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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 25th, 2023

To: The Council Committee on Academic Mission (CCAM)
University of Regina

From: The Department of Psychology
University of Regina

Re: Written response to External Reviewers' Report for the 2018 Academic Unit Review

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Please consider the following our formal written response to the Council Committee on Academic Matters (CCAM) in regard to the External Reviewers' Report for the Academic Unit Review of the Psychology Department that took place in April, 2018. Three faculty members external to the Psychology Department (two external to this university) reviewed our Department. Our then Head, Dr. Richard MacLennan, met with CCAM on August 20th, 2018 to discuss the External Reviewers' Report and provided a preliminary response. Our subsequent Head, Dr. Laurie Sykes-Tottenham, also met with CCAM on January 19th, 2019, to provide an interim update.

The External Reviewers' Report shows that we are an accomplished Department, with strong graduate and undergraduate programs and exceptional research contributions. Despite these strengths, repeatedly throughout the report there are indications of our Department being under-resourced, with a clear message that the Review Team has grave concerns about the Department's sustainability if additional resources are not provided. We have been working hard to address the reviewers' recommendations, but support from the Faculty and University is needed in order to address many of the issues identified. We look forward to continuing to work with others to try to ensure the longevity of our Department in its current form to maintain these strengths, while working to improve it further.

On the pages that follow, you will find a summary of the unit review recommendations (with associated page numbers from the report) and our planned actions and/or current status of those actions. As requested, following this summary is a section providing report recommendations we do not agree with and the reasons we do not agree.

Unit Review Recommendation	Planned Actions and/or Current Status
Offer on a yearly basis practicum and intern placements for clinical students (p. 2); a more appropriate model of training for the use of the clinic would be one in which more junior students could be trained "in house" (p. 12); foster stronger collaborations with psychologists in the community (p. 13)	In 2021 we hired Dr. Y. Nicole Faller, a Training Clinic Director. Amongst other duties, Dr. Faller is responsible for: securing practicum and internship placements, liaising with other clinical settings in the community, generating referrals, and supervising practicum students in the Clinic.
Additional faculty member to teach graduate (and undergraduate) courses in neuropsychology (p. 2); there is a real need for a faculty member who has expertise in neuroscience (p.15)	We hired Dr. Austen Smith in 2019 as a term member, and in 2021 he was re-appointed as a tenure-track member. Dr. Smith teaches neuropsychology courses in our department.
Hire a Director of the Training Clinic (p. 2 & 12); the clinic is underutilized, in part, because there is a real need for a full-time Ph.D. Training Director (p. 12)	We hired Dr. Faller as a Training Clinic Director (see point above).
Faculty member to teach forensic courses (p. 2); a need for a permanent faculty member in forensic psychology (p. 8) or two (p. 15)	Luther College hired Dr. Kaila Bruer in 2019, and Dr. Sarah Zanette in 2021. Campion College also hired Dr. Susan Yamamoto in 2021. All three of these tenure-track faculty have expertise in forensic psychology.
Clerical support needed for Training Clinic (p.2)	There are ongoing discussions with the Faculty of Arts about whether and clerical support can be provided for the Training Clinic. Amidst current budget shortfalls, a plan has yet to be determined.
Vacant faculty positions (p. 3); make increased supervisors available for undergraduate students (p. 8); consider permanent instructor positions* (p. 9); "both the graduate program and undergraduate programs have increased in enrolment over time… the faculty complement has not…faculty should be increased within the department of psychology" (p. 16)	Since the unit review, across the U of R and the federated colleges, 4 tenure-track faculty have been hired. We have also hired Dr. Sarah Sangster and Dr. Natasha Gallant as term faculty (3 years for Dr. Sangster, and 2 for Dr. Gallant). Dr. Sangster was hired as a teaching-intensive faculty, so her course load is 6. These positions help us to offset the loss of faculty members in the classrooms as a result of teaching releases. All of these members regularly supervise honours students, and many of them supervise graduate students as well. Dr. Gallant has applied for a tenure-track CRC position, and we are very hopeful that she will be hired in that role in 2023.
Hire additional administrative staff (p.4)	There are now two full-time administrative staff since Catherine has returned from leave. Despite this, the workload for a department of this size is still significant. Our administrative staff have been working together with the faculty administrator and the Head to more efficiently process the workload.
Lab space for all faculty (p. 4)	Dr. Jennifer Gordon has since received new lab space, funded by a CFI associated with her CRC position.

