

Report of External Review Committee for the
Department of Psychology, University of New Mexico

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The External Review Committee visited the Department of Psychology at the University of New Mexico from April 2 through April 4, 2007. In preparation, all Committee members had reviewed a comprehensive self-study prepared by the Department. During the site visit, faculty, students, and administrators were very helpful in providing us with additional information. We met with virtually all faculty members, groups of graduate students (which included almost all students), an undergraduate 300-level course, an undergraduate honors course, the department chair and associate chairs, and university administrators. We will discuss issues that relate to Psychology's place in the university and then discuss issues related to how Psychology has chosen to allocate its resources internally.

On the whole this is a strong psychology faculty, with a very good record of publication and external grant support. The high percentage of non-tenured assistant professors on the tenure track is not ideal, but it is a group that shows great promise. The chair of the Department has been very effective. The graduate students are generally pleased with their training, although we have some questions (discussed below) about critical mass of both faculty and students in some content areas. The undergraduate program faces serious challenges with an extraordinarily and unworkably high number of students for the size of the faculty. Facilities are adequate in many respects, although Logan Hall is showing its age and is too small for the present department. The Psychology Clinic is quite problematic. The BRAIN and MIND Institutes are wonderful resources, which are only beginning to be tapped by the Department.

Issues Related to Psychology's Place in the University

Too Many Undergraduate Students and Too Few Faculty

A major challenge for the department is teaching a large number of undergraduate students with a disproportionately small faculty. The College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) reports that there are 668 declared majors and 342 declared minors, a total of 1010 students. Elsewhere the total is reported to be 1080. Even using the smaller figure, the number of majors plus minors per faculty member is 52.1, in stark contrast to the 14 other A&S units listed in the self-study, which average 11.8 per faculty member (ranging from 2.1 in Physics and Astrophysics in to 36.1 in Sociology). That Psychology is carrying a load nearly 5 times higher than its peer departments in the College is quite striking. As a consequence, the number of student credit hours generated by Psychology is also higher than other A&S departments. Thus, the Psychology Department has a huge undergraduate load. Although it is common for psychology departments to be in this situation, it is particularly extreme at UNM. There are several consequences of this large student load and relatively small faculty.

First, the percentage of undergraduate courses taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty has declined from 75% to 50% over the last 10 years. Consequently, the percentage of courses taught by non-tenure track and contingent faculty and by teaching assistants has increased substantially. We spoke with an upper-level class of about 60 undergraduate students who reported that they had few courses (even large lecture courses) with faculty members. Many of the courses they had taken were with the same lecturer (a non-tenure track individual whom they reported to be an excellent instructor), giving them a limited view of psychology. Furthermore, the potential for first-hand research experiences in the labs of active faculty researchers as part of the undergraduate experience is necessarily very small because of the number of students. Second, the number and variety of courses available to undergraduate students is fairly small, regardless of rank of instructor. Many students complained that courses listed in the catalog were rarely or never offered. They noted that it was very difficult to find enough courses available to graduate in a timely manner. This problem is, in effect, a tuition rise for students who must remain on campus for an additional semester, which may in turn contribute to the relatively low graduation rate for the campus. Third, many students reported little writing experience in their courses. Indeed, some reported that they had never written a paper at UNM, striking because these were advanced undergraduates with extensive course experience. A common course in which psychology majors learn to write in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA) is research methods. However, at UNM some sections of this course do not require report writing and instruction in APA style.

The obvious solution to this problem is to hire more faculty. The Psychology Department has added (and is in the process of hiring) some outstanding new faculty members, who will enhance the expertise, prestige, and grant income of the department. However, for various reasons including salary funding sources these new faculty will have very limited teaching responsibilities and will not be able to fully meet the pressing needs of the undergraduate instructional mission. The site visit team urgently recommends the addition of new tenure-track faculty who will teach both graduate and undergraduate courses. A step that would help Psychology but may not be as beneficial to the university as a whole would be to require a minimum GPA before a student is admitted to the major. Although this could deter students with weaker pre-college backgrounds and hence may not be entirely compatible with the public-service goals of the university, it could serve as an incentive for students in the pre-major courses. The burden of meeting other students' needs might then be shifted to other departments where the resource ratios are not so steep.

