Psychology Action Plan

1. Status of Action Items from Prior Review:
   1. Recruit and maintain a departmental faculty of 45 full-time tenure track faculty members and 7 full-time lecturers (INCOMPLETE FOR TENURE TRACK FACULTY). The department currently has 31 tenure track faculty, which is well below the target number, even accounting for the reassignment of five tenure track faculty to the Neuroscience Institute since the prior review. The department currently has seven full-time lecturers, down from a peak number of nine two years ago. The incomplete items are still relevant; expansion of the tenure-track faculty is key to continued growth of the department’s graduate program and research portfolio, and for facilitating progression of the undergraduate majors. Even after the successful hiring and retention of six faculty through Area of Focus and 2CI mechanisms since the last review, the department is still nine tenure-track faculty shy of its target number.

   2. Improve the departmental model for funding graduate students by (a) increasing the minimum level of graduate student support from $12,000 to $15,000 per student for students in their first four years and continuing to increase the average level of support each year; and (b) gradually increasing the number of graduate students admitted into the program, as permitted by growth in faculty size, institutional funding, and grant support, with a target of at least one additional student per year (PARTIALLY COMPLETE). Even though the number of tenure-track faculty has not consistently grown, Ph.D. enrollments grew from 97 in 2008 to a peak of 119 in 2015. Average 12-mo stipends increased to about $21,000 for FY 2016. In FY 2016, the department spent approximately $96,000 of its indirects on graduate student stipends, which is not a sustainable practice.

   3. Address competitiveness and compression of faculty compensation (INCOMPLETE). Salary compression remains a pressing retention and morale issue. In the previous APR report, it was estimated that approximately $435,000 would be required to bring the salaries of tenure-track faculty to the average level for public R1 universities included in the OSU faculty salary survey. Currently, we estimate that $352,000 would be necessary to bring this year’s salaries to the average level of last year’s salaries for public R1 universities, even after taking into account adjustments made for the first year of the university’s model for addressing compression of full professors, and also taking into account recent successes in hiring faculty through the 2CI initiative with salaries that are above market. Additionally, analysis of the salary structure shows that long-term, highly meritorious faculty members are among the most compressed, with a number of salaries ranging from 20-35% below the national average.

   4. Secure additional space to support departmental growth (PARTIALLY COMPLETE). After the last APR, Psychology added about 4,000 square feet of research space in Kell Hall. In the most recent university plan for relocation of space for the demolition of Kell Hall, Psychology is slated to move to the 12th floor of Urban Life. Additionally, in May 2016 Psychology received the remaining space on the 10th floor of Urban Life vacated by the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Institute (six offices, a conference room, a workroom, and a reception area). Although some new research space was secured since the prior review, space has not increased commensurate with growth in grant funding. More research lab space will be necessary to facilitate increased productivity of current faculty, as well as to accommodate any additional growth in tenure-track faculty.
2. Major Findings in Current Review

The current review highlighted a number of departmental strengths. The review also noted substantial challenges constrain future growth, which need to be addressed in order for the department to realize its full potential. The external reviewers highlighted that Psychology has a strong faculty that embraces the university’s strategic plan and aspirational goals, that has increased its productivity by producing more peer-reviewed publications than any other department, and that has achieved one of the highest levels of grant-supported research in the College, during a period of generally decreasing resources. The external reviewers concluded that “Psychology cannot sustain further growth without adequate resources,” and recommended that “College and/or university administration should back-fill the resources that have not been replaced, most importantly faculty lines.”

The major findings for the current review are listed below:

1. The discrepancy between growth in faculty productivity and reduced resources has contributed to problems with retention, morale, and propensity for continued growth. The external review highlighted salary compression/inequities and changes in indirect cost return as the major factors affecting morale.
2. The faculty has a notable dearth of diversity, particularly in comparison to the student body it serves, which is 52% African-American at the undergraduate level.
3. The strength of the department’s undergraduate program was highlighted for the quality and innovation of teaching by stellar faculty, and for the large number of undergraduate majors from diverse backgrounds. Despite these strengths, the department relied increasingly over the period of review on part-time and term-limited instructors to serve the 1,748 majors.
4. The size of the doctoral program, strategies for recruiting top students, equity of graduate student stipends, and alignment of the graduate curriculum with department research goals were all questioned by the external reviewers.

