

MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT
M. A. PSYCHOLOGY
Spring 2003-Spring 2005

The mission of Southeastern Louisiana University is to meet the education and cultural needs, primarily of Southeast Louisiana, to disseminate knowledge and to facilitate life-long learning through quality instruction, research and service in a safe, student-centered environment.

The purpose of offering graduate study in the Department of Psychology is to provide students with a M.A. level of knowledge and skills that will prepare them for entry either into a Ph.D. program or a subprofessional position.

1. Goal 1

To train graduate students in practical research skills and critical thinking skills.

a. Assessment

(1) Criterion: A student will not be allowed to graduate with a M.A. in Psychology without at least acceptable competence in those skills listed in Working Goal 1.

(a) Procedure: An understanding of research and the manner by which research is conducted is accomplished both by formal course work plus actual experience in research. All students are required to take Psyc 635 (Experimental Design and Analysis) and Psyc 636 (Nonexperimental Design and Analysis). These four-hour courses cover design and statistics, and also require work on a research project as part of the course requirement. Students are required to earn a grade of at least a B in these courses. All students gain actual research experience when they are required to conduct a research project for their thesis work (Psyc 770). Some students gain additional research experiences by taking independent research (Psyc 549) as an elective. A student's research skills and knowledge are certified by faculty committee evaluations of their performance on thesis and on their comprehensive exams.

(2) Criterion: Alumni respondents will have positive ratings in terms of the questions relating to training in research and critical thinking skills.

(a) Procedure: All of the Alumni of our M.A. program will be surveyed using the questionnaire developed by Institutional Research at SLU. The questionnaire is entitled "A Survey of Graduate Degree Programs" and contains several questions rating satisfaction with the research training and critical thinking training.

b. Results Obtained

(1) As can be seen in Appendix A, students have performed quite well in the statistics/methods courses. Overall during the assessment period, 86% of the students passed the comprehensive exam in Psyc 635 (Experimental) and 90% of the students passed the comprehensive exam in Psyc 636 (Nonexperimental). The percentage of students passing the comprehensive exam requirement in Psyc 635 is comparable to that of the previous assessment period (88%) and the passing rate for Psych 636 is slightly lower than that of the previous assessment period (100%).

(2) During the current assessment period, seven students successfully completed research projects in Psyc 549.

(3) As can be seen in Appendix B, seventeen students successfully defended their theses during the assessment period.

(4) Institutional Research has not released the data from the survey of graduate alumni since 2001. Thus, we do not currently have access to data which assesses alumni attitudes towards their training.

c. Changes in the Program

As has been the case in the past, we have incurred significant turnover among the graduate faculty during the assessment period. However, despite this turnover, training in the areas of research and critical thinking remains strong.

d. Planned Changes.

No changes are planned in this area of the program.

2. Goal 2

To provide students with a broad body of knowledge representative of the current state of knowledge in Psychology.

a. Assessment

(1) Criterion: A student will not be allowed to graduate with a M.A. in Psychology without a broad base of knowledge of Psychology.

(a) Procedure: Students do not specialize in an area in the Psychology M.A. program; rather they are required to take a broad base of core courses. Thus, whether students are going on to Ph.D. programs in applied areas such as Cognitive or Physiological, they have had a broad base on which to build. Student' general knowledge is certified by faculty committee evaluations of their performance on thesis and on comprehensive exams. Additional evidence comes from performance on the LSU consortium exams which require a broad, general knowledge of the major areas of

Psychology (Note: only the subset of our students in the consortium program take these exams).

- (2) Criterion: Alumni respondents who enter Ph.D. programs will have positive ratings on questions relating to how well their M.A. training prepared them for further graduate work.
 - a) Procedure: All of the Alumni of our M.A. program will be surveyed using the questionnaire developed by Institutional Research of SLU. The questionnaire is entitled "A Survey of Alumni of Graduate Degree Programs" and contains several questions rating satisfaction with the curriculum.
- (3) Criterion: Fifty percent of the students who apply to doctoral programs will be admitted to a doctoral program.
 - a) Procedure: Psychology faculty will follow up on all graduate students for whom they write letters of recommendation to graduate schools, and report the results to the Graduate Coordinator.

