State of the Department: Psychology at the University of Oregon, 2018

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Preamble
This is our department’s first State of the Department (SOD) report. It resulted from the confluence of two separate events. First, as department head I wanted to create a regular opportunity to take stock of our department activities. A concise annual report, directed mainly to the department, seemed like it might well serve that purpose. Second, Provost Banavar asked departments to present information about their scholarly productivity in the form of “performance metrics”. Given the large heterogeneity within our discipline, the idea to distill productivity information into a small set of decontextualized “metrics” was very unappealing to many of our faculty. Instead, a SOD report allows presenting essential metrics within their relevant context to the administration and the larger campus community. The Executive Summary and sections of Research and Scholarly Activity and Teaching provide details of the department’s activities. In addition, we list all departmental research “products” in the Appendix.

While this report was prepared with input from major committee chairs, time constraints did not allow its wider discussion within the department. Also, for key metrics, comparative data from preceding years is not yet available. Thus, this first SOD is a prototype that will evolve as we receive feedback from the department and the administration. Future SODs will also gain in value, once information about important trends can be incorporated.
Executive Summary: Research and Teaching

• Psychology’s research and scholarly activity has been very vigorous during the last year. With regard to the most important aspect, namely peer-reviewed journal articles, our department presented 222 publications (i.e., about 7 per faculty member) and many of these were in the best, discipline-specific and cross-disciplinary journals. Other indicators, such as grant funding (combined 30 active grants with a total volume of $26 million) and national-level awards to our faculty are consistent with a highly productive department. Aside from a strong emphasis on basic-science research, faculty in our department also often engage in research with direct, societal impact.

• In terms of teaching, Psychology continues to be one of the largest providers of student credit hours (SCH) on campus (Total=37,974). With just 5.7% of the tenured faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), we cover 16.7% of all of the student credit hours in CAS. After a major revision of our undergraduate curriculum towards a more rigorous and coherent major, we are now in a phase of monitoring the results and fine-tuning where necessary.

• In terms of graduate education, Psychology continues to attract highly talented graduate students and we can afford to be highly selective in our admissions (13 admissions out of 351 applicants). At the same time, the department should work on growing our class size by 2-3 students per year, which may require extra recruitment efforts and/or adjustments in our initial interview offers. Our clinical graduate program serves a particularly important function in terms of training research-oriented clinical psychologists and its involvement in the associated Psychology Clinic, which provides both training opportunities and serves the community’s mental health needs.
Research and Scholarly Activity

**Quantity:** The current record of research activity is based on 29 TTF faculty, including one research-active, retired faculty member, and it spans the time from January 2017 to May 2018. There is little disagreement in our field that peer-reviewed manuscripts are the most important marker of scientific productivity. There is probably less agreement about what constitutes a healthy number of publications across different sub-disciplines. For example, a single experiment may take months to complete for a systems neuroscientist or an infant developmental psychologist. Other researchers work with large datasets that, once established can be used for a multitude of research questions. Comparing publication counts across such different types of research activity is not very meaningful. Nevertheless, as long as an aggregate measure is applied across the entire department, the number of publications can serve as a rough indicator of overall productivity. With regard to this metric, the last year was wildly successful for our department. **Collectively, we published 222 peer-reviewed papers (7.7/faculty).**

It is noteworthy that a standout number of papers (56!) were (co-)authored by our clinical faculty member Nick Allen, who has had several large, longitudinal studies/clinical trials arrive at the publication stage. Whatever the context, this is an absolutely astounding achievement. However, even when subtracting Nick Allen’s contribution, our overall productivity still remains very high (166 publications, 5.9/faculty).

