PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

REVIEW PROCESS

The Department of Psychology prepared a self-study following program review guidelines. A three-person external review team reviewed the self-study document, visited the campus in early January of 2002, interviewed unit personnel and university administrations, and submitted a written report. The Program Review Committee (PRC) read the self-study and external review documents, and a committee representative solicited feedback from the Department regarding the external reviewers' report. This document includes summaries of the self-study and external review reports, as well as the PRC’s findings and recommendations.

SUMMARY OF THE SELF-STUDY

Mission

The self-study document provides the following mission statement:

“The Department of Psychology strives to meet five objectives. The first is to offer a comprehensive base of undergraduate courses for educating pre-baccalaureate students from all areas of the University. The second is to provide strong programs for undergraduate majors that emphasize scientific psychology and critical thinking so that we can prepare students for employment or graduate study. Our third objective is to provide the highest quality graduate programs possible in the areas of clinical, industrial-organizational, experimental (behavioral neuroscience and cognitive), developmental, and quantitative psychology. Fourth, we are committed to creating and disseminating knowledge by doing research, publishing scholarly work, and teaching. Finally, recognizing that we exist within a larger society, we are dedicated to serving our communities, both within the University and beyond.”

Recent History

The number of full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Department currently is 31, down from a 1989 high of 36. During the period of 1995-2001, 13 new faculty were hired. These new hires, who now constitute nearly 40% of the faculty, changed the demographic profile of the Department from one dominated by full-professors to one that shows a more even distribution across the ranks. Consistent with the decline in the number of faculty in the Department, there was, from 1995 to 2001, a
6% decrease in the number of majors (481 as of Fall 2001), and a 20% decline in the number of funded graduate students (86 as of Fall 2001).

The reduction in the number of faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students notwithstanding, several noteworthy occurrences during the 1995-2001 time period are identified in the self-study:

- The doctoral program in Industrial-Organizational Psychology maintained its ranking among the top five such programs in the country;
- A new interdisciplinary graduate minor in Occupational Health Psychology was approved by the American Psychological Association;
- The Behavioral Neuroscience graduate program was selected by the University to receive investment funds for enhancing the growth of a program with high potential;
- Programmatic attempts to improve undergraduate advising were initiated;
- An undergraduate major in behavioral neuroscience was approved;
- The psychology building was substantially renovated and major improvements to the instructional facilities were made;
- A commitment to improve the undergraduate curriculum emerged, as indicated by the addition of new courses (e.g., forensic psychology, psychology of language) that are now regularly offered; and
- Several individual members of the faculty received various awards of recognition (viz., Master Teacher, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Outstanding Contributor to Graduate Education, Arts and Sciences Faculty Excellence Award; American Council of Education Fellowship).

**Programmatic Areas**

The Department offers six programmatic areas of study leading to the baccalaureate (B.A. or B.S.) and doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees in psychology (three faculty specialize in social psychology, a doctoral level area of concentration that was eliminated several years prior to the self-study):

- Behavioral Neuroscience (4 faculty)
- Cognitive Psychology (5 faculty)
- Clinical Psychology (10 faculty)
- Developmental Psychology (3 faculty)
- Industrial-Organizational Psychology (5 faculty)
- Quantitative Psychology (1 faculty)

In addition to these program areas, two units in the Department serve primarily to train graduate students:

- The Institute for Psychological Research and Application (IPRA), whose mission is to provide applied research opportunities, primarily to Industrial-Organizational graduate students; and
- The Psychological Services Center (PSC), which provides training opportunities to clinical graduate students.
Finally, the Department houses the interdisciplinary Center for Neuroscience, Mind, and Behavior (CNMB), comprised of 20 faculty from the Departments of Psychology, Biological Sciences, Philosophy, and Communication Disorders.

Faculty Resources and Activities

At the time of the self-study, the Department was comprised of 31 permanent faculty (tenured or tenure-track), but added two faculty during the course of the program review: an assistant professor in Clinical and an associate professor in Industrial-Organizational. In addition to its permanent faculty, the Department routinely relies on a variety of other personnel to meet its instructional needs: clinical psychologists to supervise the training of clinical students, part-time and full-time instructors, and a limited number of doctoral students to staff courses.

As is typical of Ph.D. degree granting programs, the workload in the Department is generally distributed at 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service. Most faculty teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (the average teaching load is two classes, one undergraduate independent study or internship, and two graduate independent studies per semester), and serve on thesis, dissertation, and preliminary examination committees (the average faculty member chairs two M.A. and three Ph.D. committees, and is a member of two to three Master’s and three Ph.D. committees in the Department per year).

Departmental expectations are that faculty will submit grant applications, actively engage in research, and present and publish the results of their research. On average, Department faculty publish 1.5 peer-reviewed journal articles and 0.5 book chapters, and make 2.5 presentations per year. During FY 2000-01, Department faculty received $382,357 in basic research grants, $34,831 for IPRA projects, and $12,963 for PSC projects. Faculty in the Clinical and Industrial-Organizational programs are actively involved in the Psychological Services Center and the Institute for Psychological Research and Application, respectively. Finally, most faculty are involved in on-going research groups, student advising, practicum supervision, and service to university, professional, and general communities.

