Background: AMPM (Assessment Monitoring Psychology Majors)

Introduction

One instrument under development by the Psychology Department Goals Committee attempts to measure teaching and has been variously referred to as:
- "Psychology Test" (Assessment Plan; Goals-Methods Matrix on page 3)
- "Psychology Dept. Majors Comprehensive Exam" (Assessment Plan; Appendix G)
- "Background Test for Psychology Majors" (implemented W97 in Psy 618 classes)

From now on we'd like to refer to this instrument as the Assessment Monitoring Psychology Majors (AMPM).

Name change rationale

The name "AMPM" should provide a distinctive and easily remembered title. Further, it conveys the notion that assessment will occur:
- early in the major's educational career —AM— when taking 560 Psychology
- late in the undergraduate career —PM—(during 618 and at senior evaluation)

Aim and Non-example

Our aim in developing this instrument? Provide a means by which to detect undergraduate instructional effectiveness. Such an objective seems to play a key role in the mission and goals process. We have always assumed that students learn and that we as educators have been effective, but we lack direct evidence to measure teaching. This instrument should **not** be viewed as a way to determine whether students "pass" or "fail" as psychology majors. It reflects how well students remember concepts that have been taught without putting the students at risk.

Format

In this instrument, stimulus words serve as the question and respondees provide a word or brief phrase as a response. In some cases the stimulus word is repeated more than once, and one tries to provide a different response for each such instance. The format follows the Word Associate Test (WAT) developed and researched by William Verplanck for some 25 years.

Conditions

The administration of the AMPM consists of a timed take-home type exercise. [We may want to control the conditions more stringently at some point.] Students:
- identify themselves by name
- take it outside of class
- keep track of start and stop time
- return it to one's instructor (560 or 618, or the chair at senior evaluation)

The form requests individuals to respond to the items on the assessment without consulting any books, notes or other reference sources.

Plan: AMPM (Assessment Monitoring Psychology Majors)

Construction   The AMPM as currently conceived consists of forty stimulus items. Since we have identified ten general areas of application in psychology (Goal 1: Teaching Objectives), this translates to four items per area. [The number of items could be increased.]

Item Creators   The stimulus items for each of the ten psychology areas would be created by faculty members with expertise in the particular area. In most cases the faculty member would be teaching a course or courses in the area in which s/he submitted a list of concepts. The list would be divided into "most important" versus "less important" concepts as determined by the faculty member.

Scoring   The individual who creates the items would score the items. This would be ten faculty scoring four items for as many students as take the AMPM that quarter.

Versions   Continuously different versions will be created— three new versions would be needed each year. A version would be created from the database of items by writing a program which selects a person for each of the ten topic areas, uses one to four of their stimuli for the area (depending on whether the item repeats or not) and identifies which items they should score.

Ten psychology areas   The following table shows the ten areas and professors who would seem to be logical providers of items for each area. Please provide feedback if you have been omitted from an expertise area or included in an inappropriate area.

Area	Individuals
behavioral analysis	
clinical psychology	
cognitive psychology	
counseling psychology	
developmental psychology	
educational psychology	
experimental psychology	
industrial & organizational psych.	
physiological psychology	
social psychology	

Deadline for Concept List   The lists of concepts should be turned in to Graf by 19 May 1997 by each faculty member—a list of concepts for each area. Questions? Ask Graf.