

June 21, 1996

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TO: Dean Jaros, Dean, Graduate School
FROM: John C. Raich, Dean *J.C. Raich*
SUBJECT: Seven Year Department Review Document, Department of Psychology

This memorandum constitutes the initial response of the dean to the departmental self-evaluation document.

I. Summary

The report presents a picture of an effective and efficient academic program of high quality. Faculty take teaching seriously. This attention is reflected in the consistently high student evaluations of Psychology courses. A number of improvements have been made over the past six years in the undergraduate curriculum. The most noteworthy of these is the implementation of hands-on laboratory experiences for undergraduates in the core areas of psychology. Student demand for the Psychology major continues strong, consistent with national trends. The graduate program is one of the University's largest and most productive. The Department is very selective in the admission of graduate students. At the same time, it has an outstanding record in the recruitment and retention of minority students. The Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research is a nationally known research program in the area of drug abuse prevention among underserved populations and is one of the University's Programs of Research and Scholarly Excellence. The Counseling Program has been rated 8th in the nation and the Industrial/Organizational program was ranked 4th in terms of research productivity. The Department provides unique community, regional, and national outreach through the Psychological Services Center and the Tri-Ethnic Center. Departmental productivity in teaching, scholarship and external support is high when compared with peer departments. To sum up, this is a strong department deserving of additional investment in key areas.

II. Organization of the report

The six year review report of the Department of Psychology is a very thorough analysis of recent progress and the current status of instructional, research, and outreach programs. It covers all aspects of departmental activities reasonably well. Peer data are used effectively. Future plans in instruction, research, outreach, and physical facilities are carefully argued and well articulated. Overall, a well-written report.

III. Comments on the report

A. Undergraduate courses

1. Enrollment trends

Overall student credit hour production by the department of psychology increased from about 23,000 in 1989-90 to over 25,000 in 1992-93 and then decreased to 23,258 for 1994-95. Over the 6 year period, there was a definite shift from lower division (-20%) to upper division (+35%) enrollments. Graduate student credit hours increased about 11% over the 6 years. The shift in enrollments from lower division to upper division has put pressure on upper division courses, particularly laboratories. Access for students to the upper division courses has become a serious concern and will need to be addressed in terms of faculty and GTA staffing.

2. Course evaluations

The faculty take teaching seriously and generally do an outstanding job in the classroom. This shows up in the student course evaluations. Data over the past 6 years consistently show average instructor ratings of 3.5 or higher on a 4 point scale.

B. Undergraduate major

1. Enrollment trends for the undergraduate major

For 1989-90, the department enrolled 623 undergraduate Psychology majors. for 1994-95, there were a total of 638 majors, divided into 398 Psychology majors and 240 Pre-psychology majors. With the concern regarding the pre-psychology major, the department will need to consider managing overall undergraduate enrollments at a level that provides a quality experience for students and at the same time meets demand for this major. Psychology continues to be a popular major choice for undergraduates, not only at Colorado State. It is the most popular major nationwide. The demand for psychology as a major is not expected to slow down until 2010 or 2020, according to some experts. Hence, enrollment pressures will be a continuing challenge in Psychology.

2. Curricular changes

The department has been successful in improving the educational experiences for upper division Psychology students by developing and offering laboratory courses in the core areas (learning, physiological, cognitive, sensation & perception, social & environmental, measurement & testing, organizational, and industrial). With the assistance of student technology fees, these labs have become state of the art in the use of technology.

3. Pre-psychology major

Experimentation with a Pre-psychology undergraduate major, instituted in 1990, has yielded mixed results. This major was introduced to help control the numbers of students enrolled in upper division courses, particularly laboratories, hence deal with runaway problems there. While the Pre-psychology major has helped control enrollment in upper level psychology courses and laboratories, it has had some undesirable impacts on

students. I would support the elimination of the Pre-psychology major, coupled to an articulation of entry qualifications into the Psychology major whose numbers should be expanded somewhat. To do so, may require some additional resources for additional sections and for advising assistance. I also support requiring more advanced courses in the sciences, mathematics, computer science, and the social sciences. Psychology is a behavioral science discipline and the level of required core courses should reflect a higher level of performance expectations from students in these core areas.

