



TAP lab is located in the Social Sciences basement, room 22.

Principal researcher, Dr. Jean Kirnan can be reached through email at jkirnan@tcnj.edu

We welcome all interested students, although our current projects are best suited for those who have successfully completed PSY 203.

TAP Lab *at a Glance*

Three main research foci:

- 1) Development of the PASS, *Predictors of Academic Success of Students*, a measure of non-cognitive predictors of first year college success;
- 2) Development of assessment tools for the *Psychology Department* to measure the learning outcomes of the major;
- 3) *Tail Waggin' Tutor Program* to assess whether therapy dogs can help improve elementary students' reading.

TAP Lab



TESTING & ASSESSMENT in PSYCHOLOGY

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What Does TAP Lab Do?

TAP stands for Testing and Assessment in Psychology. Our research revolves around the development of psychological measures from creating a test blueprint to item writing, in person and on-line test administration, item analysis, reliability and validity, fairness checks, and implementation and use.

In Our Department: *Assessment*

The purpose of these assessments is for the psychology department to determine if curricular goals are being met.

- This assessment is diagnostic of the knowledge & skills that students gain across different instructors, semesters & teaching pedagogies, and helps the department make the best decisions regarding the teaching of these classes

TAP Lab student researchers will:

- 1) Write test items
- 2) Administer assessments
- 3) Analyze and interpret assessment results
- 4) Revise and/or delete ineffective test items
- 5) Disseminate results through paper or presentation



In The Community: *Tail Waggin' Tutors*

This is a program that uses therapy-certified dogs to visit elementary schools to improve students' confidence in reading aloud.

- The purpose is to compare the reading growth (as measured through standardized tests) to determine whether the program helps improve students' reading and writing skills.

TAP Lab student researchers will:

- 1) Gather and analyze the archived data
- 2) Conduct interviews with teachers and dog owners
- 3) Disseminate results through papers or presentations

In Higher Education: *Predictors of Academic Success of Students*

Traditional predictors of early academic success explain about 25% of the variation in the first year college GPA.

Continuing concerns of gender and racial bias in standardized tests, coupled with the changing demographics of incoming college classes, create a need for new measures.

- The purpose of the PASS is to identify and measure other, non-traditional factors that contribute to the prediction of early academic success.

TAP Lab student researchers will:

- 1) Collect and clean data;
- 2) Statistically analyze items for validity, fairness, and reliability;
- 3) Disseminate results through papers or presentations