

Department of Psychology

College of Education and Allied Professions

2015

Program Review

Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts

Degree Programs

Contacts

Alvin Malesky, Department Head

malesky@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.3357

Windy Gordon, Undergrad Program
wgordon@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.3361

Lori Unruh, Graduate Program
lunruh@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.2738

Kia Asberg, Clinical Program Director
kasberg@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.3451

Tom Ford, Experimental Program Director
tford@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.2109

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1-2
Standard 1	3-5
The purpose of the program reflects and supports the mission and strategic vision of Western Carolina University and the mission of its School or College	
Standard 2	5-7
The program engages in ongoing, systematic planning that is reflective of the University's strategic plan	
Standard 3	7-12
The program provides and evaluates a high quality curriculum that emphasizes student learning as its primary purpose	
Standard 4	12-15
The program has sufficient faculty resources to meet its mission and goals	
Standard 5	15-18
The program has sufficient faculty resources to meet its mission and goals	
Standard 6	18-19
The program has an administrative structure that facilitates achievement of program goals and objectives	
Standard 7	20-22
The program has adequate resources to meet its goals and objectives	

APPENDICES

Supporting Documentation

Executive Summary

The Psychology Department houses one of the largest undergraduate majors at Western Carolina University (WCU). The department also offers a three year Specialist in School Psychology degree and a Masters of Arts degree in General Psychology. The General Psychology program has two tracks (Clinical and General-Experimental). The School Psychology program is accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and will not be addressed in the current self-study. The McKee Clinic is also housed within the Psychology Department and provides psychological services to WCU students and community clients. The clinic is staffed by advanced graduate students who are supervised by graduate faculty and our licensed Clinic Director.

The Psychology Department's greatest strength is its dedicated and gifted faculty. There are currently 11 tenured, six tenure-track (three in their first year), four fixed-term faculty members and an administrative support associate in the department. One of the tenured faculty members ended his phased retirement in December of 2015. Another tenured faculty member is currently on phased retirement.

Many of the faculty in the department are skilled educators and have received or have been nominated for university and national teaching and mentorship awards. In addition, most of the psychology faculty is actively involved in service to the college, university, and region. This includes but is not limited to faculty serving as Chair of the Faculty Senate and faculty serving on national professional boards and nonprofit boards in the community. In addition to teaching and service virtually all members of the Psychology Department are actively engaged in scholarship. In fact, several members of our faculty are widely considered experts in their respected field and are sought out by regional, national and international media outlets. Our faculty routinely involve both undergraduate and graduate students in their research projects. This is evident by the fact that many of our graduate students are published in peer-reviewed academic journals. Further, last year over 50 of our undergraduate and graduate students presented research at regional and national conferences.

The exceptional faculty in the Psychology Department is a major contributing factor to the unprecedented growth of our undergraduate major. We currently have over 400 active majors (114% growth in the past 10 years), making Psychology one of the largest majors on campus. In addition, the number of students in our minor has grown 660% in the past decade (53 in 2005 to over 350 in 2015). This growth has placed a notable strain on our department. For example, our sustained growth over the past 10 years has translated into an increased demand for upper-level psychology courses to meet the graduation needs of our majors and minors. Each major requires at least ten (10) upper-level psychology courses (not counting intro psychology or our two statistics courses) and each minor requires a minimum of five (5) upper-level courses (not

counting intro psychology). Many of our courses are at 100% capacity, with capacity set by the maximum number of seats allowed in the classroom.

Fortunately, our Dean, Dr. Dale Carpenter, appreciates the challenges that have accompanied our sustained growth. Last year he created a new Clinic Director position for the McKee Clinic with teaching responsibilities in the Psychology Department. In addition, he recently converted a .8 master's level position to a 1.0 doctoral level position and additionally allocated a new tenured-track position to the department. These new positions will alleviate some of the pressure associated with our growth. Specifically, we will soon be able to offer additional upper-level courses thereby increasing course availability for our students.

Although our current undergraduate curriculum is in line with national standards for the teaching of psychology we plan on reviewing our curriculum at the start of the spring 2016 semester to make sure that we are providing the best possible education options for our students as well as to make sure that we are in a position to optimally accommodate our growth. Curriculum changes, however, will be made based on pedagogical rationale and not simply to address growth demands. It is imperative that we continue to provide a high quality educational experience to our students regardless of the size of our major. In updating the curriculum we will rely heavily on the most recent APA Guidelines for Undergraduate Curriculum and on recommendations emanating from the current program review.

As previously stated, the School Psychology program is evaluated by its own accrediting body and is thus not considered in this program review. The two tracks of the General Psychology program (Clinical and General-Experimental), however, are evaluated in this review. These tracks typically enroll relatively small cohorts (six to eight for Clinical and four to five for General-Experimental) of highly competitive students. On average, students in the Clinical track have some of the highest GPA and GRE scores of all graduate programs at WCU. Students in both tracks are productively engaged in research and often have multiple presentations at professional conferences and even publications by the time they graduate from WCU. In addition, students in the Clinical track provide psychological services (under supervision) at the McKee Clinic and in the community via their practicum placements. Finally, selected students in both tracks serve as Instructor of Record for sections of Psy-150 (intro psychology) courses. These students take a course on teaching psychology and are closely supervised by experienced faculty.

The Psychology Department has submitted a *Permission to Plan* request for a doctoral program in Psychology (Psy.D.) to the UNC General Administration. Rationale for this decision is provided in Section One. Guidance is sought from the review team on how best to leverage our limited resources while establishing the doctoral program should we be granted permission to move forward with offering this degree.

Significance and Scope of the Program

Standard 1: The purpose of the program reflects and supports the mission and strategic vision of Western Carolina University and the mission of its School and/or College.