4. Assessments

a. Curriculum

A comparison of the undergraduate curriculum with that at peer universities indicates that peers require more courses in mathematics and the biological/physical sciences. The Department plans to address this shortcoming. On the other hand, with its 6 required laboratory courses, we provide more hands-on experiences for undergraduates than any other CCHE peer.

b. Survey of undergraduate majors

To obtain student opinions about the undergraduate program, a questionnaire was distributed in classes populated by undergraduate majors. Respondents were, on the whole, satisfied with the undergraduate program in psychology, in particular the course offerings, quality of the faculty, accessibility of the faculty, and quality of teaching. Suggestions for improvement pertained to more 100 and 200 level courses, more instruction in professional communication, availability of lab sections, the pre-psychology major, the advising system, particularly career advising.

c. Career tracks for graduates

A telephone survey was conducted of 100 psychology alumni from classes of 1982, 1987, 1989, and 1991 showed that job level increased over time since graduation. participation in internships while in school was related to increase in job level after graduation. The majority of graduates had positive feelings about their undergraduate experience. The survey indicates that 24% of respondents work in psychology-related fields, 22% work in organizational fields, and 12% work in technology-related fields. The remaining survey participants are employed in a variety of other areas or are pursuing advanced degrees.

The Department's Career Advising Center, which opened in 1992, currently assists students with vocational decision making, academic and career planning, field placements, research and teaching assistantships, and graduate school preparation and applications.

4. Quality indicators for the undergraduate program

The quality of the undergraduate majors shows up in the fraction of student awards such as the Dean's List, Honor graduates, and honor societies.

5. Future plans for the undergraduate program

The department's future plans in undergraduate education focus on:

- a. Re-examine the pre-psychology major.
- b. Increase options for post-baccalaureate employment for psychology majors.
- c. Expand hands-on experiences for undergraduates.

- d. Provide faculty development in teaching technology.
- e. Utilize available expertise in the Tri-Ethnic Center for undergraduate education
(An example might be an undergraduate concentration in substance abuse leading to certification in drug and alcohol counseling)

C. Graduate program

The graduate programs are focused in three main areas:

- Counseling Psychology
- Experimental Psychology
- Industrial-Organizational Psychology

1. Support of graduate students

The quality of graduate programs, as measured by GRE scores, is significantly higher than the national average in comparable graduate programs. Number of applications have increased from 330 per year to 504 per year, whereas the number admitted and enrolled have stayed about the same, in the low 20's. This places the Department in the enviable position of having a large, well-qualified applicant pool.

Over the past six years, the department has progressed from funding fewer than 50% of its graduate students to 91%. This compares favorably with student support at doctoral programs in psychology (65%) and masters programs (24%) nationally. Total expenditures for GTA's increased by 60% over the past 5 years. A considerable portion of this support currently comes from DA/RSP funds.

For reasons stated below, the use DA/RSP funds for this purpose is not optimum and should be phased out. There is also increasing pressure to invest more of the DA/RSP resources in research initiatives. This reduces likely future resources for graduate student support.

To counter this trend, the Department has made an effort to diversify the support base for graduate student support to include the Counseling Center, public schools, local industries, journal editing assistantships, fellowships, contracts and grants, hospitals, and mental health agencies. To leverage its teaching resources and to provide financial support for as many graduate students as possible, the Department usually pays the minimum GTA stipend allowed by the University.

The Department prides itself on the recruitment and retention of minority graduate students which make up 20% of the graduate student population. Retention rates for ethnic minority graduate students exceed those of non-minority cohorts. Slightly over 60% of the currently enrolled graduate students are female.

The documentation of awards and recognitions for graduate students is impressive.

2. Assessment of the graduate program

Alumni who graduated in the past 5 years were surveyed. Nearly all of the respondents judged the quality of the graduate program to be good to excellent. 93% felt that they were prepared to meet professional challenges. The survey also generated a number of suggestions to make the graduate program more responsive to the changing mental health marketplace and the needs of employers of graduates.

