

Assessment Cycle 2022-2023

Psychology-Clinical Psychology (M.S.) (552)

Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development

Department: Psychology

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Northwestern Mission Statement. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the School of Education and Departments of Health and Human Performance, Military Science, Psychology, and Social Work, the College produces knowledgeable, inspired, and innovative graduates ready for lifelong learning who contribute to the communities in which they reside and professions they serve. Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their families related to learning and development.

Department of Psychology Mission. The Department of Psychology (undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Addiction Studies and a master's degree in Clinical Psychology) is dedicated to providing high quality education by actively engaging in the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. Students develop a robust knowledge base of concepts and theories, scientific and critical thinking, ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world, communication, and professional development. As part of our educational mission, the Psychology Department provides encouragement and support for research and scholarship for both the faculty and students with opportunities for practicum and externship training experiences. These activities are designed to foster professionalism and prepare students for graduate education and/or immediate employment and service in the community.

Clinical Psychology Program Mission Statement: The mission of the clinical psychology graduate program is to educate students in the science and practice of clinical psychology so that they may develop into knowledgeable professionals who are

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intelligent consumers of research and competent and ethical providers of psychological services.

Methodology: The assessment process for the MS in Clinical Psychology program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator;
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core graduate courses if required;
- (5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Clinical Psychology Graduate Council, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Students will know and utilize the theories, techniques, and outcomes of major approaches to psychotherapy.

Course Map: PSYC 5200: Theories of Psychotherapy
PSYC 5260: Practicum I: Psychotherapy and Intervention

Measure: 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

Annually, students are administered a preliminary exam during orientation before starting the program to establish a baseline of knowledge. The exam covers the same four areas, including theories, which are covered by the program's comprehensive exams. This allows for pre- and post-course assessments. Because this is a preliminary evaluation, no minimum score is expected.

Each student enrolled in PSYC 5200, a required course for Clinical Psychology graduate students, was administered a comprehensive exam as the final evaluation of the course. The exam is composed of questions developed by a faculty member and designed to evaluate the students' foundational knowledge of the theories of psychotherapy. The goal was for 80% of students to achieve a composite score of 70%. These scores were also compared to the preliminary exam scores with an anticipated positive change.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-22, the target was met.

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Of the seven students, 100% earned at least 70% on the targeted multiple-choice questions. Scores on the pretest ranged from 40 to 80% ($M = 52.57$, $SD = 13.15$). For the comprehensive exam, the scores for the same targeted items were much more consistent and ranged from 80 to 92% ($M = 87.43$, $SD = 4.27$). These scores were significantly higher than the pretest scores (two-tailed paired t -test, $t_6 = -8.77$, $p = < .001$), demonstrating increased knowledge of theories of psychotherapy and improvement in the desired direction. Moreover, only two items were missed by more than half of the class. While they were items regarding the older, more abstract theories (Gestalt and Individual Psychotherapy), the results revealed greater knowledge, in general, of these theories.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 data, faculty implemented changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The weakest performance on the comprehensive exam involved Gestalt Psychotherapy. One possible reason was that students consistently verbalized their dislike of the theorist's brashness during the video demonstration and disinterest in considering the theory for adoption. This video could inadvertently diminish their motivation in gaining a thorough knowledge of the theory. The instructor presented a therapist's demonstration of the theoretical orientation, which is gentler and, therefore, more likable. In addition, one of the Case Conceptualization assignments required the application of the Gestalt theory. Students were taught this theory in a workshop format where they were allowed to experiment with Gestalt strategies and techniques to better understand the positive opportunities this theory provides to assist clients.

The AC 2022-2023 target was met.

The results showed that 100% passed the comprehensive exam, including essay, which is the primary goal. Therefore, the target was met. However, it is notable that only 51% (4 out of 7) passed the 25-question post-test at a 70% or higher. These questions have been used the last three years and this is the only class for this to occur. However, one reason might be that a different instructor taught the course than the original instructor who created the questions and taught it the two years previously. Even so, overall, the students performed significantly better on the post-test ($M = 68.00$, $SD = 10.07$) than on the pre-test ($M = 53.14$, $SD = 12.80$), $t(7) = 2.30$, $p = .03$. In addition, six out of seven (90%) of students in this cohort responded correctly to the question directly regarding Gestalt theory. These results indicate students' knowledge of theories of psychotherapy significantly increased from the pre-comp to the comprehensive exam, which is evidence of improvement in the desired direction for this SLO.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. There was a change in instructors for this course. While the goal for the pre-posttests was met, it was noted that students' scores were higher on the essay portion of the test showing understanding and application of the theories than on the multiple-choice pre-posttests, indicating specific detail academic knowledge of the theories. This may be due

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to the workshop format focus changing the learning expectations. As a result, a review of the pre-posttest questions will be conducted to determine if any updates are necessary to ensure questions are directly related to the course content. Any changes needed will be made prior to the pre-test in the fall of 2023. In addition, application assignments will be made for each of the major theories addressed in the course with interactive/process andragogy in mind. These changes will improve the student's ability to balance their academic content knowledge with the ability to utilize and apply this knowledge when they begin working with clients. These changes will continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure: 1.2. (Direct – Skill/Ability)

At the end of the semester, students enrolled in PSYC 5270 (Practicum II) were evaluated by their supervisors on their knowledge and use of theoretical and scientific approaches to psychological treatment, including evidence-based practice. The goal was for 100% of enrolled students to demonstrate fundamental knowledge by scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation. The equivalent rating for the recently adopted (2018) evaluation form is a score of 3 (1 = Not Satisfactory, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Satisfactory, and 4 = Superior).