**Quality:** Given the heterogeneity in our discipline (research ranging from cell-level neuroscience to psychological effects of institutional practices), it is difficult to compare journal quality/impact across subfields. The relative size of subfields varies dramatically, leaving the journal impact factor as a highly misleading indicator of quality or "publication difficulty". Nevertheless, most of us can agree on a broad category of journals that publish the best empirical work within psychology’s sub-disciplines, or that publish more general, high-impact reviews or theoretical integrations. Typically, in a given year one would expect only a subset of our faculty to publish in these top journals. Without attempting to present an inclusive or exclusive tally, it can be stated unequivocally that our faculty are very active in this top category of journals. Within the last year, we had multiple publications in top disciplinary journals (e.g., Child Development, Developmental Psychology; Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition; Sleep; Social and Affective Neuroscience), top interdisciplinary journals (e.g., Journal of Neuroscience; Nature; Nature Neuroscience; Neuron; Psychological Science; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences) and general review journals (e.g., American Psychologist, Current Directions in Psychological Science, Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews, Perspectives on Psychological Science, Trends in Cognitive Sciences).

**Awards:** Collectively, our faculty received six different university-level and nine different national-level rewards and recognitions.

**Funding:** Our faculty’s scholarly success translates also into very high levels of external funding. Psychology faculty had 30 active grants during the preceding year, with a total volume of almost $26 million (not counting grants by postdocs or graduate students). Of these, 11 grants were newly acquired since January 2017.

**Societal impact:** Our department has a long tradition of producing theoretically groundbreaking, basic research, where societal impact is not on the immediate horizon. However, several of our faculty also produce research that either has direct translational outcomes, or that feeds into consulting or public policy recommendations. I highlight a few examples here:

- Nick Allen tries to utilize mobile and wearable devices to detect and mental health issues.
- Research from Elliot Berkman focuses on developing effective interventions to curtail unhealthy behavior (e.g., smoking, uncontrolled eating).
- Phil Fisher’s research leads to widely used interventions to help families with foster children. He also engages in public policy consulting through the Harvard Center on the Developing Child.
- Jennifer Freyd’s research emphasis on interpersonal and "institutional betrayal" trauma directly feeds into consulting and public/institutional policy development (including on our campus).
- Robert Mauro’s work results in guidelines for improving cockpit safety.
- Jeff Measelle’s “global-health” related research focuses on assessing and counteracting the effects of malnourishment on the cognitive development of children in East Asia.
- Maureen Zalewski develops new treatment for individuals with borderline personality disorder, a service that both directly benefits the Eugene community and that will have larger-scale implications for clinical practice.
Teaching

Undergraduate instruction is overseen by the department’s Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC; Chair: Holly Arrow). Psychology continues to be one of the largest contributors to undergraduate education on campus (see below figure). With only 5.7% of the tenured faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), we cover 16.7% of all of the student credit hours in CAS. An important aspect of our teaching contribution is that compared with other Psychology departments across the country, a large part of teaching is covered through tenure-track faculty. For example, we pride ourselves in having the majority of our very large, introductory classes (400+ students) taught by TTF.

In the preceding academic year (2016/17), we had 1387 majors while providing a substantial amount of general-education instruction to non-majors. The minor fluctuations over the last few years largely reflect campus wide enrollment trends.

In 2015, we enacted a reform of our curriculum with the joint goals of increasing rigor in our 400-level classes, streamlining the course flow for students, and decreasing 400-level class sizes. At the same time, we added 300-level courses that both serve as “feeder courses” into the various sub-disciplines of our major and fulfill general education requirements for non-majors. The modest increase of non-major SCHs from 37% before 2015 to 39% in 2016/2017 is consistent with these changes.

The new curriculum, in general, is working well, but some issues have arisen with the new version of the Research Methods course (PSY 303: Topics)—one of the “gatekeepers” into our higher-level courses. In particular, the workload for Graduate Employee (GE) instructors seems to be excessive, making it increasingly difficult to recruit graduate students to teach the course. UEC chair Holly Arrow is currently considering some redesign of the course, better support for the GErs, and closer coordination and supervision of GE instructors. Another major goal of the UEC for the next year is to tackle grading issues. Specifically, this involves examining data on grading practices for the past four years and drafting guidelines that will help reduce grade inflation and/or grading inconsistency across instructors.

