not collected this year

Analysis of the NSSE data showed that the PSY Senior data was just slightly below that reported for the TTU Senior. In the area of working effectively with others, the PSY Senior data was also slightly below that reported for the TTU Senior. In the area of speaking clearly and effectively, the PSY Senior data exceeded that reported for the average TTU Senior.

	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*
PSY	75.8	30	75.7	44	73.6	46	75.1	51	75.9	55
TTU	74.4	1445	75.2	1457	74.3	1652	74.4	1,722	74.8	1620
CCTST Norm	74		73.3		73.3		72.8		72.8	

Analysis of the CCTST data for 2024-2025 indicated that the PSY average was higher than the TTU and national norm means. This has been the trend over the last couple of academic years.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

It is always important to maintain our focus on critical thinking skills. We do have several courses specifically aimed at this topic (e.g., Information Literacy in Psychology) and all PSY courses aim to infuse these skills into coursework. At the same time, small fluctuations in CCTST scores can also be a consequence of the pandemic, as many majors are seeing these same small decreases. We will also continue to work on developing more opportunities for group projects and effective communication. We'll continue to track this data.

Summative Evaluation:

Overall, the undergraduate program is doing very well, meeting all criteria for success over several years. We are within the goal of 90% norm on the ETS major field test. Although NSSE data was not collected for the current academic year, the data from the NSSE for 2024 showed that we exceeded the TTU mean in most areas. The new Senior Thesis self-assessment data showed improvement in all relevant measures from Thesis I to Thesis II. Our 2024 CCTST data rebounded from the previous year, showing an improvement in critical thinking in last year's cohort. We anticipate receiving the 2025 data soon and are confident that the scores will still remain high. We will continue to track this data over the coming year, as we remain committed to our critical thinking aims.

Assessment Plan Changes:**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Psychology BS Curriculum Map

Appendix 2: Senior Thesis Matrix

Appendix 1: Psychology BS Curriculum Map

	Course	Title	Student Outcomes				
			SLO 1	SLO2	SLO3		
			Knowledge of Psychology	Research Skills	Critical Thinking	Communication	Teamwork
Requirements	PSY 1030	Intro to Psychology	X		X		
	PSY 3010	Statistics and Experimental Design	X	X	X		X
	PSY 3020	Information Literacy in Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 3110	Experimental Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 2130	Life Span Development Psychology	X	X	X	X	
	PSY 3300	Introduction to Social Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 4050	Learning and Cognition	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 4130	Brain and Behavior	X		X	X	
	PSY 4150	Personality	X	X	X	X	
	PSY 4160	Abnormal Psychology	X		X		X
	PSY 4930	Senior Thesis I	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 4931	Senior Thesis II	X	X	X	X	X
Electives	PSY 2110	Psychology of Adjustment	X		X	X	
	PSY 2210	Educational Psychology	X		X	X	X
	PSY 3000	Problem Solving	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 3030	Careers in Psychology		X		X	
	PSY 3050	Parapsychology	X	X	X	X	
	PSY 3120	Sensation and Perception	X	X	X		
	PSY 3140	Experimental Social Psy	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 3150	Cognitive Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 3160	Applied Research Methods	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 3400	Industrial Psychology	X		X	X	
	PSY 3410	Group Dynamics	X		X	X	X
	PSY 4100	Child Psychology	X	X	X	X	
	PSY 4140	Health Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 4200	Adolescent Psychology	X		X		
	PSY 4250	Intro to Psychological Testing	X		X		
	PSY 4300	Adult Psychology	X		X		
	PSY 4320	Intro-Therapeutic Techniques	X		X	X	X
	PSY 4400	Psychopharmacology	X		X		X
	PSY 4600	Data Analytics in Psychology	X	X	X	X	X
	PSY 4800	History of Psychology	X		X		
	PSY 4810	Concepts of Gerontology	X	X	X		
	PSY 4940	Field Experience in Psychology		X	X	X	