	Members without their own dedicated lab space from the faculty include: Dr. Sarah Sangster, Dr. Austen Smith, Dr. Natasha Gallant, and Dr. Nick Carleton. Dr. Don Sharpe has been sharing space with Dr. Sangster, Dr. Laurie Sykes-Tottenham has been sharing space with Dr. Smith. Dr. Natasha Gallant is working with the faculty to develop lab space in the event that she is successful in obtaining the CRC. Dr. Carleton has temporary lab space that he has purchased from 2 Research Drive using grant contract funding. Most importantly, the Faculty of Arts is launching a strategic space plan, with the primary goal to ensure that researchers have adequate lab space. The Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies in Arts has been in close collegial communication with Psychology members about this plan.
Increase discretionary spending (p. 4)	The Faculty of Arts does not have a formal mechanism by which Departments can apply to have their discretionary budget increased. It does not seem likely that this will change anytime in the near future, with the current budget setbacks.
Perceived lack of alignment between the vision of the Department and that of current Dean of Faculty of Arts; perception that the activities valued by the Department are not valued by the Faculty, particularly research and graduate education (p. 5)	A new Dean of Arts – Dr. Shannon Dea – was hired in 2020. Discussions with the Dr. Dea on this topic have improved these perceptions. We are hopeful for continued improvement on this front under Dean Dea's guidance.
Approval of grants with teaching release; Policy to forbid teaching releases (p. 5)	No such policy exists in the Faculty of Arts but the Dean has indicated that a policy limiting the number of teaching releases may still be proposed, which we will work to address in the event that a motion for such a policy is brought-forward. The department will continue to work with the Faculty to ensure that any teaching releases do not hinder our ability to offer high quality programming at the graduate and undergraduate levels.
Formal program to mentor sessional faculty (p.5)	Sessional instructor syllabi are reviewed by the Department Head; mentoring is provided by faculty who teach in the same content-area (each sessional is assigned a faculty-mentor in their letter of offer); teaching evaluations are completed (by students for every offering, and by the Head as per the collective agreement and department policy); student evaluations are reviewed by the head (with follow-ups as required); and assistance with teaching development is provided by Centre for Teaching and Learning.
Perception that graduate teaching and supervision are neither recognized nor acknowledged in performance reviews and resource allocation, and that service to national organizations is similarly disregarded	Things have changed since Dean Dea has taken leadership of the Faculty of Arts. First, the course load across the faculty was lowered to 2/2 in order accommodate graduate supervision and research. It is also no longer the case that graduate teaching/supervision and service to national

(p. 5); there is no teaching credit for graduate student supervision and the Faculty of Arts, unfortunately, undervalues graduate teaching and instead prioritizes undergraduate education (p. 15); graduate supervision needs to be reinforced and validated (p. 16).	organizations are not valued in performance review; They are both factored into performance review, as well as in merit increment decisions.
Leave to travel is restricted to an absence from 3-hrs of class per semester maximum (p. 5)	Dean Dea has recently signaled a desire to revisit this policy.
Four classes per year is high relative to other psychology departments and should be taken into consideration when making teaching assignments and allocating resources (p. 6). One possible solution would be to allow faculty to self-select into research and teaching streams (p. 6).	Dean Dea has been open to discussion on this topic. However, with the current budget challenges demanding attention, there is likely no change on this issue in the foreseeable future.
Planning session to meet and talk about faculty members' goals for the future of the department (p. 6)	A Faculty Realignment Committee was stuck, and gathered information on potential options for moving out of Arts. After discussion, Science seemed like the only viable option in the event that we decide to move. However, we have since decided not to move out of Arts.
Academic advising for undergraduates beyond what is offered by Student Services (p. 7); better communication, such as a central website for undergraduates (p. 8)	We have a large Undergraduate and Honours Committee whose 7 members frequently provide advising to students regarding their programs, honours, grad school, and career options; in addition, many non-UHC members also frequently provide such advising to students. Every fall, two UHC members hold an information session that is widely advertised (including posters around the department, a posting on the dept's undergraduate website, announced in classes, posted on UR Course sites, conveyed to the PSA and then posted by them on their Facebook page, reminder emails, etc). During this session, information is given on our Honours program, on requirements for graduate school applications (including links for important external resources, such as the CPA graduate guide and the ETS website for GREs), and on a diverse number of career paths our graduates have taken. After each year's session, the updated slides are posted on the Dept's undergraduate website. Also posted on the Dept's undergraduate website is a complete description of our honours application and selection process (including info on what student should do in the years prior to applying, which includes talking to Dept members), our honours application form, honours requirements, and a current list of supervisors and positions available for the following year.