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-22, the target was met.

Table 1

Psychological Intervention Skills	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Demonstrates knowledge of theories of psychotherapy.	3.00	.00
Takes a theoretically based approach to working w/clients.	3.32	.57

As seen in Table 1, the students enrolled in PSYC 5270 during the Spring semester received a rating of 4 for demonstrating knowledge of theories of psychotherapy. For the application of this knowledge with clients, the ratings ranged from 3 ($n = 1$) to 4 ($n = 1$), with $M = 3.32$. In terms of the SLO, the objective was met with 100% of the students earning a rating from their supervisor of 3 or higher, consistently meeting high standards.

Based on this information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 data, the faculty planned to organize an advisory board with the goal for the board to be comprised of at least four supervisors from the various practicum sites. The goal was for the board to provide direction. A second goal was to schedule the meeting in the early part of the Fall 2022 semester to incorporate the information collected from the meeting into the Fall 2022 Practicum I and to make changes in time for Spring 2023 Practicum II. Upon further discussion and consideration, it was determined that this action would not have a direct influence on the students' ability to know and utilize theories and techniques with clients. It is not known what opportunities are provided during supervision to demonstrate

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knowledge and, therefore, if it's an area of improvement for the students or a need for an opportunity in supervision. Instead, the University faculty supervisor continued to emphasize discussion of the students' theoretical orientation or orientation of the site and required the students to conceptualize cases theoretically during case staffing.

These actions had a direct impact on the student's ability to know and utilize the theories, techniques, and outcomes of major approaches to psychotherapy.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

Table 2

Psychological Intervention Skills	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Demonstrates knowledge of theories of psychotherapy.	3.67	0.52
Takes a theoretically based approach to working w/clients.	3.67	0.52

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The decision was made to not move towards an advisory board due to the goals being more aligned with program enhancement versus this specific SLO. Therefore, a decision was made to continue the previous (2020-2021) actions of the supervisor in practicum II regarding methods and opportunities in group supervision time with the instructor. In addition, PSYC 5200 Theories of Psychotherapy will be provided in a workshop format with strong andragogical interactive activities that allow the students to practice and personalize the skills and techniques of various theories. These assignments/activities will be reflected in a submission of a "portfolio" of interactive and reflective work by each student. The intention behind these more applied activities is to help students generalize knowledge to skills with clients.

These changes will improve the student's ability to know and utilize the theories, techniques, and outcomes of major approaches to psychotherapy, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward for this SLO.

SLO 2. Demonstrate understanding of research, theory, and methods of clinical practice, including assessment, diagnosis, and intervention of normal versus dysfunctional development and psychopathology.

Course Map: PSYC 5300: Intellectual Assessment
PSYC 5320: Personality Assessment
PSYC 5750: Psychopathology
PSYC 5270: Practicum II: Psychotherapy and Intervention

Measure 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

The preliminary exam covers the same four areas, including psychopathology.

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Coordinating targeted items allows for pre- and post-course assessments. Because this is a preliminary evaluation, no score was expected.

Each student enrolled in PSYC 5750, a required course for Clinical Psychology graduate students, was administered a comprehensive exam as the final evaluation of the course. The exam is composed of questions developed by a faculty member and designed to evaluate the students' knowledge of psychopathology, including its etiology, diagnosis, and treatment. The goal was for at least 80% of students to achieve a composite score of 70% or better. These scores were also compared to the preliminary exam scores with an anticipated positive change.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

For AC 2021-2022, all seven students (100%) earned at least 70% on the targeted 25 multiple-choice questions. Scores on the pretest ranged from 48 to 84% ($M = 62.29$, $SD = 11.28$). For the targeted items, scores on the comprehensive exam ranged from 76 to 100% ($M = 85.14$, $SD = 8.86$) and were significantly higher than those on the pretest (one-tailed paired t -test, $t_6 = -2.45$, $p = .002$). These results indicated students' knowledge of psychopathology significantly increased from the pre-comp to the comprehensive exam, which is evidence of improvement in the desired direction. The cohort's weakest performance on the pre-comp and comprehensive exams was on questions regarding diagnosing intellectual disability (0% and 43% accuracy, respectively).

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 data, faculty implemented the changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Additional class time was spent in PSYC 5750 reviewing information on the intellectual disability disorder, including showing a video of individuals diagnosed with the disorder and their related symptoms. Faculty observed limitations among the students in their ability to modify and/or generalize across tasks that involved Mental Status Exams (MSE), including diagnostic interviews, assessments, and practicum clinical interviews. The graduate faculty created a uniform MSE form to assist the students, but without noticeable change in students' performances. Therefore, the graduate faculty presented a MSE Workshop in the fall semester to ensure consistent instruction and then to help them adapt it to the situational task.

The AC 2022-2023 target was met.