An additional option would be to re-examine and reconceptualize the distinction between the B.S. and B.A. degree, both offered in Psychology. Presently, few students elect the B.S. degree, partly because of the requirement that they minor in another area of science or in mathematics. That requirement itself does not ensure a stronger laboratory/scientific grounding in psychology. The Department may be able to offer more writing experiences and training in research methods for students who seriously want to study psychology as a science (and better prepare for graduate school) by offering and requiring specific sections of courses for B.S. majors. These would be smaller than the other courses (perhaps 50 or less), be taught by faculty, and require writing and/or research projects. Additional laboratory experiences might also be designed for B.S. students. Other sections or courses, designed for B.A. students, might be larger and taught by lecturers, contingent faculty, or teaching assistants.

Introductory Psychology

In the face of enormous enrollment pressures, Professor Hodge has developed a creative format for Introductory Psychology that combines lectures and weekly mastery quizzes. This has increased the rate of students passing this course, which is taken by a large number of freshman students. This increase in success rates is important to university administrators, who have a goal of reducing failure in “killer” courses with the hope of improving retention (although it is not our impression that this is indeed a “killer” course in terms of difficulty). However, many of the psychology majors with whom we spoke did not like this format, in part because the amount of material covered was not very extensive. It may be possible to offer some options in course format. Perhaps teaching several smaller sections of Introductory Psychology (possibly for declared majors or those who intend to pursue a B.S. degree) would provide a better format for the more serious psychology students. These sections could be taught by graduate students following appropriate training (see below). More graduate TAs might be needed to effect this change, or some TAs from the present Introductory Psychology course could be shifted to teach smaller sections.

University, College, and Department Level Advising

As mentioned earlier, we met both with a very small Honors class and with a larger 300-level class. Both groups emphasized advising as a major problem at the university. Complaints ranged from not knowing whom to go to for what type of advice to receiving blatantly incorrect advice. Many students in the larger class did not know that the Psychology Department has an advisor. If they did know, often they did not know how or when to use this important resource. Students also expressed concern that they could not plan schedules because of lack of information about when particular psychology courses would be offered. Most students did not know how to become research assistants in faculty laboratories, and they were generally unaware of community volunteer opportunities or the possibility of encouraging the department to develop service-learning courses. Students were not knowledgeable about what they needed to do to prepare for graduate school and how to find information about graduate school. They were unaware of the APA’s *Guide to Graduate School*, an invaluable publication widely used nationally, and other written materials that can help students plan their post-college futures.

A critical problem seems to be lack of communication among various levels of advisors at UNM, as well as communication with students. Many students complained of advisors claiming not to know the relevant rules and shuffling the student across campus to another advisor. (The complaints were not about the quality of advice provided by the departmental advisor, they were about advising at other levels and about lack of information about when and how to use the departmental advisor.) Whether this is a matter of diffusion of responsibility among three levels of advising, or training of individual advisors, or something else, we do not know. The University needs better ways to inform students about the advisors that they need to see for various purposes and at different stages in the undergraduate career. Advisors also need to give students consistent (and correct) information about requirements. The present advising problems appear to be outside of, and beyond the control of, the Department of Psychology but greatly affect the experiences of the students it teaches.

A second problem involves providing information to students beyond what courses they need for graduation. Students expressed a need to know which courses would be offered by the department and when. Although schedules change, it may be useful to have tentative schedules

available in the advising office or on the Web as soon as they are semi-finalized (with the caveat in writing that these may change as faculty situations change). Although we understand that frequent e-mail messages are sent to majors, the students evidently either do not receive these, do not read them, or find that they do not address the points mentioned above.

Offering workshops perhaps twice per year to provide information about graduate school and about alternative career paths with a B.A. or B.S. in Psychology would be helpful. Some of these could be offered by the graduate assistants assigned to the psychology advising office, though having regular faculty do some of them would be valuable. There may be a need to assign more graduate assistants to the psychology advising office or to add staff time. Although useful materials about graduate school and jobs in psychology (e.g., a guide to graduate study, books and brochures on what to do with a Psychology degree) may be available in the advising office, as noted above many students are unaware of their availability. Students should be made aware of links to resources on the web, such as the resources that APA has for students and other university's web sites. Some of this information could be given in all sections of the Research Methods course, an appropriate venue given that virtually all students there would be Psychology majors.