Western Carolina University: Mission

Western Carolina University creates learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research, service, and engagement through on campus, off campus, on-line and international experiences. The university focuses its undergraduate, master's and three doctoral programs, educational outreach, research, creative, and cultural activities to sustain and improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in our region, state, and nation.

Western Carolina University's Strategic Plan is included as Appendix 1-A.

College of Education and Allied Professions: Mission

Our college provides high-quality programs to our students in all of areas of study, with emphasis on professional education and allied professions. We prepare graduates who will positively impact the region as educators, administrators, and other professionals, in schools and other professional community settings. We actively engage in our region as teacher-scholars through collaboration, consultation, direct services, and scholarly endeavors, in a variety of environments.

The College of Education and Allied Profession's Strategic Plan is included as Appendix 1-B.

Department of Psychology: Mission

The Department of Psychology provides the state, region, and university with a center of teaching and scholarship in the psychological sciences. The most important expression of this occurs through effective instruction in the undergraduate and graduate psychology curricula. The department offers a wide-array of undergraduate courses but requires students to complete "core" subject courses (e.g., statistics and research methods, history of psychology, senior seminar capstone) most frequently recommended by national committees that evaluate psychology curricula. Both undergraduate and graduate psychology curricula are delivered by a committed faculty, many of whom have earned awards for teaching excellence, and some of whom have national and international reputations as practitioners and scholars across a diverse range of research specialties (faculty CVs are included as Appendix 1-C). Some of the faculty in applied specialty areas are actively engaged in regionally-focused consultative services, including healthcare psychology, school psychology, and forensic psychology (e.g., public safety personnel selection and hiring).

The McKee Clinic, operated by the Department of Psychology, offers an array of psychological services to the public at large, provided by faculty and advanced graduate students. Initiated in 2004, this clinic specializes in comprehensive psychological assessment, a critical service that is very difficult to obtain elsewhere in our rural region. We are able to serve approximately 100 clients a year at very low cost, at the same time providing valuable real-world training for our graduate students. We have recently hired a full-time Director and are actively working to expand our services and scope.

One distinctive aspect of the undergraduate psychology program at Western Carolina University is its emphasis on engaging students in intentional learning opportunities outside of traditional classroom activities. This is accomplished through a wide-ranging internship program (for academic credit), which places students in a variety of positions providing support to the region, a concerted focus on the use of service learning to supplement classroom work in a variety of courses, and an active program of undergraduate involvement in faculty research projects (for which academic credit is also earned). Last year students recorded 16,126 hours of student service to the community via service learning activities (Appendix 1-D). Internship sites are listed in the Internship Manual (Appendix 1-E). Students also have the opportunity for international travel. For example, students visit Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps as part of a Psychology of Hate travel course (Appendix 1-F).

As well as internships, the Department of Psychology sees collaborative research activities with students as an integral part of its teaching mission. A growing focus on scholarly activity in the department has fostered a *culture of research* that benefits students and faculty alike. Under the guidance of experienced faculty researchers, undergraduate and graduate students complete a range of hands-on research projects throughout their studies, many of which result in regional and national conference presentations, with some leading to publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The department also organizes a weekly research colloquium series that is always well-attended, particularly by faculty and graduate students, and which features expert speakers from Western Carolina University and other institutions in the wider region. The fall Research Colloquium Schedule is listed in Appendix 1-G.

In addition to delivering psychological services to the community, providing a research-oriented undergraduate major and graduate courses to prepare students for successful entry into doctoral programs, the Department of Psychology also provides extensive support to other areas of the University. One important example is in offering a number of courses required of Education students (e.g., Development Psychology, Educational Psychology), in support of the College of Education and Allied Professions mission. The department also supports the University's mission through offering courses within the Liberal Studies program (e.g., General Psychology, Human Sexuality, Developmental Psychology) which are extremely popular with students outside of our major.

Finally, it should be noted that Western Carolina University has offered high-quality graduate programs in psychology, including the Master's in Clinical Psychology (M.A.) and the Specialist in School Psychology (S.S.P.), for more than 40 years. In response to the university's 2020 Strategic Plan (Appendix 1-A), increase in student demand and regional/societal need, we have proposed a practitioner-focused doctoral degree program in Clinical-School Psychology. In applied psychology specialties, the Psy.D. degree indicates practitioner-oriented training and is distinct from the research-intensive Ph.D. To better meet the needs of our large and underserved region in western North Carolina, we seek to offer a combined specialty program to provide training both in clinical psychology and school psychology. Our conceptualization of training in clinical and school psychology regards the science and the professional practice of psychology at the doctoral level occurring on an integrated and incremental continuum, rather than as mutually exclusive areas of focus. This doctoral program is completely congruent with the regional engaged mission of WCU and the CEAP. The Psy.D. proposal has institutional support and appears to have support at General Administration (GA); however, as of this writing we have yet to receive formal approval to submit a comprehensive plan for the program to GA.

Standard 2: The program engages in ongoing, systematic planning that is reflective of the University's strategic plan.

Program's strategic goals/objectives.

Undergraduate. The department's integrated learning plan (ILP) (Appendix 2-A) was implemented in the fall semester, 2012, and is effective until spring semester, 2017. The plan includes the following program goals - each comprised of specific objectives: (1) Knowledge Base - Students will demonstrate familiarity with major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology; (2) Research Methods - Students will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, interpretation, and presentation of findings; (3) Critical Thinking Skills - Students will reflect the use of critical thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes; (4) Application - Students will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues; and (5) Values - Students will value evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect human values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a discipline.

Graduate. We have a *Specialist in School Psychology program (SSP)* within the department that is reviewed by an accrediting body (NASP) and is thus outside the scope of the current review. The two concentrations (tracks) within the M.A. in Psychology program have distinct goals that were revised in the summer of 2015.