The comprehensive exam included 75 multiple-choice questions and two discussion questions. The exam included the 25 items from the pre-test. Of the six students, 100% earned at least 70% on the entire exam and the targeted multiple-choice questions. Scores on the pretest ranged from 36 to 84% ($M = 59.43$, $SD = 16.24$). For the targeted items, scores on the comprehensive exam ranged from 80 to 96% ($M = 89.14$, $SD = 5.01$)

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and were significantly higher than those on the pretest (one-tailed paired t -test, $t(6) = -5.77, p < .000$). These results indicated students' knowledge of psychopathology significantly increased from the pre-comp to the comprehensive exam, which is evidence of improvement in the desired direction for the SLO.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The weakest performance on the pre-comp and comprehensive exams again was on the question regarding intellectual disability (0% for pre- and post-test). Given the consistently poor performance on the question regarding intellectual disability, the test item is considered to be a poor item. The question will be revised for the 2023-2024 pre-comp and comprehensive exam. The other weak area was mood disorders, specifically time criteria that distinguish between mood disorders. The instructor will use a mood disorder case for one of the case analysis assignments, which will require students to differentiate between mood disorders in their selection of the correct diagnosis.

These changes will have a direct impact on the student's ability to demonstrate competency in knowledge of psychopathology, including its etiology, diagnosis, and treatment.

Measure 2.2. (Direct – Assessment Skill / Ability)

Students will demonstrate their psychological assessment and diagnostic abilities through formal clinical interviews, mental status examinations, standardized psychological testing administration, scoring, and interpretative evaluation reports they are required to submit for PSYC 5300 and 5320, required assessment courses for Clinical Psychology students. Upon completion of PSYC 5320, the students submit a comprehensive psychological assessment report to evaluate their proficiency in performing structured clinical interviews, mental status examination, and psychological test administration, scoring, and interpretation used in professional assessment and diagnosis. The goal was for at least 70% of students to score at least 80% on the comprehensive report to demonstrate competency in psychological assessment and diagnostics.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

Results of comprehensive psychological assessment report data for AC 2021-2022 yielded grades ranging from 93 to 96%, with a mean score of $M = 95, SD = 1.10$. Analysis indicated above-average student proficiency in performing structured clinical interviews, mental status examinations, test administration, scoring, and interpretation techniques. There was an improvement from the previous AC 2020-2021 comprehensive

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psychological assessment report grades, which had a $M = 90$. The identified comprehensive report area for improvement focus was the overall writing section which included APA formatting, grammar/sentence structure, and clear flow of information saw significant improvement for AC 2021-2022 with an overall mean score of 95%, five points higher than the previous year. Analysis of the AC 2021-2022 comprehensive report results indicated that the weakest performance area was *recommendations*. This area included identification of examinee needs directly informed by psychological testing objective data and potential concerns requiring further investigation, such as reported medical issues.

Additional course focus on the comprehensive assessment report improvement area included two targeted class discussions with subsequent skills tests. All students earned a 100% score on the skills tests given a week after the specified class discussion, which demonstrated mastery of the material. Additionally, students completed 3 psychological assessment reports and a comprehensive final report which included an evaluation of the targeted writing skills domain. Students demonstrated improvement across report assignments, with a mean score of 80% on report 1 and a mean score of 94% on the final report. The goal to facilitate improvement in overall writing techniques by recognizing correct and incorrect use of APA style, grammar, and flow of information was effectively achieved as evaluated by these course activities.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 data, faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students continued to receive instruction for the administration of psychological assessment instruments virtually and in person. The course modifications based on changing industry standards divided the comprehensive report activities between virtual and in-person administration. Due to fluctuating circumstances related to COVID-19 and other community challenges such as hurricanes, comprehensive assessments are now effectively administered through a combination of testing platforms/environments in the world of work. Additionally, the need for more education concerning the connection between physical health and psychological well-being as a component of comprehensive psychological evaluation recommendations were addressed.

In AC 2022-2023 on a pre-test knowledge measure administered at the beginning of the semester students achieved scores with a range of 90 to 100% and $M = 98$, $SD = 0.37$, demonstrating awareness of the basic connections between physical health and psychological well-being. The post-test knowledge measure was not administered due to the high scores demonstrated on the initial measure. Acquired knowledge application evaluation scheduled as a component of the final comprehensive assessment report was discontinued. Comprehensive assessment reports are conducted with student volunteers which places the presenting problems evaluated in the report to chance based on the volunteer's information. For this assignment, comprehensive report activities did not obtain volunteers with reported physical health concerns. Further evaluation of skills application was not possible for this cycle. However, knowledge of physical health and psychological well-being as a component of comprehensive psychological evaluation was noted through initial measurement of student knowledge and additional instruction was provided.

The AC 2022-2023 target was met.

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Decision or Recommendation

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students will receive instruction for the administration of psychological assessment instruments virtually and in person to reflect current industry standards in the practice of psychology. Additional education concerning the connection between physical health and psychological well-being as a component of comprehensive psychological evaluation will be expanded. This will be evaluated with an instructor-provided psychological assessment report rather than a comprehensive report component to ensure data is available for student use.

A new instruction component will focus on the need to include medication influences on psychological assessment results. This is a targeted education instruction for including medication information within psychological assessment reports and to encourage compliance with medical provider instructions as recommendations. It was noted in the AC2022-2023 year that approximately 75% of volunteers for student mock assessment activities reported active prescription medication use which was not consistently addressed by students in their psychological assessment report assignments.