Graduate Assistant Resources

At the time of the self-study (Fall, 2001), 86 graduate students were funded by the Department. Students are supported at the half-time level for four years, with the source of the funding coming from the Graduate College (the bulk of the allocation), training grants for clinical students, external research grants, and Academic Challenge Awards from the Ohio Board of Regents. Most of the students funded through the Graduate College serve as teaching and research assistants to faculty. Clinical students generally are funded through training grants and have assistantship duties off campus. Five students annually receive non-service fellowships from the Graduate College.
Facilities and Equipment

The Department is housed in its own five-story, recently renovated building. The building contains faculty and graduate student offices, classrooms and seminar rooms, three computer labs, undergraduate research rooms, a conference room, the Psychological Services Center, the J.P. Scott Center for Neuroscience, Mind, and Behavior, the Institute for Psychological Research and Application, interview rooms with one-way mirrors, research laboratories, a departmental library, and space for housing research animals. The Department generally possesses state-of-the-art research equipment, and all faculty and staff have desktop computers.

Financial Resources

Consistent with the reduction in number of faculty, Departmental salary and wage expenses have decreased 4.4% since 1995-96. Operating expenses have declined 37% since 1995-96; this is somewhat deceptive, however, insofar as the self-study identifies 1995-96 as a “banner year,” suggesting that it was an outlier in terms of operating expenses. Since 1996-97, the operating budget has actually increased by 32%. Nonetheless, the overall budget for the Department has decreased by 7.5% since 1995-96.

In addition to the operating budget, five additional budgets are earmarked for specific units or purposes within the Department: the Clinical Academic Challenge budget, the Industrial-Organizational Academic Challenge budget, the Institute for Psychological Research and Application (revenue-generated) budget, the Psychological Services Center (revenue-generated) budget, and the overhead return budget. The self-study notes that because the percentage of faculty submitting proposals and receiving external funding has been increasing in recent years, the size of the overhead return account is expected to increase in the coming years.

Self-Evaluation of Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Faculty quality and research productivity. As indexed by the number of published works (journal articles, book chapters, edited volumes, textbooks, and professional books), there has been a somewhat uneven, yet generally upward, trend in published works by Department faculty in recent years. Using 1995 as the base year, the self-study notes that the number of such works peaked in 1998, and has decreased since. Still, the number of published works—approximately two products per faculty member per year—was somewhat greater in 2000 and 2001 than in 1995, but not substantially so. In addition, all indications are that the faculty are publishing in some of the better journals in the field.

The Industrial-Organizational program consistently ranks in the top five of such programs in the country, although this ranking has slipped from 3rd to 4th in recent years. The self-study identifies the Behavioral Neuroscience specialization as the program most likely to become nationally recognized in the near future. Other areas of particular strength include the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, and Occupational Health Psychology.
The Department Promotion and Tenure document stresses the importance of teaching, research, and service. Because of the variability across areas within the field of psychology in, for example, the availability of external funding and in the amount of time and effort necessary to conduct research, the expectations for tenure and promotion vary across areas of specialization within the Department. The Promotion and Tenure document presents general guidelines that are applied with this variability across areas of specialization in mind.

**Student entry attributes.** The self-study describes the quality of the Department’s undergraduate majors as “highly variable,” insofar as some of the students are competitive on a national level for admission to top quality graduate programs, while others are of lesser quality. The graduate student body is defined as generally strong, although there is variability across program areas.

**Quality of curriculum, instruction, and support services.** The self-study identifies the undergraduate curriculum as a strong one, and the uniformly positive student evaluations across all types of courses support this claim. Nonetheless, it appears that the curriculum is being swamped by its students; the Department currently has twice the number of majors the curriculum was originally designed for. This has resulted in several problems, such as bottlenecks at critical junctures in the program. In addition, almost three quarters of the upper-level elective courses have introductory psychology as the only prerequisite, meaning that many of these courses must be pitched at a lower level than preferred. Finally, the absence of a “breadth requirement” means that students may not be exposed to the variety of areas that constitute the field.

Historically, the graduate program has been well regarded and thought to be in need of few modifications. Student evaluations of core and specialty courses are uniformly positive. However, the self-study notes that the program is now at an important juncture. While graduate education in psychology has become increasingly specialized at the national level, the Bowling Green program continues to emphasize breadth requirements—a core of courses common to all students regardless of their specialization. As a result of this national disciplinary trend, there is sentiment, though not unanimity, in the Department to eliminate the breadth requirement.

**Quality of graduate students and assessment of graduate student learning outcomes.** Approximately 10% of the 250-300 annual applicants to the graduate program are admitted. Students admitted to the program are strong, with Graduate Record Examination scores ranging from the 71st to the 76th percentile on the verbal and quantitative sections, respectively, and with an average grade point average of 3.58.

The Department systematically assesses graduate student learning at both the individual and group level. At the individual level, students evaluate their own academic and professional development by responding to queries concerning coursework, thesis/dissertation progress, teaching experiences, presentations and publications, and service activities. At the group level, the Department examines degree completion rates,
which show, for example, that for students entering the program during 1989-1994, 91% received their M.A. degrees and 64% received their Ph.D. degrees. Among those receiving their M.A. degrees, 70% also received the Ph.D. Data collected by the Department from 55% of the current students show that almost 90% have given at least one professional presentation, and about one third have been a co-author of a published article. A final measure of learning outcomes is job placement rates. Data collected from 64% of the 110 students awarded Ph.D. degrees from 1995-2000 show that 100% have obtained employment in the field of psychology. A higher proportion of the Department’s graduates are employed in higher education than is true of Ph.D.s in psychology nationally (35% vs. 22%). Similarly, a higher proportion of Bowling Green graduates are employed in business or government than is true nationally (24% vs. 18%). The self-study notes that the overrepresentation in these two areas likely reflects the Department’s emphasis on scholarly productivity and the size of the Industrial-Organizational program.

