

# **Counseling & Psychology BS: 2019-2020**

## **Definition of Unit**

### **Providing Department:**

Counseling and Psychology BS

### **Department/Unit Contact:**

Barry Stein

### **Mission/Vision Statement:**

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.

## **Program Goal 1**

### **Define Goal:**

Maintain adequate faculty with appropriate expertise to deliver a quality program.

### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

#### **Benchmarks**

Several types of assessment measures are used to evaluate this goal. One measure is that faculty credentials meet SACS/COC standards. A second measure of adequate faculty is based on the indirect measure of student perceptions of teaching effectiveness using the IDEA system. We would expect teaching effectiveness to meet or exceed the University and National average if we had adequate faculty with appropriate expertise delivering a quality program. A third indirect measure involves the findings of external evaluations of the psychology program conducted approximately every four years. A fourth measure of adequate faculty to maintain a quality program is based on analysis of Delaware Cost Study data involving comparisons educational expenditures per Student Credit Hour SCH in the department to national expenditures in similar programs. The Delaware Cost Study findings also provide a way to compare the research productivity of faculty as measured by the amount of external funding generated across faculty in the department in comparison to national data for similar departments.

DRILL DOWN-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

## **Program Goal 1: Assessment**

### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Annual and following each semester (IDEA)

### **Rationale:**

#### **Assessments**

Several types of assessment measures are used to evaluate this goal. One measure is that faculty credentials meet SACS/COC standards. A second measure of adequate faculty is based on the indirect measure of student perceptions of teaching effectiveness using the IDEA system. We would expect teaching effectiveness to meet or exceed the University and National average if we had adequate faculty with appropriate expertise delivering a quality program. A third indirect measure involves the findings of external evaluations of the psychology program conducted every four to five years. A fourth measure of adequate faculty to maintain a quality program is based on analysis of Delaware Cost Study data involving comparisons educational expenditures per Student Credit Hour SCH in the department to national expenditures in similar programs. The Delaware Cost Study findings also provide a way to compare the research productivity of faculty as measured by the amount of external funding generated across faculty in the department in comparison to national data for similar departments.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

## **Program Goal 1: Results**

### **Results:**

#### **Results**

All faculty credentials for courses taught in this discipline have met SACS/COC standards. These results suggest we are using appropriately qualified instructors in our courses. Student evaluations of teaching in the program generally meet or exceed institutional and national averages when comparing the students' progress on relevant course objectives. External evaluations have consistently praised the quality of the program and the faculty in the program (reports are on file). The Delaware Cost Study findings comparing the department to a similar national comparison group reveal mixed findings. On the one hand, the department greatly exceeds the national average for externally supported research per FTE tenured and tenure track faculty. On the other hand, the direct instructional expenditure per SCH is a fraction of the national average. Our interpretation of these findings is that faculty research productivity is quite good, but that the University expenditures per SCH in this discipline are well below the national average for similar programs and indicates that more faculty are needed.

### **Attachments:**

Delaware SCH; IDEA\_2010-2015 Local Norms

## **Program Goal 2**

### **Define Goal:**

Maintain appropriate facilities and equipment to deliver a quality program and provide faculty with resources needed to succeed.

### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

#### **Benchmarks**

The assessment of this goal occurs by a variety of means both internal and external to the department. For example, the University evaluates the condition of every building on campus and plans for maintenance and renovation on a regular schedule. Instructional Technology Services (ITS) at TTU sets minimum standards for computer equipment used by faculty and students at the University. Equipment that does not meet this minimum standard in the department is disconnected and replaced. The Departmental faculty are also encouraged to evaluate the facilities, available equipment, research and testing material and services, and identify needs. External program evaluations are also conducted approximately every four years.

As COVID-19 hit during spring semester, the department engaged in a more ambitious effort to move everyone to laptop computers with office docking stations.

DRILL DOWN-----  
RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

## **Program Goal 2: Assessment**

### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Quarterly

### **Rationale:**

#### **Assessment**

The assessment of this goal occurs by a variety of means both internal and external to the department. For example, the University evaluates the condition of every building on campus and plans for maintenance and renovation on a regular schedule. Instructional Technology Services (ITS) at TTU sets minimum standards for computer equipment used by faculty and students at the University. Equipment that does not meet this minimum standard in the department is disconnected and replaced. The Departmental faculty are also encouraged to evaluate the facilities, available equipment, research and testing material and services, and identify needs. External program evaluations are also conducted every four to five years and evaluate the adequacy of the facilities and equipment for programs offered.