Additionally, in the AC 2022-2023, for the first time, students had mock assessment volunteers consistently reporting regular use of marijuana. As the stigma around marijuana use, whether recreationally or as a prescription medication continues, it is important psychological assessment student instruction addresses the impact of regular marijuana use on cognitive performance and psychological well-being. A module on the neuropsychological effects of marijuana on cognition, mood, and well-being will be provided to psychological assessment students. A pre-test and post-test will be administered to students around the module activities. Evaluation of knowledge application will be conducted through modification of a course assignment to practice potential areas of concern addressed in the recommendation section of psychological assessment reports.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate an understanding of research, theory, and methods of clinical practice, including assessment, diagnosis, and intervention of normal versus dysfunctional development and psychopathology, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 2.3. (Direct – Intervention Skill / Ability)

At the end of the semester, students enrolled in PSYC 5270 were evaluated by their supervisors on their knowledge and skills of treatment planning and choosing and implementing evidence-based interventions to effect change. The goal was for 100% of students to be rated satisfactory (3) and demonstrate competency in psychological intervention. The rating scale on the evaluation form is 1 = Not Satisfactory, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Satisfactory, and 4 = Superior.

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Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

All seven students (100%) of the students received a minimum rating of three. In addition, while the increase was small, there were increased ratings for this year's practicum cohort across all areas (see Table 4).

Table 3

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Ability to propose & defend treatment plan.	3.33	.58
Seeks information about therapeutic techniques.	4	0
Knowledgeable about therapeutic techniques.	3.67	.58
Overall Rating	3.67	.58

Similar to the evaluation of theories knowledge, it was not known if the supervisors evaluated the students' knowledge and application of treatment planning or the students' ability to take the initiative in supervision with discussing treatment planning. The language on the survey was modified to clearly assess students' knowledge and application of treatment planning. As previously discussed, the plan of forming an advisory board was further discussed, and it was determined that this action would not have a direct influence on the students' ability to know and utilize theories and techniques with clients. Instead, the Practicum I instructor/supervisor and Practicum II supervisors emphasized class discussions that prompted students to explain and defend treatment plans from an empirically supported perspective.

These changes had a direct impact on the students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of treatment planning and choosing and implementing evidence-based interventions to effect change.

Table 4

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Ability to propose & defend treatment plan.	3.67	.47
Seeks information about therapeutic techniques.	3.50	.50
Knowledgeable about therapeutic techniques.	3.50	.50
Demonstrates knowledge of theories of psychotherapy.	3.67	.47
Takes a theoretically based approach.	3.67	.47
Overall Rating	3.67	.47

It is noted that two students received a satisfactory rating (3) across all areas while the other four students received Superior ratings (4), with two items as exceptions. This supervisor was not providing regular supervision for the two students and was prompted to comply with the contractual agreement of weekly supervision. He elected to supervise

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them virtually, and the topic generally focused on educating the students about assessment rather than specific supervision of their clients and their application of theory. A review of the revised questions that compared knowledge vs initiative/application showed that students who were regularly supervised in person about their clients received superior ratings of their knowledge and application, which met the objective.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Clinical Director will meet with each supervisor, particularly the noted supervisor, to review practicum objectives and supervision requirements with the goal of evaluating the partnership and the University's and site's needs. Practicum I and the University supervisor of Practicum II will emphasize student discussion of theoretical conceptualization and application in treatment planning and empirically supported techniques.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate understanding of research, theory, and methods of clinical practice, including assessment, diagnosis, and intervention of normal versus dysfunctional development and psychopathology, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 3. Students will demonstrate and apply knowledge of experimental design and statistical analysis used to evaluate, plan, and perform psychological research.

Course Map: PSYC 5100: Psychological Research: Statistics
PSYC 5120: Psychological Research: Design
PSYC 5950: Psychological Research: Application

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

The preliminary exam covers the same four areas, including statistics and research design, which are covered by the program's comprehensive exams. This allows for pre- and post-course assessments. Because this is a preliminary evaluation, no minimum score was expected.

Each student enrolled in PSYC 5120 was administered a comprehensive exam as the final evaluation of the course. The exam is composed of questions developed by a faculty member and designed to evaluate the students' knowledge of statistics and research design. The goal was for at least 80% of students to achieve a composite score of 70% or better. These scores were also compared to the preliminary exam scores with an anticipated positive change.

Finding: Target was met.

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Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

For AC 2021-2022, all 25 questions from the pretest were included in the comprehensive exam. Five of six students taking both tests (83%) scored 80% or better on the questions from the pretest, with a range of 64 to 92% ($M = 80.7\%$, $SD = 9.3\%$). Scores on the pretest ranged from 32 to 48% ($M = 41.3\%$, $SD = 5.5\%$). For the targeted items, scores on the comprehensive exam were significantly higher than those on the pretest (one-tailed paired t -test, $t_5 = 11.8$, $p < .001$). As a result, student knowledge of statistics and research methodology clearly increased, not just statistically but also practically, between the pre-comp to the comprehensive exam.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The PSYC 5120 instructor spent additional class time on the ethical treatment of human participants and the due date for the completion of the two CITI training courses was changed to ensure that students had a good background before discussing the material in class. In addition, a new instructor taught PSYC 5100 and PSYC 5120 who taught the course with the goal of improving students' comfort and confidence with the material by simplifying the discussion and encouraging questions.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

