State of the Department: Psychology at the University of Oregon, 2019

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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 218 publications (i.e., about 6.4 per faculty member) and many of these were in the best, discipline-specific and cross-disciplinary journals. Other indicators, such as grant funding (combined 29 active grants with a total volume of $29 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 and by all metrics, most efficient providers of student credit hours on campus.

- In terms of graduate education, Psychology continues to attract highly talented graduate students and we can afford to be highly selective in our admissions (14 admissions out of 438 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 34 TTF faculty. The reporting period spans the time from January 2018 to May 2019. 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 data sets 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 used as an aggregate measure 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 very successful for our department. Collectively, we published 218 peer-reviewed papers (6.4/faculty, 2018: 7.4/faculty).

**Quality:** Given the heterogeneity in our discipline (ranging from cell-level neuroscience research to research on 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., Annual Reviews in Psychology, Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, Journal of Neuroscience, Nature; Neuron, Psychological Science, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences) and general review journals (e.g., American Psychologist, Current Directions in Psychological Science, Perspectives on Psychological Science, Psychological Bulletin).

**Intellectual outreach:** Last year, Psychology faculty have been featured in numerous press articles (e.g., Washington Post, NPR, or VOX), blogposts, or podcasts. Moreover, our faculty have also directly produced content in non-academic media outlets. Collectively, there were six articles in publications such as the Conversation (two of which were re-published in the LA Times and the Washington Post). In addition, two of our faculty have regular blogs that are widely read (Hall and Srivastava) and one (Srivastava) has a regular podcast.

**Awards:** Collectively, our faculty received 14 different university-level and 6 different national-level rewards and recognitions.

**Funding:** Our faculty’s scholarly success translates also into very high levels of external funding. Psychology faculty had 29 active grants during the preceding year, with a total volume of about $29 million (not counting grants by postdocs or graduate students). Of these, 7 grants were newly acquired since January 2018. During the reporting period, Psychology faculty submitted a total of 55 grants.

**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 can only present a few examples here:

- Some of Elliot Berkman’s research 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 and he is engaged 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).
- Jeff Measelle’s “global-health” related research is focused on assessing and counteracting the effects of malnourishment on the cognitive development of children in East Asia.

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1 This includes one, research-active, retired faculty member (Posner), and one faculty member associated with the department, but who receives his salary through his own company (Slovic).
• Robert Mauro’s work results in guidelines for improving cockpit safety.
• 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 Figure). In the preceding academic year (2018-19), we had 1377 majors (1254 in 2017/18, and 1387 in 2016/17)—with that we are by far the top UG major on campus (next is Human Phys with 997 majors). In terms of total number of credit hours taught (about 33k), we rank at number 4 of the 40 CAS departments. Importantly, we provide these credit hours with fewer TTF and NTTF faculty than most other departments. For example, in terms of credit hours per academic year FTE, we are with 1025 for TTF and 2236 for NTTF considerably more “efficient” that CAS overall (TTF: 616 and 1082). Also, while CAS “produces” overall 23 majors per TTF academic year, for Psychology this number is 53. 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.