Following are the goals of the *Clinical* concentration. Students will demonstrate: (1) an ability to function as culturally competent and ethically-minded mental health professionals and researchers in a variety of settings and systems; (2) an understanding

of core areas of psychology (clinical, developmental, cognitive, biological, personality) designed to provide a higher level theoretical and applied orientation, (3) an ability to competently administer and interpret cognitive, academic, behavioral, emotional, and social assessment tools, and provide consultation to clients, care givers, and systems and (4) an ability to function as scientist-practitioners who can effectively interpret, utilize, apply, and conduct empirically based research; and (5) a proficiency in gathering clinical data, identifying psychopathology, utilizing diagnostic classification systems, identifying appropriate diagnoses, and implementing evidence-based treatment in adherence with ethical principles. See Appendix 2-B for the Clinical Handbook.

Following are the goals of the *General-Experimental* concentration. Students will: (1) demonstrate an ability to function as culturally competent and ethically-minded researchers; (2) demonstrate a more developed understanding of core areas (social, cognitive, developmental, physiological) of psychology designed to prepare them to continue on to a doctoral program in the area of psychology; (3) demonstrate an ability to function as scientists who can effectively interpret, utilize, apply, and conduct empirically based research; (4) complete additional hours of directed study with a faculty member with the intent of developing a publishable project and presenting at professional conferences. See Appendix 2-C for the General Experiential Handbook.

Process for developing and modifying goals/objectives.

Undergraduate. The goals and objectives for the undergraduate program are defined by the department. Proposed changes would be discussed at a department faculty meeting with open discussion and voting on changes as necessary. If a change in goals or objectives calls for a curricular change then the Director of Undergraduate Studies would submit those proposed changes as described in Standard 3.

Graduate. Each of the two concentrations within the M.A. Psychology program has a Curriculum Committee that meets regularly to discuss curriculum and/or program changes. The department's Graduate Committee reviews recommendations from the Clinical Committee and the General-Experimental Committee, and that committee's recommendations are reviewed at the department's faculty meetings. After these reviews program directors submit proposed changes through Curriculog for approval at the College and University levels.

Relation of program goals/objectives to curricular and programmatic activity.

Please see Standard Three for a comprehensive review of goals/objectives.

Process of implementing program goals/objectives

Undergraduate. The current goals and objectives for the undergraduate program were identified in the fall semester 2012 and implemented as the department's integrated learning plan (ILP). (See Appendix 2-A).

Graduate. The goals and objectives for the Clinical and General-Experimental concentrations are effective for the 2015-2016 academic year. They are currently being

implemented and will be evaluated based on the performance standards outlined in the Unit Assessment Plans (see Appendix 3-G-E).

Standard 3. The program provides and evaluates a high quality curriculum that emphasizes student learning as its primary purpose.

Undergraduate Programs

Undergraduate Degree Requirements

The undergraduate degree in Psychology is described in Appendix 3-U-A and at http://catalog.wcu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=36&pooid=4861&hl=Psychology+major&returnto=search.

Students must complete the Liberal Studies and major courses, a minor, a second major or an approved program (AP). The AP is a customized set of courses in lieu of a minor. The majority of our graduates complete an existing minor rather than an AP or second major. Students must also complete 30 credits at the 300/400 level as a resident student. Finally, the student must have at least a 2.0 GPA overall and in the major.

Western's curriculum aligns well with APA standards for the Undergraduate Psychology major

The Intended Learning Outcomes in Western's undergraduate Psychology major are consistent with the APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (APA, 2013).

APA Goal 1: Knowledge Base in Psychology. This goal is explicitly addressed as Goal 1 in the department's Intended Learning Outcomes (see Appendix 2-A).

APA Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking. This goal is explicitly addressed as part of Goal 2 in the department's Intended Learning Outcomes (see Appendix 2-A).

APA Goal 3: Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World. Responsibilities and ethics are included as Goal 5 in the department's Intended Learning Outcomes (see Appendix 2-A). The cultural and ethnic diversity of the faculty is described elsewhere in the report. Diversity within our students is similar to Western's overall profile (see Appendix 3-U-B).

APA Goal 4: Communication. This goal is explicitly addressed as part of Goal 2 in the department's Intended Learning Outcomes (see Appendix 2-A).

APA Goal 5: Professional Development. Our students have excellent opportunities for professional development in independent research (PSY 280 and PSY 480) and we offer between 3 and 12 credits for Internship (PSY 483, 484, 485 and 486). Internships can be arranged locally or at remote sites. We also provide opportunities through our regular colloquia series.

Pre-requisite requirements in the undergraduate curriculum are upheld.

General Psychology (PSY 150) stands as a pre-requisite for all courses in the core and area requirements of the major except for Child Development (PSY 320). PSY 320 is an “Upper Level Perspective” (ULP) course within the university Liberal Studies curriculum. ULPs must be taught at the 300 or 400 level AND may not require pre-requisites other than class standing. Otherwise, PSY 150 is required and not waived for our major courses.

Research Methods and Data Analysis II (PSY 272) is the pre-requisite for Cognitive (PSY 444), Learning (PSY 446) and the Senior Seminar (PSY 495). This pre-requisite is sometimes adjusted through either substituting Statistics (MATH 170) for PSY 272 or by allowing a student to take PSY 272 at the same time as the other courses. These arrangements are not common, perhaps 15 students per year out of our 400+ majors.

The sequence and structure of the curriculum.

The core courses and area requirements in the Psychology major were selected to teach undergraduate students about the major areas in our discipline. Appendices 3-U-C.1 through 3-U-C.20 are examples of syllabi for each course that meets a core or area requirement in the undergraduate major.

Students generally take General Psychology (PSY 150), Research Methods and Data Analysis I (PSY 271) and Research Methods and Data Analysis II (PSY 272) in their first four semesters. History of Psychology (PSY 455) and Senior Seminar (PSY 495) are specifically reserved for the student’s senior year.

