Psychology Department Assessment Plan
(Corresponds with the Strategic Plan adopted in 2018)

Mission Statement:
The Psychology Department is a vibrant community of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who value the processes of critical inquiry and discovery in the laboratory, the classroom, and the community. Consistent with the mission of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, we strive to provide experiences through which our students can become analytical, critical, and creative thinkers, conscientious and active global citizens, and lifelong learners and leaders. Through the entwined roles of teaching and scholarship, we strive to prepare our students to contribute to their communities and pursue their chosen careers.

Department Learning Outcomes:
1. and 2. *Effective Communication* - Students will learn effective written and oral communication skills.
3. *Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning* - Students will develop skills to participate in the creation of and the constructive critique of psychology as a science.
4. *Technological Competence* - Students will demonstrate the ability to use computers and other technology for scientific inquiry, application, and communication.
5. *Critical Analysis and Reasoning* - Students will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical and open-minded inquiry, and the scientific approach to analyze issues related to behavioral and mental processes.
6. *Information Literacy* – Students will recognize when information is needed and be able to locate, evaluate, and provide meaning to information.
7. *Interpret Language and Symbol* – Students will learn to interpret the meaning behind various languages and symbols relevant to the field of cognitive psychology.
8. *Intercultural Competence* – Students will develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to engage in effective and appropriate interactions with people of different cultures.
9. *Respect for Diversity* - Students will recognize, understand, and respect the complexity and impact of diverse sociocultural, historical, and international systems on psychological phenomena.
10. *Ethical Reasoning and Compassion* - Students will demonstrate an understanding of and a commitment to the ethical standards of psychology when engaged in such activities in the discipline as describing, explaining, interpreting, evaluating, applying, and/or practicing.
11. *Preparation to Participate in Civic Life* – Students will develop knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make a meaningful impact on their community.
12. *Psychological Knowledge* - Students will become familiar with major concepts and empirical findings in various areas of the discipline, will appreciate the variety of perspectives in psychology, and will learn to explore the discipline independently.
13. *Applying Psychology* - Students will apply psychological principles to personal (self and others), interpersonal, organizational, community, and cultural issues.
14. *Career Preparation - Students will pursue realistic ideas about how to implement psychological knowledge*, skills, interests, and values in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings and in socially responsible ways.

Psychology Department Goals

The psychology department's strategic plan emphasizes our dedication to the teacher-scholar model. Key elements of the teacher-scholar model include undergraduate research apprenticeships with faculty scholars and other experiences, such as internships and assistantships, in which students collaborate with faculty to apply psychological theory and research findings to real-world problems in real-world settings. Consistent with our commitment to the teacher-scholar model, our strategic plan focuses on strengthening our robust program of *Experiential Learning Opportunities in Psychology* (ELOPsy). Accordingly, and in the spirit of promoting equity and inclusion, we will begin to evaluate whether all students in our department are able to access and benefit from our ELOPsy program. The psychology department will assess ways in which we recruit and enroll students in ELOPsy, as well as learning outcomes associated with student participation in ELOPsy. After assessing learning outcomes associated with our ELOPsy courses, we will then examine learning outcomes associated with our advising and core methodology courses to determine whether all students receive a strong foundation prior to participating in ELOPsy. Finally, we will end this assessment cycle by identifying ways in which the relationships we form within and outside TCNJ provide students with additional opportunities for experiential learning that enhance the psychology curriculum.

Assessment Methods

Assessment will be a department-wide effort, conducted by all faculty and staff of the department. However, a committee of three full-time faculty members will be appointed each year to carry out specific tasks outlined below. The assessment activities for the upcoming 5-year cycle will include mostly survey methods (e.g., surveying psychology majors, alums, and faculty), as well as review of enrollment data.

Assessment Schedule

YEAR 1: ASSESS ACCESSIBILITY OF ELOPSY
For the **first year of assessment (2018-2019)**, rather than directly assessing learning outcomes, the psychology department focused assessment on the distribution of various groups of students across ELOPsy courses. We believe this is an important first step in our assessment plan because we do not feel that we can accurately assess our students' learning outcomes unless all of our students have equal opportunities to benefit from these experiences. The Center for Institutional Effectiveness provided our assessment committee with data on ELOPsy course enrollments over the past several years (2015-2018). In addition to examining enrollment data, this first year's assessment also included an evaluation of the degree to which our faculty engage students in activities related to diversity, equity/inclusion, and social justice, particularly in our ELOPsy courses. We used data from a faculty survey administered during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years to assess the number of student projects that fulfilled the learning outcomes of "respect for diversity" and "career preparation." The results of the first year's assessment are presented in our report dated AY 2018-2019.