Finally, it can be noted that the academic experience of Psychology majors suffers from having virtually all undergraduate classes at locations remote from Logan Hall, minimizing contact between students and the Department, especially with the Psychology advisor and with individual faculty and the research opportunities they potentially provide.

Facilities

Logan Hall was built for a smaller faculty conducting research quite different from the mainstream of the field today. There has been little remodeling of the building over the years, and parts of it look dingy. This is exacerbated by poor lighting, particularly in the basement. The amount of space available for laboratories and offices is becoming an increasing problem, which will become more severe with new and potential new hires.

Although the space in Logan Hall is less than adequate, the space allocated to the Psychology Clinic is much worse. The 2005 accreditation renewal letter from the APA's Office of Accreditation commented on "the lack of training clinic space" as a significant problem, a factor in the Clinical Psychology PhD program's receiving just three years' renewal of accreditation rather than the seven that successful programs normally receive. The department's Clinic, which is 10 minutes' walk from Logan Hall, remains in the same building that the 1995 External Review Committee report described as "old and dilapidated." That space is now 12 years older and presently is below minimum as a resource for research training and clinical service to the community. Visually the office space is well below par for routine professional offices typically found in a community. The waiting room is quite cramped, and the facility is understaffed, greatly limiting the type of practica that are possible. Remarkably, there is not a single one-way mirror in the facility, a necessity for live observation. This is needed not only for supervision but for training of other student clinicians observing faculty or student clinicians.

Although the Clinic appears to be well run given its current resources, the present Clinic facilities also preclude developing a practicum plan better grounded in the science of psychology and in line with the direction that leading programs increasingly are taking. Specifically, a growing model for clinical practica is a series of specialty clinics, housed in a single facility, with several of the regular Clinical faculty each offering didactic and supervisory teaching

around a set of clinical phenomena and appropriate assessment or intervention technologies. For example, a practicum could focus on anxiety, substance abuse, or neuropsychological assessment. Shared resources (e.g., receptionist, office space, advertising, backup supervision, observation facilities) can foster cross-fertilization between practica and between training in clinical research and training in clinical service.

Thus, aside from ethical and pragmatic problems with the current Clinic space, it limits the potential success of the program's promising evolution into a clinical science program. The cost in terms of practicum options was noted above. In addition, locating the Clinic in or adjacent to Logan Hall is vital for fostering clinical research/service integration, for a variety of reasons including faculty access to and visibility in the Clinic. Adequate space for the Clinic, whether via relocation or substantial remodeling and expansion, should be regarded as an urgent ethical imperative, beyond the evident pedagogical and public-service appeal of such an upgrade.

An outstanding asset for the Psychology Department's research programs is the MIND Imaging Center, a joint enterprise of UMN and the MIND Institute. Currently the MIND Imaging Center supports two MRI/fMRI scanners (one new and not yet usable), a whole-cortex MEG system, and a high-density EEG/ERP recording facility. Most of these are state-of-the-art systems, and the MIND Institute provides support to maintain the equipment and computational resources for data analysis. Among the Psychology Department's faculty are experts in the major methodologies of fMRI, MR spectroscopy, MEG, and EEG/ERP, and these faculty are well positioned to take advantage of the MIND resources and in turn to enrich the MIND Institute. The scientific director of the MIND Institute holds a joint appointment as Professor of Psychology, and the Institute provides salary support for several other members of the Psychology faculty and stipend support for several graduate students. Further links between the MIND Institute and the Psychology Department are provided by four research staff members of the Institute who are Ph.D graduates of the UNM Psychology Department and contribute by occasionally teaching courses and supervising students in the Department. Currently, Psychology students are using the MIND facilities to study the neural bases of addiction, psychopathology, and basic cognitive functions. These facilities provide the faculty and students of UMN with superb opportunities to investigate the brain mechanisms of normal and abnormal cognition.