	Each year a UHC member also attends the PSA honours talk, to serve as a resource person during this session. Beyond this, many resources are available on our dept's graduate website that address application requirements, program requirements, FAQs, etc., and there is a large poster in the main psychology hallway that provides detailed information about the path to graduate school in psychology. Information on clinical and nonclinical career streams, educational requirements, and other career options, are also standard components of the first unit in both of our 2 required introductory courses.
Office hours bi-weekly or monthly for the Psychology Students Association (PSA). (p. 8)	The Undergraduate and Honours Committee (UHC) members are accessible to address all student questions and concerns and are flexible in providing meeting times to accommodate students' schedules.
Perhaps a section or unit somewhere in the undergraduate program, such as the introductory course, could include some content on acknowledging and introducing First Nations approaches to healing, and/or decolonizing the practices of psychology, and/or psychology within social justice frameworks, etc. Another suggestion is to develop a course that specifically addresses these issues, or to build in relevant content to existing courses. (p. 9-10)	The issue of Indigenization in the classroom has been a topic at several department meetings since the unit review. Members have shared resources with each other and provided tips about how to do this in particular classes. It is an ongoing issue that we are continuing to work on.
No course reduction for EAP chair (p. 11)	The Department is currently considering this matter to determine if a reduction is needed.
Better accessibility to clinic for mobility-challenged (p. 12)	Drs. Loutzenhiser and Klest have worked with Facilities Management (FM) to address the accessibility issues. FM has made structural changes the doors to the Clinic, to ensure they can be easily opened by people with disabilities, and have also restricted the use of the elevator that goes to the clinic to ensure that it is not taken out of service for other purposes during times when access to the clinic is required. We intend to monitor this issue on an ongoing basis. Dr. Loutzenhiser is also a member of the Bookstore Renovative Committee and has provided information about the need for accessibility throughout the renovation process that directly impacts the Clinic.
Provide formal adjunct appointments to supervisors in the community (whereby they would receive the status of being affiliated with the university and receive other benefits; e.g., library privileges); providing a listing of adjuncts (e.g., on the website) who can provide research and clinical training opportunities; regularly inviting adjunct	Many members of the community have applied for and received adjunct status; however, this designation is not the best fit for community supervisors who are not engaged in research. The 'professional associate' designation is most appropriate for clinical supervisors not engaged in research. We encourage and welcome applications from community partners who are not yet formally affiliated, but we are unable to bestow this status to those who don't apply.