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Program Goal 2: Results**

#### **Results:**

#### **Results**

ITS routinely identifies computer systems every year that do not meet minimum specifications for the University that are housed in the department. Faculty have requested access to Ipad devices and laptop computers, as well as a variety of psychological testing instruments, and survey tools for data collection. Faculty request items when needed. Thus far we have been able to satisfy these requests.

As COVID-19 impacted the university during spring semester, the department expended funds to move all faculty to laptop computers with office docking stations. Faculty received either MacBook Airs, or PC compatible laptops with specifications to meet current ITS recommendations. Zoom Pro licenses were provided to all faculty.

#### **Attachments:**

### **Program Goal 3**

#### **Define Goal:**

Maintain sufficient student enrollment at the undergraduate level to ensure the viability of the program and course offerings.

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

##### **Benchmarks**

Two direct measures of student enrollment are used to evaluate this goal. These include the number of majors and the number of Student Credit Hours (SCH) generated by psychology courses.

## DRILL DOWN-----

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Program Goal 3: Assessment**

#### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Annually

#### **Rationale:**

##### **Assessments**

Two direct measures of student enrollment are used to evaluate this goal. These include the number of majors and the number of Student Credit Hours (SCH) generated by psychology courses. A lagging direct measure is the number of degrees conferred.

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Program Goal 3: Results**

#### **Results:**

#### **Results**

The number of undergraduate psychology majors has fluctuated over the last seven years. During the last four year period the number of majors has increased while the overall university enrollment has declined. We also experienced an increase in the number of transfer students from community colleges during this time period. During the same period the number of SCH has declined slightly. The slight decline in SCH is primarily a result of lower enrollment in our general psychology course which results from more transfer students and the proliferation of numerous courses created at TTU to satisfy the social science general education requirement. SCH in our upper division courses has actually increased during this time period.

#### **Attachments:**

Degrees Conferred 2014\_2018.pdf; Enrollment; SCH Fall 2016\_2019.pdf

### **Program Goal 4**

#### **Define Goal:**

Students enrolled in the undergraduate program will report that they are receiving accurate, personalized, and supportive academic advisement that is equal to (not statistically different from) or better than the institutional and national average.

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

##### **Benchmarks**

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) includes a question on the survey that provides a direct measure of student satisfaction with advisement. This survey is administered to a stratified random sample of freshmen and senior level students every three years at TTU.

## DRILL DOWN-----

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Program Goal 4: Assessment**

#### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Every 3 years

#### **Rationale:**

##### **Assessment**

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) includes a question on the survey that provides a direct measure of student satisfaction with advisement. This survey is administered to a stratified random sample of freshmen and senior level students every three years at TTU.

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Program Goal 4: Results**

#### **Results:**

The department has undergone a variety of changes in the delivery of advising services over the years. Early on students were advised by faculty. This model gradually shifted to professional advisors. As early as 2006 we began to receive complaints from students and tried to meet with the professional advisors in the College of Arts and Sciences where the major was originally housed. NSSE scores were well below the institutional average for freshmen and seniors. The failure to improve these advising services was one important factor in our decision to move the psychology major to the College of Education where the faculty are housed. The advising services our students receive from the professional advisors in the College of Education has resulted in much fewer student complaints and much higher NSSE advising related scores. Since 2006 our freshmen and senior scores have moved from below TTU and National averages to above TTU and National averages.

#### **Attachments:**

NSSE Advising Scores.pdf

### **Student Learning Outcome Goal 1**

#### **Define Goal:**

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

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

**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).**

#### **Benchmark**

The ETS major field test in psychology 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. We expect our students to score within one standard deviation of the national average for psychology.

DRILL DOWN-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

## **SLO Goal 1 Assessment**

### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Anually

### **Rationale:**

The ETS major field test in psychology 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.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

## **SLO Goal 1: Results**

### **Results:**

#### **Results**

The average scores of students graduating from the baccalaureate program in psychology were within one standard deviation of the national average on the ETS major field test in psychology in each of the preceding years with variations from year that are probably due to individual differences in student ability in each cohort. Some faculty have requested more information about the content of the ETS major field test in psychology so they could determine if there is content that is not being covered in their courses.

### **Attachments:**

ETS major field scores

## **Student Learning Outcome Goal 2**

### **Define Goal:**

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

### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

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

### **Benchmarks**

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. Indirect measures are also used 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 using results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that is conducted every three years.

