

# Assessment Summary: May 2011

**Name of Program:** Psychology, Criminal Justice, Sociology/Social Work

**Year of Assessment Report:** 2011-2012

**Date:**

**Faculty Participants:** Maria LaPadula, Dina Karafantis, Susana Case, Christopher Ortiz, Len Tester, Emily Restivo, Blair Hoplight

## 1. Which program learning outcomes have been assessed for the planned academic year?

One of the goals for the Behavioral Sciences department for the 2011-2012 academic year was to collect and analyze more data regarding one of our program outcomes. The program outcome that was chosen was: “upon graduation students will effectively communicate course material orally”. During the 2010-2011 year we noted that students in our CJ classes had difficulty meeting this outcome successfully. So, we decided to incorporate more oral presentations into the CJ classes so that students would have more exposure to this and hopefully perform better on this outcome. Thus, we incorporated oral presentations into CRIM 325, CRIM 354 and CRIM 301. We used the oral presentation rubric we developed last year as the direct measure and the student survey as the indirect measure.

## 2. Which measuring instruments were used for the assessment?

Data was collected during the fall 2011 semester and spring 2012 semesters from three of our criminal justice classes:

CRIM 325 Forensic Technology

CRIM 354 Organized Crime

CRIM 301 Criminal Investigation.

The faculty developed a grading rubric for the oral presentation (direct measure) last year so that all students were graded in the same way. The rubric is attached.

The **indirect measure** used to study this outcome was a student survey asking students about their experience doing the oral presentation. The survey is attached.

### 3. What were the important findings? How well did students achieve the targeted learning outcomes?

The oral presentation (direct measure) grades were given a number grade (out of 100) and the following scale was used to assess student work:

Superior Work: 90-100  
Very Good Work: 80-89  
Satisfactory Work: 70-79  
Poor Work: 69 and below

With regard to **Criminal Justice** data was collected from 83 students ( more than the 40 student we collected from last year). The results for our Criminal Justice classes were as follows:

44.6% of the students' work fell into the superior range (as opposed to 26.8% last year)

41% of the students' work fell into the very good range (as opposed to 14.6% last year)

9.6% of the students' work fell into the satisfactory range (as opposed to 17.1% last year)

4.8% of the students' work fell into the poor range (as opposed to 39.9% last year)

The Criminal Justice students did remarkably better this year with regard to their performance on oral presentations. Their score were in line with the scores from the psychology and sociology/social work students from last year. The Behavioral Science faculty were satisfied with the oral presentation grade (direct measure) results for the criminal justice classes since the majority of the students met the program outcome of being able to effectively communicate course material orally. It appears that exposing our Criminal Justice students to more oral presentations has helped their performance. We will continue to be sure that oral presentations are incorporated into our Criminal Justice curriculum. In fact, we are in the process of revising the CJ curriculum and are making sure that this occurs.

The student survey's (direct measure) were given to find out student overall satisfaction with their oral presentation experience. After the student gave their oral presentation they filled out the 10 item questionnaire. Each of the student responses were averaged to yield one overall score. We then took the means for each of the survey scores. The means ranged from 1 to 5, the higher the number the more satisfied they were with their experience. The students in the criminal justice classes all had means at about 4. This means that overall the students were satisfied with their experience of giving the oral presentation.

**The second goal for the 2011-2012 academic year** was to assess the outcome related to students understanding descriptive and inferential statistics. We used data from two sections of our PSYC 210 Statistical Analysis class (Fall 2011) and one section of PSYC 370 Research Methods (Spring 2012). For the direct measure we used student scores on five labs that they complete in the PSYC 210 class. The first two labs cover descriptive statistics and the other three labs cover inferential statistics. The direct measure in the PSYC 370 class was the scores on the results and discussion sections of student research projects as well as scores on their final take home exam. Surveys were devised to serve as the indirect measure of the outcome (see attachment).

The lab grades (direct measure) were given a number grade (out of 100) and the following scale was used to assess student work:

Superior Work: 90-100

Very Good Work: 80-89

Satisfactory Work: 70-79

Poor Work: 69 and below

There were 46 students in the statistics classes and the results for the descriptive statistics labs (1 and 2) were as follows:

21.7% fell into the superior range

32.6% fell into the very good range

13% fell into the satisfactory range

32.6% fell into the poor range.

The following are the results for the same 46 students with regard to inferential statistics (labs 3,4 and 5)

19.6% fell into the superior range

30.4 fell into the very good range

17.4 fell into the satisfactory range

32.6% fell into the poor range

It appears that a high percentage of students had difficulty with both the inferential and descriptive statistics in these classes. The faculty agreed that this needs to be addressed. Thus, at the end of the summer 2012 the Behavioral Science faculty are going to meet to discuss how to address this next year (2012-2013). Since this outcomes (understanding descriptive and inferential statistics) is very important for our students we are going to focus on it again next year.

The student surveys (indirect measure) were given to find out student overall satisfaction with their knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics. Each of the student responses were averaged to yield one overall score. We then took the means for each of the survey scores. The means ranged from 1 to 5, the higher the number the more satisfied they were. The mean was 4.2, meaning that the majority of students were satisfied with knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Next we analyzed the data regarding descriptive and inferential statistics from our PSYC 370 Research Methods class. There were 25 students in this class. Their final exam involved them using descriptive and inferential statistics. However, we mistakenly did not have the instructor give separate grades for descriptive and inferential. Instead, the grades are combined. This needs to be addressed next year.