Appendix 2: Senior Thesis Matrix

Comprehensive Senior Thesis Course Rubric

	Competency	Evaluation				Rating
		Outstanding (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Unsatisfactory but Improving (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)	
Intellectual Autonomy	Creativity & Originality	Student exhibits creativity in the examination & interpretation of existing theory. Student generates original hypotheses, methods, & experimental designs.	Student shows some creativity in the examination & interpretation of existing theory. Student is able to come up with sound hypotheses, methods, & designs even though they are not necessarily novel.	Student is unable to adequately demonstrate creativity in the examination & interpretation of existing theory. The hypotheses, methods, & designs produced are weak and need improvement.	Student shows no creativity or originality in the examination & interpretation of existing theory. The hypotheses, methods, & designs generated are severely flawed.	
	Reasoning & Critical Thinking	Student demonstrates adeptness in learning, assessing, integrating, and applying new information.	Student adequately demonstrates an ability in learning, assessing, integrating, and applying new information.	Student shows some signs of being able to learn, assess, integrate, and apply new information; however, they are erratic in the demonstration of these skills.	Student is resistant to incorporating new information. The student shows no initiative in the development/cultivation of their reasoning or critical thinking skills.	
	Theoretical Connections & Applications of Research	Student demonstrates a clear & thorough understanding of literature & research. Student skillfully addresses both obvious & subtle gaps in current theory/research, aptly connecting theory to hypothesis/findings. The research referenced clearly shows appropriate relevance, significance, breadth/scope.	Student demonstrates a good understanding of literature & research. Student acknowledges & addresses major issues in current theory/research, sufficiently connecting theory to hypothesis/findings. The research referenced shows appropriate relevance, significance, breadth/scope.	Student demonstrates an attempt at understanding literature & research. Student partially acknowledges & addresses issues in current theory/research, & attempts to connect theory to hypothesis/findings. The research referenced shows little appropriate relevance, significance, breadth/scope.	Student demonstrates no understanding of literature & research. Student does not acknowledge or address any issues in current theory/research, & does not connect theory to hypothesis/findings. Research referenced clearly shows no appropriate relevance, significance, breadth/scope.	
	Statistical Proficiency	Student exhibits an exceptional ability to read, interpret, apply, & communicate statistical information.	Student exhibits an adequate ability to read, interpret, apply, & communicate statistical information.	Student is able to read, interpret, apply, & communicate statistical information; however, they are erratic in the application of these skills.	Student is unable to read, interpret, apply, & communicate statistical information.	
Adaptability and Ambiguity	Intellectual Resilience	Student exhibits an exceptionally responsible, non-judgmental, patient, resilient demeanor throughout the learning process. Student acts & responds thoughtfully & constructively to obstacles & opportunities. Student clearly learns from mistakes & obstacles. Student maintains an exceptional level of organization, motivation, & focus throughout the learning process.	Student exhibits a responsible, non-judgmental, patient, resilient demeanor throughout the learning process. Student acts & responds thoughtfully & constructively to obstacles & opportunities. Student begins to incorporate lessons from encountering mistakes & obstacles. Student maintains a high level of organization, motivation, & focus throughout the learning process.	Student needs significant improvement in cultivating a responsible, non-judgmental, patient, resilient demeanor throughout the learning process. Student rarely acts & responds thoughtfully & constructively to obstacles & opportunities. Student does not incorporate lessons from encountering mistakes & obstacles. Student maintains an average to less than average level of organization, motivation, & focus throughout the learning process.	Student unable to cultivate a respectful and professional demeanor throughout the learning process. Student acts & responds rashly & inappropriately to obstacles & opportunities. Student does not demonstrate ability to learn lessons from encountering mistakes & obstacles. Student clearly lacks organization, motivation, & focus throughout the learning process.	
	Flexibility	Student expertly deals with ambiguous conditions. Student is receptive to feedback, is willing to learn or try new concepts/methods, & demonstrates an exceptional ability to adapt to changing circumstances.	Student effectively deals with ambiguous conditions. Student is relatively receptive to feedback, is willing to learn or try new concepts/methods, & demonstrates an increasing ability to adapt to changing circumstances.	Student is unsuccessful in attempting to deal with ambiguous conditions. Student is somewhat receptive to feedback, is reluctant to learn or try new concepts/methods, & demonstrates a limited ability to adapt to changing circumstances.	Student is unable to deal with ambiguous conditions. Student is resistant to feedback, will not learn or try new concepts/methods, & lacks the interest or ability to adapt to changing circumstances.	
