Measuring Student Career/Occupation Development and Identity Status with Student Self-Assessment Assignments

Michael Vigorito
Department of Psychology

University Assessment Meeting, March 16, 2018
Students will emerge from the major with realistic ideas about how to implement their psychological knowledge, skills, and values in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings.
APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major

Guidelines 2.0

The Guidelines 2.0 were approved by the APA Council of Representatives in August 2009. This document is a revision of the original APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (PDF, 289K), approved by the council in August 2006. The first revision, effective as of August 2009, superseded the original guidelines and is expected to remain in effect through Spring 2014.

GOAL 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Apply psychological content and skills to career goals
5.2 Exhibit self-efficacy and self-regulation
5.3 Refine project-management skills
5.4 Enhance teamwork capacity
5.5 Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation

Outcomes
Students will:

5.5 Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation

Foundation Indicators
Students will:

5.5a Describe the types of academic experiences and advanced course choices that will best shape career readiness
5.5b Articulate the skill sets desired by employers who hire or select people with psychology backgrounds
5.5c Describe settings in which people with backgrounds in psychology typically work
5.5d Recognize the importance of having a mentor
5.5e Describe how a curriculum vitae or résumé is used to document the skills expected by employers
5.5f Recognize how rapid social change influences behavior and affects one's value in the workplace

Baccalaureate Indicators
Students will:

5.5A Formulate career plan contingencies based on accurate self-assessment of abilities, achievement, motivation, and work habits
5.5B Develop evidence of attaining skill sets desired by psychology-related employers
5.5C Evaluate the characteristics of potential work settings or graduate school programs to optimize career direction and satisfaction
5.5D Actively seek and collaborate with a mentor
5.5E Create and continuously update a curriculum vitae or résumé
5.5F Develop strategies to enhance resilience and maintain skills in response to rapid social change and related changes in the job market

APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major

The APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major represent a national effort to describe and develop high-quality undergraduate programs in psychology.
The Core of the Psychology Major

Exposure to information about career goals and opportunities always receives the lowest ratings from graduating psychology majors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required courses (18 credits):</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 1101 Introduction to Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 1201 Orientation to the Psychology Major</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 2311 Elementary Psychological Statistics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 3311 Research Methods in Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 5111 Seminar in Psychology</td>
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</table>

An opportunity to assess growth in career/professional development
PSYC 1201 Orientation to the Major
Fall 2014 - Spring 2017
11 Classes; 256 students completed the course

Scores (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Quizzes</th>
<th>Psych Activities</th>
<th>APA style</th>
<th>Final Reflection</th>
<th>Pie Chart</th>
<th>Academic Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>36.5</td>
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</table>

Assessments (10 pts. Maximum)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L&amp;D Survey</th>
<th>Holland Quiz</th>
<th>In/Out Class Behavior</th>
<th>Outside Class Reflection</th>
<th>Time Manage. Skills &amp; Reflection</th>
<th>APA Style Error</th>
<th>Jrnal Articles</th>
<th>Writing in Psych</th>
<th>Job Ads</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Working With People</th>
<th>Career Reflection</th>
<th>Grad School</th>
<th>Eportfolio</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of completed assignments</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
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<td>36.5</td>
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</table>

Psychology-Related Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>N=</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Participation</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psych Club</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Interview</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology Talks</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Interview</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Interview</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Fair</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Senior Survey
Learning Goals Question

2014-15 (N =43)

2015-16 (N =34)

2016-17 (N =54)
Majoring in Psychology provided me with Job-related skills

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neutral
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Does not apply to me

2014 - 15
2015- 16
2016-17
2017 Fall
Identity Status in Late Adolescents: Scoring Criteria

James E. Marcia and Sally L. Archer

Introduction

The scoring criteria presented in this chapter are intended for use with late adolescents, aged 18 to 22. The dual processes of exploration and commitment are the primary scoring considerations. The criteria are somewhat more stringently applied for this age than for early and middle adolescence. The reasons for this difference are directly related to the developmental theory of identity formation. Early adolescence may be seen as a period of deestructuring, wherein previous cognitive, psychosexual, and physiological accomplishments undergo transition to a more pre-adult form. Middle adolescence can be construed as a restructuring phase in which new organizations of old and new skills are formed. Late adolescence, in contrast to the two earlier periods, is seen as a period of consolidation, of discernible identity composition, and of testing in the world the newly constructed identity. Hence, late adolescence is the period in the life cycle when for most persons identity “gets done” for the first time.
Commitment - "the degree of personal investment the individual expressed in a core of action or belief." (Kroger & Marcia, 2011, p.33-34)