Students may complete courses in four of the five areas (Developmental Processes, Personality and Social Psychology, Biological Bases of Behavior, and Applications in Psychology) in any order they choose. However, Cognition (PSY 444) or Learning (PSY 446) should only be taken after Research Methods and Data Analysis II (PSY 272). Further, Senior Seminar (PSY 495) should only be taken after PSY 444 or PSY 446. This sequence is required because of a cross-curriculum requirement of writing a research proposal in PSY 272, PSY 444 or PSY 446 and PSY 495.

Amount of time needed to complete the curriculum

Between 2010 and 2015 the average number of years to complete the B.S. in Psychology has ranged from 4.1 (2012) to 3.8 (2013, 2014 and 2015) (see Appendix 3-U-D).

Alignment of curriculum to meet University needs

The psychology program aligns clearly with the university’s five core learning goals. Appendix 2-A shows how the psychology program learning goals map onto the university goals.

The Psychology department offers several courses that are important in the Liberal Studies curriculum. Over the last five years the department has offered multiple sections of General Psychology (PSY 150; Perspective P1), the Freshman Seminar in Psychology (PSY 190), Human Development: Childhood (PSY 320; Upper Level Perspective) and Human Sexuality (PSY 331; Upper Level Perspective). Appendix 3-U-E lists the number of sections offered, average size for all sections and student credit hour production for these courses.

Finally, the Psychology department teaches Psychology Applied to Learning and Teaching (PSY 323). This is a service course taught for students in the Teacher Education program. Psychology majors cannot take this course. Appendix 3-U-E also lists the number of sections offered, average size for all sections and student credit hour production for this course.

Statement of course objectives that reflect the expected student learning outcomes of the program in all syllabi

Appendix 3-U-F lists every declared student-learning objective from every course syllabus from 2015 for the five departmental learning goals (and 13 sub goals) as laid out in our ILP (see Appendix 2-A). The number of empty cells in the matrix does not clearly represent all the concepts taught in these classes as courses cover material that is not formally listed as learning objectives in the course syllabi. The undergraduate committee is planning to arrange a work session to review how syllabi should explicitly relate assignments and experiences in their classes to the department goals and sub goals. This should allow us to be more specific in what we declare on our syllabi.

Internal processes used by the program to modify the curriculum or program

The Psychology Department has an Undergraduate Committee of five members of the faculty, appointed by the head of the department, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, as chair, and the head of the department (*ex officio*). The committee meets as needed to discuss the status of the undergraduate program. Suggestions for changes in the undergraduate program requirements go first to this committee. Recommendations from this committee are then forwarded to the full faculty for a vote.

Course changes are implemented by individual course instructors. The course change or course addition is forwarded sequentially to the departmental, college and university curriculum committees. When a course is taught by multiple instructors the head of the department designates a member of the faculty to oversee the change.

Changes in the major requirements are implemented by the head of the department or by the Director of Undergraduate Studies at the direction of the head of the department. Changes that require approval are forwarded sequentially to the departmental, college and university curriculum committees. Changes that are not strictly curricular do not need curriculum committee approval but are presented to the college Leadership Council and the Dean of the College and then forwarded to the Registrar for implementation.

Learning outcomes and Learning Outcomes Assessment

The department's Intended Learning Outcomes and the processes for assessing the outcomes are summarized in the ILP (see Appendix 2-A).

Graduate Programs: M.A. General Psychology Clinical Psychology Concentration and General Experimental Psychology Concentrations

Graduate Degree Requirements & Alignment of curriculum with disciplinary standards

The program curriculum for both concentrations (tracks) for the M.A. General Psychology graduate program is provided in Appendix 3-G-A and is located at the following link:

http://catalog.wcu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=38&poid=5141&returnto=1332

The *M.A. in Clinical Psychology* curriculum meets the standards set forth by the North Carolina Board of Psychology, specifically the North Carolina Psychology Practice Act (1NCAC54.1802 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATE).

<http://www.ncpsychologyboard.org/Office/PDFfiles/PRACACT.pdf>

Course selection is designed to a) allow students to meet requirements for licensure upon completion of the program, and b) prepare students for doctoral level study by providing them with ample training in evidence-based assessment, psychotherapy, and research.

The *M.A. in General Experimental Psychology* curriculum was redesigned in 2009. The current curriculum reflects a common disciplinary emphasis on research experience and course work in core academic areas of psychology including *social, cognitive, developmental, learning, and physiological psychology*.

Course selection is designed to prepare students for doctoral level study. Through intensive research with faculty mentors and coursework, the M.A. program provides students with an informed basis for choosing a doctoral program, as well as, greater research skills, expertise in core areas of psychology, and credentials to pursue a doctoral degree.

Amount of time needed to complete the curriculum

Both the *Clinical and General Experimental* programs are designed to be completed within a 2 year time-frame but some students require an additional semester in order to complete the thesis requirement. A review of the data for program graduates over the past five years provided by the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness indicates that time-to-degree ranged from 2.0 to 2.3 years. See Appendix 3-G-B for specific data.

Multi or interdisciplinary strengths of the program

The *Clinical Psychology* program is based on a scientist-practitioner model of training. Research is conducted across disciplines of psychology (clinical, school, experimental, cognitive, neuropsychological) and related fields (social work, criminology and criminal justice, and counseling). The applied training is carried out in a variety of settings (the WCU Psychological Services Clinic, VA hospitals, correction agencies, schools, community mental health agencies etc.). The *General Experimental Psychology* program places a strong emphasis on conducting research in more than one core academic disciplines in psychology. With both programs, faculty from a variety of disciplines within the department as well as in other departments are involved in supervision and mentoring of students.