Graduate Education

Graduate education is addressed through two department committees, the Graduate Admissions Committee (GAC, chair: Mike Wehr) and the Graduate Education Committee (chair: Paul Dassonville). Our current total number of graduate students is 86. In terms of admissions, this year, we successfully interviewed and recruited an excellent incoming class of 13 first-year Ph.D. students. This is consistent with our average of the last 5 years (13.6), but is probably 2-4 fewer students than we are able to absorb within our program. Consistent with the last few years, we had to make roughly twice as many offers (28). This is higher than in years 2010-2015, where the ratio between offers and recruited students was approximately 3 to 2. It is also noteworthy that the total number of applications has been declining from its peak years around 2012-16 (>500) down to 452 in 2017/18 to 351 this year—which is similar to the number of applications before the 2008 depression started to have its effect. Thus, it is likely that the overall reduction in applications reflects better non-academic job opportunities and greater competition between graduate programs for remaining, talented students. As a department, we may need to consider ways of more actively recruiting talented students into our program, as well as carefully increasing the number of initial offers while retaining our high standards.

In terms of the graduate curriculum, the GEC focused much of its effort on a revision of our Supporting Area Project (SAP). The purpose of the SAP is to ensure an appropriate level of breadth in our Ph.D. training by requiring students to complete a project outside of their main area of interest. In recent years, though, the advent of new methodologies in psychological sciences has forced researchers to become adept in the use of multiple methodologies within their own area of interest. The revised SAP better prepares our students for this new reality and encourages them to take on projects that allow them to learn and use a methodology that is not routine within their advisor’s lab. Other GEC priorities in the past
year have focused on enhancing our training of teaching skills, and a revision of our curriculum of statistical training. In the upcoming year, the GEC will undertake a revision of our learning outcome assessment methods, as part of the development of our annual Assessment of Student Learning. In addition, to better prepare the subset of students who will obtain nonacademic jobs upon graduation, the GEC will focus on an enhancement of the professional development opportunities we offer our students.

Clinical Graduate Program and Psychology Clinic

The Clinical Graduate Program (Director of Clinical Training: Nick Allen) is composed of seven core tenure-stream individuals and one clinical associate professor. The program is highly ranked within in national surveys. For example, the US News and World Report survey of Best Graduate Clinical Psychology Programs ranked the University of Oregon 25th in the country (among 224 programs). Currently, the UO clinical graduate program is also the only, not-for-profit, research-based program that trains clinical psychologists in Oregon; there is only one other, for-profit program.

Important developments over the last year include preparing for the renewal of our APA accreditation (self-study report submitted in May, site visit in the fall), and our efforts to stabilize the faculty available to meet our teaching and training needs. Although the current faculty is sufficient to cover the teaching, training and advising needs of our program, a challenge we have faced in recent years is that many of the core clinical faculty have been "bought" out of teaching or training roles by grant funding and administrative service. In order to address this, we are currently in the process of hiring a new non-tenure track clinical assistant professor and will launch a search for a tenure-track faculty member in the fall (the latter being an early replacement for Professor Hall, who retires in 2020). With these new positions, we believe we will be readily able to meet the needs of the program and provide stability through various expected (an unexpected) transitions.

The operations of the Psychology Clinic (Director: Crystal Dehle) are intertwined with the clinical graduate program. The clinic's primary mission is to provide high-quality training and supervision in evidence-based interventions for students in the clinical psychology doctoral program. In addition, the mission includes efforts to support and facilitate student and faculty research on clinically relevant topics, and to provide high quality, low-cost evidence-based services to the local community. The Clinic is one of a few local options for evidence-based treatments delivered with good fidelity to the original treatment protocol. Advanced doctoral graduate students provide services under the supervision of licensed Clinical Psychologists. An income-based sliding fee scale determines client fees, which range from $10-50 per evaluation or treatment session.

