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## **Students Learning Outcome and Assessment Plan Rio Hondo College**

Department/program: Psychology

5 April 2007

Course title/number: Research Methods in Psychology; Psychology 200

Participating Faculty: Christine Sutow, Vernon Padgett

### **State Student Learning Outcomes:**

#### **Students will be able to:**

1. Describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology.
2. Explain different research methods used by psychologists.
  - a. Describe how various research designs address different types of questions and hypotheses
  - b. Articulate strengths and limitations of various research designs
  - c. Distinguish the nature of designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not
3. Evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from psychological research.
  - a. Interpret basic statistical conclusions
  - b. Distinguish between statistical significance and practical significance
  - c. Describe effect size and confidence intervals
  - d. Evaluate the validity of conclusions presented in research reports
4. Design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions using appropriate research methods.
  - a. Locate and use relevant databases, research, and theory to plan, conduct, and interpret results of research studies
  - b. Formulate testable research hypotheses, based on operational definitions of variables
  - c. Select and apply appropriate methods to maximize internal and external validity and reduce the plausibility of alternative explanations
  - d. Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data using appropriate statistical strategies to address different types of research questions and hypotheses

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5. Follow the APA Code of Ethics in the treatment of human and nonhuman participants in the design, data collection, interpretation, and reporting of psychological research.
6. Generalize research conclusions appropriately based on the parameters of particular research methods.

**Proposed Types of Assessment to be used:** (attach rubric)

Objective tests: Students will be tested 4 times on all topics listed above as Student Learning Outcomes.

Short written assignments: 47 short written assignments, both individual and group, both in-class and out of class, in this course, assessing all Student Learning Objectives.

Longer written assignments: Students write 3 APA-style reports on their collection, analysis, and interpretation of original, empirical data. These longer (4 to 6 pages single-spaced, exclusive of Anova calculations and other appendices), provide further assessment of Student Learning Outcomes 4, 5, and 6.

Oral report on individual research projects: Students describe orally their final research report. This oral presentation provides for further assessment of Student Learning Outcomes 4, 5, and 6.

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**Collection and Evaluation Process:**

Assessment results are collected, analyzed, and evaluation by the instructor in and out of class, during class sessions, outside of class sessions, and following the completion of the course, every time the course is conducted.

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**Changes implemented**

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Objective test questions are continuously revised based on the instructor's item analysis of their effectiveness (percent correct; item discriminability; item-to-total-correlation coefficient). New questions are added and old deleted and existing items are modified following the results of this continuous review. The 47 short written assignments are evaluated and modified each time they are used. New exercises are added and old ones deleted following an analysis of the effectiveness of each exercise at each class meeting. Guidelines for the written and oral reports are revised following each semester's class. Lecture content and lecture presentation method (PPT vs. examples worked on board; PPT with or without accompanying handouts of that material and/or more, etc.) is continuously revised after routine and continuing assessment of its effectiveness.

**Review and recommendations; scheduled completion date**

All revisions detailed above were implemented each semester the course has been offered, with the latest analysis and implementation of changes by end of December 2006.