Assessment of undergraduate student learning outcomes. During the last week of each semester the Department surveys its current majors to assess their learning along six dimensions: scientific inquiry and problem solving, inter- and intrapersonal growth, research skills and logical thinking, integration of course material with courses in the social sciences, relevance for career or future, and working with others. The data discussed in the self-study show that while there were no significant differences among first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year students in their average scores on integration, inter- and intrapersonal growth, and scientific inquiry and problem solving, the scores for research skills and logical thinking, and working with others increase with each year in the program.

The data also revealed an unexpected and disturbing pattern: majors tend to view the courses they take as of decreasing relevance as they progress through the program. This suggests a problem either with the assortment of courses offered during students’ final year in the program, or that students are taking third year rather than fourth year, and presumably more relevant, courses during their final year. The Department will use enrollment data to determine the cause of this perceived lack of relevance of courses taken during the final year in the program, and make the necessary adjustments to rectify the problem.

Assessment data collected from alumni produced mean scores on integration, inter- and intrapersonal growth, working with others, and research skills and logical thinking that were significantly higher than those derived from the surveys of current students. The differences between the two groups on the scientific inquiry and problem solving, and relevance for career or future dimensions, however, were non-significant. The higher scores among the alumni on four of the six dimensions suggests that students come to appreciate their training more once they have graduated and have had a chance to reflect upon it. Alternatively, given the selective nature of the alumni survey (only 10% of those surveyed responded, and two thirds of these had attended graduate school in psychology or a related discipline), it might reasonably be expected that the scores would be even higher. Whichever interpretation is accepted, the self-study interprets the lack of any significant difference on two of the six dimensions as a negative outcome. As
with the survey of current students, relevance of course work was flagged as a weakness by alumni.

Preliminary results from an assessment of critical thinking skills among 1st and 4th year majors shows that the 4th year students scored significantly higher than the 1st year students. However, this was true on only four of the eight tasks presented.

An occupational survey of alumni shows that the vast majority are employed in the social services field or are attending graduate school. Most of those surveyed had earned graduate degrees, typically at the master’s level (e.g., social work, counseling), or indicated that they intended to pursue such a degree. Few of the jobs listed by the undergraduate alumni were held by those possessing only a bachelor’s degree in psychology. Many of the best undergraduate alumni have completed or are in the process of completing doctoral degrees at some of the strongest programs in the country. Similarly, the placement rate of doctoral students is judged to be excellent by the self-study.

Adequacy of resources. The self-study concludes that “Up until last year, and certainly through the 1990’s, the Psychology Department has had more than adequate resources to carry out its teaching, research, and service missions.” While recognizing that they “have been fortunate over the years, which is no doubt why we were targeted for greater than average cuts to our operating budget,” the Department nonetheless expresses concern that the reduced operating budget will not permit support of faculty and students at the levels characteristic of the recent past.

Unit Planning: The Next Seven Years

In keeping with the changing nature of the field of psychology, the Department will make significant changes in both the undergraduate and graduate programs over the next seven years.

Improvements in graduate training. One of the major trends occurring in the field of psychology is increasing specialization and, at the same time, a blurring of traditional disciplinary boundaries between psychology and such fields as biology and sociology. The Department believes that graduate training should reflect these new realities. To this end, the self-study proposes several improvements in the graduate program, all of which will begin to take place immediately:

• Modify the graduate curriculum to reflect program needs. The Department will relax the general breadth requirements currently in place for all students, and permit the specific program areas to determine the course requirements for their students. The result will be increased specialization of training.
• Increase the quantity and quality of graduate students. The Department will intensify its recruitment efforts, with a particular emphasis on enrolling more students in the smaller program areas. In an attempt to attract stronger students, the Department will explore the possibility of increasing stipend levels for the
highest quality students, guaranteeing summer funding for these students, and making increased use of recruitment weekends for the strongest applicants.

- Provide more teaching opportunities for graduate students. To make those students who plan to pursue an academic career more competitive, the Department will provide them with greater opportunity to teach their own courses, rather than merely serving as teaching assistants for faculty.
- Establish a focus for the quantitative program area. The Department will expand faculty participation in the quantitative program by involving faculty who have quantitative skills, but who are not currently identified with the quantitative area. The Department will consider involving faculty from other departments as well, such as mathematics, EDFI, and sociology.
- Explore reviving the social psychology program. Because of the retirement of area faculty, the social psychology program has been dormant over the past several years. However, the Department recently hired a new social psychologist, and several other faculty count social psychology as an area of secondary interest. Consequently, the Department will encourage faculty to list this secondary interest formally, and to continue and expand their collaboration with faculty in the major program areas.

**Improvements in undergraduate training.** Because the undergraduate program was designed at a time when the number of majors was half its current size, the Department plans several changes in the curriculum. These include a number of initiatives that will take place over the next calendar year:

- Change PSYC 201 to PSYC 101, thus giving the introductory level course a freshman-level designation.
- Create a layer of sophomore-level courses, via a renumbering of current courses and the addition of several courses that are currently taught as general seminars, in which sub-areas of psychology are introduced.
- Require students to sample from among these sophomore-level courses so that undergraduate training reflects an exposure to the breadth of the field.
- Establish tracks in specialty areas for which the sophomore-level courses are prerequisites. Beyond the breadth of training noted above, this will allow students to specialize in an area of particular interest to them, and serve as a solid foundation for those planning to pursue graduate level training in an increasingly specialized field.
- Expand opportunities for undergraduates to learn about and do research. The Department will introduce a 200-level pass-fail course wherein faculty and graduate students present their research to undergraduates, with no supposition that these students have any background in psychology beyond the introductory level course and statistics. The goal of this course will be to encourage students to become involved in research early in their undergraduate careers.