Current graduate students were surveyed as well. 92% of the respondents reported that the quality of their graduate education is good to excellent. The same percentage felt that they were being adequately prepared to meet their professional goals. All students felt that they were pleased to have chosen CSU for their graduate education. Suggestions for improvement also related to more employment preparation.

3. National Rankings of research-doctorate programs

The Counseling Psychology Program was ranked 8th nationally in a reputational ranking about six years ago and is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association. It is the only APA-accredited doctoral counseling program among state-supported schools in Colorado. The Counseling Program is the only program in the nation that has received continuous funding from the National Institutes of Mental Health for training ethnic minority psychologists.

In a recent productivity study, the Industrial/Organizational program was ranked 4th in the nation. This was the largest positive change in institutional rankings of the 40 universities, with CSU moving from 38th place. It is the only Ph.D. granting program with this specialization in the western U.S.

In the 1995 reputational survey of research-doctorate programs in the U.S., sponsored by the National research Council, Psychology was ranked 82nd out of 185 doctoral programs rated for the scholarly quality of the faculty. This represents a considerable improvement over the rating in the same category for the 1982 survey where the program placed about 115th out of 150 programs. The numerical rating for scholarly quality of the faculty improved from 1.8 to 2.79. The quality of the CSU doctoral program was also viewed to have improved significantly over the past 5 years. In terms of program effectiveness the CSU program (2.83) was rated ahead of peer departments such as North Carolina State (2.63), Oklahoma State (1.85), and Washington State (2.56), but behind Iowa State (3.41), Purdue (3.70), and Texas A&M (2.88).

Although this reputational rating represents a remarkable improvement, the overall department rating seems to lag behind those specific to the Counseling and Industrial/Organizational programs. One should note, however, that there is a strong correlation between program size and reputational rating and such ratings are notoriously slow to change even when there is significant improvement. Further improvement in the reputational rankings should be a continuing department-wide goal. This should involve a plan to enhance the reputation of the Experimental Psychology program, perhaps by focusing on a limited number of key areas and taking better advantage of interdisciplinary opportunities related to Experimental Psychology..

4. Career tracks for graduate degree holders

From surveys mailed to alumni of the graduate program, the following employment statistics follow:

- 26% community mental health centers, private clinics, or counseling centers,
- 12% hospitals,
- 21% private practice.

5. Future plans for the graduate program

Future plans for the graduate program focus on the following:

- a. Review of the graduate curriculum to respond to emerging trends, to include: closer integration of the Tri-Ethnic Center into the Department, a new course in the epidemiology, assessment, treatment, and prevention of drug abuse, establishing stronger linkages between the Experimental program and biological and computer science, applied social sciences, and business disciplines at Colorado State.
- b. Stabilize funding for graduate student support.
- c. Expand options for graduate research training.

D. Research program

1. Recent progress

Faculty research productivity has remained fairly stable at about 3.5 refereed papers, books, chapters, and monographs for 1994-95. By comparison, psychology departments at CCHE peer institutions average 2. Average research and scholarly productivity of our faculty clearly exceeds that of CCHE peer departments.

External research support has continued to grow. Contract and grant expenditures have increased from about \$1.5 Million for 1989-90 to \$2.3 Million for 1994-95 and indirect cost recoveries have changed correspondingly from about \$350K to \$590K. Grant support for the Tri-Ethnic Center is the major contributor. The comparison with CCHE peers shows that the Department brings in over 2.5 times the grant support and 4.3 times the indirect costs than the average peer department.

The Department has moved to strengthen its program in cognitive psychology by hiring a new faculty member with expertise in memory, attention, and problem solving. The Department had no coverage in this important area of psychology for several years. The Department has also committed to a position with expertise on the interface between the Tri-Ethnic Center and the Department of Psychology. This position is viewed as strengthening the connections between the Department and the Center.

2. Future plans

- a. Priorities for future faculty recruitment

Counseling Psychology

psychodiagnostic and counseling theory,
 health psychologist with expertise in neuropsychological assessment and rehabilitation,
 community psychology with expertise in ethnic minority psychology.

The last position would interface well with the Tri-Ethnic Center and would complement current expertise in social/environmental psychology.

