

## **Response Program Review Committee Report for PhD – Counseling Psychology**

We want to express our appreciation to our program review team for their dedication and thoughtful consideration of our program review materials and goals. The reviewers offered useful perspectives and insightful questions and suggestions. In this document, we consider each of the suggestions offered in the reviewers' report, and describe our initial responses and (often) an initial action plan based on each recommendation (**CP responses in blue**).

### **Recommendations for continuing to build on current diversity, social justice, and research training**

- Encouraging graduate students to develop their own courses, especially those that fulfill undergraduate requirements, have potential for summer and/or on-line courses. One example provided to the committee was a new course on suicide prevention developed by a CP graduate student.

This is a suggestion we are currently acting on, both for summer session offerings and (as budget permits) during the academic year. In 2016-17 two new courses (Psychology of Suicide; Theory and Practice of Mindfulness) are being developed and offered by PhD students, with plans to continue to offer in the future as demand warrants.

- The possibility of the Center for Academic Enhancement providing additional funding was raised in discussions with the committee.

We have pursued funding from multiple campus sources, including DDEEA and the Chancellor's climate initiative, to support CP students who provide services in a variety of ways to enhance a climate of openness and respect at UW. We will continue to seek means to fund these efforts, and are currently in negotiation with CAE about one such initiative.

- Hiring a bilingual supervisor or a licensed faculty member who is bilingual could be a way to build on the strengths of the faculty and the CPTC, on graduate students' backgrounds, and on the community client base at the CPTC.

This is a possible direction for growth for CPTC, however there are other priorities that the department feels are more important at this time, such as growing support services related to campus climate and establishing a permanent funding stream for an additional part-time staff position to provide supervision for the mental-health related part of these efforts.

### **Comments on creating enrollment balance within coursework with current resources while maintaining the current quality of clinical training**

- Some measure of stability to the program could be insured if the CPTC director could be offered a three-year contract.

This is a helpful suggestion, and we agree that this position has been unstable in recent years and that the current Director could benefit from added security and support. We plan to pursue this as part of the current CPTC director's 3<sup>rd</sup>-year review this spring and hope to receive approval from the SoE administration for this change to a longer term contract.

- Breadth courses might not have to be sequenced and thus not offered every year. If some could be offered at any time during years 1 – 3 of student's training, there would be a potential for cost savings in the summer. Course enrollments may be allowed to increase for courses that are less fundamental to the training mission of the department but still required by APA (e.g., History and Systems). Alternatively, the CP department may have plans to offer History and Systems as online and invite graduate students from other departments to enroll. The department may consider additional collaborations with another APA accredited program on campus, i.e., Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychology. This may build on the attractive collaborative model that the Counseling Department has already established.

The Doctoral Training Committee has, over the past five years, implemented curriculum that allows for collaboration with other departments (RP, EP) in order to address this issue of the foundational courses. New required changes from the Commission on Accreditation addressing Discipline Specific Knowledge requirements must be implemented by January 1, 2017 in order for the program to be in compliance. For classes that are required by all three programs (CP, RP, and SP), it is difficult to imagine an alternate year plan, as the enrollments for yearly offerings is around 25 students. It is important to note that changes in the training model in RPSE may also decrease demand for some of these classes, which will have implications for course offerings and enrollment. However, there are already some of these classes that only serve two departments, at which point less frequent offerings seem feasible, with some coordination. We appreciate the suggestion to diminish the burden on instructional time by decreasing the frequency of offering these classes, and will also follow up on the suggestion to coordinate with the Department of Psychology to further increase efficiency.

- The CP department may consider offering other online courses that meeting undergraduate requirements, can sustain high enrollment, and potentially be offered in the summer semester, when undergraduate students may be particularly motivated to seek out online offerings when they are not in residence in Madison.

This is a new direction for us and a helpful suggestion as we explore increasing our undergraduate offerings. We currently have one fully online class (CP 225: Coming to terms with cultural diversity), which proved popular with students in both summer and fall 2016. We are working toward moving the History and Systems class (doctoral course) online in summer 2017. We will continue to look for opportunities to implement technology-infused classes. One challenge for our department is that we do not have an undergraduate major and some departments on campus have not provided approval for our courses to count toward major or minor requirements for their students given the pressures of the new budget model.

