Guidelines 3.0 maintains the structure that was introduced in Guidelines 2.0. We specify five “goals” that characterize work at the undergraduate level as the first-level organizer using the numbers 1–5. “Student learning outcomes” (SLOs) represent the second-level organizer; we designate the outcomes that correspond to each goal using decimal points to distinguish separate outcomes. Each goal encompasses from three to six outcomes. The third-level organizers constitute “indicators” that represent a developmental scaffold; we designate foundation indicators with a lower-case letter and baccalaureate indicators with a corresponding upper-case letter.

We provide two versions of the Guidelines to assist with curriculum review and assessment planning. The first version summarizes just the learning goals and outcomes, which provides a reasonable overview of the work for programs that may need to concentrate on outcomes that are more broadly defined. The second version provides more details and includes a conceptual scaffolding of foundation and baccalaureate indicators that may be helpful in refining curriculum and assessment planning. Foundation indicators may contribute to course design in introductory psychology and other lower-level courses. Baccalaureate indicators capture student performance in higher-level courses and capstone experiences.

Summary of Learning Goals and Outcomes

GOAL 1
Content Knowledge and Applications
1.1 Describe key concepts, principles, and theories in psychological science
1.2 Develop a working knowledge of psychology’s major subfields
1.3 Portray significant aspects of the history of psychological science
1.4 Apply psychological content to solve practical problems
1.5 Provide examples of psychology’s integrative themes*

GOAL 2
Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking
2.1 Exercise scientific reasoning to investigate psychological phenomena
2.2 Interpret, design, and evaluate psychological research
2.3 Incorporate sociocultural factors in scientific research practices
2.4 Use statistics to evaluate quantitative research findings

GOAL 3
Values in Psychological Science
3.1 Employ ethical standards in research, practice, and academic contexts
3.2 Develop and practice interpersonal and intercultural responsiveness
3.3 Apply psychological principles to strengthen community and improve quality of life

GOAL 4
Communication, Psychological Literacy, and Technology Skills
4.1 Interact effectively with others
4.2 Write and present effectively for different purposes
4.3 Provide evidence of psychological literacy
4.4 Exhibit appropriate technological skills to improve communication

GOAL 5
Personal and Professional Development
5.1 Exhibit effective self-regulation
5.2 Refine project management skills
5.3 Display effective judgment in professional interactions
5.4 Cultivate workforce collaboration skills
5.5 Demonstrate appropriate workforce technological skills
5.6 Develop direction for life after graduation

* Psychological Science’s Integrative Themes (APA, 2021a)
A. Psychological science relies on empirical evidence and adapts as new data develop.
B. Psychological science explains general principles that govern behavior while recognizing individual differences.
C. Psychological, biological, social, and cultural factors influence behavior and mental processes.
D. Psychological science values diversity, promotes equity, and fosters inclusion in pursuit of a more just society.
E. Our perceptions and biases filter our experiences of the world through an imperfect personal lens.
F. Applying psychological principles can change our lives, organizations, and communities in positive ways.
G. Ethical principles guide psychological science research and practice.

1 In 2005 APA approved a policy statement that defines evidence-based practice in psychology and encouraged the development of policies that reflect this view.