

2020 – 21 Departmental Executive Summary

Department:	Human and Social Sciences	Date: 6/16/2021
Members involved with analysis of artifacts: Ed Hoffman, Kathy Miller, Thad Warren, and Sara Brady		
See #1 Undergraduate Program Assessment Plan: Student Outcomes for: <i>a) Student Outcome; b) Background; c) Question(s); d) Methodology</i>		
Analysis of artifacts: 1). PERFORMANCE CRITERIA* - <i>How was data analyzed? (attach rubrics/scoring tools if used).</i> Students enrolled in PSY 101 (Intro to Psychology), PSY 445 (Abnormal Psychology), CJ 220 (Criminal Law), and CJ 420 (Criminal Evidence, Procedure, and the Courts) completed a take-home essay assignment regarding the course content. To assess written communication skills, two faculty members per program used the attached rubric to analyze each artifact from criminal justice and psychology upper- and lower-level courses (see Appendix A for assignment prompt and assessment rubric). The two courses from psychology were PSY 101 and PSY 445 and the two courses from criminal justice were CJ 220 and CJ 420. Due to the large number of psychology students, a random sample of 15 artifacts were selected from PSY 101 and 14 artifacts from PSY 445. Due to low enrollment numbers in criminal justice courses, all student artifacts were analyzed for CJ 220 ($N = 5$) and CJ 420 ($N = 2$). Although at least one instructor was involved in the scoring, both faculty raters came to an agreement on the attached rubric in order to assign a single score. After artifacts were scored, Sara Brady analyzed all data in a statistical software to determine mean differences by course level (lower-level vs. upper-level). To determine whether or not students met the standards for written communication, students were considered as having met the criterion if they scored a 2 or higher on each criterion of the rubric. Percentages equal to or higher than 75% were considered adequate across courses. In addition, independent samples t tests were conducted on students' rubric scores to determine whether mean differences are found between students in entry-level courses and students in senior-level courses. Statistical significance of $p < .05$ and Cohen's $d > .025$ criteria were determined to be cutoffs for establishing a difference between lower- and upper-level courses.		
Summary of RESULTS*: 1). <i>Restate the assessment question(s) (from the Assessment plan):</i> Q1: To what extent are students who are entry-level psychology and criminal justice courses proficient in written communication? Q2: To what extent are students who are in senior-level psychology and criminal justice courses proficient in written communication? Q3: Are senior-level students taking psychology and criminal justice courses more proficient in written communication than their entry-level counterparts? 2). <i>Summarize the assessment results. (A narrative summary is required. Charts, tables or graphs are encouraged but optional.)</i> To answer Q1 and Q2, Appendix B displays the frequencies and percentages of students who earned a score on each of the rubric criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For communicating purpose in writing, all courses achieved at least 75% of mastery.• For communicating content in writing, only students in PSY 101 did not achieve mastery (66.67%).• For communicating writing conventions appropriate to the discipline, lower-level criminal justice and psychology students achieved at least 75% mastery. However, upper-level criminal justice and psychology students did not (50% and 40%, respectively).• For using credible sources in writing, only lower-level criminal justice met the criteria for mastery (80%). Only 50% of upper-level criminal justice students, 46.67% of lower-level psychology students, and 66.67% of upper-level psychology students met the criteria for being proficient in using credible sources.• In terms of writing mechanics, only upper-level criminal justice students did not meet the criteria for being proficient in writing mechanics (50%). To answer Q3, Appendix C displays the means and confidence errors of the course rubric averages by rubric criterion. In psychology, there were significant differences found between lower- and upper-level students in terms of writing content ($p = .03$, $d = 0.85$), writing conventions ($p = .007$, $d = 1.09$), and credible sources ($p = .013$, $d = 0.99$). Due to low sample size in criminal justice courses, independent samples t tests were not able to be calculated. However, Welch's t tests confirmed that there were no statistically significant differences found		

between courses, $ps > .05$. Descriptive data from the psychology courses revealed that upper-level psychology students outperformed their lower-level counterparts in terms of communicating written content and using credible sources. However, lower-level psychology students outperformed upper-level psychology students in terms of using writing conventions appropriate to psychology (i.e., APA style).

3). **INTERPRETATION*** - Discuss how the results answer the assessment question(s).

Overall, students across both upper- and lower-level psychology and criminal justice courses are proficient in written communication. But there were some deficiencies in specific courses based upon the rubric criteria. Most notably, lower-level psychology students struggled most with adequately applying the course content, as well as using credible sources. Upper-level psychology students struggled most with correctly applying APA style (conventions). Criminal justice students displayed a split between lower- and upper-level students in terms of using appropriate writing conventions, credible sources, and writing mechanics.