The BRAIN Institute shares a building with the MIND Institute. Researchers there conduct basic neuroscience research with animals. At present, Psychology Department faculty and graduate students are not involved in the BRAIN Institute, but it could be a valuable resource for faculty and students in the Psychology Department who work with animals.

Issues Related to Departmental Resource Allocation and Emphases

Use of and Training of TAs

Members of the Review Committee met individually with groups of graduate students in the various areas of the department. Graduate students were very positive about the faculty with respect to scientific ability and accomplishments, course teaching, and accessibility and mentorship. At the same time, they raised concerns about the larger framework of their graduate education, concerns which were consistent with other issues discussed in this report.

One set of concerns was focused in the TA experience. In some cases, the work is largely clerical and mechanical, with little educational benefit to the graduate student. In other cases, the

experience involves more teaching but often with little in the way of training or supervision of this experience. For example, there is no mandate for training in the teaching of psychology prior to serving as a TA. At present, teaching assistants optionally take a non-departmental training course for teaching assistants. Many graduate students who teach do not take this course. Adding a required course or other systematic training experience before students teach could be useful both for the graduate students' development and for improving the undergraduate curriculum. Using more trained graduate students to teach more sections of courses would increase the number of course offerings and would reduce class size (another issue mentioned as a negative by the undergraduate students). Such an initiative would require a more comprehensive training and supervision effort by the Department, such as an initial experience in leading a discussion section prior to (semi)independent teaching. Given that a significant proportion of graduates of the Ph.D. program will be engaged in college-level teaching, this would appear to be a priority component of the doctoral program.

A second set of concerns was focused on area-general issues of professional development for graduate students. There is no required component of the program that deals with such issues as conference and job presentations, the journal publication process, ethical issues and relations with Institutional Review Boards, and the like. Aside from those in the Clinical program, graduate students receive no systematic training in multicultural issues, many of which will be highly relevant for their future teaching and/or research experiences. A third issue raised by graduate students is a shortage of funds to support graduate research fellowships. This means that some students have to arrange other funding that may delay progress on their degrees, although as noted above teaching experience could be important for the careers of many graduate students.

Areas of Emphasis within the Psychology Department

An issue raised in the charge letter to the Review Committee was whether it has been a wise choice for the Department to emphasize a few areas of expertise and whether it has been done optimally. Given the small absolute size of the faculty relative to the domain of psychology normally covered at research universities and relative to the exceptionally high teaching demands on this department, the Committee views some degree of specialization as necessary. The particular configuration of emphases now in place and currently articulated, however, is problematic, in terms of both the viability of some areas and the alignment of resources in the Department in relation to its advertised graduate training strengths.

Critical mass in specific areas. The Review Committee was concerned about how the Department determines the minimal requirements for establishing an area of concentration. Single faculty members who feel intellectually isolated are not as likely to remain, or remain productive within a department. Equally important, no one faculty member is able to provide the breadth of methodological and theoretical perspectives, skills, and coursework necessary for doctoral training. Thus, it is problematic that two areas in department (quantitative and developmental) are now largely single-faculty areas. Similarly, effective doctoral training gains immensely from having a cohort of students who provide both scholarly and social support. Although in several contexts the coverage of developmental material is portrayed as part of a larger evolutionary-developmental program, in at least one printed document from the department the developmental program is advertised as a distinct area. This appears inappropriate.

It is important to distinguish (a) users of a particular methodology, such as cognitive paradigms or data analysis methods, from (b) scholars specializing in an area and advancing it. Training for a PhD in a specific area depends primarily on mentoring from and collaboration with successful faculty who are themselves moving a particular substantive area forward and also on available coursework taught by appropriate specialists. Further contact with additional faculty who are users of knowledge in a student's specialty area is also valuable but no substitute for working at the frontiers of one's field. Thus, for example, a substantial proportion of the department faculty involved in cognitive neuroimaging are not pushing cognitive psychology forward. This is not a problem in itself, but the problem of there being a very small cohort of core cognitive faculty is not substantially mitigated by the larger and growing local cognitive neuroimaging community. The same can be said about the developmental and quantitative areas. We echo the concerns of the 1995 External Review Committee as to whether a sufficient critical mass is available to justify a separate area of doctoral specialization in quantitative psychology, even though there is national recognition that this area is underserved, and even though the Department has a strong tradition in quantitative psychology. Faculty resources in that area have declined. Given recent and ongoing changes in the mathematical and computational foundations of quantitative analysis, developments in computational neuroscience and image analysis, and a variety of areas where advanced quantitative skills are tremendously valuable to psychologists, it will be essential to consider the role of that area within the department. If it is conceived as a core, basic resource for faculty and students, rather different decisions might be made than if it is a separate area of specialization in which a group of faculty and graduate students are actively working to advance the field.