Alignment of curriculum to meet University needs

The *Clinical* program is aligned closely with the mission of the University and the College of Education and Allied Professions (CEAP) through the integration of coursework, research, and hands-on practicum experiences, as well as an emphasis on community engagement. Specifically, students are actively involved in the provision of services to the region through various practicum experiences, including our Psychological Services Clinic (a.k.a. The McKee Clinic), Jackson Psychological Services, and the Charles George VA Medical Center. Further, students are trained to administer and interpret evidence-based psychological assessments, conduct diagnostic interviews, identify and implement treatments for a wide range of psychosocial difficulties, and to utilize the science of psychology in promoting the wellbeing of the community.

Statement of course objectives that reflect the expected student learning outcomes of the program are in all syllabi

The syllabi for all courses within both the *Clinical and General Experimental* programs clearly reflect the expected student learning outcomes as outlined in Appendix 3-G-C. A copy of all course syllabi is provided in Appendix 3-G-D.1 through Appendix 3-G-D.11

Internal process(es) used by the program to modify the curriculum

The *Clinical and General Experimental* programs both complete curriculum reviews each year to ensure that the curriculum continues to adequately prepare students for entry into doctoral programs and/or professional licensure. This includes ongoing monitoring of licensure requirements and professional training guidelines provided by APA.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

Learning outcomes expressed as measurable statements of what students will know or be able to do upon completion of the program.

The Learning Outcomes for each program are provided in Appendix 3-G-C.

Consistency between the required curriculum and the intended learning outcomes.

As seen in the matrices provided for each program in Appendix 3-G-C and Appendix 3-G-E, the curriculum provided in both the Clinical and General Experimental programs align well with the program learning outcomes for each program.

Assessment measures that are explicitly designed to provide results to inform curricular decision-making.

The Annual Program Assessment reports provided in Appendix 3-G-F illustrate in detail the types of assessments completed by both the *Clinical and the General Experimental* programs in relation to curricular decision-making. For both the *Clinical* and *General Experimental* programs, course grades are reviewed, Thesis Prospectus scores are reviewed, final Thesis submissions are reviewed, student completion and presentation of professional presentations of independent research projects are evaluated, and student application and acceptance into doctoral programs at the end of the program is evaluated. In addition the *Clinical* program also considers evaluations from professionals, who are not members of the faculty (e.g., practicum site supervisors).

Consistent use of assessment results to make changes/modifications to the curriculum.

In 2014, both the Clinical and General Experimental graduate programs added a new course, PSY 599, to their curricula. This course was designed to allow the graduate students to begin work with their thesis director earlier and allow for a more timely and consistent oversight of student progress toward the completion of the thesis. Previously this responsibility had been placed on the instructor of the PSY 652 Statistics and Research course. The new design allows the thesis director to guide the development of the thesis project from the very beginning. This has added clarity to students' thesis development.

Additional appendices include:

Appendix 3-G-G – Graduate Program Student Enrollment

Appendix 3-G-H – Graduate Program Course Offerings and Mean Class Size

Appendix 3-G-I – Graduate Program Course Sequence

Standard 4: The program has sufficient faculty resources to meet its mission and goals.

Faculty credentials

The department's faculty is highly credentialed. Currently, seventeen of the 19 full time faculty members have terminal degrees. The other two faculty members have a master's degree. All tenure/tenure-track faculty possess doctoral level training, most with Ph.Ds. There are also two

faculty members on phased retirement, one in the first year and one who completed his third (and final year) in December. Vitas for the faculty are listed in Appendix 1-C.

Demographic representativeness of the faculty

The psychology department has ten male and nine female full-time faculty members. Of these 19 faculty, nine are tenured, six are tenure track, and four are fixed term (yearly contracts). A fixed term is typically an annually renewable contract that has a heavier course work expectation and a lower research expectation. The psychology department is not racially or ethnically diverse.

Span of faculty backgrounds

The expertise of the faculty represents well both the content of the discipline and the undergraduate and graduate instructional programs of the department. Currently among the full-time doctoral level faculty there are four experimental psychologists (including expertise in cognitive neuropsychology), two social psychologists, three clinical psychologists, five school psychologists, three educational psychologists, one developmental psychologist, and one forensic psychologist. The major areas of expertise underrepresented in the department are adult development, health psychology and industrial/organizational psychology. Relative to the makeup of the department's students, school/educational is overrepresented, but many of these faculty members teach courses outside the school/educational area.

Faculty development

Faculty are involved in a wide variety of faculty development activities. The department's faculty are actively involved in research and publishing (see Appendix 1-C). Especially impressive is the involvement of faculty members with undergraduate and graduate students in conducting presentations at the Southeastern Psychological Association Meetings. Several faculty members have editorial responsibilities with journals or are officers of national organizations. Clinical faculty members with licenses participate in regular continuing education to maintain their licenses.

Professional and pedagogical opportunities for faculty

Tenure-line faculty receive \$750 for professional development. Full-time tenured contract faculty receive \$650. Faculty are able to supplement these funds for travel by taking advantage of the Chancellor's travel fund (\$1200) and Project Value funds (\$500). Some funding for pedagogical development is available through the Coulter Faculty Commons.

Work environment

The work environment in the department is quite positive. The additional space for research and clinical work afforded by the McKee Clinic has greatly improved the work environment. A positive environment is also demonstrated by the frequent cooperation of multiple faculty

members in research projects. The department meets monthly, has an annual retreat and has an active set of committees.

Distribution of instructional loads

Tenure-line faculty teach a base course load of 3/3, with an expectation of scholarly productivity. Few course releases are assigned. The Department Head teaches half-time; the faculty director of the McKee clinic receives two course releases; program directors with clinical duties receive a course release; and one faculty member who is Chair of the Senate teaches half time (funded outside of the department). Full-time fixed-term faculty members without administrative duties are expected to carry heavier loads in lieu of expectations for scholarship and supervision of student research.