(b) Results Obtained

- (1) (a) As can be seen in Appendix A, students continued to do extremely well on their SLU comprehensive exams in the various content areas. The overall pass rate for all comprehensive exams was 90%.
- (1) (b) Results from the LSU consortium exams (Appendix C) indicate an increase in performance in all areas except in the area of History & Systems where scores decreased. The decline in passing rates in the areas of History & Systems can be traced to graduate faculty turnover during the assessment period.
- (2) Institutional Research has not released the data from the survey of graduate alumni since 2001. Thus, we do not currently have access to data which assesses alumni attitudes towards their training.
- (3) As can be seen in Appendix D, our students are quite successful in gaining acceptance into doctoral programs after completing their M.A. at SLU. In fact, all but one student who applied to doctoral programs was eventually accepted. Thus, the goal of a 50% acceptance rate for those students applying to doctoral programs was exceeded.

a. Changes in Program

We have lost two tenure-track, graduate faculty members who were responsible for the instruction History & Systems and Physiological Psychology at the graduate level.

b. Planned Changes

We are planning to expand our graduate program by adding an Industrial/Organizational track. This expansion of our graduate program will also include the hiring of several new

faculty.

3. Goal 3

To permit pursuit of a Ph.D. degree in Psychology in the “Louisiana Consortium of Graduate Training in Psychology.”

a. Assessment

(1)Criterion: Each year at least one student will enter an LSU Ph.D. program through the consortium program. (Note: LSU limits the number of consortium students that they allow each year to 1 or 2).

a.Procedure: These figures are obtainable from LSU each year.

(4)Criterion: SLU will have at least two faculty qualifying as LSU Affiliate Graduate Faculty Members.

(a)Procedure: These figures are obtainable from the LSU graduate catalogue each year.

b. Results Obtained

(1) One student qualified to enter the LSU consortium program in 2003 and one student qualified in 2003; however, no students entered the LSU Consortium Program during the assessment period.

(2) LSU was contacted about including SLU graduate faculty members as LSU Affiliate Graduate Faculty Members. However, LSU currently accepts applications for Affiliate Graduate Status only under very special circumstances (e.g., no LSU faculty member in an area of expertise specifically required for a dissertation committee). Thus, unless a need at LSU arises, it is unlikely that SLU faculty members will be granted LSU Affiliate Graduate Status.

d. Changes in Program

We have disbanded the consortium relationship with LSU.

(3) Planned Changes

Because we no longer offer the consortium with LSU, we plan replace all assessment criteria related to the LSU consortium with new criteria.

4. Goal 4

To provide students who do not immediately wish to pursue a Ph.D. with a variety of courses that will help prepare them for subprofessional positions.

Assessment

(1)Criterion: Seventy five percent of the M.A. alumni who attempt to get jobs in Psychology will be successful.

(a)Procedure: Major professors will follow up on all of their graduate students receiving the M.A. and report the results to the Graduate Coordinator.

(2)Criterion: Alumni respondents who obtain jobs will have positive ratings on questions relating to how well their M.A. training prepared them for those jobs.

(a)Procedure: All of the Alumni of our M.A. program will be surveyed using the questionnaire developed by Institutional Research at SLU. The questionnaire is entitled “A Survey of Alumni of Graduate Degree Programs” and contains several questions rating satisfaction with how well the M.A. program trained them for jobs.

(3)Criterion: Students who plan to obtain subprofessional positions will include applied courses in their program.

(a)Procedure: Students are allowed to take up to nine hours of practicum work. Students are placed in a setting such as the Comprehensive Counseling Center on campus or the private practice of the Neuropsychological Center of Louisiana in Baton Rouge and allowed to engage in assessment and counseling under the guidance of a licensed Psychologist. This is a chance for students to operate in a manner more relevant to their future professional life than would be the case in the typical classroom setting.

b. Results Obtained

(1) As can be seen in Appendix E, 100% of the graduates who attempted to find subprofessional positions were successful. Thus, the goal of a 75% success rate was achieved.

(b) Institutional Research has not released the data from the survey of graduate alumni since 2001. Thus, we do not currently have access to data which assesses alumni attitudes towards their training.