Evolution and Development. Developmental Psychology is aligned with Evolutionary Psychology to constitute the Evolution and Development Area. This group overlaps with the former Developmental/Personality/Social (DPS) Area. The 1995 External Review Committee described the former DPS area as an "administrative convenience" with little coherence. That characterization applies today, though with social and personality now absent. Although developmental and evolutionary areas have important conceptual links, the specific foci of existing developmental and evolutionary faculty have little in common. There are only two faculty members who study evolutionary psychology and one who is a traditional developmental psychologist. Critical mass may be lacking in both of these areas, but this is particularly true of developmental. If an additional developmental faculty member were to be added, it would be important for that person to have links both to the existing developmental faculty and to at least one other area of the department.

Cognitive, Brain, and Behavior. A fairly new area for the Department is the Cognitive, Brain, and Behavior (CBB) Area. The Ph.D. program in CBB brings together a strong group of faculty researchers in the areas of cognitive psychology, neural factors in animal behavior, and human cognitive neuroimaging. This faculty provides expertise in a number of approaches and methodologies including animal surgery and behavioral testing, EEG/ERP recording and analysis, magnetoencephalography (MEG), and structural and functional fMRI. These methodologies are being used to investigate neural phenomena related to cognitive processes including attention and perception, learning and memory, and developmental plasticity, as well as neurological and psychopathological syndromes. Effective collaborations are in place to varying degrees with other UNM departments, including Neuroscience, Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Psychiatry, and Neurology. Particularly important for the CBB program are collaborations with other research institutes—the CASAA for addictions research

and the MIND Institute for brain imaging. In sum, the UMN Psychology Department and its affiliates provide a rich environment for research and training in Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience.

An important strength of the CBB graduate program is that all students acquire a broad knowledge base in the mutually supportive areas of Cognitive Psychology, Biological Bases of Behavior, and Functional Neuroimaging. This is achieved by students' taking a required course in each of these areas as well as a series of electives in the area they have selected for concentration. Additional courses in neurobiology, neuroanatomy and neurophysiology are available to CBB students through the Neuroscience Department. The courses offered provide broad coverage of the field of Cognitive Neuroscience, although there appears to be a shortage of elective course offerings in basic cognitive psychology.

Students enter the CBB program assigned to a faculty mentor and begin research in their first year. This system appears to be working well and is sufficiently flexible to allow for change of mentors when appropriate. The laboratories of the CBB faculty are generally well equipped and well funded and provide a supportive environment for student research.

The strengths of the CBB program are in the quality of its faculty and students and in its excellent facilities, particularly at the MIND Institute. The CBB faculty includes a number of internationally respected investigators who have made important contributions to their respective research fields. Overall, the faculty has a strong record of publication in peer-reviewed journals and does very well at obtaining outside research funding.

Although the CBB program is generally strong, a few concerns were noted. The graduate students expressed the view that many of the elective Psychology courses in the CBB program were loosely structured seminars rather than well organized, intensive learning experiences. The Review Committee also had some concerns about the subarea of Cognitive Psychology. The three cognitive psychology faculty are not particularly interested in neuroscience or the use of neuroimaging to address their more basic cognitive questions (a perspective which is fine, on its own merits). Perhaps as a result, there seems to be little interaction between faculty oriented toward neuroscience and those oriented toward cognition. Given this, the Review Committee had some concerns about critical mass in basic cognition both for faculty and for students.