DRILL DOWN-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

## **SLO Goal 2 Assessment**

### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Each Semester

### **Rationale:**

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. Indirect measures are used 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 using results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that is conducted every three years.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

## **SLO Goal 2: Results**

### **Results:**

#### **Results**

All graduates of the baccalaureate in psychology plan and conduct a senior thesis project for submission to the departmental faculty that involves a review of the literature, an oral proposal, data collection, statistical analysis, and preparation of a written report in APA format. Students are encouraged to present their research at regional and/or national meetings and venues. Students must complete the thesis in order to graduate with a degree in psychology. Results from the NSSE survey provide additional evidence of student engagement in high the impact practices described above and indicate that senior level psychology students at TTU are significantly more likely to have made class presentations, prepared two or more drafts

of a paper before turning it in, worked on a paper that required integrating information from multiple sources, and participated in a culminating senior thesis or experience than the average TTU senior or the average college senior nationally. These findings are consistent over the last three cycles of NSSE survey administration at TTU.

A rubric has been developed and distributed to students to ensure that all are aware of the competencies that we are seeking to achieve and are evaluating. This rubric has also been mapped onto the core curriculum and is shown in the Senior Thesis Rubric Course Matrix.

**Attachments:**

NSSE Scores Capstone.pdf; Senior Thesis Rubric Course Matrix.xlsx; Senior Thesis Rubric.docx

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**New Modifications and Continuing Improvement to Goals/Objectives/Outcomes Item**

**Program Changes and Actions due to Results:**

The faculty decided to make a concerted effort to better prepare and engage students in research activities to enhance their success and success in graduate school. This involved strongly motivating and encouraging student to complete quality research projects that could be presented to a national audience.

**Link to Assessment:**

A record number of student research projects (17) were accepted and presented at the national meeting of the APS in Washington DC last year. Many of these students went on to receive graduate fellowships across the country. This year the COVID-19 pandemic hit us during spring semester. Many projects had to be cut short and presentation opportunities were greatly curtailed if not completely eliminated as all travel has been eliminated. We are continuing to explore ways to effectively engage students in research and give them opportunities to present their research ideas whether it be to a limited audience or a virtual audience.

## **Student Learning Outcome Goal 3**

### **Define Goal:**

Students in the baccalaureate program in psychology will be ready for life-long success in their careers and for graduate study by preparing them to think critically, communicate effectively, learn on their own, and work effectively with others.

### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives:**

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

### **Benchmarks**

A variety of assessments are used to evaluate this goal. These assessment include direct measures of student performance such as their successful completion of the capstone senior thesis project (a mandatory requirement for graduation), performance on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), and performance on the Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT). In addition, several indirect measures involving student perceptions from the NSSE are used to evaluate this learning outcome goal and include 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.

DRILL DOWN-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **SLO Goal 3 Assessment**

#### **Frequency of Assessment:**

Each Semester, Annually, Every 3 Years

#### **Rationale:**

A variety of assessments are used to evaluate this goal. These assessment include direct measures of student performance such as their successful completion of the capstone senior thesis project (a mandatory requirement for graduation), performance on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), and performance on the Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT). In addition, several indirect measures involving student perceptions from the NSSE are used to evaluate this learning outcome goal and include student perceptions of whether the institution helped them learn how to think critically and analytically, work effectively with others, and speak clearly and effectively.

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **SLO Goal 3: Results**

#### **Results:**

#### **Results**

All students are required to successfully complete a senior thesis to graduate. In order to improve communication skills, the senior thesis involves an oral presentation of a research proposal and a poster presentation on the final day during which faculty from the department ask questions and discuss results with students in a conference like setting. This past year some of the presentations had to be done on Zoom because of the COVID-19.

All students are required to successfully complete a senior thesis to graduate. In addition, senior level students are required to take a variety of general education exit exams. In the past, psychology students had scored above the national average on the CCTST which is a test of reasoning skills. In more recent years the administration of the tests has not received the motivational encouragement of the retired VP who tried to ensure that students took the test seriously. Consequently, scores on this test have declined since the VP's retirement. Last year the administration of the CCTST was assigned to the college and department to administer in the hopes that students can be better motivated to perform on the test. Psychology majors also participate in taking the CAT exam which is widely used to assess student's critical thinking. Significant gains have been obtained on the CAT in several key courses within the program including "Information Literacy in Psychology", and "Problem Solving." Every three years the NSSE is administered at TTU. The results indicate that the perceptions of senior psychology majors at TTU compare favorably or are higher than other seniors at TTU and the national norms in several relevant areas. These areas include: the institution helping them to think critically and analytically, helping them communicate effectively, helping them work effectively with others.

#### **Attachments:**

Senior NSSE Responses.pdf

## RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### **New Modifications and Continuing Improvement to Goals/Objectives/Outcomes Item**

#### **Program Changes and Actions due to Results:**

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**Link to Assessment:**

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