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TO: David L. Eaton , Vice Provost and Dean – The Graduate School
Rebecca Aanerud, Associate Dean – The Graduate School

FROM: Sheri Mizumori, Chair – Department of Psychology *Shari Mizumori*

SUBJECT: Psychology Department response to the 10-year review committee report

The following is the Psychology Department response to the February 14, 2014 report of the 10-year review committee. We sincerely appreciate the hard work of the exceptional team of external and internal committee members as they identified key strengths and challenges of the department, offered thoughtful recommendations for next steps, and championed our need for additional resources in order for us to meet the challenges.

Starting from the time of the committee's visit to the department in January (2014), the Chair met either individually or in small or large group meetings with faculty, students and staff. Upon receipt of the committee report, it was distributed to all faculty, graduate students, and staff. Meetings and discussion continued. These meetings have provided opportunities to understand the department perspective about the challenges and recommendations outlined in the report. The challenges are significant, and thus important discussions will continue over an extended period of time.

Overview

The review committee described many strong aspects of the Psychology Department. The faculty are 'strong and of the highest quality'. Not only are our senior faculty world renowned, but the junior faculty are considered to be the rising stars in their fields. The department staff is 'effective and motivated' despite being very 'stretched.' 'The organization of the Department's undergraduate programs is excellent,' and the 'Psychology Advising Office staff [is held] in very high regard.' For these reasons, Psychology courses remain some of the most highly subscribed and popular courses at the University of Washington.

The review committee identified many major challenges that the Psychology Department has been struggling with for many years. In fact, just last year, department faculty explicitly tried to identify the nature of the impediments that prevent us from moving forward to become the type of thriving and collaborative community that can leverage all of our research to the forefront of our fields, a community that compels new faculty and students to want to join our department. The report of the committee made some specific recommendations that will be used to guide our strategic planning toward our goals and visions.

The Psychology Department is not only large, but diverse in terms of the research and training goals of its faculty and students, and complex in terms of its many inter-related instructional and research functions and operations. Further, since Psychology is inherently interdisciplinary, there is a growing need to explore and manage department connections with other departments on campus. Therefore, each major decision or change (in response to the committee report) will need to be carefully considered within these broad contexts. The overall plan, then, is to start by identifying the goals/visions, operations, and impact of the larger and over-arching aspects of department function and decision making, such as its research goals as well as its graduate support and training goals. We will identify and then capitalize on our unique strengths to create research areas of excellence, and these may or may not directly reflect the organization of our graduate training programs. Strategizing on these fronts will in turn guide our future evaluation of the need for changes in our undergraduate curriculum, as well as department policies that affect resource allocation (e.g. faculty hires), faculty teaching loads, course buyout policy, faculty mentoring and leadership development, and merit evaluation. Throughout all levels of planning, every effort will be made to be transparent, inclusive, and data- and goal-driven.

If the department's strategic plans are coupled with careful investments by the College or University (as suggested by the reviewers), we are confident that we can not only continue to offer a very high quality education to both undergraduate and graduate students, but also raise the potential productivity and impact of our already high-quality research profile (which will, in turn, elevate our funding and fundraising profiles).

What follows represents a summary of our responses to the specific challenges by the committee, actions taken thus far, and expectations for the near future.

Challenges (followed by Committee Recommendations/Department Plan):

Challenge #1: 'The department's organizational structure creates challenges that ripple through the department at numerous levels. These areas, termed "silos" by departmental faculty, work counter to the growth of collaborative intellectual communities between areas within the department and constrain the planning and recruitment of new and bridging areas of psychology. Additionally, graduate students are too often caught between non-permeable area boundaries; the rigid area structure is not in keeping with the explosive and unpredictable growth of the entire field.'