- Fast tracking of new multidisciplinary undergraduate degree that could increase enrollment counts and provide TA opportunities.

We agree that this new major can provide a service to students seeking entry into the health field with an emphasis on access and equity. This can be beneficial to SoE (increasing enrollments and credits generated) and also to CP (opportunities to work in a sustained way with undergraduate students; support for TAs for some classes). SoE is still determining how creation of new classes or sections of classes (to generate more credits) will be linked to funding (to support TA instructors).

### **Thoughts on supporting and enhancing faculty and scholarly productivity**

- To retain junior faculty, a more reasonable workload, protected time and other research issues (space for labs, time, number of students) should be dealt with administratively.

In a small department it is difficult to minimize service and advising loads for pre-tenure faculty. Although we do not assign Assistant Professors to the largest departmental service roles (i.e., master's Training Director; doctoral Training Director; Department Chair) junior faculty do typically serve on one of the training committees (which are not a light workload this year, with changes to curriculum requirements in both master's and PhD programs) and often another smaller department committee, as well as representing the department on one School of Education committee. Also, we have representation on the Salary and Promotion committee (which manages the annual merit review process) from faculty at each level, so one member of this committee is an Assistant Professor each year.

There have also been times when we have asked pre-tenure faculty to take on responsibilities beyond this normal expectation (e.g., appointing Kim Howard director of the School Counseling program; appointing Mindi Thompson as interim director of CPTC, and also of the EPTC internship program). In retrospect, it appears that we have sometimes taken evidence of good progress toward tenure as license to invite increased service responsibilities—a practice we will avoid in the future, as it sends just the wrong message to research productive junior faculty.

Thus, we recognize that the service load is not light for pre-tenure faculty in our department, and that we need to adhere to our ideals of not expanding what is already a considerable expectation for departmental service. We will also look at reducing some elements of this expected load (such as not requiring that one member of Salary and Promotions be at the assistant rank.) We note that this is also a concern for recently tenured early career faculty, who usually have been asked to take on an increased service load, which can make it difficult to continue to prioritize scholarly productivity.

New hires generally receive reduced instructional load for two of the first 10 semesters (with some flexibility to allocate course releases at key times relative to research development). Start-up packages and Fall Research Competition allow for funded research time in summer.

Not having dedicated lab space for faculty is challenging for those faculty whose desire is to have a traditional psychology lab. There is ready access to meeting spaces in the department and elsewhere in the Education Building, as well as interview rooms in the Education Building. More extensive facilities in Ed Sciences (EPTC clinic rooms and other spaces) offer attractive shared space options for faculty research projects, although research projects compete with clinical uses of these rooms, making scheduling less flexible. We will look into whether there are underutilized spaces in the CP area of the Education Building that could be re-purposed as communal research facilities (including meeting space and document storage) without adversely affecting department functioning (e.g., need for office space for adjunct faculty).

The issue of advising loads is an important one. Our 6 faculty whose degree is closely related to or in counseling psychology have a high advising load compared with many other PhD programs. Over the last two years, partly in response to the new accreditation standards, we have made some changes in the scheduled offerings of required classes (teaching alternate-year classes and combining courses to allow us to teach to two cohorts when possible) that should allow for right-sized cohorts and realistic advising loads.

A separate issue that can lead to unequal advising loads is our flexible assignment of students to advisors. Despite the fact that incoming students are matched with advisors who share their stated interest, we have stated clearly (in writing in our welcome letter to incoming students; verbally during our orientation meetings) that the initial advisor assignment is temporary, and that it is normal for students to change advisors during their time in the program. This flexible advising plan takes into account the possibility of evolving interests during doctoral study, and allows for student-initiated renegotiation of advising assignments when there is poor “fit” with the original advisor. We also recognize, however, that under this policy there is the potential for charismatic and productive younger faculty members to attract more than their fair share of doctoral advisees. In discussing this recommendation from the review committee, faculty noted that we can maintain this option (to change advisors after admission) in principle, without overemphasizing it to the point where it comes to feel like an expectation. Changing how we communicate about this policy, and emphasizing the possibility to work with different faculty members without needing to change advisors, may help to reduce pressure on popular or productive faculty members from eager potential advisees.