For AC 2022-2023, seven students took the comprehensive exam, with seven (100%) of them scoring 70% or better on the entire exam, which exceeds our goal of 80%. The exam scores had $M = 79.1\%$, $SD = 6.9\%$; scores ranged from 71% to 87%. All 25 questions from the pretest were included in the comprehensive exam. Zero of six students taking both tests scored 80% or better on the questions from the pretest, with a range of 48 to 76% ($M = 64.6\%$, $SD = 11.9\%$). Scores on the pretest ranged from 20 to 52% ($M = 33.1\%$, $SD = 13.0\%$). For the targeted items, scores on the comprehensive exam were significantly higher than those on the pretest (one-tailed paired t -test, $t(7) = -6.4$, $p < .001$), indicating, student knowledge of statistics and research methodology clearly increased, not just statistically but also practically, between the pre-comp to the comprehensive exam.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, PSYC 5100 will continue to meet two days a week (two 75-minute class periods) as opposed to one day a week (150-minute class periods). The weakest areas on the post-test exam were the interpretation of a one-tailed independent samples t -test and interpretation of Tukey HSD post-hoc test, so additional class time will be spent in PSYC 5120 on this material.

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These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate and apply knowledge of experimental design, the responsible conduct of research, and statistical analysis used to evaluate, plan, and perform psychological research, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 3.2. (Direct - Knowledge)

At the conclusion of each research project, Paper-in-lieu of thesis or Thesis, thesis advisors scored the project using a rubric that assesses critical thinking and analysis of psychology concepts and literature, development of a research question(s) and hypotheses, appropriateness of the research design and methods, presentation and interpretation of data in psychological research. The goal was for students to earn an overall rating of at least 80% or a rating of 3 on a 4-point Likert scale to demonstrate proficiency.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

The intervention effectively provided structure and increased the number of completed research projects on time – three of four students completed their PIL or thesis by May 2022, with 100% earning a rating of over 80% -- two students completed theses, and one student completed a Paper-in-lieu of thesis (PIL). In addition to this cohort, two students from previous cohorts completed their PIL. For accuracy, the survey results were interpreted using a 4-point Likert scale instead of converting them to percentages. The students ($n = 3$) who completed a PIL received a mean overall rating of 3.625. Two students completed theses and received a mean overall rating of 3.75. The three students from this year's cohort presented at NSU Research Day, and two presented at the Southwestern Psychological Association Convention. All results are in the desired direction.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, faculty implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. With the Provost's approval, PSYC 5130, an elective research course, was offered as a pilot in Summer 2022 to impose structure and required timelines to their research proposals. There were no required courses in the summer that bridge the program's first and second years. The intention for the summer was for students to prepare drafts of their research project and pursue concentrations if desired. However, anecdotal data has consistently shown students do not take full advantage of the time for their research proposal without structure to guide productivity. The intention of this class was to address the ongoing challenges of students completing their theses or PIL in a timely manner.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

The ongoing intervention effectively provided structure and increased the number of

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completed research projects on time – 100% of students proposed before the conclusion of the Fall semester and completed their thesis by May 2023, with 100% earning a rating of over 80%. For accuracy, the survey results were interpreted using a 4-point Likert scale instead of converting them to percentages. The students (n = 6) who completed theses received a mean overall rating of 4.76. The students from this year's cohort presented at NSU Research Day, and two presented at the Southwestern Psychological Association Convention.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Provost approved two years of offering the summer course to collect data; therefore, the faculty will again offer PSYC 5130 as an elective research course in Summer 2023 with the present cohort in order to impose structure and required timelines to their research proposals. The intention of this class was to address the ongoing challenges of students completing their theses or PIL in a timely manner, and the results showed 100% of those students successfully completed their theses. Areas of improvement noted on the evaluations were clarity of results and tables/figures, proofing drafts prior to submitting it to major professor, and thoroughly addressing advisor's feedback to minimize revisions. Resources and sample write-ups will be added to PSYC 5130 for students to use as models for writing results. In addition, these findings will be shared with major professors at the start of the fall semester to incorporate strategies for students to address feedback and reduce revisions.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate research knowledge and application in a timely manner, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate understanding and application of ethical and professional standards in research and clinical practice.

Course Map: PSYC 6000: Ethics and Professional Conduct
PSYC 5270: Practicum II: Psychological Intervention and Therapy

Measure 4.1. (Direct – knowledge)

Annually, students are administered a preliminary exam during orientation before starting the program to establish a baseline of knowledge. The exam covers the same four areas, including ethics, which are covered by the program's comprehensive exams. This allows for pre- and post-course assessments. Because this is a preliminary evaluation, no score was expected.

Each student enrolled in PSYC 6000, a required course for Clinical Psychology graduate students will be administered a comprehensive exam as the final evaluation of the course. The exam is composed of questions developed by a faculty member and designed to evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of ethical principles

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and standards of practice and their ability to practice ethical decision-making skills when presented with an ethical dilemma. The goal was for 90% of enrolled students to achieve a composite score of 70%. These scores were also compared to the preliminary exam scores with an anticipated positive change.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-2022 the target was met.

In AC 2021-2022, students achieved pre-comprehensive exam score items with a range of 44 to 80% and $M = 64$, $SD = 2.72$. Analysis of the comprehensive exam score items indicated a range of 84 to 100% and $M = 92$, $SD = 1.31$. The scores were improved from the pre-comprehensive exam to the comprehensive exam in AC 2021-2022. The scores suggested improved student performance and increased knowledge of key concepts. Of importance to note, analysis of pre-comprehensive exam items identified as areas of weakness for this student cohort guided instruction during course activities.