Standards for faculty review

The Department of Psychology Collegial Review Document (DCRD) is provided as Appendix 4-A. Our DCRD has served as a model for the College.

Orientation, mentoring and evaluation of graduate students

All graduate students participate in orientation during their first week on campus. Students with assistantships are given detailed job descriptions (Appendix 4-B) and their supervisor evaluate their work with a formal evaluation form at the end of each semester (Appendix 4-C). A select group of second-year graduate students are instructors of record for introductory psychology courses. Those students participate in a credit-bearing course on the teaching of psychology. In that course they participate in discussions of readings related to teaching, learn essential course management conduct, and are regularly observed and given feedback on their teaching.

Course size

The Psychology Department has experienced intense growth over the past decade. The number of majors in our department has increased from 185 in 2005 to 395 in the fall of 2015. This represents a 114% increase over the past 10 years. Furthermore, the number of psychology minors has increased from 53 in 2005 to 350 this semester. This represents a 660% increase in the number of psychology minors in the past decade.

This massive growth translates into an increased demand for upper level psychology courses to meet the graduation needs of our majors and minors. Each major requires at least ten (10) upper level psychology courses (not counting 150, 271 & 272) and each minor requires a minimum of five (5) upper level courses (not counting 150).

We are keenly aware of the demand that this is putting on our department. In fact, we have scheduled 28 courses (offering 1122 seats) at the 200-400 level for next semester (not counting internship & 480). We typically reach 100% capacity in many of these courses. It should be noted that capacity is often set by the size of the room. Thus, we cannot increase course size beyond room capacity.

Our Dean, Dr. Dale Carpenter, is sensitive to the stress that our growth has placed on the department. Last year Dean Carpenter created a Clinic Director position with teaching responsibilities. In the fall of 2015 Dean Carpenter created a new tenure track position and converted a master's level fixed term position to a doctoral level fixed term position for the fall of 2016. The department has also started the process of reviewing our curriculum to see if changes can be made to accommodate our increasing size without jeopardizing educational quality.

Summary

The Department of Psychology has a strong faculty. Most areas of the discipline are represented. The department has an unusually high number of upper-level courses with large class sizes (many 400-level classes have enrollments of 45+). As the number of majors continue to grow each year, it is not expected that the course size will decrease until additional faculty are hired.

Standard 5: The program attracts, retains and graduates high quality students.

Undergraduate Program

Attracts

The Department of Psychology recruits undergraduate students through participation in the general university admission marketing and recruitment program. The Director of Undergraduate Studies serves as the department's designated admissions liaison. The liaison participates in the programs directed by the university and the Admissions Office and handles inquiries concerning admissions for the department. Recruitment efforts include two campus wide open house events per semester. Each event includes both a general session and a departmental session held in the Killian building. We have faculty and undergraduate student representation at both events at every Open House.

The general information sessions typically attract about 1,000 students and Psychology representatives will communicate over the phone or email with 50-75 prospective students. These conversations are held with a mix of prospective majors and minors. The department hosts 100-125 people at each Open House departmental session including an average of 50 prospective Psychology majors and 50-75 members of the prospective students' families.

The department is in the process of developing new table top displays highlighting our undergraduate program. We are also developing a new three-fold brochure which describes the major curriculum and some career options for psychology majors.

The Director of Undergraduate Studies also participates in advising new students during all six New Student Orientations in June. Historically Psychology faculty have also participated in the

University Academic Experience program which provides new students (not necessarily psychology majors) with information about what to expect in college courses.

Finally, the department participates in the annual fall semester “Majors Fair” held for current students. This usually leads to contact with about 25 prospective majors.

The psychology program has no specific academic requirement for admission as a psychology major. Appendix 5-A provides an overview of the characteristics of new psychology majors and enrollment trends. The number of entering first year students who declare Psychology as a major has been stable for the past five years ranging between 83 and 100. The total number of majors has been increasing growing from 360 to 473 (see Appendix 3-U-B). There are two notes about the total number of majors.

First, this total includes inactive students who are in good standing and are eligible to reenter the university. Our total for currently enrolled majors is 395. The department is developing a plan to try to contact and reenroll the students who are inactive.

Second, Appendix 3-U-B shows that the number of majors increased from first year to senior year in the two cohorts that have completed four years since 2010. In 2010-2011 we enrolled 105 majors and in 2013-2014, four years later, we had 180 seniors. The pattern repeated itself with the class entering in 2011-2012 which grew from 115 to 171. The cohort entering in 2012-2013 started with 99 and has grown to 154 juniors.

Retention and Graduation

Overall retention for Psychology is difficult to separate from overall enrollment. The four year growth trend described above clearly indicates that we attract far more new students than we lose. This growth occurs in the third year. The average second year to third year change for the last four cohorts has been a growth of 34 students. There is also a third to fourth year change in the last three cohorts that averages 32 students. Thus, while individual student retention is unclear the overall enrollment trend shows “retention” of majors of 156% across the last two cohorts to complete four years and a third cohort now in their junior year (see Appendix 3-U-B).

On the other hand, the number of degrees conferred tells a slightly different story. For the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 cohorts the number of degrees conferred in four years was 103% (108/105) and 104% (120/115) of the first year enrollment. Further, students in these graduating groups completed the degree in 3.8 years. On the positive side, the number of degrees conferred after 4 years for the last two cohorts suggests an overall retention of over 100%. Of concern is that fact that we have many students who did not receive their degree in their “senior” year. In 2013-2014 we had 180 seniors but presented only 108 degrees. In 2014-2015 we had 171 seniors but presented only 120 degrees.

It is possible that the large growth between the junior and senior years explains this discrepancy. Many of our students who came into the major late in the last three years may not have

completed the degree requirements in time to graduate in four years. While the three most recent graduating classes graduated in 3.8 years this may change in the next several classes as the large number of late majors graduate.