- Faculty who are licensed and those whose research areas or labs attract more students carry heavier workloads and advising responsibilities. The CP department may consider how to more equitably document these teaching and service contributions within the department's workload policy to achieve improved balance across faculty.

This is a very serious issue for our department, and has contributed to both morale and retention concerns over the last 5-10 years. In accordance with feedback from APA and the standards for accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation, we have moved from a model in which most clinical training was done “out of house” to one in which we provide more hands-on training, and also more rigorous evaluation of trainee clinical skills relative to benchmarks of readiness for practicum (1<sup>st</sup> year) and readiness for internship (penultimate year). In the old model, faculty licensure was considered optional, but in the new model, licensure as a

psychologist is needed for many training responsibilities, including administrative (Doctoral Training Director), instructional (for multiple required practicum classes) and remedial (overseeing development and remediation plans for students struggling with clinical skill development).

We have struggled with “growing pains” for this transition, as several senior faculty members did not pursue licensure under our old training model, and are now restricted in their ability to contribute to some of the time-consuming responsibilities in managing doctoral clinical training. This places a disproportional burden on more junior faculty members hired under the new model, all of whom are licensed and are called upon to take on these duties.

We have tried to redress this inequity with higher service expectations for unlicensed faculty members in other areas, but definitely need to create a better system for documenting effort. In addition to our development of a post-tenure review process, we are scheduled this year to revise our guidelines for annual merit review, with a goal of accurate documentation of each faculty member’s contributions in areas of research, teaching, and service, which will allow for clearer specification of expectations around equitable workloads. We are also looking at ways to support pursuit of licensure for senior faculty interested in this option.

- Reducing the size of future PhD cohorts could relieve some faculty mentoring burdens. In the past the department felt pressures to maintain cohort size to insure classes were filled. Some faculty think there are too many PhD students and that reducing the size of cohorts should be considered. As the CP department continues to share teaching responsibility for graduate courses across programs/departments, there should be less pressure to meet minimum enrollment requirements, which can allow for smaller cohort sizes.

As noted above, we have rearranged the course sequencing to permit alternate year offerings to double cohorts. This will allow us to conform to university expectations for enrollment in graduate courses as much as possible, while reducing cohort size relative to our past norms, to reflect changes in faculty composition and keep doctoral advising loads manageable. Because of sequence-of-training issues, some practicum seminars will need to be taught annually to single cohorts in this model, and so will be somewhat under-enrolled relative to UW’s expectations for doctoral seminars.

### **Recommendations regarding how the courses required to meet the doctoral training program can be sustainable in the new summer budget model**

- The department is recommended to review the question of summer courses in the context of the bigger picture of the PhD training sequence – deciding whether some courses that might not have to follow a particular sequence should be offered on an every other or even every third year basis.

We are looking into these options, and also into two different options for subsidizing required summer doctoral classes. For one of these classes (History and Systems), we hope that implementation as an online course may encourage enrollment from doctoral students at other institutions, generating tuition revenue. We have developed several relatively high-revenue

summer classes that we hope will generate an internal subsidy for our required PhD classes. If these measures are not successful, we may need to approach SoE about providing some small form of subsidy for summer doctoral instruction.

We also agree with the reviewers that less frequent offerings may be possible with some required PhD classes, depending on demand. Of the two summer courses in question, Social Psychology is required by all three programs (CP, RP, and SP), so alternate year offerings would likely have prohibitively high enrollment. History and Systems will be required by CP and SP, but not RP starting summer 2017. So if we are not successful in attracting outside enrollment with an online offering, alternate year offerings of this class may be an option.

- The department is recommended to reduce redundancies in the curriculum and increase class sizes by working with other departments on campus that are offering the same (APA required or research methods) courses and find a way for departments to coordinate core course offerings. This may require some scheduling discussions to accommodate CP students' time in the CPTC.

The new curriculum that was developed in accordance with CoA requirements that must be implemented by January 1, 2017 is designed to reduce redundancies, increase class size, and allow for reduced cohort size in order to address faculty workload and ensure a high degree of success for our students. We will continue to seek efficiencies by coordinating with other departments in SoE, and also with the Department of Psychology when feasible.

