



If you have any questions or concerns about the form, please contact Brittany Brown at [bbrown3@framingham.edu](mailto:bbrown3@framingham.edu) or 508-626-4742.

**Program Assessment**

First Name: \*

Last Name: \*

Banner ID: \*

Email: \*

**Please select the reporting period this assessment/accreditation work was completed:**

\*

**Please select the type of program you completed assessment/accreditation work for this reporting period:**

*Note: If changing your initial selection, please refresh this page prior to making a new selection.*

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**Please select the program you completed assessment for during this reporting period:**

\*

**Please select the option that best describes the assessment work completed during this reporting period.**

- \* ☐ Only assessed program learning objective(s)  
☐ Only completed other assessment activities (ex. assessment plan, rubrics etc.)  
☒ Assessed program learning objective(s) and completed other assessment activities (ex. assessment plan, rubrics etc.)  
☐ Did not undertake program assessment work

**Program Learning Objectives Assessed**

**List the first program learning objective assessed during this reporting period:**

**For the first program learning objective assessed, other than GPA, what data/evidence was used to assess student learning? (e.g. capstone assignment, portfolio review, licensure examination)**

Artifact Solicitation:

Via e-mail and announcements in department meetings, the DPAC Chair solicited writing artifacts from all instructors who taught a 300-level psychology course during the Fall 2020 semester. The Department had previously deemed all 300-levels courses to be 'writing-intensive', thus these were deemed an the appropriate object for Goal 4 assessment in the 2017-2021 Assessment Plan Artifacts were solicited from the following eight (8) courses:

PSYC 305: Human Relations  
PSYC 318: Educational Psychology  
PSYC 322: Abnormal Psychology  
PSYC 341: Group Dynamics  
PSYC 353: Topics in Human Services  
PSYC 354: Psychology of Prejudice  
PSYC 369: Human Sexuality  
PSYC 370: Developmental Psychopathology

Response Rates:

Five instructors submitted artifacts for their courses (63% participation rate by faculty), resulting in 40 total artifacts. Two artifacts were used for rubric calibration, and the remaining 38 were rated for Goal 4 assessment.

One hundred and thirty-three students were enrolled in the above 8 courses, and we obtained 40 artifacts. In theory, this means that 29% of the eligible students were represented in the artifacts. However, the number of artifacts may not have a one-to-one correspondence with the number of students who authored them. In at least one of the participating classes, for example, students could work on the papers independently, or with a partner. Thus, we should be cautious when interpreting the artifact 'response rate'.

#### Artifact Preparation:

A staff member from the FSU Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA) "scrubbed" each artifact in preparation for the ratings. They removed any information that would communicate the course title/#, instructor name, and/or author's identity from the artifacts.

The OIA staff member e-mailed the scrubbed artifacts to Dr. Nicole Rossi, who then coordinated the artifact assignments for the committee (see Topic E, p. 3). Dr. Rossi did not rate any artifacts.

#### Calibrating the Rubric:

For rubric calibration, Dr. Rossi sent two of the scrubbed artifacts to each member of the DPAC. They independently rated the artifacts and, sent their ratings to Dr. Rossi who then collated the ratings. One member of the DPAC was less familiar with APA guidelines than the others. Thus, we provided them with resources to consult when making ratings.

Next, the DPAC met to discuss the calibration results and rubric. Overall, the committee members were within 1 point of each other on most ratings with one exception: APA formatting. Thus, we further discussed this criterion and amended the rubric as described in the Rubric Development section.

An additional rule that was decided during the calibration discussion was that we would rate the artifacts using whole scale numbers only (i.e., no half points).

#### Rater Assignments & Instructions:

Dr. Rossi assigned the remaining 38 artifacts to the four-members of the DPAC (Dr. Rossi did not rate any artifacts). She assigned the artifacts to dyads such that each member worked with every other member. Each rater evaluated approximately the same number of artifacts and approximately the same number of artifacts per prompt. No committee member rated artifacts from their own class(es).

Discrepancies in ratings were handled by each dyad as follows:

- Per FSU's OIA guidance, differences of 1 scale point were acceptable and did not require resolution. The average of these scores was used as the 'true' score.
- If differences greater than 1 scale point occurred, raters communicated with each other to resolve their discrepancies, and they then returned revised ratings to Dr. Rossi. Of the 12 disagreements for APA style, all but one involved the faculty member less familiar with APA. If their ratings were excluded, the number of disagreements greater than one would be comparable across dimensions.

### **For the first program learning objective assessed what were the results/outcomes/findings/conclusion(s)?**

Mean scores, and frequency counts, for each rubric dimension are presented in the attached Table. Overall, the artifacts averaged near proficiency on "Purpose" (M=2.93) and "Grammar, Mechanics, and Tone" (M=2.74). APA Formatting had a lower average (M=2.37) suggesting this is still a developing skill for many students.