- "know what he or she is getting into ... based on the results of behavior consistent with one's stated goals.“
- demonstrates "knowledgeability... [which is] ... related to articulateness“
- demonstrates "behavior in commitment-related behaviors“
Exploration - "some period of re-thinking, sorting through, and trying out various roles and life plans." (Kroger & Marcia, p. 33)

- "a genuine exploration to have had disruptive effects such as decrease or cessation... such as disputes with family"  p.206

- shows knowledgeability - "a realistic picture of available societal opportunities" e.g., "a psychology major ought not to expect to hang out a psychotherapy shingle upon completing the BA"

- demonstrates "knowledge of alternatives... and .. for some information about comparisons and contrasts that indicate a respondent's thoughtfulness about the ideas underlying the labels" p. 206

- demonstrates activities directed toward gathering information/experiences, i.e., self-initiated, in-depth searching (eg., working in a research lab)

- demonstrates consideration of "alternative potential identity elements" e.g., "leave a childhood vocational or ideological niche... and to actively explore different paths commensurate with one's interests and abilities."
How to score Identity Status in the life area of career/occupation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploration</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>1. Identity Diffusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>2. Identity Foreclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Moratorium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Identity Achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Has a commitment been made?

**Yes.** Makes a commitment through:

**Achievement** - after a *period of exploration* develops a foundation of well-defined self-concepts and personal values.

**Foreclosure** - accepts the identity *with little evidence of the exploration of identities* (e.g., Conform to expectations of others).

**No.** Is there any evidence of *vague and ill-formed commitments* and some level of exploration?

**Moratorium** - shows vague and ill-formed commitments and engaged in *active exploration* of identity alternatives.

**Diffusion** - no clear idea of an identity and no attempt to explore identity alternatives.
For each student identify the category that best describes the self-reflection essay by entering a confidence score between 1 (low) and 3 (high).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Identity Status Rubric for Self-Reflection Essay</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>#15</td>
<td>0 (Diffusion): Cannot be assessed; did not complete the assignment properly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>#25</td>
<td>1 (Foreclosure): No clear idea of an identity and no attempt to explore identity alternatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>#35</td>
<td>2 (Moratorium): Accepts identity with little exploration of alternative identities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>#45</td>
<td>3 (Achievement): Shows vague/ill-formed commitments AND engaged in active exploration of identity alternatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>#55</td>
<td>4 (Achievement): Examined values/goals AND reached full commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Post-BA/BS plans:**
  - #15: Hopes for a Master’s in clinical psych area
  - #25: Enlisted in the Navy, plans to pursue PhD in BSN
  - #35: Attend grad school in forensic psych
  - #45: Unsure
  - #55: No plans other than maybe attend grad school in unspecified field

- **If an Oriental did the study switching Dropping the i with**
  - #10: Continuing
  - #20: Continuing
  - #30: Continuing
  - #40: Continuing
  - #50: Music/Art therapy

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**Students fully achieving identity** must show evidence of examined values/goals AND show evidence of a firm commitment.

- A student satisfying Exploration and Commitment (*Identity achievement*) earns a maximum score of 4.
- A student satisfying neither requirements (*Diffusion*) earns the minimum score of 1.
## Confidence Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Exploration</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Activity directed toward the commitment</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1S</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5S</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exploration
- **Appearance**
  - 0: absent
  - 1: previous in time (only in grade school or highschool or early in college)
  - 2: some instances appear to be currently (i.e., in college) present
  - 3: some instances are currently present

### Commitment
- **Knowledgeable**
  - 0: absent
  - 1: difficulty articulating knowledge
  - 2: some ability to articulate knowledge
  - 3: articulate

### Breadth of alternatives
- 0: absent
- 1: maybe one or more instances
- 2: some clear instances
- 3: many instances

### Activity directed toward the commitment
- 0: absent
- 1: little, most of the work is internal (thoughts; no evidence of overt behavior)
- 2: some external indications of commitment
- 3: clear external indicators of commitment
Example: Reflections from Orientation of the Major

Orientation to Psychology
15 December 2016

Final Reflection

Over the course of the semester, I have done many self-assessments, quizzes, and other activities to introduce me to the Psychology major, career options, job opportunities, and skills needed to succeed. I believe these activities have enriched my understanding of major requirements.