**Promoting faculty success.** Although the Department believes the publication record of the faculty is good, it would like to improve on this record. In addition, they would like to increase the percentage of faculty who are able to secure extramural
funding for their research. The self-study proposes several mechanisms to achieve these goals:

- Create differential teaching loads based on research expectations. Currently the Department maintains an informal three-tiered teaching system: (1) faculty with external funding who have as much as a 50% reduction in teaching responsibilities; (2) faculty who teach two courses per semester (the majority of those in the Department); and (3) part-time instructors who teach as many as three courses per semester. The Department will formalize this system by creating renewable positions for two to three full-time Instructors/Lectures so that it can provide reduced teaching loads (down to three courses per year) for “extraordinary” and “research intensive” faculty.

- Provide a rotating schedule of course release for clinical supervision. Because the clinical faculty provide supervision of clinical cases in addition to their two course per semester teaching load, the Department will offer a one course reduction (for up to two faculty in any given semester) for those who accumulate a preset number of supervision hours.

- Use surplus from course buy-outs (beginning in Fall 2002) to provide release for grant writing.

**Faculty hiring.** In order to meet its teaching, research, and service goals, the Department would like to increase the number of faculty from 31 to 36 or more. At least two of these new positions will be at the Instructor level (for AY 2002-03 or 2003-04), while the others will be determined by Departmental and individual program area needs. The timetable for these latter hires will be dependent on the timing of retirements and the career stages of current faculty in a given area. An explicit goal of the hiring strategy is to recruit faculty who bridge two areas of Departmental strength.

**Expanded outreach to the community.** The Department will increase, on an ongoing basis, the level of services it provides to the university and area communities via the Psychological Services Center and the Institute for Psychological Research and Application. It is expected that this expansion will be most evident in the services provided by the Psychological Services Center.

**Facilities.** Even though the Psychology Building has recently been renovated, there is a need to optimize the cooling and ventilation system on the 5th floor, where the research animals are housed.

**SUMMARY OF THE EXTERNAL REPORT**

The three-member external review team was impressed with the Department and its programs. However, they also believed there were some significant shortcomings, both in existing programs and operations, and in the future plans set forth in the self-study. The specific strengths and weaknesses identified by the external reviewers are detailed below:

- Both the Industrial-Organizational and Clinical programs are quite strong. The faculty in both areas are productive, and both programs offer extensive and
effective outreach services. In addition, the Behavioral Neuroscience program is poised to achieve excellence in the relatively near future.

- The Department maintains a strong commitment to undergraduate teaching as a central part of its mission.

- Excellent faculty-graduate student relations characterize the Department. The students uniformly agree that they are receiving excellent training and that they are treated as junior colleagues.

- The involvement of Department faculty in multidisciplinary research is noteworthy and bodes well for future funding opportunities.

- The involvement of the Industrial Organizational and Clinical faculty in the area of Occupational Health Psychology forms a strong bridge between the two strongest programs in the Department, and has the potential to pay high research and funding dividends.

- Collegial relationships and egalitarian values characterize the Department. The positive consequence of such an environment is that the Department is a pleasant place to work. The downside is that such values often inhibit making difficult decisions that might enhance the position of one area at the expense of the others. Similarly, even though faculty salaries are a common complaint among Department members, very few assert that increasing the merit component of the salary increment policy is a reasonable way to rectify this. Rather, in an egalitarian spirit, most faculty prefer across the board increases for all faculty.

- While the Department has a history of seeking and obtaining external funding for research, improvement is necessary. Department faculty do not seem to be of a common mind regarding the need and utility of external funding, suggesting the lack of a consistent philosophy regarding this important issue.

- Many of the weaknesses identified by the external review team are the result of the lack of a common vision of the Department’s future. One consequence of this is the absence of a ready framework within which to make important decisions. The lack of a strategic plan means that faculty hires, graduate student recruitment, and other important decisions are often made on an ad hoc basis.

- Although Department faculty are strongly committed to undergraduate teaching and have received numerous teaching honors, the external review team believed that additional steps can be taken to enhance teaching effectiveness. They also noted that many of the faculty in the smaller program areas are displeased that most of their teaching is in “service-related” courses rather than courses in their areas of specialization.
The average publication rate of Department faculty is competitive with comparable Ph.D. granting departments of psychology. There is, however, significant variation among the faculty in this regard. This suggests that the Department should implement a differential reward system on the basis of research productivity, as well as develop a plan to maintain the productivity of those with strong records and enhance the productivity of those with relatively weak records. The same holds true for external funding attempts and successes.

The external review team believes that Department faculty have a solid service commitment, although it might be “protecting” junior faculty from too much service activity.

Department faculty report that the University administration does not present a clear and unified sense of goals and priorities. The review team believes that it is critical for the administration to clarify its priorities and provide an appropriate reward structure for their realization.