YEAR 2: CONTINUE TO ASSESS ACCESSIBILITY AND THEMES OF EQUITY/INCLUSION
Our **second year of assessment (2019-2020)** will address student participation in collaborative research as part of our ELOPsy lab courses, particularly Psy390 and Psy492. For this assessment, we will examine the ways (e.g., via online application or as a result of personal invitation) students apply for and are admitted to faculty-run research labs. We will also design a survey to identify what motivates students to participate in ELOPsy (e.g., why did they decide to

apply to become a member of a research lab), as well as what deters them from pursuing these opportunities.

During our second year, we will also assess the quality of our teaching, advising, and mentorship as a result of student participation in our ELOPsy program. Our goal is for ELOPsy to enhance the education provided by our core curriculum to provide students with a set of skills that are directly applicable to their future education and careers. Thus, we will survey recent alums of our department to assess the degree to which they believe the different ELOPsy courses prepared them for their careers and/or graduate school, particularly in the areas of critical analysis and reasoning, psychological knowledge, written communication, and information literacy (common ELOPsy learning outcomes). The third year's assessment will also include faculty report of scholarly outcomes, including journal article publication and conference presentations, that resulted from faculty/student collaboration. This assessment will identify ELOPsy courses that yield the greatest scholarly outcomes for students in order to determine whether all students benefit equally from these opportunities.

YEAR 3: ASSESS LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH ADVISING/CORE COURSES
Our **third year of assessment (2020-2021)** will focus on assessing learning outcomes associated with our advising courses (i.e., Psy096/7) and core methodological courses that students typically complete prior to participating in ELOPsy. Students first learn about ELOPsy courses in our advising sequence and they receive continued encouragement to participate in ELOPsy in their core course, which lay the foundation for participation in higher-level academic experiences. Assessment of the core methodology courses will include faculty review of student writing samples to assess whether students are meeting the particular learning outcome of effective written communication. During the third year assessment, we will also assess the progress of transfer students through the core curriculum and their ability to participate in ELOPsy once they join our department. Finally, we will evaluate different systems of support for our adjunct faculty who frequently share in teaching our core methodology courses.

YEAR 4: ASSESS COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH ADVANCED COURSES
Our **fourth year of assessment (2021-2022)** will focus on assessing oral communication skills that are frequently associated with our 300 and 400 level courses. For this assessment, faculty will observe and rate student presentations (e.g., COSA presentations) so that we may compare oral communication skills across our seminar (e.g., Psy373/470) and ELOPsy courses (e.g., Psy390/492).

YEAR 5: COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
Our **fifth year of assessment (2022-2023)** will focus on assessing the strength of our relationships within and outside TCNJ in providing students with additional opportunities for experiential learning. For example, this assessment will evaluate the impact of study abroad for Psychology majors. We will also explore ways in which students may be involved in experiential learning opportunities at other institutions (e.g., summer fellowships), both near and abroad.

Year	Topic	Relevant Learning Outcomes	Assessment Method
2018-2019 INDIRECT	Accessibility of ELOPsy for all students	#5 Critical Analysis and Reasoning #12 Psychological Knowledge #1 Written Communication #6 Information Literacy	Review enrollment data from the Center for Institutional Effectiveness on ELOPsy (Experiential Learning Opportunities in Psychology)
2019-2020 DIRECT and INDIRECT	Accessibility of collaborative research participation and evaluation of learning outcomes associated with ELOPsy courses	#1 Written Communication #5 Critical Analysis and Reasoning #12 Psychological Knowledge #6 Information Literacy #14 Career Preparation #9 Respect for Diversity #13 Applying Psychology	Survey alums Survey students Survey faculty
2020-2021 DIRECT	Student preparation for ELOPsy via core methodology courses and the psychology advising sequence	#1 Written Communication #3 Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning #4 Technological Competence #5 Critical Analysis and Reasoning #6 Information Literacy	Survey students : Psy121 pre and Psy299 post assessment Faculty review of writing assignments
2021-2022 DIRECT	Oral communication skills in seminar courses vs. ELOPsy courses	#2 Oral Communication	Survey students Faculty evaluation of oral presentations
2022-2023 INDIRECT	External learning opportunities: Community/Global Engagement (i.e., study abroad)	#8 Intercultural competence #9 Respect for Diversity #11 Preparation to participate in civic life #13 Applying Psychology	Survey students Survey faculty