3. Action Steps

In the coming cycle, Psychology will work with the college to take a number of action steps to fulfill the department’s main goals articulated in the Self Study, and to address the major findings in the current review. These action steps, organized by Major Finding, include:

1. Faculty resources, retention, morale
   1a. To complement college and university efforts to address salary compression and faculty retention, the Chair, in consultation with the department Executive Committee, will devise and implement a plan for allocation of departmental funds from indirect cost recovery and grant buyouts to support and reward faculty productivity through summer salary and other resources in support of research, starting in summer 2017. [short-term, with ongoing implementation monitoring]
   1b. The department faculty will work with the other SBS units in the college to develop a mentoring program for both early- and mid-career faculty that will begin this year. [short-term, with ongoing implementation monitoring]
   1c. The Chair will evaluate the administrative support staff structure within the department and recommend changes to the college aimed at more efficiently supporting the department’s research and instructional missions, starting this year. [short-term]
   1d. The Chair will investigate supplementing departmental IT support with university resources from the Instructional Innovation and Technology office. [mid-term]
   1e. As Psychology receives additional new research space from the university, the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will plan new shared research spaces that extend beyond individual faculty labs, in order to enhance collaboration and productivity among faculty. [mid-term]
2. Diversity
2a. Psychology faculty will continue to participate in the Next Generation program, submitting proposals to advance diversity to better reflect the student body through recruiting new faculty and post-docs. Departmental search committees will use strategies highlighted in the diversity hiring plans of Next Generation proposals for all departmental faculty hires. [long-term]
2b. The Chair will consult with the Dean to (i) ensure that resources (e.g., competitive faculty salary/startup packages) are adequate to advance hiring and retention of diverse faculty members, and (ii) develop a mentoring program that effectively supports diverse faculty. [mid-term]
2c. The department’s Diversity Committee will conduct a needs assessment of the diversity climate in Psychology during the fall of 2016. The Diversity Committee will use the results to sponsor events aimed at cultivating a departmental climate conducive to the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students. [short-term, with long-term next steps]

3. Undergraduate program
3a. The department’s leadership team, in collaboration with the college, will develop and conduct a structured orientation and training program for part-time and term-limited faculty. The Chair will also work with the Dean on (i) moving resources between PTI and VL lines to fit instructional needs, and (ii) converting VL lines to lecturer lines in order to reduce reliance on part-time and term-limited faculty and to promote stability and consistency of high-quality undergraduate education. [long-term]
3b. The Undergraduate Program Committee will consider changes to the undergraduate curriculum to (i) further incorporate student research, (ii) highlight the teaching of transferable skills that prepare students for a range of careers, and (iii) continue to facilitate timely progression through the major. [mid-term]
3c. Departmental faculty and staff will conduct continued outreach through the web, and social media to teach students about career opportunities for psychology majors. [long-term]
3d. Departmental faculty will explore avenues and funding sources for offering a wider array experiential learning opportunities through research and applied practicum, summer research assistantships, study abroad, and other research and internship experiences. [long-term]

4. Graduate Program
4a. The Graduate Program Committee (GPC) will conduct a systematic examination of the size and stipend structure of the department’s doctoral program, in comparison to peer and aspirational institutions and market demands. By the end of this academic year, the committee will submit recommendations to the faculty regarding how large its doctoral program should be and how graduate student stipends in the department should be structured and funded in order to be competitive and equitable. [short-term, with mid-term next steps]
4b. The duties of the department’s graduate coordinator will be expanded to include working with faculty on (i) enhanced use of social and other electronic media to advertise the graduate program at a national scale; (ii) maintaining connection with and tracking job placements of Ph.D. program alumni after graduation; and (iii) annual collection and analysis of graduate student productivity data (e.g., publications, presentations). [short-term]
4c. The GPC will evaluate the graduate curriculum and recommend changes aimed at improving our preparation of graduate students for careers within and outside of academia. [mid-term]
4d. Through Next Generation proposals and external training grant applications, departmental faculty will seek to build training infrastructure for doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows. [long-term]
Signatures

Christopher Henrich, Ph.D, Chair

Sara Rosen, Ph.D, Dean

Risa Palm, Ph.D, Provost

10/31/16

11/7/2016

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