The Department chair is committed to facilitating necessary changes, but the changes identified by the chair as being essential do not necessarily match the issues of greatest concern to the faculty. While the chair values bringing greater equity to the smaller areas of the Department, for example, some faculty feel devalued because differential productivity is not differentially rewarded within the Department. The review team believes that such policies as raises based on across-the-board adjustments rather than on merit, and similar teaching loads for all faculty, regardless of the level of research productivity, reduce morale.

**External Review Team Recommendations**

The review team provided a critique of the seven-year plan set forth in the self-study, concurred with many of its proposals, and offered some recommendations of their own. Although they believed that the Department was both creative and proactive in its plan, the reviewers also thought that some of the proposed goals were unrealistic. Consequently, they offered several alternative suggestions. Their concurring and alternative recommendations are as follows:

**Goal A: Improvements in graduate training.**

Because it is consistent with the direction in which the field of psychology is moving, the review committee believes the Department is right to move in the direction of specialized doctoral training. However, to the extent that it does this it will become increasingly difficult for the Department to support the variety of graduate programs currently in place. The Department now offers programs in six different areas, and proposes to revive the social psychology program. It is both unrealistic and unwise to spread Departmental resources across six or seven graduate programs, especially in light of the need for increased area specialization. In addition, the current curriculum is too course-intensive and is not conducive to enhancing the research training needs of advanced students.
Thus, the curriculum should be revised so that fewer courses are offered. This will have the added benefit of reducing some of the heavy teaching demands currently assumed by the faculty.

- Enhanced recruitment efforts can increase both the quality and quantity of graduate students in the program. Along these lines, area faculty should collect attrition/completion information and job placement data to share with potential applicants. The Departmental web page should be updated on a regular basis and contain individual faculty profiles (e.g., degree school, area of specialization, recent publications).

- Graduate students should be given the opportunity to teach their own sections of undergraduate courses. This can be accomplished by using some of the current stipends as teaching assistantships for upper-level graduate students who teach their own courses. This will have the added benefit of reducing teaching demands on faculty.

- Faculty should be encouraged to collaborate with one another. In light of the Department’s expressed goal of expanding the quantitative program, such collaborations could be particularly fruitful when they involve faculty with a quantitative orientation. However, it is important that the Department prioritize its support of the various program areas. Because the training needs of the different areas are too diverse for the Department to support, a more realistic alternative to developing the smaller program areas is to build research bridges between faculty of related areas.

In short, it is impractical to attempt to support six graduate programs. Instead, the Department should prioritize its goals. At the same time, the reviewers support the idea of cross-area collaboration and the identification of ways that individuals in the smaller or non-viable program areas can be integrated into the critical missions of the Department.

**Goal B: Improvements in undergraduate training.**

- The reviewers agree that the existing undergraduate program is no longer tenable for the number of majors the Department is serving. In addition, the present structure creates bottlenecks in the flow of students through the major, and it does not require much breadth in course exposure. Thus it makes sense to change PSYC 201 to PSYC 101, firmly establish it as a freshman course, and then create a number of sophomore-level courses that students take to get breadth exposure. However, the proposal to offer specialty tracks at the undergraduate level might replace the current bottleneck with a new one. In addition, providing specialization training at the undergraduate level is antithetical to the Department’s argument that since graduate training is becoming so specialized, undergraduate training should insure breadth. Finally, offering specialty tracks at the undergraduate level would require more courses and more frequent scheduling of these courses, than would a non-specialized curriculum, and would increase the
faculty's undergraduate teaching load. As an alternative strategy, the external reviewers suggest devising a leaner undergraduate curriculum.

- Increasing opportunities for undergraduates to become involved in research is an appropriate step in broadening and modernizing the undergraduate curriculum. The proposal to offer a non-credit courses to lower-level undergraduates that exposes them to faculty and graduate student research within the Department is a good one. Similarly, a two-level course credit system whereby undergraduates participate in research, and later conduct somewhat independent supervised research, is a sound proposal. However, it is unclear whether an honors program in psychology is firmly established and considered as part of the above proposal. This uncertainty notwithstanding, early promotion of an undergraduate honors program would be another way to get high-quality undergraduates involved in research.

**Goal C: Promoting faculty success.**
- While the external reviewers are supportive of differential teaching loads based upon research productivity, they do not support creating “teaching-only” instructor positions. The best teachers are those who infuse current research into their teaching; thus the best teachers may be active researchers. One can be an excellent researcher and an excellent teacher without being overwhelmed in either, as long as a mechanism exists that facilitates procedures such as course buy-outs, differential workload assignments for research activity, and buy-outs for funding proposal preparation. The reviewers believe that enactment of the proposal for a leaner graduate and undergraduate curriculum, as well as greater use of graduate students teaching undergraduate courses, will create room in the curriculum to allow teaching reductions for research-active faculty.

- Teaching credit—rather than course reductions—should be given to faculty involved in nontraditional teaching such as clinical practicum supervision or field placement supervision.

- The proposal to use surplus dollars from course buy-outs to provide release for grant writing is an excellent one. The Department also should consider a system whereby a certain percentage of the overhead from externally funded projects goes back to the Department (for such uses as that proposed above), and a certain percentage goes to the individual investigator as a means for providing incentive for obtaining extramural funding.

