

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Psychology
Master's and PhD Programs**

**Key Assessment Findings
2011-2012**

Comprehensive Exam

All eighteen of the students who took graduate comprehensive exams in AY2011-2012 passed. Five students passed the MA comprehensive exam, and three more passed with honors. Four students passed the doctoral comprehensives, and six additional students did so with honors. Overall passage rates were very high as in the previous year. Passing with honors rates are highly dependent on individual students, so the change in those percentages with small samples is not considered to provide a useful year-to-year basis for program assessment. The percentage of doctoral students who passed with honors this year was however very high even in comparison to the previous two years. The overall rate of honors passage does reflect on the high quality of the graduate students that we have been able to recruit.

**GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS
Department of Psychology
AY2008-2009 through AY2011-2012**

	Fail		Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
2011-2012							
Master's program	0	0%	5	62.50%	3	37.50%	8
Doctoral program	0	0%	4	40.00%	6	60.00%	10
2010-2011							
Master's program	1	7.69	7	53.85%	5	38.46%	13
Doctoral program	0	0%	4	66.67%	2	33.33%	6
2009-2010							
Master's program	1	6.67%	7	46.67%	7	46.67%	15
Doctoral program	0	0.00%	5	71.43%	2	28.57%	7
2008-2009							
Master's program	0	0.00%	10	83.33%	2	16.67%	12
Doctoral program	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	4	66.67%	6

In addition to Statistics and Research Methods, the Department has a well-established process for tailoring the content of the comprehensive exams to individual students' areas of expertise. A scoring rubric that applies across all content areas was developed to include the extent to which responses (1) address the question, (2) show mastery of content, and (3) present material in a clear and organized way. Two graders independently score each question, providing a composite score for the three aspects of scoring. Discrepancies on any individual question of more than 1 point on a 4-point scale are reviewed by a third reader, and a composite grade across all three

raters is assigned for that question. Of the 105 questions graded, there were discrepancies requiring a third reader in 7 instances.

Graduation and Internship

Seventeen students graduated with an MA degree in Psychology; eight of these were in a terminal MA program, and nine are in a continuing PhD program. The terminal MA is designed as a two-year program. Five of the graduating MA students completed the program within two years; two students took 3 years, and one who had left the program was reinstated, resulting in a total completion time of 5 years. Two students withdrew from the program and one was dismissed after making insufficient progress.

Seven PhD students also graduated. On average, those students passed their oral defense within 5 ¼ years. All students who had an oral defense of their PhD dissertation passed. For Clinical PhD students, there is a required 1-year internship in addition to the comprehensive examination, the dissertation, and the oral defense. Average completion time, including internship, for six clinical students was six years. All Clinical students who applied for internships for 2011-2012 were successful in obtaining paid APA-accredited positions. Licensure rates were determined for students completing between the 2002-2003 and 2009-2010 academic years. During that period, 53 students graduated with the doctoral degree, 49 (92%) became licensed psychologists. The remaining four alumni did not apply for licensure during that reporting period.

Curricular Changes for Master's Program and Ph.D. Program

Graduate student performance was reviewed at the Department's annual meeting. Based on the very positive results on the comprehensive examination, no changes were made to the procedures for exam preparation or evaluation.

Options for improving specialization at the MA level were considered, and a committee reviewed options for alternative MA degrees or certificates. It was determined that current resources did not merit a change in the near term, but possible program changes will be reviewed again next year.

Reinstatement of the Human Development Ph.D. program, which was included in the University's Strategic Plan, was officially approved. Students will be able to be admitted to the program starting in fall 2012.

Our new Assistant Professor in Human Development set up a laboratory and offered research opportunities in the field of physiological functions and risky behavior. In addition, he added a new graduate course in Cognitive Development to our Departmental offerings, and substantially modified our required Research Methods course.

The Applied Experimental Program continued a regular non-credit Cognitive Science Seminar to discuss ongoing research. A new format involved separate student sessions to address practical issues of graduate study as well as research discussions with both students and faculty.

A new Graduate Student Research Symposium was initiated. The format was much like a scientific conference poster session. Students displayed posters of their research and provided a very brief overview of their work. This was followed by an open poster session. The event is designed to be an informal meeting where students have the opportunity to interact with faculty and peers and display their research. It is required of all Ph.D. students who completed their Master's level research project by the end of the previous fall semester. Other graduate students who wish to present their research can do so with approval of their faculty advisor.

The Department devoted considerable time and effort to reaccreditation of the doctoral program in Clinical Psychology by the American Psychological Association. An extensive self-study was submitted in September 2012, and a site visit by APA was conducted in March 2012. In the summer of 2012, the University was notified that the program had been reaccredited for the maximum period of seven years.