Professional/Personal Development	Communication with Faculty & Peers	Student demonstrates highly sophisticated communication skills; active listening, engaged dialogue, professional courtesy, appropriateness (language, response time, etc.) Student is able to begin a network of professional resources & colleagues.	Student demonstrates good communication skills; active listening, engaged dialogue, professional courtesy, appropriateness (language, response time, etc.) Student is interested in building a network of professional resources & colleagues.	Student demonstrates few communication skills; shows little grasp of active listening, engaged dialogue, professional courtesy, appropriateness (language, response time, etc.) Student shows little interest in building a network of professional resources & colleagues.	Student demonstrates no appropriate communication skills & shows no interest in building a network of professional resources & colleagues.	
	Professional Skills	Student demonstrates exceptional familiarity with professional publications; continued interest in research, publication, presentations, etc.; seeks to develop & improve professional skills. Student may already have identified areas of research interest.	Student demonstrates a working familiarity with professional publications; displays interest in research, publication, presentations, etc.; seeks to develop & improve professional skills.	Student demonstrates little familiarity with professional publications; displays little interest in research, publication, presentations, etc.; does not seek to develop & improve professional skills.	Student demonstrates no familiarity with professional publications; displays no interest in research, publication, presentations, etc.; sees no value in developing & improving professional skills.	
Effective Communication	Style	Oral & written: Uses appropriate scientific language. Tone and subject fits target audience. Written: Demonstrates mastery of APA format, correct grammar/spelling. All communication (both oral & written) uses appropriate language & communicates at level of complexity & clarity appropriate for intended audience.	Oral & written: Uses appropriate scientific language, developing tone and subject to fit target audience. Written: Demonstrates good working skill, <10 APA formatting errors, <10 grammar/spelling errors. All communication uses appropriate language & communicates clearly but complexity/connections needs improvement.	Oral & written: Appropriate scientific language lacking, tone and subject do not align with target audience. Written: Demonstrates improving but rudimentary skill, <15 APA formatting errors, <15 grammar/spelling errors. Appropriate language somewhat lacking in all communication, clarity & complexity/connections need improvement.	Oral & written: Absence of any appropriate scientific language, tone and subject inappropriate for target audience. Written: Demonstrates no grasp of APA format & no basic language proficiency, >20 spelling/grammar errors. No subject or audience appropriate language, ideas unclear, lacks complexity & thought.	
	Structure & Organization	Projects (papers, presentations, posters, etc.) adhere to given guidelines & show perceptive logical development. As applicable, projects have relevant & clearly defined sections; thoughtful, seamless transitions; and clear, detailed graphics.	Projects adhere to given guidelines & show good logical development. As applicable, projects have few structural problems, have clearly defined sections & thoughtful transitions, & appropriate graphics.	Projects do not fully adhere to given guidelines & show marginal (but attempted) logical development. As applicable, projects have some obvious organization problems, show attempted logical development, have major sections but awkward transitions, & graphics are below average.	Projects do not adhere to any of the given guidelines & lack any coherent organization. As applicable, projects show no logical development; have few, if any, major sections with no transitions; & have subpar, if any, graphic elements.	
Resource Utilization	Time Management	Student effectively manages multiple tasks, allows adequate time for completion & revision. Student is able to respond to changes/obstacles & reallocate resources in order to maintain progress/meet deadlines.	Student maintains momentum on multiple tasks, allows adequate time for completion & revision. Student is improving in ability to respond to changes/obstacles & reallocate resources in order to maintain progress/meet deadlines.	Student struggles with managing multiple tasks, allows little time for completion & revision. Needs significant help in responding to changes/obstacles & reallocate resources in order to maintain progress/meet deadlines.	Student unable to manage multiple tasks, allows no time for completion & revision. Student does not respond to changes/obstacles & reallocate resources in order to maintain progress/meet deadlines.	
	Professional Resources & Support Services	Student demonstrates knowledge, use, & mastery of multiple online resources such as journals, databases, webinars/web courses, reference documents, videos, books, forums, etc. Student demonstrates knowledge, use, & mastery (as appropriate) of on campus resources such as library, research librarians, writing center, student success center, peer mentors, faculty.	Student demonstrates knowledge in use of multiple online resources such as journals, databases, webinars/web courses, reference documents, videos, books, forums, etc. Student demonstrates use & knowledge of on campus resources such as library, research librarians, writing center, student success center, peer mentors, faculty.	Student demonstrates little knowledge in use of multiple online resources such as journals, databases, webinars/web courses, reference documents, videos, books, forums, etc. Student has little knowledge or use of on campus resources such as library, research librarians, writing center, student success center, peer mentors, faculty.	Student demonstrates no knowledge in use of multiple online resources such as journals, databases, webinars/web courses, reference documents, videos, books, forums, etc. Student does not/refuses to use on campus resources such as library, research librarians, writing center, student success center, peer mentors, faculty.	