**Goal D: Faculty hiring.**
The external reviewers noted that it was difficult to get a clear sense of the Departmental vision and plan, especially in regard to projected hires. On the one hand, the self-study proposes a plan to hire new faculty who have bridge interests across program lines, but suggests, on the other hand, that there is some sense of turn-taking and program sensitivity in the determination of the hiring strategy. Because of this confusion, the external reviewers suggest that the Department
develop a written strategic plan. This plan would include a vision for the Department, a specific plan and prioritization for faculty hires, and a method for evaluating the successful implementation of the plan. The best way to proceed with these efforts would be to have a Departmental retreat with a hired facilitator experienced in the area of program development planning.

**Goal E: Expanded outreach to the community.**
Expanded visibility and outreach are realistic goals for the Psychological Services Center. The external reviewers were surprised that students are charged nothing for services at the PSC, and suggest charging a reduced fee for assessment and therapy services. This would bring some additional income into the clinic while still providing a service to the students.

**Goal F: Facilities.**
The provision of adequate ventilation and temperature control for research animals housed on the 5th floor is a critical need. The ventilation system must be repaired or replaced before the summer of 2002, or the animals must be housed elsewhere on a permanent basis.

**PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE FINDINGS**

Based upon a review of the self-study and external review documents, the PRC finds that there are several areas of notable Departmental strength and potential, as well as some areas in which the Department can improve. These are detailed below.

1. **Programmatic focus.** The Department offers six programmatic areas of study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels: behavioral neuroscience, cognitive psychology, clinical psychology, developmental psychology, industrial-organizational psychology, and quantitative psychology. There appears to be general agreement that the Industrial-Organizational and Clinical specializations are the strongest among these. The Behavioral Neuroscience program has the promise of developing into a first-rate program as well. The PRC finds that six specialty programs has spread Departmental resources too thinly and has created internal concerns about the distribution of resources across the areas. Further, the Department’s strong commitment to equity across programmatic areas may be detrimental to the development and maintenance of excellence in a more limited and manageable number of the areas. The Department proposes to expand the quantitative program area, but it is not clear what the rationale for this is, whether new curricular offerings will be necessitated by this expansion, whether there is a demand for this area of specialization, and whether students will actively be recruited for specialized study in this area. It is not clear from the self-study that quantitative methods is a separate area of study so much as it is a method of inquiry that cuts across the other programmatic areas. If the Department intends to pursue the development of this program as one of a small group of areas of programmatic strength, it should develop a rationale for the proposed expansion, and address the issues of demand, recruitment of students, whether new curricular
offerings will be necessitated, and the effect of the development of this programmatic area on other areas and on departmental resources.

The PRC believes that stature in an area is more easily lost than gained, and the Department should be mindful of this as it prioritizes its support of the various programs. This finding is made with the understanding that it is possible, even necessary, to separate planning for coverage of undergraduate curricular areas from planning for three to four focal areas as areas of distinction at the doctoral level. As the Department moves in the direction of increased specialization in doctoral training, it will become very difficult, if not impossible, to sustain competitive training programs in six or seven areas of specialized study.

2. Strategic plan. Many of the weaknesses identified by the external review team are the result of the lack of a shared vision of the Department’s future. This is at least partly the result of the Department’s commitment to maintaining a wide variety of programmatic areas, each of which has a somewhat different orientation regarding Departmental goals and priorities. Regardless of its cause(s), one consequence of the lack of a shared vision is the absence of a framework within which to make important decisions. This means that such important activities as faculty hires and graduate student recruitment are often made on an ad hoc basis. For example, turn-taking among the individual programmatic areas appears to be a guiding principle in faculty hiring, but this is a strategy that is not necessarily consistent with the desire to hire faculty who bridge areas of specialization.

3. Differential rewards. The research and publication record of the faculty is good on average, though unevenly distributed among the individual members of the Department. The number of published works has followed a generally upward trend in recent years, and faculty are publishing in good to top quality journals. Department faculty apply for and receive a moderate amount of funding for their research, but could improve on this record. The faculty do not seem to be of a single mind regarding the need and utility of external funding, suggesting the lack of a consistent philosophy regarding this issue. There is a need for a differential reward structure based on scholarly productivity. This reward structure should include a plan to maintain the productivity level of those with strong records and to enhance it among those with relatively weaker records.

Improvement in obtaining external funding is essential and should be a major goal. The Department must send a clear and consistent message as to the importance and utility of extramural funding, and should reward those who obtain grants more substantially than is presently the case. At the same time, it is important that the Department formally recognize that funding opportunities often are area-specific. As a result, faculty should be expected to explore funding opportunities to the extent appropriate to their areas of specialization. Similarly, it should be recognized that external funding may have different meanings in different programmatic areas (e.g., basic research vs. professional consultation). The PRC concurs with the external reviewers that the use of course buy-out funds

15
to provide release time for grant writing is an effective strategy to increase the
number of submitted proposals, as is the return of a percentage of the grant
overhead directly to the investigator. Finally, the Department should more
systematically exploit the value of IPRA and PSC in promoting research among
both faculty and students, as well as their value in attracting extramural funding
for both basic and applied research, including federal and state level funding.