Comprehensive exam item analysis of those same items reflected improved overall student knowledge in the weakest areas, including ethical dilemma resolution with colleagues (pre-comp item target response rate of 29% and comp rate of 100%), related legal concepts such as privilege (pre-comp item target response rate of 14% and comp rate of 86%), bartering with clients (pre-comp item target response rate of 29% and comp rate of 100%), and ethical consideration when clients present gifts (pre-comp item target response rate of 14% and comp rate of 100%). Additional evaluation of student performance on demonstration-based assignments indicates the student performance scores range from 90 – 96% with a $M = 94%$ and $SD = 1.11$. The goal of 90% of students demonstrating proficiency at 85% was met.

Based on experience from AC 2021-2022, the improvement resulted from analysis of pre-comprehensive exam items identified as areas of weakness that guided instruction during course activities was effective. This practice will continue as each cohort of students has variable performance levels in these identified areas.

In AC 2022-2023, students achieved pre-comprehensive exam score items with a range of 48 to 76% and $M = 64$, $SD = 2.65$. Analysis of the comprehensive exam score items indicated a range of 88 to 92% and $M = 92$, $SD = 0.45$. The scores improved from the pre-comprehensive exam to the comprehensive exam in AC 2022-2023. The scores suggest improved student performance and increased knowledge of key concepts. Of importance to note, analysis of pre-comprehensive exam items identified as areas of weakness for this student cohort guided instruction during course activities. Comprehensive exam item analysis of those same items reflected improved overall student knowledge in the weakest areas, including the rights to privilege in legal settings (pre-comp item target response rate of 14% and comp rate of 100%), ethical guidelines for bartering (pre-comp item target response rate of 14% and comp rate of 100%), dual relationship boundaries (pre-comp item target response rate of 29% and comp rate of 100%), and ethical responsibilities to protect human rights (pre-comp item target response rate of 29% and comp rate of 100%).

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Additional evaluation of student performance on demonstration-based assignments indicates the student performance scores range from 88-98% with a $M = 94\%$ and $SD=4.06$. The goal of 90% of students demonstrating proficiency at 85% was met.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to demonstrate understanding and application of ethical and professional standards in research and clinical practice.

Additionally, in the 2022-2023 PSYC 6000 course, a new module of the ethical responsibilities for self-care to mediate stress and the potential for burnout in relation to ethical responsibilities was incorporated as a component of ethical practice in psychology. Students effectively demonstrated knowledge of self-care skills, the impact on mental well-being, and how deficits in self-care impact professional performance effectively on a basic questionnaire with a 100% correct response rate. A focus on self-care practice as an ethical responsibility was incorporated across course activities during the semester. A targeted assignment revealed students effectively understand the need for self-care from a professional and personal development standpoint. However, they demonstrated difficulty clearly identifying steps to maintain self-care consistently. The knowledge survey was not administered again at the end of the semester as students demonstrated self-care knowledge effectively from the initial survey. Students received an additional opportunity for personal self-care skills development through a Department of Psychology sponsored guest speaker presentation for student development in October 2023 titled Self Care.

Based on experience from AC 2022-2023, the changes in instruction and activities guided by analysis of pre-comprehensive exam items identified as areas of weakness were effective. This practice will continue as each cohort of students has variable performance levels in these identified areas. The addition of course instruction and evaluation of student knowledge about the ethical responsibilities for self-care in the professional practice of psychology yielded awareness of the need for more focus in this content area.

Decision or Recommendation:

In AC 2022-2023 the target was met with the implemented changes.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, in AC 2023-2024 the faculty will ensure the expanded focus in ethical professional practice to technology-specific platform skill sets and the ethical use of social media platforms in professional practice as these industry standards continue to rapidly evolve. This will include another revision of 20% of pre-comp and comp questions specific to the identified areas. Based on greater understanding of student difficulties applying basic knowledge of ethical responsibilities for self-care to improve professional competence in context of professional development, modified course activities will address this deficit. Students will complete a basic ethical responsibilities of self-care knowledge survey at the beginning of the semester. An experiential assignment will follow with an opportunity for students to rate their initial competence and later progress in developing consistent ethical self-care skills as a component of their professional development.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate understanding and

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application of ethical and professional standards in research and clinical practice, with a new awareness of self-care maintenance as a component of ethical professional development thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 4.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

At the end of the semester, students enrolled in PSYC 5270 were evaluated by their supervisors on their knowledge of ethical and professional practice, as well as their demonstration of ethical and professional practice. The goal was for 100% of enrolled students to demonstrate fundamental knowledge by scoring 3 (satisfactory) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2021-22, the target was met.

As can be seen in Table 5, the supervisor's rating form yielded a mean overall mean rating $M = 3.75$, $SD = .50$, in the superior range, with a minimum rating of 3 (satisfactory) for 100% of the students. Moreover, 100% of the students received superior ratings in three of the items. No weak area was noted.

Table 5

Ethical and Professional Conduct	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Knowledge of ethics.	4	0
Ethical behavior.	3.75	.50
Respect for confidentiality.	4	0
Maturity	3.75	.50
Cooperation with others.	4	0
Overall Rating	3.75	.50

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 data, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. As previously discussed, the plan of forming an advisory board was further discussed, and it was determined that this action would not have a direct influence on the students' knowledge and demonstration of ethical and professional practice. Instead, the Practicum I instructor/supervisor and Practicum II university supervisors emphasized class discussions of ethical dilemmas and prompted student-lead identification, discussion, and resolution of potential ethics dilemmas in situations where none existed.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to demonstrate understanding and application of ethical and professional standards in research and clinical practice.