The desire to have greater cross-area interaction and intellectual exchange has been a major goal of the department. The existence of a functional separation of areas has indeed created challenges at many levels of department function including the development of a single long-term plan or mission. In Planning Committee and faculty meeting discussions of last year, it was noted that the mere presence (or the number) of research areas per se are not the culprits behind the less-than-desirable state of intellectual exchange in the department; many more highly ranked Psychology Departments list more areas than we have with the same number of, or fewer, faculty. Therefore, during our Fall 2013 faculty retreat, we collected data on faculty views of the strengths and challenges of the department. In this way, it was possible to identify the main elements (reflecting our strengths) of a future mission, the major impediments to achieving our mission (challenges), and some first steps that we could take to reduce these impediments. The breadth of excellent research was considered a great strength of the department. Not surprisingly, then, faculty overwhelmingly felt that strong research visions should be reflected in the department's overall mission as well as its instructional

vision. Further, faculty thought that a top priority for the department should be to create a more thriving and collaborative intellectual community. Faculty discussed one major impediment to our ability to achieve this goal has been a culture that effectively maintains greater intellectual separation than we would like around each department area. This intellectual separation seems to be due in large part to the lack of infrastructure and incentives (e.g. graduate fellowships) that support cross-area collaboration and intellectual exchange, as well as the fact that Psychology is spread across nine buildings on campus plus two off-campus locations (see Challenge 2 below). Additional important factors that likely contribute to the intellectual isolation of areas include a lack of sufficient knowledge of colleagues' research, and a sense of competition across areas for diminishing resources. The latter has been exacerbated by the current economic stress.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION '*..the department (should) move toward cross-area collaboration and resource sharing, with explicit incentives for collaborative multidisciplinary research and teaching.*'

- a. 're-examination of department procedures that would move the department away from an area-specific model and toward a department-wide model of decision-making and resource allocation'
- b. 'appointment of a 'blue-ribbon' panel.....would help the department plan strategically' [see DEPARTMENT PLAN for Challenge 3 below]
- c. 'A broader process for decision such as faculty hiring, graduate student recruitment and requirements/curriculum, TA allocation, space allocation, etc'
- d. 'identify the most interesting open questions in the field, and target faculty hiring to address those questions'
- e. 'Incentivize collaborative research that span the traditional area boundaries'
- f. 'expect faculty to self identify in both a primary and secondary area(s)'
- g. 'encourage graduate student rotations across multiple areas and faculty co-mentoring'

DEPARTMENT PLAN: Following the most recent faculty retreat (Fall 2013), there were expeditious ("low hanging fruit") efforts to create a greater sense of community by creating mechanisms by which faculty and students can learn more about their colleagues' research. These efforts included showcasing more prominently our faculty, student and staff successes in the form of e-newsletters and announcements on our department website, the scheduling of a department-wide graduate recruiting event held on the same day for all area student candidates, the development of a policy that states that all graduate students' doctoral final examinations must be advertised and made open to the public, and the encouragement of cross-area research seminars. With time, we will collect appropriate data on the effectiveness of these efforts.

Discussion since the receipt of the review committee report has resulted in further discussion of new department wide initiatives that aim to promote a stronger and intellectually rich environment for faculty and graduate students. As a first step, we are establishing working groups or committees (of elected faculty and graduate student representatives) that will be charged with researching models from other departments, as well as re-evaluating existing (and/or proposing new) department approaches that create:

- a more intellectually stimulating and collaborative research organization in the department. As suggested by the committee, we may start by asking faculty to self-identify with at least two traditional areas as a way to begin to collect data on faculty views of the nature of their research. Also as recommended by the review committee, and together with upper administration support, we will look for incentives for our faculty to engage in novel collaborative, cross-disciplinary research and teaching. Examples of incentives include full

- course credit for each of two faculty who co-teach new cross-disciplinary courses, or a course release/buyout for the PI of new multi-PI grants.
- department-level administration of TA positions rather than area administration of TA positions.
- cutting edge and interdisciplinary graduate training programs. Specific topics to consider include the committee recommendations that students rotate through different labs, that there be more opportunities for interdisciplinary training, and students should be co-mentored. It should be noted that there is already a policy in place that states that all graduate students must have identified a primary and secondary advisor.
- institutionalized mechanisms that make it relatively easy for faculty to keep up on each other's research. Faculty meeting discussions revealed support for one idea that we are looking into, and that is to place on hold some or all of the traditional area seminars next year in lieu of a number of department-wide seminars that either feature our own faculty in TED-talk style or feature a thematic cross-disciplinary research emphasis topic.