For the most recent academic year of available summary data on clinic services (i.e., 2016/17), two licensed supervisors provided training for 11 practicum students who provided 35 comprehensive diagnostic assessments for new clients, and 548 hours of psychotherapy for new and continuing clients. The client base for the 2016/17 year reflects an even split between UO students and local community members from the Eugene/Springfield area.

Diversity/Inclusion

For several years now, the Committee for an Inclusive Community (CIC, Chair: Lou Moses) has been working on promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity in our department, and on integrating these values in our research, teaching, and mentoring. The CIC has seen remarkable growth over the past year, expanding its scope and activities.

A major goal this year has been to strengthen the department's sense of community. For example, the CIC posts a regular bulletin highlighting community and diversity related events, has established a dedicated departmental slack channel for community activities, and has hosted a range of other social activities and events.

A related goal has been to help department members develop skills and awareness with respect to becoming more effective allies to those from underrepresented/marginalized groups. CIC members have attended trainings on implicit bias or contracted with Rehearsals for Life (RfL) to provide participatory workshops for graduate students and for faculty. RfL is a theater troupe that uses interactive techniques geared toward empowering individuals to step in to defuse disrespectful situations.
With financial support from the Underrepresented Minor Recruitment Fund, the CIC is providing funding opportunities to individuals who wish to attend workshops or conferences that have a diversity/inclusivity theme. The expectation is that those taking advantage of such opportunities will bring back what they have learned for the benefit of the whole community.

The CIC conducts an annual survey that is distributed to graduate students, faculty, and staff to assess the department climate. Results are presented to the department through the CIC newsletter.

The CIC has also been active external to the department. It provides input to the university’s Diversity Action Plans and attended workshops on diversity plan issues run by the Division of Equity and Inclusion, and by the College of Arts and Sciences. It also recently joined with representatives of diversity committees in other natural science departments in establishing regular meetings with the aim of sharing ideas and joining forces on common diversity goals.

One of the plans for the near future is to roll out our first ever survey of department members’ experiences related to gender bias and sexual harassment. The aim is to use the findings in proposing policies and practices in our department that will promote a healthy, positive environment for all genders. In the longer term, the CIC hopes to increase the presence of underrepresented minority groups in our ranks. Looking further ahead, and more ambitiously, the CIC considers hosting a visiting weekend for talented underrepresented minority students who are planning graduate study in psychology.

In terms of faculty recruiting efforts, our department has been very mindful of campus-wide diversity goals. In recent years, our department has made an over-proportional share of offers to female and/or minority applicants (which were not always successful). This year we have succeeded in hiring three female TTF (one of them Hispanic). Two of these hires were only possible because we received generous help from CAS, VPRI, DEI, and OPAA with associated partner hires.

**Psychology Outreach and Development**

The department's outreach/development is handled by Elliot Berkman with the help of one graduate student. The charge of this service position is to increase the visibility of the department and translating its mission to the local, state, national, and international communities of laypeople, stakeholders, and donors. This goal is accomplished by (a) communicating our scholarship clearly and regularly through our annual newsletter, our department website, and several social media channels and (b) interacting with donors and liaising with CAS and UO Development to foster donor relations. In the preceding year, the social media presence was substantially increased and the “news” feature on the website was enhanced. The website is updated at least once per week and social media news is added on a daily basis. This year also saw the release of our most substantial newsletter to date with features on new faculty, student awards, our efforts around diversity and inclusivity, and alumni updates among other topics. Elliot Berkman also worked with the new CAS Development officer to get her up to speed on our department’s scholarship and secure a gift for graduate student training. The plan for the next year is to continue to accelerate our online and social media presence and explore new options to connect with alumni in addition to or instead of the newsletter.

**New Centers.** An important new development in our department is the addition of two new research centers, the Center for Digital Mental Health (Director: Nick Allen), and the Center for Translational Neuroscience (Director: Phil Fisher). Each of these centers channels research, development, training, and outreach activity focused on a particular scientific and real-world problem.