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The supervisors' ratings are summarized in Table 6 and yielded a mean overall mean rating $M = 3.67$, $SD = .47$, in the superior range, with a minimum rating of 3 (satisfactory) for 100% of the students.

Table 6

Ethical and Professional Conduct	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Knowledge of ethics.	3.67	.47
Ethical behavior.	3.67	.47
Respect for confidentiality.	3.67	.47
Maturity	4.00	0
Cooperation with others.	3.83	.37
Overall Rating	3.67	.47

Similar to observations in 2.3, two students received a satisfactory rating (3) in nearly all areas while the other four students received Superior ratings (4). This supervisor was not providing regular supervision for the two students and was prompted to comply with the contractual agreement of weekly supervision. He elected to supervise them virtually with a didactic focus rather than specific supervision of their clients which would have presented greater opportunity to observe the students' ethics. A review of the other students' ratings was exciting as it showed 100% superior ratings across all areas of ethical and professional conduct.

Decision or Recommendation.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Clinical Director will meet with each supervisor, particularly the noted supervisor, to review practicum objectives and supervision requirements with the goal of evaluating the partnership and the University's and site's needs. Otherwise, Practicum I and University supervision of Practicum II will continue to emphasize ethical dilemmas when students encounter them and pose potential dilemmas that continue to challenge students to lead the resolution of the ethical dilemmas. In addition, social media and social trends pose ever-changing challenges to professional development. For example, on several occasions, instructors had to address students' dress as a group and individually. The faculty will host a mini workshop in Fall 2023 covering various topics pertaining to professionalism as graduate students and young professionals.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate understanding and application of ethical and professional standards in research and clinical practice, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on the Analysis of the Results:

Program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis from AC 2021-2022 which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement in AC 2022-2023.

- While specific actions have been identified for each objective, the graduate faculty continued to host one activity per semester that brought first and second-year graduate students together to foster a culture that recognizes achievement, peer and faculty-student interactions, and healthy communication. For example, graduate faculty hosted game night and lunches.
- The Graduate Faculty hosted an end-of-year celebration of completing the first year and for completing all required coursework for the respective cohorts.

SLO 1

- Each student enrolled in PSYC 5200, a required course for Clinical Psychology graduate students, was administered a comprehensive exam as the final evaluation of the course. The exam is composed of questions developed by a faculty member and designed to evaluate the students' foundational knowledge of the theories of psychotherapy. The goal was for 80% of students to achieve a composite score of 70%. These scores were also compared to the preliminary exam scores with an anticipated positive change.
- At the end of the semester, students enrolled in PSYC 5270 (Practicum II), a required course for Clinical Psychology students, were evaluated by their supervisors on their knowledge and use of theoretical and scientific approaches to psychological treatment, including evidence-based practice. The goal was for 100% of enrolled students to demonstrate fundamental knowledge by scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation with a Likert scale of 1 = Not Satisfactory, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Satisfactory, and 4 = Superior.

SLO 2

- Based on an identified weakness in the data, faculty enhanced the course focus on the intellectual disability disorder, including showing a video of individuals diagnosed with the disorder and their related symptoms.
- Graduate faculty presented a MSE Workshop in the fall semester to ensure consistent instruction and then to help them adapt the administration of the MSE to the situational task.
- Faculty provided instruction on the connection between physical health and psychological well-being as a component of comprehensive psychological evaluation.
- Faculty provided instruction for the administration of psychological assessment instruments and performance evaluation measures between two service

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environments (virtually and in-person) to mirror the professional psychology world of work in response to COVID-19 pandemic changes.

- The language on the assessment survey was modified to clearly assess students' knowledge and application of treatment planning. As previously discussed, the plan of forming an advisory board was further discussion, and it was determined that this action would not have a direct influence on the students' ability to know and utilize theories and techniques with clients. Instead, the Practicum I instructor/supervisor and Practicum II supervisors emphasized class discussions that prompted students to explain and defend treatment plans from an empirically supported perspective.

SLO 3

- Faculty redesigned PSYC 5100 to meet two days a week (two 75-minute class periods) as opposed to one day a week (150-minute class periods) to improve comprehension.
- Because it was disrupted by Covid-19 the previous year, the faculty resumed with the intended timeline structure of completing subgoals for May 2022 completion of their PIL or Thesis, attention to accuracy in evaluating students' research and statistical knowledge and preparing students to present at NSU Research Day in 2022.

SLO 4

- Analysis of pre-comprehensive exam items identified as areas of weaknesses guided instruction during course activities.
- Faculty ensured the expanded focus in the ethical use of technology in professional practice with revised pre-comp and comp questions specific to telehealth activities and the use of social media.
- Faculty incorporated instruction on the ethical responsibilities of self-care during professional development and in the professional practice of psychology.
- Faculty continued to present a practicum orientation to review specific behaviors that differentiated professional immaturity from maturity (e.g., procrastination, critical thinking and decision making, patience, punctuality, and discipline).
- As previously discussed, the plan of forming an advisory board was further discussed, and it was determined that this action would not have a direct influence on the students' knowledge and demonstration of ethical and professional practice. Instead, the Practicum I instructor/supervisor and Practicum II university supervisors emphasized class discussions of ethical dilemmas and prompted student-lead identification, discussion, and resolution of potential ethics dilemmas in situations where none existed.

