

**Assessing the General Education Behavioral Science Division  
Student Learning Outcomes in PSY 101:  
Fall 2012 Update  
submitted by  
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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 2009-2010 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**

In order to continue to assess the General Education student learning outcomes, a series of 12 multiple choice questions (four per student learning outcome) was administered during the final exams in the sections of the Fall 2012, Day Undergraduate (DUG) PSY 101, General Psychology course (N = 120). The questions were previously drawn from 4 different chapters in the same "Exploring Psychology" textbook (CH's 1, 4, 11 & 15 currently—8<sup>th</sup> Edition) and had been revised following a psychometric analysis in 2009. There were three instructors for the four sections assessed. Another instructor participated, but lost the data prior to the analysis. One of the four instructors used a different text from the Exploring Psychology textbook. This was the fifth use of the developed instrument with a textbook being used that was not the one from which the questions were originally drawn. The total sample size was 120 for the on campus daytime students this semester.

Out of 12 possible correct answers, a mean total score of 7.825 (65.2%) with a standard deviation of 2.22 was obtained from the 120 student respondents. The KR20 reliability coefficient for the instrument was found to be 0.53.

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

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Total Score**

<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Cum. Percentage</u>
2	1	1	1
3	4	3	4
4	3	2	7
5	12	10	17
6	15	12	29
7	15	12	42
8	18	15	57
9	21	18	74
10	18	15	89
11	11	9	98
12	2	2	100
Total	120		

The raw scores appear to be slightly negatively skewed. On the total score, 58% scored 8 or above (passing).

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 23% of the 120 students (28) answered 100% (4/4) correct; 34% (41) answered 75% (3/4) correct; 30% (36) answered 50% (2/4) correct; 12% (14) answered 25% (1/4) correct; and, 1% (1) answered 0% correct. The mean score for this SLO assessment was 2.675 with a standard deviation of 0.989.

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 29% of the 120 students (35) answered 100% (4/4) correct; 42% (50) answered 75% (3/4) correct; 18% (21) answered 50% (2/4) correct; 9% (11) answered 25% (1/4) correct; and, 2% (3) answered 0% correct. The mean score for this SLO was 2.858 with a standard deviation of 1.023.

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 11% of the 120 students (13) answered 100% (4/4) correct; 32% (39) answered 75% (3/4) correct; 35% (42) answered 50% (2/4)

correct; 18% (22) answered 25% (1/4) correct; and, 3% (4) answered 0% (0/4) correct. The mean score for this SLO was 2.292 with a standard deviation of 0.999

### **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 Spring 2012, indicates that students have demonstrated an understanding of the three student learning outcomes. The average total score of 7.825 represents an overall minimally passing score of 65.2%. Using a higher standard, with 75% or 3 out of 4 questions answered correctly considered "passing" for each SLO, 57% passed SLO #1, 71% passed SLO #2 and 43% passed SLO #3.

A comparison of this administration (Fall 2012) to the most recent previous administration (Spring 2012, N = 53) revealed an decrease in total score means from 8.91 to 7.825. The standard deviations were very similar with only a slight difference (SD = 2.22 in Fall and 1.85 in Spring). The changes in SLO score means were also minimal (SLO#1 = 2.79 to 2.675, SLO#2 = 3.19 to 2.86 and SLO#3 = 2.92 to 2.29). Slight decreases in scores were noted on all SLO's. Since the Spring sections were all taught by the same instructor and had a much smaller N value, a comparison with the previous Fall semester might be more appropriate. The mean total score last Fall 2011 semester was 7.67 (N = 168) compared to 7.825 currently. SLO #1 was 2.63 compared to 2.67 currently. SLO #2 was 3.19 then compared to 2.858 currently and SLO #3 was 2.21 compared to 2.292 currently. Essentially, no differences shown from Fall 2011 to Fall 2012.

### **AEOP Results**

In order to continue to assess the General Education student learning outcomes for the AEOP (Accelerated Evening Online Program), the same series of 12 multiple choice questions (four per student learning outcome) which had been utilized for the Day Undergraduate Program previously was administered during the final exam in two sections of the Fall 2012 AEOP semester (N = 9). Only two evening, in-class sections were selected because of difficulties in maintaining test security for online administration. The questions were again drawn from 4 different chapters in the same "Exploring Psychology" textbook (CH's 1, 4, 11 & 15). This was not the textbook used for the class by either of the two instructors.

Out of 12 possible correct answers, a mean total score of 10.78 (89.8%) with a standard deviation of 0.441 was obtained from the 9 student respondents. The KR20 reliability coefficient for the instrument was reported as 0.00 indicative of a small standard deviation.

A frequency distribution table was constructed to show the distribution of total scores. It can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Total Score**

<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
10	2	22
11	7	78
Total	9	100

The small sample size yielding consistent high scoring leaves very little to interpret.

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 89% of the 9 students (8) answered 75% (3/4) correct; and 11% (1) answered 50% (2/4) correct. The mean score for this SLO assessment was 2.89 with a standard deviation of 0.333.

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 89% of the 9 students (8) answered 100% (4/4) correct; and, 11% (1) answered 75% (3/4) correct. The mean score for this SLO was 3.89 with a standard deviation of 0.333.

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

Of the four questions assessing this SLO, 100% of the 9 students (9) answered 100% (4/4) correct. The mean score for this SLO was 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.0.

**AEOP Conclusions**

The analysis of the data for assessing the General Education Behavioral Science Division SLO's in PSY 101, General Psychology two AEOP classes in Fall 2012, indicates that students have demonstrated an understanding of the three student learning outcomes. The small sample size and consistent high achievement limits the ability for further interpretation.

### **Day Results compared to AEOP Results**

A comparison of the results obtained from the Day students to the AEOP students was not performed this semester. The small sample size and outstanding performance of the AEOP students would limit the validity and usefulness of such an analysis. Further studies will be conducted with students in the Spring 2013 sections.