faculty and community supervisors to participate in functions of students and faculty (p. 13)	We are in the process of trying to secure library access for all practicum supervisors in the community; the Arts Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies has been having discussions with the library to try to assist us with this initiative. We have two functions each year: the Fall Reception (formerly known as the Jillings ceremony) and the Honours Symposium. Adjunct members and community clinical supervisors have always been invited to the Fall Reception, and we are now ensuring that they are invited to the Honours Symposium as well.
Accessibility to mental health services limited for graduate students (p. 14)	It appears that there was a belief among the clinical psychology students that the Clinical Program would not allow them to take advantage of free services offered by the University of Regina Counselling Services. We have reiterated that they can indeed seek these services. The concern arose regarding seeking therapy at a place where practicum placements also occurred. Our Clinical Practicum Co-ordinator, Dr. Wright, discussed these issues with the PGSA and the Director of Counseling Services. A plan was made to have our clinical students seen by therapists who were unlikely to be their future supervisors, but she also suggested that the students consider multiple relationship issues and their levels of comfort seeking services there. The PGSA has been working to develop other alternatives for students seeking mental health counselling. As clinical faculty, we also provide information about mental health resources in our initial meeting with first year students, as well as in our classes and in our roles as student supervisors.
Funding for graduate students not guaranteed (p. 14)	The Department awards funding from GSBF by merit and need; although not guaranteed, in practice all students without funding of their own (e.g., Tri-Council awards) receive a minimum of ~$12,500 per year. The department and the Dean are also in discussions with the provincial government about a proposal to create new fully-funded spaces in the clinical MSc and PhD programs.
Clear guidelines for graduate students on tasks to complete degrees and completion deadlines (p. 16)	EAP program timetables for MA and PhD are posted on the dept's graduate website, showing milestones and recommended timelines for completion. Information for clinical graduate students is available in the Clinical Program Manual.

Report recommendation we don't agree with	**Reason we don't agree**
Faculty participation in some PSA meetings (p.8)	Each year the PSA is made aware of who the faculty-liaison is, and told that this individual is available to them to act as a resource and as the point-person for communication with the department. They are told to involve the liaison when scheduling their meetings and events if they would like him/her to attend. Despite this, there has been little to no engagement with the liaison over the past few years. As this is a Student Union organization, we cannot force them to involve us, as faculty members, if they choose not to do so.
Taking relevant statistics courses too late in their degree to be of use in interpreting research findings in their senior courses (p.8)	Our fourth-year stats class (required for honours students) has four prerequisites (PSYC 101, 102, 204, and 305—all of which are required courses for all majors) so it would be impractical to teach this class earlier in the program; similarly our 3rd year stats class has three prerequisites (PSYC 101, 102, and 204). Our 2nd year research methods course (204) provides students with information about methodologies and research design, including the theoretical underpinnings of common statistical analyses and designs. At the time of the unit review, we were in the process of a major course catalog revision in which PSYC 204 was added as a prereq for many 3rd year courses, particularly those that have a research component, and a note was added to the 204 description indicating "Psychology majors should take this course early in their programs, as it is relevant to all areas of psychology and is a prerequisite for many upper year courses." We do not want to add PSYC 204 as a prereq for the remaining 3rd year courses, as these are general interest courses that attract a large number of non-majors (who are unlikely to have taken 204) and are less research-focused.
A number of graduate students indicated our department is not receptive to constructive feedback. (p. 13) The Review Team recommends that the department establishes a Graduate Student Advisory Committee to serve as a liaison between students and faculty. This committee could be comprised of students elected by their peers and a faculty member serving as ex-offico (p. 14).	The Psychology Graduate Students Association (PGSA) is a committee that is comprised of students and has a faculty member liaison; this committee provides feedback to the Department and Clinical Committee as the feedback arises. Further, the Clinical Committee surveys students each year asking for feedback. The feedback from past students is not consistent with this feedback. Additionally, the readily available Clinical Program Manual—which all clinical students are expected to be familiar with—has specific procedures outlined for providing feedback. All feedback received is given due care and consideration, to determine if a change is needed or would be beneficial.
Adequate space should be provided to all graduate students in the department. (p. 16)	Without additional information, it is unclear why this concern was expressed, as many types of spaces are currently available to our graduate students. All graduate

	students work within faculty members' labs or shared labs when completing their research; many also have the privilege of using this space when completing their course-work and other academic activities. There is an office dedicated for teaching assistant use, with additional office space being available for booking on occasion. There is additional shared space provided by the Faculty of Arts for graduate student use through an application process, and the support staff in our Department assist students with room-bookings when needed for meetings and other academic activities.