

**Assessing the General Education Behavioral Science Division
Student Learning Outcomes in PSY 101:
Spring 2014 Update
submitted by
Dr. Tim Ficklin
5/21/2014**

Three credits of Chaminade University's General Education Requirements for all Baccalaureate Degrees include a Behavioral Science Course. General Psychology (PSY 101) is an optional course fulfilling this requirement. Consistent with the need for assessing student learning outcomes (SLO) at the program level, the student learning outcomes for the General Education Requirements also need to be assessed. As there is, at this time, no agreed upon approach for assessing the overall student learning outcomes for the General Education Requirements, it is necessary to perform this assessment of student learning outcomes within the specific course, in this case, the General Psychology course. The Chaminade University Catalog states that for the Behavioral Science Requirement the student will demonstrate:

1. The ability to apply the scientific method to the study of human behavior in various environmental contexts.
2. An understanding of human behavior relative to various environmental contexts.
3. An understanding of human behavior relative to adapting to various changing environmental contexts.

Day Program Results

Following the Fall 2013 administration, Dr.'s Mulford and Ficklin rewrote distractors for one item to clarify and increase potential passing rates of that item and totally replaced another item for the same purposes. A series of 15 multiple choice questions (five per student learning outcome) was constructed and was administered during the final exams in the two sections of the Spring 2014, Day Undergraduate (DUG) PSY 101, General Psychology course (N = 55). The questions were selected from 4 different chapters in the same "Exploring Psychology" textbook (CH's 1, 4, 11 & 13 currently—9th Edition—David G. Myers) and had been revised several times following a psychometric analysis in 2009. There was one instructor for the two sections assessed. The instructor for the two sections used a different text from the Exploring Psychology textbook. This was the eighth use of the developed instrument with a textbook being used for the class that was not the one from which the questions were originally drawn. The total sample size was 55 for the on campus, daytime students this semester.

Out of 15 possible correct answers, a mean total score of 10.164 (67%) with a standard deviation of 1.75 was obtained from the 55 student respondents. The KR20 reliability coefficient for the instrument was found to be 0.11 for these two day sections combined.

A frequency distribution table was constructed to show the distribution of total scores. It can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Total Score

Total Score	Frequency	Percentage	Cum. Percentage
6	3	5.5	5.5
7	1	1.8	7.3
8	5	9.1	16.4
9	8	14.5	30.9
10	11	20.0	50.9
11	16	29.1	80.0
12	8	14.5	94.5
13	2	3.6	98.2
14	1	1.8	100.0
Total	55	100.0	

The raw scores appear to be relatively normally distributed (Mean = 10.164, Median = 10.00, Mode = 11). On the total score, 83.6% scored 9 or above which represents a raw score of 60% or minimal passing).

SLO #1 The ability to apply the scientific method to the study of human behavior in various environmental contexts

Of the five questions assessing this SLO, 10.9% of the 55 students (6) answered 100% (5/5) correct; 38.2% (21) answered 80% (4/5) correct; 32.7% (18) answered 60% (3/5) correct; 14.5% (8) answered 40% (2/5) correct; and, 3.6% (2) answered 20% (1/5) correct. The mean score for this SLO assessment was 3.382 with a standard deviation of 0.991.

SLO #2 An understanding of human behavior relative to various environmental contexts

Of the five questions assessing this SLO, 25.5% of the 55 students (14) answered 100% (5/5) correct; 41.8% (23) answered 80% (4/5) correct; 30.9% (17) answered 60% (3/5) correct; and, 1.8% (1) answered 40% (2/5) correct. The mean score for this SLO was 3.909 with a standard deviation of 0.799.

SLO #3 An understanding of human behavior relative to adapting to various changing environmental contexts

Of the five questions assessing this SLO, 3.6% of the 55 students (2) answered 100% (5/5) correct; 30.9% (17) answered 80% (4/5) correct; 30.9% (17) answered 60% (3/5) correct; 21.8% (12) answered 40% (2/5) correct; 9.1% (5) answered 20% (1/5) correct; and, 3.6% (2) answered 0% correct (0/5). The mean score for this SLO was 2.873 with a standard deviation of 1.171.

Day Program Conclusions

The analysis of the data for assessing the General Education Behavioral Science Division SLO's in PSY 101, General Psychology classes in the Spring 2014 semester indicates that students have demonstrated an understanding of the three student learning outcomes. The average total score of 10.164 represents an overall passing score of 67.7%. Using a standard of 3 out of 5 questions answered correctly considered "passing" for each SLO, 81.8% passed SLO #1, 98.1% passed SLO #2 and 65.4% passed SLO #3. A further item analysis revealed that of the two items changed, one item (#15) still needs additional editing because only 27% passed it which is the lowest by far of any of the items. Changing this item before the Fall 2014 administration may help to increase the reliability of the instrument as well. Overall though, scores were higher for this administration than the previous one in the Fall 2013 semester (total mean 10.16 compared to 9.32) and standard deviation slightly lower (1.75 compared to 2.21).