ASSESSMENT REPORT TEMPLATE
HYPOTHETICAL EXEMPLAR

Program Innovation, PhD

In today's society, program evaluation and program improvement are essential at many levels (e.g., K-12, small focused programs in the community, academic degree programs). This is especially true as policy-makers increasingly want to ensure that tax-payer dollars are being used effectively. The PhD in Program Innovation prepares students to create, assess, and innovatively improve programs in a variety of sectors. Of note, graduates will be experts in measuring student learning outcomes in a robust way. Cohorts of 3-5 students persist through the program. Most students are full-time, though we do occasionally have 1-2 students enroll in the program part-time. Many of our courses are taken by students completing degrees in other programs across the University.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Program Innovation doctoral program will:

1. **Produce original research through the formulation of testable hypotheses and the execution of appropriate statistical methods and design.**
2. **Write a research manuscript that is stylistically appropriate and uses correct grammar and sentence structures.**
3. **Clearly communicate research findings to both technical and non-technical audiences through oral presentations.**
4. **Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different measurement approaches (e.g., CTT).**
5. **Explain the underpinnings of different statistical techniques (e.g., regression)**
6. **Create an appropriate evidence-based program improvement plan with a comprehensive assessment plan.**

<u>Comprehensive Outcomes</u>

Our program is comprised of two quantitative psychologists, one teaching and learning faculty member, and one program theory/evaluation/assessment faculty member. These four faculty teach all the courses in the program and chair the dissertations of our students. The faculty meet monthly to discuss student progress and other program issues. In addition to monthly meetings, the faculty have a one-day retreat in a different building on campus in August. During our first August retreat, we affirmed the above list of student learning outcomes as a representative set of outcomes that encompass the scope of our program. Although our students delve into a particular area of research with their advisor in the program, the above set of outcomes detail the expected student learning outcomes we anticipate all students will achieve prior to conferral of the doctoral degree.

<u>Communicating Outcomes</u>

The above student learning outcomes are shared with all faculty members at the August retreat. This is especially critical when new faculty join our team. Students are also shown the student learning outcomes during Program Orientation. These outcomes are discussed in relation to the curriculum. We want to make sure the students know the purpose and intent of the program and are aware of the program expectations from their first day in the program.

Curriculum Map

Below is a curriculum map that represents the alignment between our student learning outcomes and the required courses and credit hours our students are required to take. Students are required to take 66 hours of doctoral credit. Below are the required courses in our program that align to our programmatic student learning outcomes. Students choose electives for their remaining credits that are related to their area of research. Students are permitted to take courses outside of PRIN at the discretion of their committee chair.

	1)Original Research	2) Writing	3) Oral Comm.	4) Measurement	5) Statistics	6) Improvement
PRIN 5020 Intermediate Statistics	1	1	1		1	
PRIN 5040 Data Management	1			1	1	
PRIN 5080 Propensity Score Matching	1	1	1		2	
PRIN 6010 Regression	1				2	
PRIN 6020 Program Theory	1	2				1
PRIN 6030 Evaluation and Assessment	1	2				1
PRIN 6050 Classical Test Theory	1			1		
PRIN 7000 Innovative Pedagogies	1	2				2
PRIN 7010 Instrument Development	2			3	3	
*PRIN 7020 Structural Equation Modeling	1	2	2	3	3	
*PRIN 7030 Hierarchical Linear Modeling	1	2	2		3	
*PRIN 7040 Item Response Theory	1	2	2	3		
PRIN 8000 Improvement Science	1	2				3
PRIN 8990 – Dissertation (12 credits)	3	3	3	3	3	3

***Students choose two of these three shaded courses.**

1- Introduced, 2- Reinforced, 3- Emphasized

Measurement

Outcome-Measure Alignment

All assessment occurs through the comprehensive exam process and the dissertation defense. A description of these measures and also the outcomes that are aligned to them are below.

Comprehensive Exams

Prior to proposing their dissertation, all students must pass the comprehensive exams. Students may sit for their comprehensive exam either in April or November. There are two days of exams. On the first day, students are provided 8 hours to complete 10 questions (there is not advance knowledge of the questions). Five of the questions pertain to the evaluation of measurement techniques (aligned to Outcome #4) and five of the question pertain to statistical techniques (aligned to Outcome #5). On day 2, students are given a case study and asked to create an appropriate evidence-based improvement plan for a program (aligned to Outcome #6). Students will have 8 hours to complete this task.

All faculty members evaluate at least 3 comprehensive exam responses. Each response is evaluated by two faculty members. Faculty members use the rubric below. If students "Fail" any question, they are not permitted to continue in the program. Students have one opportunity to "Re-write" questions. Only 3 of the 10 questions from Day 1 can be re-written. If a student does not pass at least 7 questions, during their first exam attempt they will be permitted to "re-sit" the exam during the next exam period (either April or November). All students must achieve "Passing" prior to being permitted to propose their dissertation.