Psychology MA Program

Attracts

The graduate program (General Psychology MA – Clinical and Experimental Tracks) attracts students through the Graduate School’s general recruitment efforts, representation and advertisements at conferences and graduate school fairs, and via our department website. The success of our graduates in terms of presenting their research at conferences, getting in to doctoral programs, obtaining licensure (for the clinical track), and our faculty’s reputation for actively involving students in research and community partnerships also attracts high quality applicants. Each year, the MA program receives between 75 and 90 applications for the two tracks combined. Unlike many programs in the college and the university as a whole, the number of applications for the Clinical track has remained steady at approximately 70 applications over the last five years. In an effort to maintain the quality of the program and the experiences that our graduate students receive, each track accepts only 10-25% of applicants. Over the past three to five years, incoming cohorts have had an average undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or above. The Psychology MA program consistently attracts incoming cohorts with GPAs in the top two or three among graduate programs at WCU.

Incoming cohorts Psychology MA Program

Clinical Track	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Incoming GPA	3.76	3.50	3.52
Incoming GRE	302	311	307

Gen-Ex Track	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Incoming GPA	3.46	3.54	3.36
Incoming GRE	302	303	320

Retains

A major feature of our Psychology MA program is the opportunity for students to work closely with faculty on research, and to allow for opportunities that will assist students with getting in to doctoral programs upon graduation. This niche has not only allowed the program to attract high quality applicants, but helps with retention as well. Over the past five years, 100% of our graduate students have presented their research at a regional or national conference in their first year of the program. Further, 100% of our clinical students have obtained a high quality practicum experience with our community partners, and we have expanded the number of

partnerships and training positions available to students. Our state-of-the art department clinic (McKee Clinic), faculty with active research programs, and our peer mentorship model also facilitate retention. In addition, 100% of our graduates in the last three years have either been accepted into doctoral programs or secured employment in their respective fields. Please see Appendix 5-B for a listing of doctoral programs students have/are attending upon completing their master's degree at WCU.

Clinical Track	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Retention – 1 st year students	N/A	100%	100%
Retention – 2 nd year students	N/A	100%	100%

General-Experimental Track	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Retention – 1 st year students	N/A	100%	75%
Retention – 2 nd year students	N/A	67%	100%

Standard 6: The program has an administrative structure that facilitates achievement of program goals and objectives.

Processes for effective decision-making. Administratively, the Psychology department has a department head (Dr. Alvin Malesky), a Director of Undergraduate Studies (Dr. Windy Gordon), a Director of Graduate Studies (Dr. Lori Unruh), and a Clinic Director (Dr. Nathan Roth). The Director of Graduate Studies oversees both the School Psychology S.S.P. program and the General Psychology M.A. program (Clinical and General-Experimental tracks). The Director of Graduate Studies is supported by directors for each track of the General Psychology M.A. program (Dr. Kia Asberg, Clinical; Dr. Thomas Ford, General-Experimental) and by committees that provide guidance for decision-making (School Psychology Committee, Graduate Committee, General-Experimental Committee). As a part of the faculty review process (i.e., tenure, promotion, and reappointment), the department head is aided in his decision-making by several key committees such as the Department Collegial Review Committee, the Post-Tenure Review Committee, and the Peer Review of Teaching Materials Committee. In addition, the department head calls the faculty together monthly to discuss ongoing issues and holds a half-day strategic planning retreat at the end of each academic year.

Support and training for department leaders. The department head is provided with a range of professional development activities through Western Carolina University throughout the academic year including attending department head training workshops. Furthermore, Dr. Malesky is currently in the Business Administration (MBA) program at WCU, a venture fully

supported by the Dean of our College. Support is provided to program directors in the form of course releases, when appropriate, to devote time to program coordination activities. In addition, the WCU Graduate School provides program directors with three to four training opportunities per year on issues such as recruitment and marketing. Finally, faculty newly stepping into leadership roles are provided support from previous department leaders.

Faculty involvement in ongoing program activities. Faculty involvement is integral to ongoing department activities such as curriculum development, ongoing program review, and yearly assessment of programs. The Undergraduate and Graduate Committees meet several times per year to discuss possible changes to curriculum and programs. Additionally, since January 2013, our faculty have participated in the College of Education and Allied Professions' annual Assessment Day which has allowed for strategic planning based on an in-depth examination of the past year's assessment data.

Student/alumni involvement in program decision-making. Throughout their training in the psychology department and then as alumni, both undergraduate and graduate students are regularly involved in the decision-making process within our department and at the level of the College of Education and Allied Professions. First, we feel it is imperative to have student representation on the planning committees. As such, students are invited each year to serve on select committees alongside faculty in making program-related decisions. In addition, student representation from the psychology department is included in the advisory council to the Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions in ensuring our students have a voice at the college level as well. Finally, alumni of the psychology department are represented on the advisory committees for our individual undergraduate and graduate programs.

Our dedication to keeping in touch with and keeping our students and alumni involved in departmental issues is also evidenced by our recent focus on our social media. We have developed both a Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/WCU-Psychology-Department-122730107746197/info/?tab=page_info) and a Twitter feed (<https://twitter.com/WCUPsychology>) that are managed by Dr. Ethan Schilling, our social media liaison. We have seen increasing student and alumni traffic through these outlets and we see social media as important for keeping our students engaged in the psychology department in the future. We are also in the process of an extensive revision and update of our departmental webpages.

Evaluation of administrators. The department head, associate dean, and dean are evaluated formally each year through established college procedures in which faculty are asked to complete an anonymous, end-of-year survey that is delivered electronically. In addition, administrators in the department and college welcome ongoing feedback from faculty.

Standard 7: The program has adequate resources to meet its goals and objectives.