For the UEC, a major focus during AY 2018-19 was on improving the 301-303 Foundations sequence, completing new guidelines for grading, and changing the incentive process for recruiting graduating seniors to compete the exit survey. UEC members are also in the process of submitting four courses for the new core education requirements, and will also soon submit two long-standing courses for permanent status, Evolutionary Psychology and Global Child Health. The issues with our foundational, stats/methods sequence had been mentioned in the previous SOD report and have received quite a bit of attention by the UEC since. Specifically, changes have been implemented to both supervision/staffing and course content for the PSY303. The staffing change is that each term a TTF or NTTF teaches two sections and also serves as the coordinator/supervisor for the GE instructors of the other sections and the GE graders, who are assigned to 303 as a whole (rather than to individual sections). Changes in course content have streamlined assignments and redesigned rubrics to make grading easier and more consistent. The changes in staffing and course materials seem to be alleviating the problem of excessive workload for the GE instructors, and they seem to appreciate the weekly coordinating meetings and support. The UEC has also supported a plan put forth by several faculty teaching the PSY302 Statistical Methods course to transition away from SPSS (a proprietary software that is expensive for the department and not generally accessible to students outside of campus labs) to Jamovi, a free, open-source statistical package that is based on R but is menu driven and hence more user-friendly for new users such as our undergraduates.
Course materials such as homework sets will be developed over the summer by GEs under the supervision of two of our TTF. PSY301, Scientific Thinking, which is open to non-majors, is undergoing some reconfiguration to lessen what has been an excessive grading load for GEs and faculty teaching the course.
**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 77, down from 86 last year due to several students successfully completing the program. We recruited 15 new students this year, consistent with our average of the last 5 years (13.6), but is probably 2-4 fewer students than we would be able to absorb. The total number of applications we received has bounced back to 438 this year (from 351 last year), indicating strong interest in our program. Notably, we were aiming to recruit 19 students, (more than in the past few years), due to demand fed in part by a number of new faculty hires. One challenge we face in recruiting larger incoming classes is the number of candidates that we invite to interview in January (68 this year), which is strongly constrained by our capacity to interview and house candidates. We recently convened a graduate admissions task force to assess our current practices and discuss potential strategies to optimize our admissions process.

The Graduate Education Committee focused much of its effort on the development of plans for an annual Assessment of Graduate Student Learning. This was accomplished by distilling the requirements of our graduate programs, as spelled out in the UO Psychology Graduate Handbook, into a concise listing of Graduate Learning Outcomes and a Graduate Assessment Plan for our Masters and non-clinical Ph.D. students (the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Plan for clinical Ph.D. students were already in existence, as part of its APA accreditation). In the upcoming year, a considerable effort of the GEC should be aimed at what are probably the top two factors of graduate student dissatisfaction within the program (and probable causes of recent difficulties in recruiting prospective students), stipend levels and teaching loads. A step toward alleviating some of this dissatisfaction was taken this past year, as we began to provide students with 1) a term off of teaching in their final year in the program, with support provided through a departmentally-funded Research GE, and 2) a First Year Merit Award during their first summer in the program, to offset the need to teach. Going forward, a number of other changes should be explored: 1) increase stipends; 2) expand the Merit Awards into the students’ second summer of the program (or their final summer, when they might need the extra time to focus on their dissertation); 3) increase the FTE for summer teaching assignments so that they match the FTE for GE assignments during the academic year; and 4) increase the use of departmentally-funded Research GEs to provide additional breaks from teaching. Current efforts to revamp and update our graduate statistics course sequence should continue, and departmental core courses would benefit from a detailing of departmental expectations and best practices associated with the teaching of these courses.

**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 two non-tenure track clinical professors. The program is highly ranked within in national surveys, and for many years the UO clinical graduate program was the only, not-for-profit, research-based program that trained clinical psychologists in Oregon. However, the Oregon Health and Science University in Portland had their first intake into their new clinical psychology program over the last year. There is also one other, for-profit, program at Pacific University based in Hillsboro Oregon. Undoubtedly the most important development this year was the renewal of our APA accreditation. This was a significant undertaking that included the preparation of an extensive “self-study” document, followed by a site visit in the fall of 2018 during which 3 external evaluators reviewed our program via inspecting our facilities, materials, and procedures, and conducting interviews with faculty, students, and University leadership. This exhaustive process resulted in a renewal of our accreditation for a maximum period of 10 years, which was very gratifying, and represents a significant endorsement of the quality of our program.

