January 5, 2018

Members of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, AYSPS External Review Team

Dear Review Team Members:

Thank you very much for agreeing to serve as reviewers for the Department’s Academic Program Review. We sincerely appreciate your willingness to participate in this process which seeks to help us make important strategic decisions on behalf of the Department in the context of Georgia State University’s goals and those of the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. We look forward to your insights and recommendations.

The Department’s self-study committee has provided a detailed account of the status of the Department and includes a set of recommendations for furthering the success of this unit. The committee’s members, Josh Hinkle (chair), Dean Dabney, Mark Reed, and Eric Sevigny, did a great job of assessing the Department and demonstrates the important role that the Department plays in our academic and outreach programs. The Committee was able to tie many of their findings and recommendations to the strategic goals of GSU and AYSPS.

Your packet includes the Department’s self-study report, the GSU Strategic Plan, and the AYSPS Strategic Plan. As a backdrop to your review, I would like to highlight a few features of the Department and the environment in which we work. The Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology (CJC) supports the largest number of undergraduate majors in AYSPS. CJC has been very active in taking advantage of new opportunities and working to increase its strength in applied research. The Ph.D. program is still relatively new (coming on-board in fall 2010) and they just launched a new on-line MA program in Criminal Justice Administration. Dr. William Sabol, a replacement 2C1 hire, is an incredible addition and will help the Department and the School address the strategic plan to engage more heavily in evidence-based policy and data analytics and analysis. I hope that the on-going hire in cybersecurity yields another stellar hire and continues to build the applied policy analysis base of the Department. There is a lot of excitement around the Department and the School for these new hires and expansion of interdisciplinary research in CJC.

The self-study outlines a set of goals and objectives, some of which call for additional resources. There are a few sources available for these resources, which is an important consideration when we discuss action items: 1. Redirection within the School 2. Success in the University’s Next Generation Initiative, which is a competitive program aimed at furthering areas of strength and excellence in trans/interdisciplinary research, and 3. Externally funded grants and contracts. In general, I agree with the goals of the self-study and I look forward to the review team’s
assessment of the Department and its goals. I request that you consider the following questions and issues as you perform your review and again, thank you for your time.

Department Goal 1: Continue to Develop a Highly Ranked PhD Program in CJC
- In the ever increasing competitive world of higher education, can you shed light on perceived demand for PhD graduates in CJC? And—where are the good jobs for these students? Does it make sense to have a strategy to target some specific non-academic jobs?
- The self-study does not discuss in detail areas of expertise in the PhD curriculum and it strikes me that we may not be taking advantage of our strengths (developing more analytic capacity).
- Do you have experience marketing PhD programs in CJC that might be helpful to our efforts to increase the quality of the program?
- Any thoughts you have regarding a reasonable time to graduation would be very helpful. Our average student does pretty well, but we have a number of outliers. In addition, if you can help us understand where our students might go off track that would be very helpful.

Department Goal 2: Increase External Funding Received
- We have struggled with developing resources to help faculty achieve success in grantsmanship—with some success. The School and University offer a variety of workshops, webinars, etc. If you have experiences or have seen good practices in this arena, I would be eternally grateful!
- In your opinion, can junior faculty be successfully mentored into grantsmanship? Would such support be different from mentorship for general research productivity?
- Can monetary incentives from the Dean’s office be effective in increasing grant activity? I ask in part because we have tried, again with limited success.
- The University and School are very engaged in supporting interdisciplinary research. It would be helpful to know if you see inter/trans disciplinary research as critical to attract much of the external funding available.
- Are there private foundations that we should look to for research support that we may not have discovered?

Department Goal 3: Grow and Expand Online Master’s in CJA
- We have high hopes for this program in terms of its content but also its on-line format. Attracting students has been challenging. Your thoughts and experiences in terms of marketing a professional type degree like this would be very helpful.

Department Goal 4: Stay on the Cutting Edge of Emerging Issues in CJC
• The Department has been discussing the cybersecurity arena and potential for MA and/or executive training in this area. Do you have a sense of how much saturation there is in the cybersecurity training market?

• Atlanta is a terrific hub for fintech/security research and policy development. Are there firms and other institutions that we should focus on for collaborations?

• Where do you see the comparative advantage of AYSPS CJC program vis-à-vis emerging issues in CJC?

Department Goal 5: Innovations in Student Learning

• Your experiences with student assessments (tools, usefulness, etc.) would be very helpful to us as we think about designing new ways to successfully develop assessments of our students.

• Is there merit in increasing the number of courses we offer online?

• In your opinion, has there been much change to undergraduate course offerings (topics) in strong CJC programs?

Sincerely,

Sally Wallace, Interim Dean
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Director Fiscal Research Center
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
Georgia State University