To answer whether senior-level students are more proficient than their entry-level counterparts, only psychology data could be assessed due to low enrollment numbers in criminal justice courses. Overall, senior-level students are only more proficient than entry-level counterparts in terms of applying course content and using credible sources. Lower-level students outperformed their upper-level counterparts in terms of using APA style and no significant differences were found between lower- and upper-level students in terms of communicating purpose and writing mechanics.

4). *Observations made that were not directly related to the question(s).*

Due to small sample size in criminal justice and program-level changes, more data is needed in future assessment years to establish the extent to which criminal justice students are proficient writers.

Sharing of Results: When were results shared? Date: 6/17/2021

How were the results shared? (i.e. met as a department) Via email

Who were results shared with? (List names): Thad Warren, Kathy Miller, Ed Hoffman, Nancy Elwell, Kim Boyce, Rebecca Ristow, Mark Blanke, and Amy Hubach

Discussion of Results –Summarize your conclusions including:

1. **ACTION***- How will what the department learned from the assessment impact:

a. Teaching:

b. Assignment/course: Department Chair will discuss with each instructor of all courses in HSS department.

c. Program: Writing and adopting a style guide in respective programs.

d. Assessment: We will repeat the assessments to look for improvement on proposed action.

2. **IMPACT***- What is the anticipated impact of the **ACTION*** on student achievement of the learning outcome in the next academic year? Improvement in overall writing based on outlined criteria in the shared rubric.

3. **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS** – Indicate budget requirements necessary for the successful implementation of the **ACTION*** Minimal impact to budget – time developing the style guide and discussing implementation.

If action is taken – it is recommended that the same learning outcome and assessment plan be used for a second assessment cycle.

What assessment questions related to the learning outcome would the program like to investigate in the future? The same question as it relates to each program within the department.

Submitted by: HSS department (Thad & Sara)
(date): 7/6/2021

Reviewed by the Assessment Committee

Department Chair notified approved/additional action needed: Approved 7/6/2021

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS – Assessment Committee Chair notified appropriate Dean: NA

Appendix A

Psychology Assessment Essay

Purpose

The purpose of the essay is to analyze critically the major theories of psychology, apply one theory to a specific scenario, and discuss the strengths and limitations of the theory to address psychological processes and behavior.

Content

Your written, typed essay should address the following:

1. Identify the six main psychological theories for explaining human behavior and mental processes.
2. Explain the core characteristics of one of these theoretical approaches (models) that you most identify with.
3. In detail, apply this theoretical approach (model) to explain someone's thinking, feeling, and/or behavior. In your explanation, generate a specific scenario when applying this theory. Use the core characteristics explained earlier in your explanation.
4. Be sure to include the strengths and limitations of the model that you choose. Adequately compare and contrast the other psychological theories when addressing the strengths and limitations of the theory that you chose to analyze and explain.
5. Use relevant, scholarly sources to support main ideas and arguments. Scholarly sources could include peer-reviewed articles, textbooks, or edited books.

Form

1. Essay should be between 3-5 pages, double-spaced.
2. Essay should include a defined introduction, body, and conclusion.
3. Essay should use standard grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
4. Essay should adhere to basic APA style in form and citation style. Essay should include a title page and reference page (an abstract page is not necessary).

Criminal Justice Assessment

Purpose:

Individuals that are being criminally investigated and charged have a number of key Constitutional rights that must be honored by law enforcement and the courts throughout the criminal investigation and trial processes. These rights, as defined in the United States Constitution and by the United States Supreme Court, form the foundation of the United States criminal justice system. This assignment asks you to identify the major protections afforded to criminal defendants through the Fourth and Sixth Amendments to the United States Constitution, to apply the protections afforded by one of these Amendments to a specific fact pattern and finally to identify and evaluate the strengths and limitations of these Amendments in the context of the criminal justice system.

Instructions:

After completing the assigned reading in your textbook please answer the following questions:

1. Provide a **brief summary** of the main protections afforded to criminal defendants under the Fourth and Sixth Amendments to the United States Constitution.
2. Provide a **detailed explanation** of the protections afforded by **ONE** of the above Constitutional Amendments.
3. Apply each of the protections discussed in question 2 (directly above) to a fact pattern of your choosing. For example, if you discussed the protections afforded under the Fourth Amendment, you could apply those to the following fact pattern:
 - i. Bob is relaxing at his girlfriend's apartment on a quiet evening at 10:00 p.m. when without warning the front door is kicked in and law enforcement officers rush into the apartment arresting Bob and seizing his work papers, laptop and cell phone all of which were not in plain sight but were hidden from view. All without a warrant of any kind.
4. Compare and contrast the limitations experienced by criminal justice professionals as a result of having to comply with both of these Constitutional Amendments with the contrasting demand of respecting individual's civil rights. This is the sought after balanced scale we have discussed in class. It is the balance that must be met between addressing and dealing with crime in our society while at the same time respecting individual's civil rights.