4. Undergraduate curriculum. Undergraduate students rate the program highly, but
the number of majors the Department now serves is twice the size of that for
which the curriculum was originally designed. This has resulted in serious
bottlenecks at various junctures in the program. In addition, the lack of
prerequisites beyond the introductory level course has resulted in the necessity to
pitch many upper level courses at a lower than desired level. Further, the absence
of a “breadth requirement” means that many students are not exposed to the
various specialty areas of psychology. If the Department’s proposed study of
course enrollment data continues to provide evidence for the idea, the PRC
supports the Departmental and external reviewer recommendation to establish the
introductory level course as a true freshman course. In addition, we support the
proposal to create a number of sophomore-level courses that provide breadth
exposure. The PRC, however, agrees with the external reviewers that the plan to
offer specialization training at the undergraduate level is inconsistent with the
Department’s position that breadth training at the undergraduate level has become
essential because graduate training has become so specialized. In addition, the
creation of specialty tracks would likely produce new bottlenecks and necessitate
the teaching of more courses on a more frequent basis, thus increasing
instructional demands on the faculty. The dual goals of breadth and specialization
of training have the potential of exacerbating staffing and distribution of resources
problems.

5. Graduate curriculum. The graduate program is well regarded by both faculty and
students. However, the trend at the national level is toward greater specialization
in the training of graduate students. The PRC is persuaded that in order to remain
consistent with contemporary trends in the field of psychology and, consequently,
to produce competitive graduates, the Department should reduce the breadth
requirements and permit greater specialization.

6. Graduate stipends. The quality of the graduate students, although variable across
the programmatic areas, is strong. Nonetheless, the Department is interested in
increasing the quantity and quality of students applying and enrolling. The
Department’s plan to increase stipend levels and to guarantee summer funding for
top quality students is a good one and should be pursued. While the PRC agrees
that stipend levels are low and often non-competitive, this is true University-wide,
and it is unlikely that the University will be able to support across the board
increases. Consequently, the Department must be more creative and
entrepreneurial in this area if it wishes to provide higher stipends. In this regard,
existing stipends could be supplemented for selected students out of external grant
funds. Similarly, the Department could differentiate across programmatic areas, and among students within these areas, in regard to the level of support provided. In these and other efforts to increase the quality of the graduate student body, the Department should be careful to avoid reducing the total number of students in the programs.

The PRC agrees with the external reviewers that the Department should collect program attrition/completion and job placement data that can be shared with potential students, and regularly update the Departmental web page so that current faculty research interests and activities are available to prospective students. In addition, the use of recruitment weekends is an effective strategy and should be continued. In all of these efforts, the Department should concentrate on recruiting high quality students for the three to four programs identified as constituting the areas of strength.

7. **Assessment action.** Assessment of undergraduate student learning outcomes has been effective in identifying a possible problem with the timing of courses offered throughout the program, and with the assortment of courses offered during the final year of the program. The self-study speculates that students may believe that the courses they take during their last two years in the program are aimed primarily at psychology majors who plan to pursue graduate level study in psychology. If this is the case, and in light of Departmental data showing that the number of majors who plan to pursue graduate training in psychology decreases over the last two years students are in the program, then this dissatisfaction is understandable. To the extent that this interpretation is correct, it is likely that changes in the assortment of courses offered during the final year of the program, as well as in the timing of these courses and those offered at earlier points in the program, will have to be made. In addition, it may behoove the faculty to be cognizant of the reality that a significant number of their undergraduate majors have career and educational objectives that do not entail attending graduate school in psychology.

8. **Undergraduate research.** The self-study laments the absence of a “research in the air” environment among undergraduate majors. However, the plan to hire full-time instructors (see recommendation 9) —who have no research obligations— appears to be at odds with the goal of infusing the undergraduate program with the importance of research. As a mechanism by which to introduce research to majors and to involve them in the research process, the Department’s plan to offer a course wherein faculty and graduate students present their research is certainly workable. Similarly, the proposal to offer a two-tiered course wherein undergraduates first participate in a research project with a faculty member and subsequently conduct an independent research project under the supervision of that faculty member, also is an effective way to introduce undergraduates to actual research. And, as suggested by the external review team, the Department also could use the psychology honors program to involve high quality students in the research process. Alternatively, and perhaps to potentially greater effect than
the above strategies, the Department could work to enhance its existing efforts to integrate research into all of its undergraduate courses, as well as to involve undergraduate majors in faculty projects as research assistants. To the extent that these latter two strategies are successful, they may obviate the need for specialized research seminars, which necessarily reach a smaller number of students than does a plan that integrates research across the curriculum. Giving undergraduates the opportunity to participate in faculty projects as research assistants is also a low cost method of introducing them to the world of research. The Department already does this to some extent, of course, but it should consider even further development of this strategy, via such mechanisms as the creation of a “Supervised Research Experience” course as noted in the self-study.

9. Teaching by graduate students. The PRC finds that the plan to hire full-time instructors devoted to teaching to allow tenured and tenure-track faculty to concentrate on research does not advance the Department’s desire to increase undergraduate student’s involvement with research. The PRC agrees with the external reviewers that the ideal teaching environment consists of active researchers infusing knowledge and experience from their research into their teaching (see recommendation 8). Thus, the Department should encourage faculty to be both good teachers and good researchers. Furthermore, advanced graduate students could be given the opportunity to teach, which would enhance their own training and not segregate teaching and research in the undergraduate curriculum. In addition to aiding with instructional demands and reducing the faculty workload, this will give graduate students important teaching experience that will enhance their marketability. The necessity and extent of this teaching involvement, however, will vary by programmatic area. For example, Clinical and I/O students may not need or benefit from as much teaching experience as would students in other areas who are more likely to pursue academic careers. As a result, Departmental policies should take these realities in account when making assignments of graduate students as teaching and research assistants.