The following are the results:

17.4% fell into the superior range

52.2% fell into the very good range

13% fell into the satisfactory range

17.4% fell into the poor range

Next we looked at their scores on the descriptive statistic and inferential statistic parts of their projects, and the results differed:

For the Descriptive section:

33.3% fell into the superior range

50% fell into the very good range

16.7% fell into the satisfactory range

For the Inferential section:

50% fell into the superior range

16.7% fell into the very good range

33.3% fell into the satisfactory range

There is obviously a discrepancy between the separation scores for inferential and descriptive statistics (student projects) and the final exam (which combined inferential and descriptive statistics). Again, the faculty will meet to discuss this in August 2012 so that this can be looked at and the changes can be made to these courses so that we can assess this outcome again during the 2012-2013 academic year.

**A third goal for the 2011-2012 academic year** was to send another wave of Graduation surveys . The first time we sent them (summer 2011 to students who graduated in 2009 and 2010) we sent out 50 and received 12 back. We had discussed this and talked about ways to increase the response rate. So, we sent another wave and attached a faculty name to the email so it wasn't just from Behavioral Sciences department, and some that were kicked back because on invalid email were mailed regularly. We received 7 additional surveys, so now have 19 out of 50.

#### **4. What's the assessment plan for the next academic year?**

The faculty are going to meet during August 2012 to plan for making changes to the Statistics and Research Methods courses so that we can re-assess the outcome related to students understanding descriptive and inferential statistics. This is an important outcome and we felt that there were a high percentage of students in the statistics class that fell into the poor range (32.6%), and there was a discrepancy in the Research Methods class.

## **Behavioral Sciences Department**

### **Oral Presentation Rubric**

#### **Definition**

Oral communication is a prepared and purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, and/or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

#### **Framing Language**

Oral communication takes many forms. This rubric is specifically designed to evaluate oral presentations of a single speaker at a time and is best applied to live or video-recorded presentations. For panel presentations or group presentations, it is recommended that each speaker be evaluated separately. The rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed supported by one or more forms of supporting materials and includes a purposeful organization. An oral answer to a single question not designed to be structured into a presentation does not readily apply to this rubric.

**Glossary**

**Organization:** Organization refers to the grouping and sequencing of ideas and supporting material in a presentation. An organizational pattern that *supports* the effectiveness of a presentation typically includes an introduction, one or more identifiable sections in the body of the speech, and a conclusion. An organizational pattern that *enhances* the effectiveness of the presentation reflects a purposeful choice among possible alternatives, such as a chronological pattern, a problem-solution pattern, an analysis-of-parts pattern, etc., that makes the content of the presentation easier to follow and more likely to accomplish its purpose.

**Delivery techniques:** Delivery techniques include posture, gestures, eye contact, and use of the voice. Delivery techniques *support* the effectiveness of the presentation when the speaker stands and moves comfortably, looks periodically at the audience, and can be heard clearly. Delivery techniques *enhance* the effectiveness of the presentation when the speaker stands and moves with authority, looks more often at the audience than at his/her speaking materials, uses the voice expressively, and uses few vocal fillers ("um," "uh," "like," "you know," etc.).

**Central message:** The central message is the main point/thesis/"bottom line"/"take-away" of a presentation. A *clear* central message is easy to identify; a *compelling* central message is also vivid and memorable.

**Speaker preparation:** Speaker preparation includes both an understanding of content and practice of delivery prior to the presentation. Speaker preparation is sufficient when the speaker is generally confident, knowledgeable, and committed to the message. Speaker preparation is outstanding when the speaker is poised, polished, and passionate about the message.

	4	3	2	1
<b>Organization</b>	Organizational pattern enhances the effectiveness of the presentation	Organizational pattern generally supports the effectiveness of the presentation	Organizational pattern partially supports the effectiveness of the presentation	Organizational pattern minimally supports the effectiveness of the presentation
<b>Delivery</b>	Delivery techniques enhance the effectiveness of the presentation	Delivery techniques generally support the effectiveness of the presentation	Delivery techniques partially support the effectiveness of the presentation.	Delivery techniques minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation
<b>Speaker Preparation</b>	Speaker displays outstanding preparation and supporting material is highly credible	Speaker displays sufficient preparation and supporting material is generally credible	Speaker displays some preparation and supporting material is partially credible	Speaker displays minimal preparation and supporting material is minimally credible
<b>Central Message</b>	Central message is compelling	Central message is generally clear	Central message is somewhat clear	Central message is present but unclear

## Oral Presentation Student Experience Survey

**Directions: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:**

1. I enjoyed preparing for this oral presentation.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

2. I feel a sense of accomplishment after presenting.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

3. I feel that I communicated my ideas well.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

4. I feel that I was quite knowledgeable about the material I presented.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

5. I feel that I presented my fellow students and my professor with new information.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

6. I feel that this presentation allowed me to look at this topic in a new way.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

7. I feel that I would be comfortable giving another oral presentation in the future.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

8. I feel that the skills I acquired from giving this presentation will help me in other classes.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

9. I feel that the skills I acquired from giving this presentation will help me in a future job or internship.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much

10. I feel that I performed well on my presentation.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	a little	neutral	some	very much



## Student Survey for Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

**Directions: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:**

1. I feel that lab and take home assignments helped better prepare me for exams.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
2. I feel a sense of accomplishment after taking this course.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
3. I feel that I can now better communicate about research.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
4. I feel that I am quite knowledgeable about the material I learned in this course.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
5. I feel that I can enter and manage data in SPSS.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
6. I feel that this course allows me to look at inferential and descriptive statistics in a new way.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
7. I feel that I would be comfortable analyzing and describing data in the future.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
8. I feel that the skills I acquired from this course will help me in other classes.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
9. I feel that the skills I acquired from this course will help me in a future job or internship.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
10. I feel that I performed well on my lab and take home assignments.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
11. I feel that I can better understand research reported in the media.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much
12. I feel that I can better understand research reported in my major area of study.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
not at all                      a little                      neutral                      some                      very much