(c)During assessment period, fourteen students successfully completed practicum courses.

b. Changes in the Program

No changes have been made in this area of the program

c. Planned Changes

No changes are planned in this area of the program

Appendix A

SLU Comprehensive Exam Summary S'03 to S'05

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Area</u> | <u># Taking</u> | <u># Passing</u> | <u>% Passing</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| S'03 | Nonexperimental (636) | 7 | 6 | 86 |
| S'03 | Physiological | 11 | 11 | 100 |
| F'03 | Experimental (635) | 12 | 9 | 75 |
| F'03 | Cognitive | 12 | 12 | 100 |
| F'03 | Social | 12 | 10 | 83 |
| S'04 | Nonexperimental (636) | 13 | 11 | 85 |
| S'04 | Physiological | 10 | 10 | 100 |
| F'04 | Experimental (635) | 9 | 9 | 100 |
| F'04 | Cognitive | 14 | 12 | 86 |
| F'04 | Social | 8 | 7 | 88 |
| S'05 | Physiological | 9 | 9 | 100 |
| S'05 | Nonexperimental (636) | 7 | 7 | 100 |
| Total | | 125 | 113 | 90 |

Appendix B

Thesis index S' 03 to S'05

| <u>Title</u> | <u>Author</u> | <u>Prof.</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|

| | | | |
|--|------------|-----|-------------|
| 1. The hybrid lineup procedure: Combining sequential and simultaneous lineups to test different array sizes | Dillon | HM | Spring 2003 |
| 2. Treatment acceptability of various psychotherapeutic techniques in the treatment of depression | Horton | PVS | Spring 2003 |
| 3. Some correlates of the James conditional reasoning test | Thomas | AB | Spring 2003 |
| 4. Effects of memory of social groups: Relative size and favorability of behaviors | Hutto | SC | Sum 2003 |
| 5. Is the bizarreness effect a special case of the Zeigarnik effect? | Readon | JW | Sum 2005 |
| 6. Verbal overshadowing and its effect upon recognition with wanted posters. | Walker | HM | Fall 2003 |
| 7. Eysenck's Psychopaths and the CRT: a misconduct study | Brazda | MR | Spring 2004 |
| 8. Effects of cognitive factors on food intake: Dietary restraint and body dissatisfaction | Deal | SP | Spring 2004 |
| 9. Monkeying around: A comparison of human and non-human primate play Behavior | Eisenstein | MR | Spring 2004 |
| 10. The bidimensional construct of appetitive and aversive processes and close relationships | Haynes | SC | Spring 2004 |
| 11. Tellegen's multidimensional personality questionnaire in violent and nonviolent female criminals: An exploratory study | Kenna | AB | Spring 2004 |
| 12. Emotional intensity and affect recognition in adults with ADHD | Abraham | AB | Spring 2004 |
| 13. Acceptability of treatments for obsessive-compulsive disorder | Lambert | PVS | Spring 2004 |

| | | | |
|---|---------|----|-------------|
| 14. Insensitivity to correlated features as related to abuse | Budwey | JW | Spring 2005 |
| 15. Impact of predictability and group valence on the effect of typicality on willingness to interact | Latu | SC | Spring 2005 |
| 16. Effects of visual exposure to the opposite sex on risk-taking behavior | Moss | JB | Spring 2005 |
| 17. Risk-taking as a terror management mechanism: The effects of self-presentation, mortality salience, and locus of control on risk taking | O'Grady | JB | Spring 2005 |

Appendix C

LSU Consortium Exam Summary F'00 to S'03

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Exam</u> | <u>#Taking</u> | <u>#Passing</u> | <u>%Passing</u> |
|-------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| S'03 | Biological Bases of Behavior | 3 | 2 | 67 |
| S'03 | History & Systems | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| F'03 | Cognitive | 6 | 6 | 100 |
| F'03 | Social | 6 | 4 | 67 |
| S'04 | Biological Bases of Behavior | 5 | 2 | 40 |
| S'04 | History & Systems | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| F'04 | Cognitive | 5 | 3 | 60 |
| F'04 | Social | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| S'05 | Biological Bases of Behavior | 5 | 2 | 40 |
| S'05 | History & Systems | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 38 | 19 | 50 |

Appendix D

Ph.D./Doctoral Admissions for Graduates S'03 to S'05

| <u>Semester</u> | <u>Graduating</u> | <u>Applying</u> | <u>Accepted</u> | <u>Accept. Rate</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| S'03 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| Sum 03 | 2 | 0 | * | * |
| F'03 | 1 | 0 | * | * |
| S'04 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 75% |
| F'04 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * |
| S'05 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| Total | 17 | 9 | 8 | 89% |

Appendix E

Employment for Graduates S'03 to S'05

| <u>Semester</u> | <u>Graduating</u> | <u>Seeking</u> | <u>Obtaining</u> | <u>Success Rate</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| S'03 | 3 | 0 | 0 | * |
| Sum 03 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| F'03 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100% |
| S'04 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| F'04 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * |
| S'05 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| <hr/> Total | 17 | 8 | 8 | 100% |