Writing criteria:

Your paper should be:

1. At least three (3) pages in length.
2. 12 point font.
3. Double-spaced and contain one-inch margins (top, bottom and both sides).
4. At the top of your paper, please include your name, assignment title, the class name and the date.
5. Please turn your paper in at the beginning of the class date this assignment is due.
6. When answering EACH OF THE above questions, please provide the following:
 - a. **Question presented:** Restate each question then provide your answer to it. That is, before answering a question, I want you to type that question in your paper, and then answer it. That way, we both know which question you are answering.
 - b. **Introduction:** For each of the above questions, provide a concise answer to the question.
 - c. **Answer:** Provide a detailed and organized answer to the question you are answering. Provide plenty of information to the reader and where appropriate reference applicable areas of the law (i.e. the relevant Constitutional provision). Consider citing an interesting fact or provide relevant examples that support your answer/position in order to make your point.
 - d. **Conclusion:** Have a clear, concise conclusion statement that restates your answer to the question presented. Also, provide the reader with your thoughts on the issue(s) covered in the question.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet basic (cell one) level performance.

	Exemplary 4	3	Proficient 2	Basic 1
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

Appendix B

Frequencies for Writing Criteria: Purpose					
Course	Rubric Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
CJ 220	1	1	20	20	20
	2	2	40	40	60
	3	2	40	40	100
	4	0	0	0	100
CJ 420	1	0	0	0	0
	2	1	50	50	50
	3	1	50	50	100
	4	0	0	0	100
PSY 101	1	2	13.333	13.333	13.333
	2	9	60	60	73.333
	3	4	26.667	26.667	100
	4	0	0	0	100
PSY 445	1	0	0	0	0
	2	10	66.667	71.429	71.429
	3	3	20	21.429	92.857
	4	1	6.667	7.143	100