Our ongoing efforts to stabilize the faculty available to meet our teaching and training needs have been significantly enhanced by the appointment of Dr. Ruth Ellingsen to the position of Clinical Assistant Professor and Associate Clinic Director. Dr. Ellingsen comes to us from UCLA and has significant expertise in clinical teaching and training, especially as it relates to intervention and assessment of child and adolescent populations. We also conducted an extensive search for a new tenure track faculty member in clinical psychology whose work emphasizes diversity and inclusivity. Although we interviewed a number of excellent candidates, the search committee and the department made the difficult decision to
not make an offer on this round. This new appointment represents a very important step in an ongoing process of sustaining and expanding our capacity to provide excellent teaching, training and mentorship that will equip our students to serve diverse populations. This is especially true given the impending retirement of Gordon Hall, and has been a leader in these efforts (within our department, the University, and the psychological profession more broadly) over many years. We plan to conduct a new search for this position in the coming year. Another development relevant to our capacity for training students to serve diverse populations is that we are currently searching for a new sessional clinical supervisor who can provide training in the delivery of psychological services in Spanish language.

Other significant developments in the program include: a) the establishment of an annual "Clinical Town Hall" where students can raise issues directly with the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) and the Associate DCT, b) the appointment of an advanced graduate student to a GE position focused on managing external practica (including the maintenance of an external practica website, advising students on opportunities, and managing relationships with external practica supervisors), b) the establishment of a Faculty Practice Plan to allow qualified faculty to conduct a limited amount of private practice, and c) changes to the requirement for paying fees while on internship year that will result in a majority of students no longer needing to pay fees while doing the required off campus training year.

The operations of the UO Psychology Clinic (Director: Crystal Dehle, Associate Clinical Professor) 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 protocols. 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., 2017/18), three licensed supervisors provided training for 13 practicum students who provided 33 comprehensive diagnostic assessments for new clients, and over 600 hours of adult, individual psychotherapy. The client base for the 2017/18 year reflects nearly an even split between UO students and local community members from the Eugene/Springfield area. We serve a diverse population of clients. For the 2017/18 year, approximately 35% of our clients identify as racial/ethnic minorities, and 20% identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Our clients ranged in age from 18 to 80, with around 2/3 identifying as female and 1/3 identifying as male.

**Diversity/Inclusion**

For several years now, the Committee for an Inclusive Community (CIC, current chair: Brice Kuhl) has been working on promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity in our department, and on integrating these values in our research, teaching, and mentoring. A major goal of the CIC in the past couple of years has been to strengthen the department’s sense of community. The CIC regularly highlights 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. These activities have ranged from happy hours to a viewing party for an Implicit Bias virtual conference. 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. This year, the CIC again contracted with Rehearsals for Life (RfL) to provide a participatory workshop for graduate students. RfL is a theater troupe that uses interactive techniques geared toward empowering individuals to step in to defuse disrespectful situations. A similar workshop for faculty was intended, but did not get scheduled due to crowding in RfL’s calendar. One of the most exciting developments for the CIC this past year has been that, with financial support from the Underrepresented Minor Recruitment Fund, the CIC has provided funding to several individuals (7 so far) to attend workshops or conferences that have a diversity/inclusivity theme. As a component of these funding awards, students have agreed to share what they have learned with the rest of the department via entries in the CIC Newsletter and/or brownbag presentations.

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. This year,
the survey expanded to include questions about 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.

The CIC has also been active external to the department, providing input to the university’s Diversity Action Plans. The CIC chair also regularly attends workshops on diversity plan issues run by the Division of Equity and Inclusion and by the College of Arts and Sciences and is also part of the Natural Sciences Diversity Leadership Committee.

In the coming year, the CIC will focus on several priorities including the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority groups in our ranks and continuing to improve department climate via targeted training and conversations (e.g., RfL). We will continue to fund travel awards for students to attend diversity-related conferences or training programs. One hope is that this will expand to include targeted recruitment efforts (e.g., at undergraduate conferences geared toward underrepresented groups). We are also planning to introduce a new talk series in which faculty members (internal and external) from underrepresented backgrounds are given the opportunity to discuss their career trajectories, challenges, and strategies for success. Finally, it is our hope to expand CIC membership to include additional members next year (both faculty and graduate students) to help improve the effectiveness of our efforts. Beyond the activities of the CIC, the department as a whole has grappled with issues of pay inequality among our full professors, which seems to be at least in part gender-related. Given that retention negotiations are a major driver of salary differences we are currently implementing steps towards greater transparency and clear processes around retention events.