Comprehensive Exam Rubric

	Fail	Re-Write	Pass
Measurement	Responses reveal narrow level of knowledge. Responses contain major inaccuracies and reveal misunderstanding of fundamental measurement theory.	Responses reveal satisfactory breadth of knowledge. Responses contain minor errors and reveal a narrow but accurate understanding of measurement theory.	Responses reveal a comprehensive level of knowledge. Responses are accurate and reveal depth of understanding in measurement theory.
Statistics	Responses contain major inaccuracies and reveal misunderstanding of fundamental statistical techniques.	Responses contain minor errors and a narrow but accurate understanding of fundamental statistical techniques.	Responses reveal a comprehensive level of knowledge. Responses are accurate and reveal an ability to use fundamental statistical techniques.
Program Improvement	The plan is brief and reveals a narrow level of knowledge around program improvement. The plan is poorly organized and difficult to follow. The plan is inadequate in multiple respects.	The plan reveals a satisfactory depth of knowledge. The plan consists of two of the three components of the "Excellent" category.	The plan reveals a comprehensive level of Program Improvement knowledge. The plan is logical and 1) effectively considers situational factors, 2) contains innovative techniques to improvement and 3) has an appropriate and robust assessment plan in place.

Doctoral Dissertation

All students are required to propose and defend a doctoral dissertation. A successful dissertation defense permits the student to graduate. Each dissertation committee is comprised of a Chair, two faculty members from PRIN and one external member. Prior to defense, the committee members evaluate the dissertation using the rubric below. The first row of the rubric aligns to outcome #1 (i.e., producing original research) and the second row of the rubric aligns to outcome #2 (i.e., writing). At the oral defense of the dissertation, which is open to the public, the committee members evaluate Outcome #3 (i.e., oral communication) using the Defense Rubric. All students are expected to "Pass". The faculty made these rubrics.

Dissertation Rubric

	Fail	Pass
Original Research	**Research is not original OR research is does not appropriately use statistical methods/design OR research is original but is not a contribution to the discipline.**	**The dissertation research is original, contributes to the discipline, presents appropriate experimental design and statistical analyses are correct.**
Writing Quality	**Writing quality is bad. Writing distracts from message in the dissertation.**	**Writing quality is good. The student uses appropriately styled sentences and correct grammar.**

Defense Rubric

	Fail	Pass
Oral Communication	**Student is unable to clearly communicate research findings.**	**Student clearly communicates research findings to both technical and non-technical audiences.**

Results

This year, 4 students graduated from the program. Because we have a small sample, we like to provide our data from previous years. Our hope is to aggregate the data and reflect upon it every five years.

Comprehensive Exam Results

	Fail	Re-Write	Pass
Measurement	**2012: 0% 2013: 0% 2014: 20% 2015: 0%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 40% 2014: 40% 2015: 25%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 60% 2014: 40% 2015: 75%**
Statistics	**2012: 0% 2013: 0% 2014: 0% 2015: 0%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 0% 2014: 40% 2015: 75%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 100% 2014: 60% 2015: 25%**
Program Improvement	**2012: 40% 2013: 20% 2014: 0% 2015: 0%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 40% 2014: 20% 2015: 0%**	**2012: 50% 2013: 60% 2014: 80% 2015:100%**

This cohort struggled with statistics, but excelled at measurement. This could be because when these students took their first year of statistics courses, they were taught by a part-time instructor while we were searching for a new quantitative psychologist. This instructor was not familiar with our program and this could be why our students struggled in this area. However, we're pleased with this cohort of students' measurement knowledge. Also, the faculty were very happy to see the first 100% pass rate on the Program Improvement outcome. Students have struggled in this area in the past and we've made changes to our courses and were incredibly happy to see this improvement.

Dissertation Rubric

	Fail	Pass
Original Research	**2012: 0%** **2013: 0%** **2014: 0%** **2015: 0%**	**2012: 100%** **2013: 100%** **2014: 100%** **2015: 100%**
Writing Quality	**2012: 0%** **2013: 0%** **2014: 0%** **2015: 0%**	**2012: 100%** **2013: 100%** **2014: 100%** **2015: 100%**

Defense Rubric

	Fail	Pass
Oral Communication	**2012: 0%** **2013: 0%** **2014: 0%** **2015: 0%**	**2012: 100%** **2013: 100%** **2014: 100%** **2015: 100%**

All students successfully defended their dissertations. The defenses were also successful. This is not surprising because the dissertation is incredibly formative. An advisor would not permit the student to defend the dissertation if it were not adequate in terms of original research, writing quality.

However, we have internal debates about the oral presentation results. Though all students pass, we feel there truly is variability in oral presentation skill. We are contemplating reaching out to the Office of Academic Assessment to aid us in developing a new rubric that better articulates our hopes for oral communication. Perhaps adding more depth would allow us to better capture the variability we see.

These results are shared during the August retreat to all faculty members. However, we constantly talk about student progress and are making small changes to our courses. Every five years we aggregate the findings and discuss the opportunity for curricular change and innovation. Thus, next summer we will have a serious discussion of creating changes to the program.

Use of Results

Again, we'll consider a major curriculum revision next summer. This summer however, we'll begin to discuss possible areas in need of improvement based on these data and our anecdotal knowledge of the program's effectiveness.