Clinical Psychology. The Clinical program is the largest in the department. The Department is unusual among research universities in the high proportion of faculty and students in the Clinical program (approximately 50%). The absolute size of the Clinical faculty and student cohorts is not unusually large for a research-oriented state university; the proportion is high because the department is so small relative to its undergraduate advising and teaching load and its scholarly ambitions. As a consequence of the high proportion of Clinical in the context of a small department, there is little room for other areas of psychology. Thus, as noted above, there are serious issues related to achieving a critical mass – in faculty, graduate students, courses offered – most clearly problematic for Cognitive, Quantitative, and Developmental areas, all of which in turn potentially enrich the Clinical program.

The Clinical program is well along in a major evolution from a traditional scientist-practitioner model to a clinical science model. Several retirements of long-serving senior faculty who generally had low clinical research publication productivity enabled the hiring of a very promising group of junior faculty in the past few years. The program now appears well positioned to gain membership in the Academy for Psychological Clinical Science, the national

organization of top-tier Clinical Psychology PhD programs, for which it was previously not eligible. Membership would enhance the stature of the program and likely both the quality of the graduate-student applicant pool and the quality of the placements of those graduates in internships and subsequent academic positions. The clinical science model preserves the balance of clinical service training and clinical research training, which is valued in the scientist-practitioner model but highlights the importance of a state-of-the-art scientific basis for clinical practice. This model would benefit both the members of the Albuquerque community served in the department Clinic as well as the graduate students being trained. Furthermore, it better aligns the current strengths of the Clinical faculty's scholarship with the training agenda of the graduate program. Impressive progress has recently been made in this evolution. It warrants continuing support from the department. Fortunately, the Clinical faculty appear to have a strong consensus on this evolution and a clear plan for completing it. The principal problem is the current Clinic facility, discussed elsewhere in this report.

Another significant issue for the Clinical program is the balance between junior and senior faculty. There are just three full professors, one of them quite busy serving as department chair and another as Director of Clinical Training, and the 3rd about to rotate back in as DCT. Reflecting the departmental shortage of faculty, the chair is unusual in teaching as many as three courses (four is considered a full load in this department) plus providing clinical supervision. A 4th full professor in Clinical will arrive in the fall, but she will be largely consumed by running CASAA. An offer is out to someone who would be a 5th full professor in Clinical, though he is likely to do little classroom teaching for the foreseeable future. There is just one (tenured) associate professor. Even with the impressive new tenured hires, the Clinical program will be unusually weighted toward junior faculty, who naturally need considerable mentoring and other forms of support. Having 43 graduate students in Clinical is not disproportionate to the roughly 10 faculty FTE in Clinical, but it is a sizable program, with substantial advising and administrative demands well beyond what a nonclinical student cohort of similar size would bring. Thus, the program risks overburdening its few senior faculty, who are quite productive and highly regarded, and distracting them from their scholarship. Given pressing needs in other areas, allocating additional senior faculty lines to Clinical is probably not in the best interests of the department as a whole. However, other types of departmental and campus resources can be provided or allocated with the substantial needs of the Clinical program in mind. For example, Clinical faculty are clearly undercompensated, in terms of teaching credit, for their teaching of graduate student practica.

Diversity within the Psychology Department

“Diversity” in an academic context has several related but distinct facets, including (1) demographic representation among the faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students, (2) substantive content covered in part in coursework, and (3) what has been called “climate” as experienced by members of various minority communities and women among faculty and students. The self-study addresses the first two facets to some degree, with particular emphasis on graduate-student recruiting efforts. The success rate is lower than what might be hoped, given the demographics of the state and the city. This was discussed at length during the site visit, and both program and department leadership seem well aware of and committed to improving representation. Change is needed at other levels in order to better represent state and national diversity among the undergraduate population of the campus (with obvious benefits in mentoring, etc.). Of course, improving representation is a long-term process that depends in part

on state and national priorities and resource allocations outside the control of the department and the campus. Nevertheless, we were surprised to learn that the campus does not have a standing target of opportunity program to encourage hiring of faculty belonging underrepresented groups. The Provost described a small program he hopes to establish, but it would be minimal in terms of absolute dollars and in providing only temporary salary support. A more substantial campus commitment will no doubt be needed in order to succeed. For example, departments would have an incentive to expand through diversification if at least a portion of faculty salaries lines were provided long-term by the Provost or college.