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Plan of Action for Moving Forward:

Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2022-2023 and will take steps to continue to improve student learning in AC 2023-2024:

SLO 1

- While the goal for the pre-posttests was met, it was noted that students' scores were higher on the essay portion of the test showing understanding and application of the theories than on the pre-posttests, indicating specific detail academic knowledge of the theories. This may be due to the workshop format focus changing the learning expectations. A review of the pre-posttest questions will be conducted to determine if any updates are necessary to assure questions are directly related to the course content. Any changes needed will be made prior to the pre-test in the fall of 2023. In addition, application assignments will be made for each of the major theories addressed in the course with interactive/process andragogy in mind. These changes will improve the student's ability to balance their academic content knowledge with the ability to utilize and apply this knowledge when they begin working with clients. These changes will continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.
- The decision was made to not move towards an advisory board due to the goals being more aligned with program enhancement versus this specific SLO. Therefore, A decision was made to continue the previous actions of the supervisor in practicum II regarding methods and opportunities in group supervision time with the instructor. Also, the students' learning and understanding by transitioning to a workshop format for the course with strong andragogical interactive activities that allow the students to practice and personalize the skills and techniques of various theories. These assignments/activities will be reflected in a submission of a "portfolio" of interactive and reflective work by each student.

SLO 2

- For PSYC 5750, the weakest performance on the pre-comp and comprehensive exams was again on questions regarding diagnosing intellectual disability. Given the consistently poor performance on the question regarding intellectual disability, the test item is considered to be a poor item. Therefore, the question will be revised for the 2023-2024 pre-comp and comprehensive exam.
- Due to weak performance in distinguishing mood disorders, the instructor will use a mood disorder case for one of the case analysis assignments which will require students to differentiate between mood disorders in their selection of the correct diagnosis.
- Students will continue to receive instruction for the administration of psychological assessment instruments virtually and in person in accordance with the changing industry standards.

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- The need for more education concerning the connection between physical health and psychological well-being as a component of comprehensive psychological evaluation recommendations will be addressed. The application of acquired knowledge will be evaluated with a specific psychological assessment assignment.
- Instructions will be provided on how to include medication information within psychological assessment reports and encourage compliance with medical provider instructions as recommendations. Application of information will be evaluated through modification of a course assignment to ensure inclusion of medication information in psychological assessment reports.
- A module on the neuropsychological effects of marijuana on cognition, mood, and well-being will be provided to psychological assessment students. A pre-test and post-test measure will be administered to students around the module activities. Evaluation of application will be conducted through modification of a course assignment to practice potential areas of concerns addressed in the recommendation section of psychological assessment reports.
- The Clinical Director will meet with each community practicum supervisor, to review practicum objectives and supervision requirements with the goal of evaluating the partnership and the University's and site's needs. Otherwise, Practicum I and the University supervisor of Practicum II will continue to emphasize student discussion of theoretical conceptualization and application in treatment planning and empirically supported techniques.

SLO 3

- PSYC 5100 will continue to meet two days a week (two 75-minute class periods) as opposed to one day a week (150-minute class periods). The weakest performance on the post-exam was in the section on the ethical treatment of human participants, interpretation of a one-tailed t -test based on data showed a two-tailed p -value, and interpretation of Tukey HSD post-hoc test, so additional class time will be spent in PSYC 5100 and 5120 on this material and the due date for the completion of the two CITI training courses will be changed to ensure that students have a good background before we discuss the material.
- In preparation of AC 2023-2024, the faculty will continue having PSYC 5130, an elective research course, in Summer 2023 with the present cohort in order to impose structure and required timelines to their research proposals in an effort to address the ongoing challenges of students completing their theses or PIL in a timely manner.

SLO 4

- Faculty will ensure the expanded focus of ethical professional practice to technology-specific platform skill sets as these standards continue to evolve, particularly in the virtual administration of standardized psychological testing. This will include revision of 20% of pre-comp and comp questions specific to teleassessment standards in the professional practice of psychology. Personal versus professional use of social media platforms will also be included in the item revisions for this generation of students who

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only know a world where social media is *the* primary mode of communication.

- Newly identified concerns regarding the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health emerge as a particular concern for student professional development. The APA Code of Ethics for Professional Practice in Psychology encourages a commitment to self-care as foundational behavior. It is important to include a targeted focus on self-care as the foundation for ethical practice in psychology. Beginning with the 2023-2024 PSYC 6000 course, a detailed module of the ethical responsibilities for self-care to mediate stress and the potential for burnout will be incorporated as an introduction to ethical practice in psychology. A focus on self-care practice will be incorporated across course discussions. An experiential assignment will follow with an opportunity for students to rate their initial competence and later progress in developing consistent ethical self-care skills as a component of their professional development.
- The Clinical Director will meet with each community practicum supervisor to review practicum objectives and supervision requirements with the goal of evaluating the partnership and the University's and site's needs. Otherwise, Practicum I and University supervisor of Practicum II will continue to emphasize ethical dilemmas when students encounter them and pose potential dilemmas that continue to challenge students to lead the resolution of the ethical dilemmas.
- Social media and social trends pose ever-changing challenges to professional development. For example, on several occasions, instructors had to address students' dress as a group and individually. The faculty will host a mini workshop in Fall 2023 covering various topics pertaining to professionalism as graduate students and young professionals.