Experimental Psychology

cognitive psychology - this need has been addressed through the recruitment of a new faculty member this year,
 physiological psychology - to replace a retiring faculty,

human factors - future emphasis area?

One problem for the Experimental Psychology area is that it has the additional responsibilities to serve as the academic core for all of the Department's programs. This may make it more difficult to develop strongly focused research programs of its own. In establish the departmental focus, the Experimental program also needs to take advantage of interdisciplinary connections within Colorado State University, e.g. with behavioral biologists, with neurophysiologists, and with the neurosciences program in general. The Department should develop specific plans to strengthen the Experimental program along these lines.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

No immediate faculty hiring plans. The program would benefit from additional support staff, however.

b. Other plans

Reallocate DA/RSP funds from instructional to research support, including the establishment of a seed grant program.

Seek additional research space.

Strengthen ties to and support from private industry.

Integrate the activities of the Tri-Ethnic Center into the Department of Psychology.

Assist the Tri-Ethnic Center to diversify external support by appealing to private foundations.

E. Outreach

Current outreach efforts include the following:

1. Psychological Services Center

This center serves the Fort Collins community and exists primarily as a training agency for students in the Counseling graduate program.

2. Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research

This center represents a national resource for research on the prevention of high risk behaviors of Native American, Mexican-American and White American youth.

3. Consultation services

Many faculty provide psychotherapy and psychoeducational services to a variety of community, regional, and national organizations.

4. University and professional service

Faculty involvement in University and professional service of faculty is notable.

F. Personnel

1. Faculty workload

The department will continue efforts to achieve a better a balance of teaching, research, and service/outreach in faculty loads.

2. Postdoctoral teaching fellows

The Department could utilize postdoctoral teaching fellows to meet enrollment pressures in upper level courses and laboratories and could provide a supportive environment for them.

3. Diversity

Data indicate that 21% of full-time regular faculty are women and 11% are ethnic minorities. This compares with national statistics of 30% women and 7% ethnic minorities. Women are under-represented at Colorado State, especially at the rank of Full Professor. The Department is committed to increasing to increasing the diversity of its faculty and its undergraduate and graduate majors, and to promoting an environment that is` accepting of individual differences and conducive to the success of all its members.

G. Facilities

1. Space

During 1995-96, the Department acquired 4,610 sq. ft. of additional teaching and office space in the B-Wing of the Clark Building. Although this additional office space provides relief from serious overcrowding, the current total department space (27,000 sq. ft.) still falls short of estimates of the total space needs of Psychology based on CCHE guidelines (about 50,000 sq. ft.). It will cost about \$80K to renovate the newly acquired space in the Clark Building. Additional space continues to be a goal for the Department, particularly teaching lab and research space.

The Department is spread out over three different floors in three different wings of a large building. This results in the three graduate programs being housed in areas quite removed from one another. This hampers collegial communication. Consolidation of departmental space is another long-term goal.

The lack of adequate teaching laboratory space is also a factor in current turnaways from undergraduate Psychology laboratories. Additional laboratory space would allow the Department to focus on the staffing issues related to student demand for these courses.

2. Computing equipment

Faculty computers are seriously outdated and need to be replaced to allow better communication, data access, and availability of Internet resources. The Department is willing to give faculty training in educational and research technology a high priority.

3. Library

Library services for the undergraduate and graduate programs in Psychology appear to be satisfactory. Over the past 5 years, the Libraries have added 83 new psychology-related journal titles. Faculty and students have access to a number of different databases. The Libraries provide a subject bibliographer with specific responsibilities in psychology.

H. Fiscal resources

I share the concern about the use of indirect cost recovery funds to support educational (as opposed to research) programs. The Department will need to reduce its dependency on DA/RSP funds to support instruction. It is estimated that about \$120,000 in new RI funds will be required to replace DA/RSP funds supporting instruction. Most of this support is for GTA stipends. Allocation of new RI funds to support GTA's would allow Psychology to not only meet the educational needs of students but also to accomplish compliance with federal directives by using DA/RSP funds to support research initiatives.

xc.: D. A. Young
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