The Center for Digital Mental Health (CDMH; https://www.c4dmh.net/) supports research, and builds digital tools, to enhance mental health - especially amongst underserved groups and young people. A particular focus is on using mobile and wearable devices, and social media, to unobtrusively track and analyze behavior. The goal is to use these data to detect mental health needs and provide adaptive, personalized interventions exactly when users need them. The CDMH was newly created this year.

The Center for Translational Neuroscience (CTN; http://ctn.uoregon.edu/) translates knowledge from basic neuroscience and applies it to improve well-being, promote resilience, and mitigate the effects of early adverse experiences. Center researchers employ successive iterations of neuroscience research, theory building, and practice to drive the scientific knowledge base forward and promote evidence-based
policy. The CTN has been operating for several years as a unit within the Prevention Science Institute, but is in the process of moving into the Department of Psychology.

Psychology has cooperative arrangements about finances and staffing with both centers. For example, indirect cost returns from grants are arranged according to grant-related staff support. Such arrangements are in the interest of both the department and the centers as they reduce the potential for unhealthy competition for grants between units.

**New Faculty.** Despite Psychology’s excellent research metrics as well as its strong contribution to undergraduate teaching and graduate education, it has seen only minimal growth of faculty lines in the last 10 years. Since the year data are readily available (1999), Psychology has grown by 3% in terms of faculty lines, compared to 26% for CAS overall, 30% for CAS Natural Sciences, and 30% for all larger departments (>20 faculty) within CAS. This year, we were able to fill three open positions, and through partner-hire arrangements, we added two additional faculty lines (constituting a net increase of about 7%). This growth in TTF lines provides welcome relief to our strained teaching operations. However, relative to most other departments, we continue to lag behind. In the years to come, it will be an important mission for the department leadership to keep reminding the administration that with our outsized contribution to research and teaching, dollars spent on new Psychology faculty are dollars well spent.
Peer-reviewed Publications  
(Jan. 2017-May 2018)


46. Delker, B.C., Smith, C.P., Rosenthal, M., Bernstein, R., & Freyd, J.J. (in press). When home is where the harm is: Family betrayal and posttraumatic outcomes in young adulthood. Journal of Aggression, Malpractice, & Trauma.


http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000186

DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2018.1441353


Emotion Understanding Predicting Adjustment in Preschool Children. Social Development.


2018 PSY Annual Report: Appendix 11


Chapters and Books  
(Jan. 2017-May 2018)


8. Blind to Betrayal published in Turkish (publisher: Kuraldisi), 2018 (J.J. Freyd & P.J. Birrell)


Awards and Recognitions
(Jan. 2017-May 2018)

University Awards

2017 Paul Dassonville: Rippey Innovative Teaching Award (w/ Charlotte Vaughn, Linguistics), College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oregon; Title: Speak Your Mind First-Year Interest Group.

2017 Caitlin Fausey: Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching, University of Oregon (https://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/recipient-profiles-dta)

2017 Jennifer Freyd: The Wayne T. Westling Award for University Leadership and Service, University of Oregon

2017 Gordon Hall: Outstanding Faculty Member Leader, Asian Desi Pacific Islander Strategy Group, University of Oregon

2017 Jennifer Pfeifer: Fund for Faculty Excellence Award, University of Oregon

2018 Sara Hodges: Marjorie Taylor Art of Teaching Award, Department of Psychology, University of Oregon

National Awards

2016-2017 Dare Baldwin: Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University

2018-2019 Jennifer Freyd: Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University

2017 Maureen Zalewski: Association for Psychological Science, Rising Star

2017 Mike Posner: Honorary Degree Doctor of Laws Dalhousie University, Halifax NS Canada, October

2017 Elliot Berkman: Social Personality and Health Network Early Career Award

2017-2018 Rob Chavez: Social & Affective Neuroscience Society – Poster Award

2017-2018 Don Tucker: Pennsylvania State University Distinguished Alumnus

2018 Mike Posner: Lifetime Achievement Award Division 3 APA

2018 Elliot Berkman: APS Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Contributions