It is expected that addressing the above four issues will have a positive impact on future department decisions regarding hiring of faculty, faculty mentoring, and resource investment and planning.

Challenge #2: 'The department's dispersal of faculty and research labs across eight buildings across campus severely limits its ability to grow or maintain cutting edge research'

The 2004 department review noted the problematic nature of research and clinic spaces within Psychology. The same facilities issues continue to exist, and in fact, due to age, have worsened considerably. Further, as elaborated in the Self Study and the committee report, the poor space distribution and quality severely hampers our ability to maintain cutting edge scientific endeavors and training of students, as well as efforts to recruit and retain top faculty. The committee report acknowledged the recent College contribution to upgrade the animal research facilities on the 3rd and 4th floors of Guthrie Hall. The Psychology Department is also very appreciative of this support. However, the fundamental problem of isolationism that is inherent to any department whose faculty, research, and students are distributed across nine on-campus and two off-campus buildings is not only inefficient from an administrative and economic perspective, but most importantly such a state will prevent Psychology from achieving its long-term mission of becoming a highly interactive and integrative leader of psychological science.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION *'College could be of great assistance to the department by advocating for a shorter, more aggressive timeline for this [the project for a Guthrie addition] project'*

DEPARTMENT PLAN: The Psychology Department very strongly seconds the committee's recommendation. The Chair is not only always available to discuss in further detail the needs of the department for such an expansion, but she is eager to discuss how Psychology can become more involved in raising funds for our new building.

Challenge #3: '...lack of a unified vision for the department's future'

Psychology is by its nature an extremely diverse field. We recognize the challenges that this diversity poses for developing a single vision for the department's future, but we regard our diversity of approaches as one of our strengths.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: We are united and committed in our desire to generate a forward-thinking mission along with a strategic plan of short- and long-term goals that will enable us to achieve our mission. In the coming year, the department will implement faculty-approved proposals generated by the working groups and committees described in Challenge 1 (above). Recently, the Planning Committee produced a draft of a mission statement that reflects the current strengths and goals of the department (see below). Faculty-at-large were given an opportunity for feedback and suggestions for change to the draft. We plan to have the new mission statement finalized by the end of winter quarter (2014). Of course, this mission statement will likely be modified once our research vision(s) become clearer.

Mission Statement: The Psychology Department seeks to expand the boundaries of our knowledge and training about biological, environmental, and social-cultural contributions to the emergence and development of typical and atypical behavior, through cutting-edge interdisciplinary research comprising both clinical and animal models, and ranging from cells to organisms to communities.

Challenge #4: ‘The department is hampered by limited discretionary funds’

It is absolutely the case that the department is constrained by very limited discretionary funds. Historically, little (if any) effort was spent on developing an Advancement arm of the department. Current endowments came from the generosity of our own professors (e.g. Bolles, Edwards, Hunt, Loucks, and Wagner). With the economic downturn of the 2008-2009 year, it became clear that the department needed to be more proactive in terms of Advancement goals; it needed to reach outside of the walls of Guthrie. With increasingly limited resources, it has indeed been difficult to create or invest in ‘new opportunities.’ In order to move toward any Advancement goal, Psychology needed to *first increase the visibility of the exciting research* of its faculty. Our annual Edwards public lecture series served this purpose well. In an attempt to identify and highlight possible new cross-disciplinary research strengths in the department, our annual Edwards public lecture series has (for the past 5 years) featured a different research theme that cut across disciplinary boundaries. The public response has been impressive: the lectures now regularly ‘sell out’ (about 900 registrants each evening) about a month before the lecture dates. Further visibility for our faculty and the department is gained by the fact that these lectures are televised on UWTV. Given our Advancement interests and needs, we sought to develop new or stronger connections with UW and local constituent groups by hosting (paid for by the Edwards Endowment) a focused dinner reception prior to one of the public lectures. Here, faculty are given an opportunity to present a compelling case for why a particular research theme should grow into, for example, a Center or new community partnerships. Building productive relationships takes years, but we have begun to see some payoff.