Budget

The budget for the department of psychology is broken down into three parts. The first is the General Operating Budget, which is an established budget of approximately \$35,000 – \$36,000 per year. There are, however, annual budget hearings that allow for specific departments to request additional funding for special needs or circumstances. The second part of the budget is the Education and Technology (E & T) budget, which is approximately \$11,000 per year. In 2009, the department was able to request additional funding in their E & T budget, which allowed for the purchase of the Tobii[®] Eye Tracker system (Approximately \$50,000). The last portion of the budget is called *Project Value* (PV) funding, which is an annual distribution to departments to support conference presentations and other professional development activities. Tenured faculty are eligible for \$650 per year in professional development monies and untenured, tenure-track faculty are eligible for \$750 a year. All full-time faculty can acquire an additional \$500 for research-related needs (i.e., conference presentations, research materials) with PV funding. Faculty also have the opportunity to obtain university funding for professional development as well. For example, there are Chancellor's Travel Funds and Professional Development Grants available that will provide approximately \$1200 per faculty member per year for travel to present at conferences and to pursue other professional development activities related to teaching and research. Last year, nine faculty members in the department were awarded Chancellor's Travel Funds.

Currency and adequacy of facilities and laboratories, instructional technology, and library resources to support the mission and goals of the program

The Psychology Department typically teaches in Killian Building. Although these classrooms are not "owned" by the department, they are most commonly used by psychology faculty. All classrooms are equipped with computer teaching stations, projectors, and a variety of other types of technology. Some classrooms are equipped with computer stations at each desk, and some have smart boards. These classrooms are often available upon request.

The Psychology Department also has a student commons area that allows for students to gather to study or socialize with their peers. We believe this commons area has improved unity and comradery for students as well as provided a comfortable appropriate location for working in between classes.

The McKee Clinic space was obtained by the psychology department in 2012. It includes testing spaces with observations rooms that have one-way mirrors and audio connections, communal office space for graduate students, and two meeting rooms with up-to-date technology. Six faculty also have office space in this facility. The money raised through the assessment completed in this clinic all go to supporting graduate student education including the purchasing

of test materials allowing our department to provide state-of-the art assessment experiences for the graduate students during course and practicum work. The department recently received approval to purchase a Medical Records Review system for the clinic and are in the negotiations for the purchase of updated video recording systems in all testing rooms.

With the purchase of the Tobii[®] Eye Tracker system the department has been able to develop a Sensation and Perception Laboratory. In addition to the stationary eye tracker, the department has also purchased the Tobii[®] Eye Tracker Glasses (which allows for mobility during tracking) and iWorks, a system for EEG assessment. The Tobii[®] Eye Tracker Glasses are a fairly new purchase, as well as the iWorks program, but it should be noted that faculty and students have produced over 30 manuscripts (theses, presentations and publications) since acquiring the system. In October 2015, the department organized a two day training with the Tobii[®] technology representative to support further utilization of the equipment.

Faculty and Graduate Assistants

Currently, in the Psychology Department we have 10 tenured faculty members. Included in this number is one faculty member in phased retirement. Not included in this number is one faculty member who has completed his phased retirement in December of 2015. There are currently 6 non-tenured tenure-track faculty, 3 in their first semester. The department also has 4 full-time fixed-term positions. These positions are similar to lecturer positions at other universities, which include teaching and service as part of the load, but no research requirements. There are also six director positions in the department. There is a Director of Graduate Programs and a Director of Undergraduate Studies. Both of these are 10 month positions. In addition, there is a Director of the Clinical Psychology Graduate Track, Director of the General/Experimental Graduate Track and a Director of the School Psychology Program (who is also the Graduate Programs Director). The department also has a Director of our psychological services clinic (McKee Clinic).

The department also has 32 graduate students assigned as graduate assistants (GA's). Each GA is required to work 20 hours per week. While most of this work is done in the Psychology Department it must be noted, that the psychology department does share these workers with other departments. Approximately 15-18 graduate students per semester give some of that time to support the Health and PE program within the college. In addition to this, there is one GA working for the Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC), one in assessment in the CEAP, one in Criminal Justice, one in Student Support Services, and a half time position in the Birth through Kindergarten Program.

Classes and Student Enrollment

The courses taught in the psychology department are broken down into two levels, graduate and undergraduate. For the undergraduate classes, the courses are broken down into independent studies, internships, and regular curriculum classes. The curriculum for psychology majors is further broken down into core requirements and area requirements. The number of sections of

each class depends on whether it is a required course for the major and whether it is a liberal studies course for non-majors. With one exception, which is History of Psychology (PSY 455), we offer either multiple sections of a course or multiple courses for each core and area requirement each semester. For example, there are multiple sections of PSY 495 (senior seminar) because it is a required course for every psychology major.

For specialized undergraduate classes (PSY 271 and PSY 272 – Research Methods and Data Analysis I & II and PSY 495 – Senior Seminar) the average class size is limited to 30 and 24 students, respectively. However, for most of our classes enrollment is around 45 students per class. This is much higher than desired, but we serve about 400 currently enrolled majors, several hundred minors, and many hundreds of students taking liberal studies requirements. To sustain the variety of our course offerings we had to allow course enrollments to grow. Appendix 3-U-F shows the variety and frequency of course offerings and the average enrollment per section for every semester for the last 5 years.

There are 12 – 14 individual courses taught at the graduate level per semester. The average class size is eight to ten students. Some of the classes enroll student from all three programs (e.g. Advanced Research Methods and Statistics; PSY 651) and some are taught for students from only one program (e.g. Group Psychotherapy; PSY 677). There are also independent practicums, independent studies and thesis courses offered for students in all three programs.

Effective and appropriate use of staff

The Psychology Department has one full time administrative assistant and 2 work-study students to support office administration. In addition, the department hired a Clinic Director last year to support the activities of the McKee Clinic.