#### Discussion/Recommendations:

1) APA Formatting Skills This assessment suggests that APA Formatting is the writing skill in which there is the largest gap between intended and demonstrated learning outcome. We need to better understand the nature of this gap and how to help students attain proficiency in this learning outcome. Related, 300-level courses may not be the most appropriate level for evaluating this learning outcome as students are not presently required to have completed PSYC 291 before taking these courses. Furthermore, non-majors can take most of the 300-level courses. The department may want to consider revising the course descriptions, and/or pre-requisites, for 300-level courses.

2) In addition to the caveat noted in discussion point 1 regarding multiple student pathways to the 300-level psychology

courses, our faculty may wish to more broadly revisit and reconsider the formative/summative distinction in relation to our departmental assessment activities. Classically, curricular assessment uses summative artifacts (i.e., artifacts from capstones and other relevant sources at the end of students' matriculation). For example, all capstone students have completed the research methods sequence, and would be expected to be proficient APA-style writers. Capstone artifacts would presumably provide a better index of this learning outcome than would artifacts drawn from courses on the pathway leading to the capstones.

3) The Multi-Faceted Nature of Communication. Our current Goal 4 focused on assessing proficiency in written communication. As we begin planning the next 5-year cycle, we may wish to consider assessing other aspects of communication as articulated in the "APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major 2.0 (i.e., presentations skills, how to effectively interact with others; <https://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf>) We recommend this question be discussed when the DPAC constructs its next assessment plan.

4) Response Rates. Our best estimate is that fewer than 1/3 of our 300-level students were represented in the assessed artifacts. How can we achieve broader participation by students and faculty? We may wish to identify any extant barriers to broader student and faculty participation; and we recommend consulting with the OIA to see if they have supports that may help us attain more inclusive and representative participation in departmental assessment.

**Attach any additional documents (data or survey summaries, charts, graphs etc.) that support your results/findings/conclusions (optional):**

Psych\_AssessmentReport\_AY20-21\_Goal 4.docx

TablePsych\_AssessmentReport\_AY20-21\_Goal4.docx

**For the first program learning objective assessed what changes/improvements have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?**

As we begin planning the next 5-year cycle, we may wish to consider assessing other aspects of communication as articulated in the "APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major 2.0 (i.e., presentations skills, how to effectively interact with others; <https://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf>) We recommend this question be discussed when the DPAC constructs its next assessment plan.

Related to the development of the next assessment plan, classically, curricular assessment uses summative artifacts (i.e., artifacts from capstones and other relevant sources at the end of students' matriculation). For example, all capstone students have completed the research methods sequence, and would be expected to be proficient APA-style writers. Capstone artifacts would presumably provide a better index of this learning outcome than would artifacts drawn from courses on the pathway leading to the capstones.

In further support of the previous notion, 300-level courses may not be the most appropriate level for evaluating APA formatting skills, as students are not presently required to have completed PSYC 291: Research Methods I before taking these courses.

**Did you assess any additional program learning objectives during this reporting period?**

- \* ☐ Yes  
☒ No

**Who interprets the results/findings of the assessment? Describe the process (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee).**

Traditionally, members of the Assessment Committee interpret the results/findings of the assessment during the summer months prior to the next academic year. Then, a presentation is made to the entire department during the academic year regarding the results/findings. The department as a whole discusses the results/findings and relevant projects are then taken up by departmental committees, i.e. curriculum and diversity committees.

#### **Assessment Activities**

**Please list the assessment activities (other than the assessment of program learning objectives) completed during this reporting period (assessment plans, rubrics etc.).**

\* Rubric Development

The DPAC examined several options for written communication rubrics; in particular, we considered a pre-existing department rubric, and one from the FSU Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA). Ultimately, we decided to adopt the OIA general education writing rubric but modified it for our curriculum. As shown in Appendix A (p. 6), we ultimately evaluated each artifact on 3 dimensions:

- 1) Purpose (the extent to which the writing addressed the assignment prompts)
- 2) APA Formatting (compliance with APA- style as specified in the assignment prompt\*)
- 3) Grammar, Mechanics, & Style (writing clarity & tone)

\* Some assignment prompts specified compliance with the 6th edition of the APA manual, while others specified compliance with the 7th edition (published in 2019). If an assignment prompt did not specify a particular edition of the APA manual, we used the 6th edition for assessment. Furthermore, if the prompts did not state which aspects of APA style were to be followed (e.g., margin sizes, font style), we only assessed in-text citations and reference lists.

**Please attach the related documents produced as a result of the activities listed in above (mandatory if funding is requested for this work):**

\* Goal4Rubric\_Assessment\_AY20-21.docx

**Program Information**

**Enter the year of the most recent program review. If the program is new, enter the upcoming program review year or enter TBD (to be determined).**

\* AY19-20

**Insert the URL of the web page where Program Learning Objectives for this program are published:**

*NECHE requires this as part of being transparent to stakeholders.*

<https://www.framingham.edu/academics/colleges/social-and-behavioral-sciences/psychology-and-philosophy/index>

**Signatures**

*Nicole Rossi*

11/14/2021

Submitter Signature

Date

**Office of Institutional Assessment**

**Office of Institutional Assessment Only**

Institutional Assessment Signature

Date