In 2012, budget reorganizations and a staff departure enabled us to hire our first full-time Advancement staff. The demands for her services were so great, that we soon hired a 0.5 FTE staff as an Advancement assistant. With these two staff members, the department has become fully integrated with the College Advancement team as well as the Alumni Association Advancement group. We secured our first gift over \$1M, and we continue to work on other advancement projects with faculty. Gifts are targeted in terms of the use of the funds, but nevertheless they provide much needed support for specific research programs.

As a point of clarification to the report, it is worth noting here that while it is true that the department relies heavily on the release/recapture budget to support the needs of the department, such funds are used only for instructional purposes and general operations. There is not enough in the release/recapture budget to support new research opportunities.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: We will continue to work with multiple levels of Advancement across the university. In addition, the Associate Chair for Research and the Advancement Coordinator will work more closely together to ensure that the latest research accomplishments have maximal impact on the relevant public groups. Further, starting this spring, our Advancement staff will work with Undergraduate Advising to build a database of Psychology alumni. They will also explore the possibility of hosting social events for graduating seniors in addition to the department graduation celebration. Building a stronger sense of community amongst our majors is a priority for it should make it easier to stay in contact with students after they graduate. The review committee suggested that we form an advisory board of external members. This is a great idea. However it is our view that the creation of such an advisory board should be guided by our visions for research excellence. Once such a long-term vision is articulated, an advisory board of targeted folks will be formed.

Challenge #5: ‘Faculty interviews revealed dissatisfaction with the current departmental merit review process’

Faculty and professional staff salaries were frozen for 4 years until September 2013. In anticipation of the lifting of the salary freeze, the department created its first Merit Evaluation Committee in Spring of 2013 so that it would be prepared to carry out objective and meaningful evaluations that determined faculty salaries. The first salary increase occurred in Fall 2013, but the mandate from the Provost office essentially led to the decision that the total amount awarded to Psychology be uniformly distributed across all meritorious faculty (which were all of our faculty). Our Merit Evaluation Committee continued to work in the Fall of 2013 to refine its metrics with the hope that we would implement our new procedures when additional salary ‘unit adjustments’ were distributed in winter of 2014. However, the Psychology Department did not qualify for a unit adjustment, and thus we still have yet to use our new evaluation tool.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: The 4-year salary freeze did indeed create a situation in which (for 4 years) the only raise experienced by faculty was in response to a retention offer. We agree with the review committee that this is not a desirable way to recognize the hard work of our faculty. In addition to the freeze being lifted, our salary situation is currently undergoing correction at different levels of the university. The Faculty Senate is creating a proposal for a multi-tiered salary structure so that faculty can come up for promotion within ranks. Coincident with this effort is the reduced likelihood of receiving a retention counter offer from the UW since the faculty salary pool is being committed to more (annual and promotion-related) faculty salary raises. At the level of the department, a new merit evaluation process should be in place by the time of our next raise. The current expectation is that in Spring 2014, faculty will use the new merit evaluation procedure in time for the July 1, 2014 merit increase.

Challenge #6 ‘Lecturers ...carry a large fraction of the undergraduate teaching load, but assignments are often made on short notice’ ‘...all tenure-track faculty should participate in undergraduate classroom teaching..’

Our teaching faculty play an absolutely critical role in the department’s ability to achieve its instructional goals. We are proud that our lecturers are some of the highest rated instructors at the university and that they effectively set the bar high for other instructors on campus. Therefore, it was very difficult when we could not afford to retain all of our part-time lecturers as the recession hit in 2008-2009. As funds became available, we created two full-time lecturer positions and we gave

year-long contracts (as opposed to quarterly contracts) to four part-time lecturers. Also, rather than hire a state line full-time Senior Lecturer this year, the department decided to use the lecturer funds to further support our current part-time lecturers. Our hope is that in the coming year we can convert more of the part-time positions into full-time positions.

