

Psychology MS

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose

Institutional Mission Reference

The Psychology MS Program offers graduate students a high quality degree program in general psychology that meets national standards of excellence. The program faculty is committed to quality teaching and the discovery of new knowledge. The Psychology Program supports Old Dominion University's mission of providing advanced graduate education for the hampton Roads area and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Institutional Goal(s) Supported

The Psychology Program supports the University goals of (a) quality graduate academic programs, (b) quality teaching, and (c) discovery of new knowledge. (see pages 3-4 of the University Catalog or pages 8-9 of the Strategic Plan). The Psychology Program also supports Strategic Initiative 2 (Excellent Graduate Programs as described in the University Strategic Plan).

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes, Methods for Assessment, Criteria for Success, Assessment Results, and Use of Results

Intended Outcome 1

Students who graduate from the Psychology MS Program will have knowledge of the basic foundations of psychology. this will include understanding of experimental methods, quantitative methods, and the ability to assimilate new psychological knowledge.

Method for Assessing Outcome 1 and Criterion for Success: Students are required to complete 15 hours of core courses including: research methods, quantitative methods, learning and cognition or perception, and developmental or social psychology. Additional courses are selected from a breadth of topics within the discipline to complete 36 hours of graduate study.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 1: Our first-year students completed an average of 18 hours of course work. Our second-year have completed an average of 29 hours of course work. All of our full-time students complete the required core course within the first year (core courses must be completed to graduate).

Alternate Method for Assessing Outcome 1 and Criterion for Success: 100% of the students will achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher in graduate course work.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected, Alternate Method for Outcome 1: The average GPA was 3.72 (3.05-4.00). The average GPA for students in their first year, second year, and third or higher was 3.8, 3.7, and 3.7, respectively.

Intended Outcome 2

Students are expected to gain research and statistical skills that enable them to think critically and independently about research, analyze research data, and communicate results and conclusions through the use of statistics.

Method for Assessing Outcome 2 and Criterion for Success: 100% of the graduate students will complete a research project during their first year of study under the supervision of a faculty. This research project will include designing and conducting a psychological experiment, analyzing the data, and communicating the results in a written report.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 2: 100% of our first year students completed a research project during their first year of study.

Alternate Method for Assessing Outcome 2 and Criterion for Success: 70% of graduate students will successfully propose and defend their master's thesis by the end of their second calendar year.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected, Alternate Method for Outcome 2: 60% of our second-year students successfully proposed their master's thesis project. No second-year students have yet defended their thesis, though several are expected to do so by the end of the summer, and the majority by fall.

Intended Outcome 3

Students are expected to gain oral and written communication skills that allow them to effectively communicate scientific ideas and findings.

Method for Assessing Outcome 3 and Criterion for Success: 100% of the students will acquire effective oral and written communication skills through participation in seminars. Each seminar will include a component that evaluates these skills and provides developmental feedback.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 3: All of our seminars require written papers and essays and verbal presentations. The students' GPA indicates that they succeeded at these tasks and are successfully acquiring communication skills.

Alternate Method for Assessing Outcome 3 and Criterion for Success: 80% of graduate students will attend and make presentations at a regional or national conference. 30% of the students are expected to co-author a submitted publication with a faculty mentor.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected, Alternate Method for Outcome 3: 50% of our first- and second-year graduate students made presentations at conferences this year. 50% of our students reported being a co-author on a submitted publication. This is impressive given that the students are only in the program actively for two years (i.e., this is not a doctoral program).