In the Orientation, there was one activity that was made necessary to pave different aspects about ourselves such as I see myself ready for graduate school. I also learned that feedback from the professors is vital for me and many others. This course was online and was other in terms of some of my other courses were related to me and my future path as this course does. This course helps me understand the different courses and majors involved.

15 December 2016

After my first day through the first week of college, I believe I need to make many changes to myself! I still want to stick with my major in Psychology, but I just want to be more engaged and able to put more time and energy into the work I want to do. I do not know exactly what I want to do, but I am leaning towards the idea of becoming a counselor and work with children in schools and/or hospitals. Many of the counselors that I have encountered in my life have helped me deal with stress and coping with many problems that have faced. I want to be able to give children that some spark of energy that was endowed to them. Some spark that gives children the hope to dreams and be happy again. This is something I can do in order to attempt to pursue this dream of helping the next generation pursue their dreams.

One of the biggest things that I want to change about myself is how I agree. I understand that I am in college now and that I need to accept it in a different way that I did in high school. I came into SUNY Old Westbury with very little work and you to get a degree in Psychology. I had no idea that a B.S. or B.A. degree was even a thing and I didn't understand how to handle them. Over the course of the semester, there was much more than I understand about the history of the degree and how it is taught. I understand the amount of work and dedication that I need to do in order to continue my major in the future. That is why my work ethic needs to be changed. I know that in this semester I haven't done my assignments.

7 December 2016

The past journal and the quiz assignment was an interesting experience for me because it brought my attention to everywhere I was doing, everyday. Being involved in the major has been challenging, I found the past quiz eye-opening to how formally spend my time. The first thing I noticed is that I spend most of my time sleeping. Certain an amount of sleep every night is something I use and I am very glad that throughout the semester I have been able to balance my time to achieve getting enough sleep. What was surprising to be the amount of time that I spent eating nothing. While I was planning to spend this time on eating and exercising, I spend time on eating. I am satisfied with not exercising a lot because of the fact that I spent the time volunteering instead. While I still do not exercise as much as I should, I do go long walks more often. I spend more time on eating and exercising, which I believe I was helping to accomplish. Overall, this assignment turned out to be very beneficial in helping me improve myself.

I have become more tuned in my strengths and weaknesses. I have become more important and important. I really like to listen to what people have to say, mostly when they have always accompanied what I need to do without breaking out. A weakness is my nervousness. Sometimes, I get overly anxious about an event, but I think that's also a good side to it.

Although I have taken this class more than once, due to "life" or taking a break I have finally appreciated the meaning of what this class truly provides students with. I'd like to say that it brings each and every individual the same experience, but it doesn't, as everyone experiences things differently. It provides a true meaning of how to connect with the inner networks of the university; in addition to how mobilizing within that network will provide students with the skills necessary to graduate, obtain a job in the field, and possibly further studies in psychology or any related field. Dr. Levy is definitely an awesome professor, not only because he has so many years of experience at the university, but has lifetime of experience as a teacher. The assignments provided me with insights of myself, as well as of the field of psychology itself most importantly whether psychology is the field for each participating student, in addition to have the individual skills within the parameters of courses that involve helping others, and learning how to help others, or whether not to lean towards the more research spectrum of psychology.

Although the class is exactly the same for the class, I somehow help me figure out where to go and who to talk to when it comes to be graduated. The assignment that appealed to me was the most for the past quiz. I was surprised to see how I spent most of my time, and how I could go about organizing my life throughout such semester. I attended the psychology club, as a form of extra credit towards the class; realized it was really interesting and the people were really friendly. I tend to be really reserved, and shy when it comes to approaching people at first, so it helped me step out of my shell. The psychology club is a great way to integrate within the psychology student community in the university. The class work is probably a lot more extensive than what most students receive in a class that may be of more difficult nature. However, the reason is fair.
Critical Thinking

• Student demonstrating the consideration of alternative ideas/identities through exploration (Achievement or Foreclosure) are likely demonstrating the application of a key characteristic of critical thinking as the Psych Dept. defines it - i.e., consideration of alternatives.

• Students demonstrating Identity Achievement are also demonstrating integration - a key component of critical thinking.