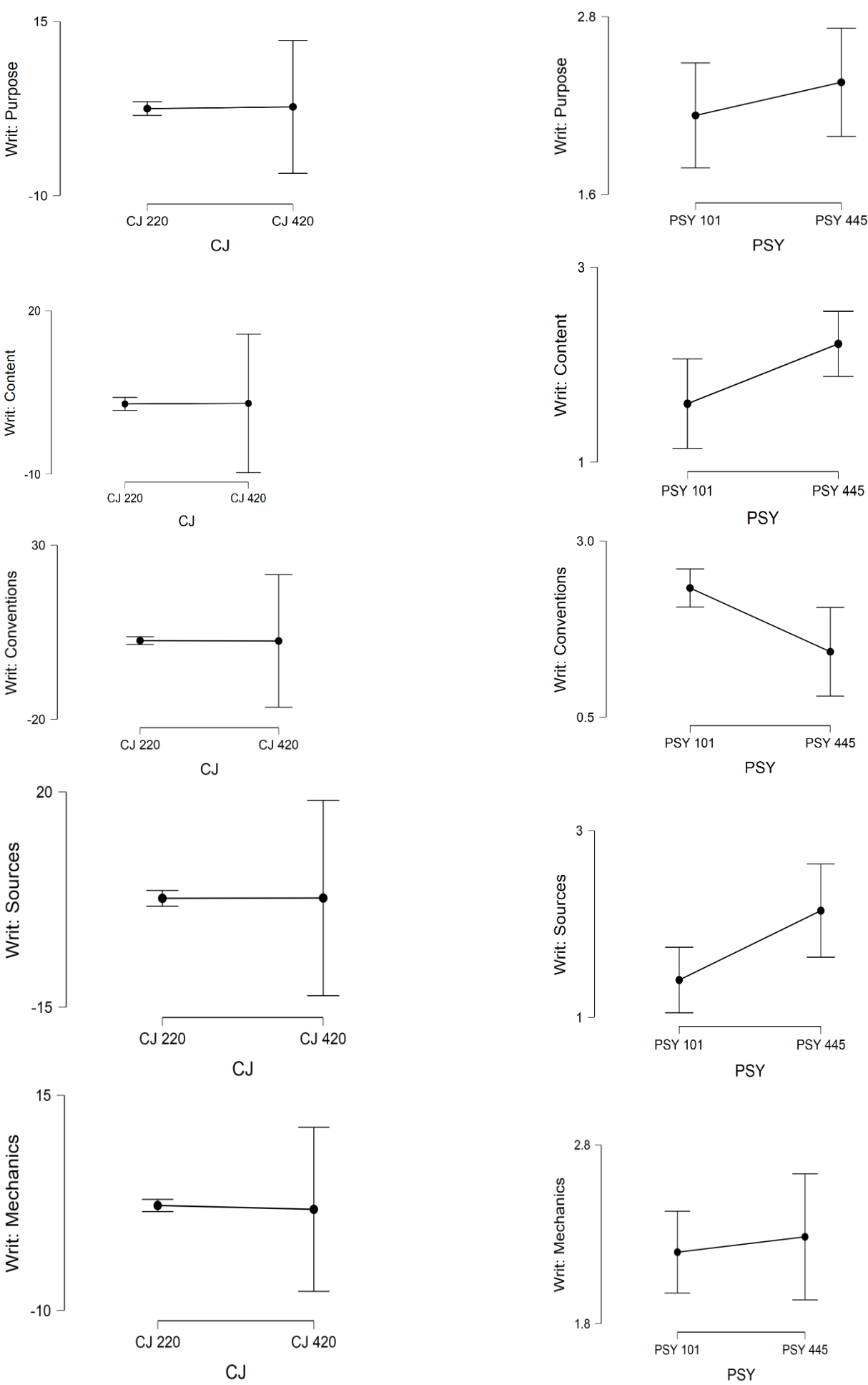
Frequencies for Writing Criteria: Content					
Course	Rubric Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
CJ 220	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	20	20	20
	2	1	20	20	40
	3	2	40	40	80
	4	1	20	20	100
CJ 420	0	0	0	0	0
	1	0	0	0	0
	2	1	50	50	50
	3	0	0	0	50
	4	1	50	50	100
PSY 101	0	2	13.333	13.333	13.333
	1	3	20	20	33.333
	2	9	60	60	93.333
	3	1	6.667	6.667	100
	4	0	0	0	100
PSY 445	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	6.667	7.143	7.143
	2	9	60	64.286	71.429
	3	4	26.667	28.571	100
	4	0	0	0	100

Frequencies for Writing Criteria: Conventions					
Course	Rubric Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
CJ 220	0	0	0	0	0
	1	0	0	0	0
	2	3	60	60	60
	3	1	20	20	80
	4	1	20	20	100
CJ 420	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	50	50	50
	2	0	0	0	50
	3	0	0	0	50
	4	1	50	50	100
PSY 101	0	0	0	0	0
	1	0	0	0	0
	2	10	66.667	66.667	66.667
	3	5	33.333	33.333	100
	4	0	0	0	100
PSY 445	0	3	20	21.429	21.429
	1	5	33.333	35.714	57.143
	2	3	20	21.429	78.571
	3	3	20	21.429	100
	4	0	0	0	100
Frequencies for Writing Criteria: Sources					
Course	Rubric Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
CJ 220	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	20	20	20
	2	2	40	40	60
	3	1	20	20	80
	4	1	20	20	100
CJ 420	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	50	50	50
	2	0	0	0	50
	3	0	0	0	50
	4	1	50	50	100
PSY 101	0	1	6.667	6.667	6.667
	1	7	46.667	46.667	53.333
	2	7	46.667	46.667	100
	3	0	0	0	100
	4	0	0	0	100
PSY 445	0	0	0	0	0
	1	4	26.667	28.571	28.571
	2	4	26.667	28.571	57.143
	3	6	40	42.857	100
	4	0	0	0	100

Frequencies for Writing Criteria: Mechanics					
Course	Rubric Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
CJ 220	1	1	20	20	20
	2	3	60	60	80
	3	1	20	20	100
CJ 420	1	1	50	50	50
	2	1	50	50	100
	3	0	0	0	100
PSY 101	1	0	0	0	0
	2	12	80	80	80
	3	3	20	20	100
PSY 445	1	1	6.667	7.143	7.143
	2	8	53.333	57.143	64.286
	3	5	33.333	35.714	100

Appendix C

Means of Written Communication Rubric Scores by Course



Note. Y-axes could range from 0 to 5. Scaling on graphs are not equivalent. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. Due to small sample in CJ 420 ($N = 2$), confidence error calculations exceeded the range of the rubric scale.