The Psychology Department is a particularly good place to invest such resources because of the diversity of its content coverage, the relatively high diversity of the undergraduates and (in Clinical Psychology) the graduate students it attracts and the relative diversity (at least in Clinical Psychology) of the faculty hiring pool. In turn, psychology courses appeal to an unusually wide swath of campus, so that students of color or having other underrepresented or under-acknowledged characteristics would benefit from a more diverse, representative, and enlightened Department of Psychology.

The committee did not thoroughly evaluate the second facet of diversity, the teaching of cultural competence. Our impression is that this is improving within conventional course contexts. No doubt continued strengthening of such coverage would be beneficial.

The third facet of diversity, climate, was not addressed in the self-study. Logan Hall generally appears to be accessible for wheelchairs (2 of 4 principal entrances, for example, with all faculty offices on the entrance level). We heard different views on the climate for women, people of color, and people providing other kinds of diversity. It appears that the department could benefit from fostering what should be an ongoing conversation about gender issues that bear on the climate, although our impression is that there is not a large or specific problem in this area. The department's relatively high proportion of women faculty is laudable, though not sufficient, for achieving a supportive climate for women faculty and graduate students.

Addressing other aspects of diversity is more nascent but promising. Our impression is that senior faculty are supportive in principle but, in general, do not yet fully "get it" about a variety of aspects of diversity. One of the very few ethnic minority faculty members, an assistant professor, has courageously started a department-level committee that is receiving some departmental financial support but to date, according to graduate students, little buy-in by senior faculty department-wide. More participation from senior Clinical faculty has been promised for the coming year. It is essential that senior faculty across the Department provide visible, ongoing commitment to diversity. This is an extra burden and often a personal challenge especially for senior male faculty, but it is a burden and a challenge already carried daily by non-majority and to some extent women members of the Department. We would like to clarify that we do not see the Department as having larger diversity problems than is common in peer settings. Indeed, the evident commitment of Department leadership in this regard is a very positive sign for the future. In any case, in this setting as in most others considerable work is needed.

Departmental Atmosphere

On the whole, there is a high level of satisfaction with the Department among faculty, with much respect for colleagues and for departmental leadership, as well as appreciation of the opportunity to work within the distinctive characteristics of the University of New Mexico. However, to some extent the absence of conflict and other negative characteristics reflects some

degree of fragmentation and detachment of faculty. It appears that there was little or no direct faculty involvement in the preparation of the departmental self-study document beyond the two principal authors, other than preparation of brief sections by each of the area heads. There seems to be less intellectual or collegial connection with the department as a whole than would be ideal. Although there is a departmental “brownbag” (the PAL series), this is irregular and not consistently attended by departmental faculty and students from all areas. Thus, it does not serve well as a departmental colloquium, which can facilitate communication across areas. Not only does the departmental colloquium series seem to be ineffective in bringing the department together, there does not appear to be any other venue for department-wide scholarly exchange, such as an annual student research “festival.” In a department with an unusual degree of focus in its areas – and sizable gaps between them – deliberate attempts to provide centripetal forces may be needed.

In spite of these observations about a lack of departmental unity, morale among the faculty and graduate students seems to be enviably high. The atmosphere appears to be one in which faculty can be productive and in which graduate students have high-quality experiences. This positive atmosphere is substantially due to the effective leadership of the Department Chair, Dr. Ron Yeo. The committee applauds his obvious role in establishing and supporting such a positive environment. He appears to be doing an impressive job in securing new resources for the Department, although the list of remaining needs is sobering.

Summary

Overall, the Committee finds the Department to be performing remarkably well relative to the resources available to it. Our judgment on the three primary questions posed in our charge letter is that the Department has made very reasonable choices about the balance of resources between upper-level vs. lower-level undergraduate instruction, about the balance of resources between undergraduate and graduate instruction, and about areas in which to specialize in its scholarship. However, in each of these domains, the outcome is not entirely satisfactory, overwhelmingly because the resources available to address them are far from adequate. Principal concerns are faculty understaffing in several of the content areas on which the Department wishes to focus; the ethical, didactic, and pragmatic limitations of the Clinic; and especially the impact on undergraduate education of the extraordinarily low ratio of faculty to undergraduate students.