We have tried to give part time lecturers as much lead time as possible when it comes to class assignments. The minute that the Associate Chair or Chair finds out about an unexpected instructor vacancy (e.g. due to an unexpected course buyout or leave), phone calls and emails are sent in search of a replacement. On occasion, the lead time has been shorter than we would like because a new circumstance has arisen that requires/enables a faculty member to buy out of a class in the following quarter. We strongly discourage faculty from such untimely decisions, and we could do a better job enforcing current buy out policy that states that faculty must give the Chair at least 2 quarters notice before the quarter in which a class is being bought out.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ‘...consider longer-term appointments for instructional faculty ... (and)... mechanisms to recognize the dedicated efforts of lecturers should be developed’

DEPARTMENT PLAN: As just described, the department is not only aware of but is actively seeking ways and resources to offer longer appointments to our instructional faculty. This is an important goal that recognizes the significant role that this group of faculty plays in the department. Further, the department will explore new ways to recognize the dedicated efforts of lecturers. In regard to the statement by the committee that all tenure-line faculty should teach undergraduate courses, the department will re-evaluate current teaching loads and course distributions of faculty after the research and graduate training programs are re-evaluated (Challenge 1 above).

Challenge #7: ‘...the PCSAS [Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System] would seem to be a logical fit and could provide substantial benefit to the department’

One of the difficulties that we have had as we sought ways to bridge graduate training for clinical and nonclinical students is the course constraints imposed by the accreditation requirements by the American Psychological Association (APA). The review committee pointed out that adopting a different accreditation mechanism, the PCSAS, would lift such course constraints. This is an option that had been previously considered by the clinical faculty because the focus of PCSAS on excellence in clinical science is more consistent with the strengths and goals of our clinical areas. Further, the greater prestige of PCSAS accreditation (over APA accreditation) was considered a great benefit for our students. In response to this review, it should be noted that a primary reason for not moving to replace our APA accreditation with PCSAS accreditation has been, and continues to be, that most states (including Washington) do not recognize PCSAS accreditation as sufficient to satisfy the state licensing requirements for clinical psychologists. There is also a large cost to become accredited by PCSAS. A third reason for not yet moving to the PCSAS model is that the APA now recognizes the constraints that are caused by its accreditation rules, and is working to make their requirements more in line with PCSAS.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ‘Consider accreditation via the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System’

DEPARTMENT PLAN: As described above, the Clinical and general faculty have considered the pros and cons of adopting the PCSAS. They will revisit the issue of adopting such a system, although

the adoption of PCSAS will not mean that the APA accreditation system will be abandoned since our graduate students still need APA accreditation to obtain a license in most states. We look forward to working with the College to identify resources so that we can move ahead on this issue.

Other Committee Recommendations and Department Plans:

1. ‘All degree programs should be continued with a subsequent review in three years.’

The Psychology Department appreciates the insights offered by the blue-ribbon panel of experts that comprised our review committee. The challenges that were identified are essential to resolve before the department can achieve its goal of being not only a top ranked department, but a department with a thriving intellectual and collaborative community that leads the country in terms of research visions and impact.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: The task of resolving the issues raised in the committee’s report in three years will be challenging. However, the combination of a thoughtful strategic plan and assistance from the College and Provost offices makes us confident that we can make significant progress toward resolving the identified challenges in three years.

2. ‘The department should explore the appointment of an Advisory Board’

The suggestion to appoint an Advisory Board is a good one, as it can help us to promote our research and instructional goals and successes with the local community.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: Parallel with the department’s re-evaluation of its research and graduate training program organizations will be consideration of appropriate Advisory Board members who share the same visions and goals. We hope that the College and University will provide financial assistance to bring Advisory Board members to Seattle for regular consultation.

3. ‘...develop department-wide activities, both social and academic’

A part of creating a more inviting and personally intellectual environment involves developing more department-wide social and academic activities.

DEPARTMENT PLAN: As part of the strategy to encourage a more thriving intellectual climate, the department will initiate new group activities that involve faculty, staff, and students throughout the year.

Timetable:

Our general plan is to create the committees outlined in Challenge 1(above) by the end of March 2014. In that way, during the spring quarter (2014) committees can gather data and research the organizational models of our peer institutions. Suggested proposals from each committee will be discussed at a faculty meeting, perhaps at the end of spring quarter. If possible, certain proposals may begin to be implemented as early as fall quarter (2014).

While these committees develop their proposals, other faculty groups can (and in some cases already have) start to gather data (via surveys) regarding faculty views on a number of department policies and procedures such that when the time comes, decisions can be made in a timely fashion.