### **Factual edits / clarifications**

The department follows a *scientist-practitioner* model, which is a term of art in the psychology doctoral training community. The report from the review team sometimes uses similar terms (e.g., “research-practitioner,” p 2; “scholar-practitioner,” p. 3; “research-practice,” p. 4) to characterize the training model, but all should read “scientist-practitioner.”

The School of Education is referred to as CoE (College of Education, p. 5).

On p. 5, the reviewers state: “Second, the current APA course requirements necessitate students taking courses in the summer in order to finish in a timely fashion and CP has long offered lower enrollment, but required summer courses.” The reviewers misunderstood the challenge of offering doctoral classes in summer. The problem is not low enrollment (in fact, these courses enroll between 15 and 30 students, with some variation from one summer to the next), but the fact that most enrollees are doctoral students whose funding during the semester provides tuition remission during the summer. This means that despite relatively high enrollments, these courses generate little or no revenue, which is needed to cover instructional costs in the summer budget model implemented in summer 2016.

On p. 5, the reviewers state: “Third, the School of Education model for summer courses is purely enrollment driven and does not provide an allowance for historical summer course offerings that would allow CP to continue with its traditional summer offerings (lower enrollment) - CP will lose money if it offers its traditional summer slate of classes necessary for students to finish in a timely fashion.” This is a UW-Madison policy (not SoE), and, as explained above, the problem is not low enrollment but low revenue generation for these classes.

On p. 6, the reviewers state: “Over the past two years and two summers – the availability (or lack thereof) of classes has made it harder to sequence the necessary classes and make progress. This reflects a change in the availability of classes compared to three years ago.” This is accurate, and the cancellation of some academic year courses reflects adjustments to curriculum offerings following a very weak recruiting year in 2015 (resulting in a cohort of only two entering students in fall 2015). (This was a one-year anomaly—the cohort entering fall 2016 was larger than normal, at 9 students.) The cancellation of one summer doctoral class (a popular elective course) was due to our cautious approach to summer 2016 based on uncertainty about the new budget model. This class is planned to be reinstated in summer 2017, based on our favorable revenue projections, following adjustments to our summer offerings.

The reviewer report suggests that the decline in enrollments has been a purposeful strategy to ensure adequate faculty oversight rather than the result of declining market interest in the program, and quotes a remark from our self-study: “faculty time to train students in clinical and research skills has increased” (p. 7). It is true that training time has decreased, but we have not seen a large decrease in the number of students admitted to the PhD program (despite declining numbers of faculty who can advise doctoral students). Declining enrollment numbers are mainly attributable to the improvement in our time-to-degree performance, resulting in many fewer ABDs maintaining enrollment while completing dissertations post-internship.

The reviewers state: “The CP department has ensured that 95% of the PhD students had funding in the first four years of their program. Overall, between 21 and 43% of students have low or no funding every year. CP has a slightly higher percent of students with low/no funding than campus peer programs (32% vs 28% and 22%” (p. 9). These statistics, derived from the Graduate School report, can be misleading. The students listed as “low or no funding” by the Graduate School are (a) students on the required predoctoral internship, which is funded but not through UW and (b) students who have completed the internship but not yet completed the dissertation (i.e., ABDs). The declining trend in the “low or no funding” category (from 43% in 2006 to 21% in 2015) reflects the steep decline in number of ABD students noted above.

The reviewers mention a task force to review TA pay policies, and state that the task force was comprised of 3 students and 2 faculty (p.10). The correct composition is three faculty and two student members for this task force.

The reviewers note that students brought a concern about classroom instruction by a new faculty member to the department, but felt unsatisfied with feedback (p. 10). This concern was brought to the department as a grievance, and the department followed grievance procedures outlined in our master’s and doctoral handbooks, including communicating to students the outcome of our review. This included restricting the faculty member from teaching required graduate courses

until she has demonstrated improvement in several areas identified in our review. Students wanted more specifics about the process of remediation and evaluation, but were told that this process is a confidential personnel matter, and assured again that faculty are taking these concerns very seriously.