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. This year, we continued to bolster our presence on social media and maintain a lively “news” feature on the website. We have more than 560 followers on our twitter account, @UO_Psych, and more than 730 on our Facebook page. We updated the website on average once every two weeks on the website. This year also saw a change in the newsletter from once to twice annually, once in the winter and once in the fall, 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, including our first-ever graduate alumni reunion to coincide with homecoming in October 2019.

New Developments

New Centers. Last year’s report covered the successful launch of two new centers, the Center for Digital Mental Health (CDMH, https://www.c4dmh.net/), directed by Nick Allen, and the Center for Translational Neuroscience (CTN; http://ctn.uoregon.edu/), directed by Phil Fisher. Since then, a third center joined the Department of Psychology. The Center for Brain Injury, Research, and Training (CBIRT, https://cbirt.org/), is directed by Dr. Ann Glang, and conducts research and training to improve the lives of children and adults with traumatic brain injury (TBI). CBIRT’s research focuses on developing interventions to improve outcomes related to education, employability, and quality of life. Its training activities promote the use of best practices among educators and other professionals who serve individuals with TBI. CBIRT received both federal and state funding for its research and services. CBIRT will provide an additional opportunity for Psychology students and faculty to become involved in translational research and outreach/policy activities.

New Faculty. Last year’s report lamented the fact that Psychology’s growth in TTF faculty over the last decade has not kept up with that in other departments, despite our excellent research metrics as well as strong contributions to both undergraduate teaching and graduate education. This year, our situation has
markedly improved. With three, regular “replacement” searches, we were able to fill 5 positions (due to two partner-hire situations). In addition, we have been granted a new data science, TTF line that we will try to fill next year. The total growth by three new lines is a very welcome development for our department.

**New Task Forces.** To tackle some of our most important challenges, the department has decided to implement, flexible task force groups that develop strategies for specific problems. This includes a working group on *mentoring*, on *pay equity*, on *new masters programs*, and on *graduate recruitment*. 
Peer-reviewed Publications  
(Jan. 2018-May 2019)


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Awards and Recognitions
(Jan. 2018-May 2019)

University Awards

2018  Elliot Berkman, Excellence Award for Outstanding Mentorship in Graduate Studies, University of Oregon.
2018  Elliot Berkman, Fund for Faculty Excellence Award, University of Oregon.
2018  Caitlin Fausey, Faculty Research Mentor Award, University of Oregon.
2018  Dare Baldwin, Faculty Research Award, Office of the VPRI, University of Oregon.
2019  Jordan Pennefather, Tykeson Award for Undergraduate Teaching, University of Oregon.
2018  Sarah Hodges, Marjorie Taylor Art of Teaching Award, Department of Psychology, University of Oregon.
2019  Dare Baldwin, Faculty Development Award for new Faculty in Residence, Clark Honors College, University of Oregon.
2019  Jennifer Ablow, Incubating Interdisciplinary Initiatives (I3) Award, University of Oregon.
2019  Margaret Sereno, Faculty Research Award, University of Oregon.
2019  Maureen Zalewski Regnier, Faculty Research Award, University of Oregon.
2018-2019 Jennifer Freyd, Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University
2019  Christina Karns, Incubating Interdisciplinary Initiatives (I3) Award, University of Oregon.
2018  Ulrich Mayr, Fund for Faculty Excellence Award, University of Oregon.

National Awards

2018  Don Tucker, First Fellow elected to the National Academy of Inventors from the University of Oregon.
2018  Elliot Berkman, Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Contributions, Association for Psychological Science.
2018  Jennifer Freyd, Award for Media Contributions to the Field of Trauma Psychology, Division 56, American Psychological Association.
2018  Michael Posner, Life Time Achievement Award Division 3, American Psychological Association.
2019  Ulrich Mayr was adopted as Fellow into the American Psychological Association
2019  Phil Fisher was adopted as Fellow into the American Psychological Association