10. Clinical workloads. Clinical faculty involved in clinical supervision of graduate students currently do not have this supervision counted as part of their teaching load, nor do they receive release time for this supervision. The self-study proposes to offer limited and temporary course reductions, on a competitive basis, to Clinical faculty as compensation for this activity. It is not clear from the data presented in the self-study, however, that the Clinical supervision load is substantially greater than the out-of-classroom instructional load assumed by other faculty in their supervision of undergraduate and graduate readings, independent studies, internships, and individual and group research projects.

**Program Review Committee Recommendations**

Based on reviews of the self-study and external review documents, and consistent with the major findings that resulted from these reviews, the PRC makes the following
recommendations. For detail about the rationalization of the recommendation, see the finding with the corresponding number, just above.

1. **Programmatic focus.** The Department should prioritize its support of the several programmatic areas currently offered, with the understanding that three or four of these will become the core areas of Departmental emphasis and strength. The prioritization should be presented to the Dean of Arts & Sciences for his approval by October 30, 2002.
   
   a. One goal of the prioritization should be maintenance of the current standing of the Industrial-Organizational and Clinical programs, and the nurturing of the Behavioral Neuroscience program so that it too becomes an area of Departmental strength.
   
   b. Faculty should be encouraged to collaborate across areas with one another so that links can be forged in a concrete way. For example, the interest in Occupational Health Psychology among faculty in the Industrial-Organizational and Clinical programs offers an excellent opportunity for collaboration in undergraduate and graduate training, research, and extramural funding.
   
   c. The PRC believes the Department will not be well served by developing quantitative methods as a separate programmatic area.

2. **Strategic plan.** The Department should develop, by December 1, 2002, a specific and detailed strategic plan for the future of the Department, so that the underlying philosophy that guides faculty hires and graduate student recruitment, for example, is clear, consistent, and related to the achievement of major Department goals. The PRC believes such a plan should be consistent with the following principles:
   
   a. it is more realistic and practical to maintain three or four rather than six or seven areas of programmatic emphasis;
   
   b. while it is a laudable goal to recruit new faculty who bridge the smaller areas of substantive focus with the core areas of Departmental strength, the major goal of faculty hires must be to maintain and strengthen the three or four core areas of Departmental strength, and this often means eliminating candidates from consideration whose major contribution would be to the smaller areas;
   
   c. given the increasing specialization of the field, it is unrealistic to expect faculty (current and potential) to indicate both a primary area of concentration and a meaningful/substantial (in terms of research and teaching commitment) secondary area of concentration.

3. **Differential rewards.** The Department should implement a differential reward structure, and present the plan to the Dean of Arts & Sciences for his approval by the end of the fall semester, 2002. The plan should include:
   
   a. a differential teaching load policy (see also recommendation 9). Under such a plan, the reduced load (2-2 or 1-2) assumed by research-intensive faculty would be balanced by the increased load (3-2 or 3-3) assumed by
faculty who are not research-intensive and for whom teaching is a more central activity;
b. differential expectations for external funding based on the funding environment within which faculty in the different areas operate;
c. the use of course buy-out funds to provide release time for grant writing;
d. return of a percentage of the grant overhead directly to the investigator; and
e. rewards for participation in IPRA and PSC.

4. Undergraduate curriculum. The undergraduate curriculum should be revamped to more effectively serve the number of majors that now constitute the program, to remove major bottlenecks in the flow of students through the program, and to enhance breadth requirements.
   a. Change the number of PSYC 201 to PSYC 101 to establish it as an introductory course at the freshman level.
   b. Renumber existing courses to establish a number of sophomore-level courses that provide breadth exposure.
   c. The PRC believes the argument for breadth is more compelling than the argument for specialization at the undergraduate level.

5. Graduate curriculum. The Department should reduce the current breadth requirements in the graduate program and create more specialized curricula in the areas of graduate specialization. Each of the programmatic areas should design a curriculum appropriate for the training of its students.

6. Graduate stipends. By the end of the fall 2002 term, the Department should develop a plan, in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate College, for improving stipend awards to highly qualified graduate students. Recruitment efforts should be concentrated in the graduate programs represented by the three to four areas of strength identified in recommendation 1.

7. Assessment action. The Department should determine, via their well-conceived student learning assessment procedures, the cause of the decreasing relevance of undergraduate coursework reported by students as they progress through the program. The PRC congratulates the Department on its effective use of assessment, and encourages the Department to complete the assessment process by taking steps to correct the problem, as proposed in the self-study.

8. Undergraduate research. The PRC supports the Department’s plans to infuse research into the undergraduate experience. Which of the several means to pursue to accomplish this, as discussed in the Findings, is a matter for the Department to resolve.

9. Teaching by graduate students. The plan to hire two to three full-time instructors, as a mechanism to permit the creation of a differential teaching load system, makes an artificial distinction between “teachers” and “researchers,” and the plan
should be abandoned. Instead, the Department should implement policies that permit faculty to excel at both research and teaching. One mechanism to accomplish this would be to make increased use of advanced graduate students as teachers of their own undergraduate courses.

10. **Clinical workloads.** Rather than *ad hoc* and limited course reductions for their service, the PRC agrees with the external reviewers that Clinical faculty should have their clinical supervision counted as part of their teaching duties. However, before implementing such a policy, it is incumbent on the Department to establish that the Clinical loads are substantially greater than the out-of-class room instructional load assumed by non-Clinical faculty in their supervision of undergraduate and graduate readings, independent studies, internships, and individual and group research projects.

*The Department of Psychology should report annually to the Dean of Arts & Sciences, with a copy to the Provost, on the implementation of these recommendations.*