FOR INFORMATION   **PUBLIC**   **OPEN SESSION**

TO: UTSC Academic Affairs Committee

SPONSOR: William Gough, Vice-Principal Academic and Dean
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PRESENTER: See Sponsor.
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: January 23, 2019 for January 30, 2019

AGENDA ITEM: 9d

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

External Review of the Department of Psychology.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Under section 5.6 of the Terms of Reference of the University of Toronto Scarborough
Academic Affairs Committee (UTSC AAC) provides that the Committee shall receive for
information and discussion reviews of academic programs and units consistent with the
protocol outlined in the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process. The reviews
are forwarded to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs for consideration.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For Information] (February 11, 2019)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

- Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P), November 1, 2018 [For
  Information]. The Committee was satisfied with the Dean's Administrative Response.
- Academic Board, November 22, 2018 [For Information]. The Board was satisfied
  with the Report from AP&P.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The *Cyclical Review Protocol* "is used to ensure University of Toronto programs meet
the highest standards of academic excellence" (UTQAP, Section 5.1). The *Protocol*
applies to all undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered by the University, and

the University's full complement of undergraduate and graduate degree and diploma programs are reviewed on a planned cycle. Reviews are conducted on a regular basis, and the interval between program reviews must not exceed 8 years.

The external review of academic programs requires:
- The establishment of a terms of reference;
- The selection of a review team;
- The preparation of a self study;
- A site visit;
- Receipt of a report from the external review team;
- The preparation of a summary of the review report;
- The Vice-Provost, Academic Programs' formal request for an Administrative Response;
- The Dean and Vice-Principal Academic's formal Administrative Response; and
- Preparation of a Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

In accordance with the *Protocol,* an external review of the Department of Psychology and its undergraduate programs, was conducted in the 2017-18 academic year. The review team met with a wide array of stakeholders including UTSC senior academic administrators, the Department Chair, and faculty, staff and students in the Department. The reviewers acknowledge the Department's success in addressing the issues raised in their previous external review, as well as the high morale and high quality of the faculty in the Department. The reviewers also identify a number of areas they feel could be addressed, and have made a series of recommendations regarding these areas.

To support programs and curriculum the reviewers recommend the Department consider ways to reduce enrolment pressures including amending existing admission requirements, increasing writing supports and introducing writing and critical analysis into the curriculum earlier in programs, increasing upper-level course offerings, finding ways to improve communication and coordination around Co-op placements, and creating additional math and programming courses to support new undergraduate programs. To address large student enrolments and class sizes, over the next two years the Department will be gradually raising the GPA averages associated with enrolment requirements in Psychology and Mental Health Studies programs, and will be revising the OUAC admissions category for the Department's programs to include high school math and biology courses. The Department will also be strengthening the research component of the program requirements and locating it earlier in the program. In terms of ensuring that all students are exposed to writing opportunities, the Department is currently engaged in a curriculum mapping exercise that has a primary objective of identifying areas for strengthening skills development, including writing. The Department is also reviewing available instructional tools to determine any that may provide richer writing opportunities to students. In terms of offering more upper-level courses, the Department notes that in the past few years they have, on average, added 3 new C- and D-level courses each year. It will continue to work to offer more C-level courses by core faculty members, and to increase the number and diversity of D-level courses. With regard to the recommendations regarding Co-op placements, the Department will be striking a working

committee to address the high attrition rates of students from the Co-op programs; as a first step the Department has already reached out to the Director of Arts & Science Co-op to discuss strategies for facilitating student retention and success. Finally, the Department will be reviewing its math and programing offerings as part of the development process for a new undergraduate program in Cognitive Neuroscience. It will develop new courses as needed.

To support faculty and research, the reviewers recommend that the University ensure new faculty receive adequate and appropriate space in a timely manner, the Department ensures faculty in the teaching stream are aware of the full of scope of activity covered under pedagogical and professional development, the Department develop social and research events to foster a sense of community, senior faculty take on leadership roles so that early career faculty are able to establish their research careers, and the Department/UTSC optimize access to the fMRI on the St. George campus. The Dean notes that there is a new process at UTSC for identifying space and equipment needs for new faculty that enables the campus to prepare for them in a proactive way. This new process encourages departments to consider the research needs of new faculty at the time they develop their faculty complement plans. As the reviewers note, the Department of Psychology provides an excellent model for the treatment of teaching stream faculty; nevertheless the Department will be working to improve messaging to faculty on the newly revised *Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching*, including criteria related to ongoing professional/pedagogical development. The Department has already begun working on developing more opportunities for social engagement/interaction among faculty, students and staff. In addition, it has struck 2 new committees – one to develop a colloquium series, and the other aimed at strengthening graduate student and postdoctoral presence and culture at UTSC. The Department is making efforts to ensure an equitable distribution of service across faculty ranks, in ways that allow early and mid-career faculty more time to focus on establishing their research and teaching careers. Finally, the Department is looking at cost effective ways to gain better access to the fMRI on the St. George campus and to expand their EEG capacity.

To support administration, the reviewers recommend additional staff in technology and student advising. The Department has received funding to increase a staff position from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE and a new departmental assistant is being hired into this position. This change will allow for a significant redistribution of duties in the administrative office. The Chair will continue to review the Department's needs and make further adjustments as necessary.

The implementation timeline for departmental action is given in the Dean's Administrative Response.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no net financial implications to the campus' operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Presented for information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:
1. Reviewers Report (June 4, 2018)
2. Provostial Summary of the External Review Report (Final)
3. Provostial Request for Administrative Response (August 16, 2018)
4. Dean's Administrative Response (October 9, 2018)

External Review of the Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Scarborough

Dr. Michael Dixon, Department of Psychology, University of Waterloo
Dr. Albert Katz, Department of Psychology, Western University
Dr. Frank Keil, Department of Psychology, Yale University
June 4, 2018

Executive Summary:

Introduction:

On May 3 and 4, 2018, Drs. Michael Dixon, Albert Katz, and Frank Keil conducted an external review of the academic programs of the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC). Here, we describe our review of the Psychology Department, including the Mental Health Studies programs (specialist and specialist COOP, major, and minor) and the Psychology programs (specialist and specialist COOP, major, and minor) and the program in Neuroscience (specialist and specialist COOP, and major), which is shared with Biology.

The Psychology Department became an independent academic unit in 2007 and has grown into a major presence in both teaching and research at UTSC. Currently, the Department consists of three larger areas organized around research interests and expertise (social psychology, clinical psychology and cognitive neuroscience) and two smaller ones (developmental psychology and behavioural neuroscience). As appropriate for the discipline and the nature of modern psychological scholarship, faculty members are often represented in more than one research area, and collaborations among areas occur and are encouraged. Members in each area tend to be responsible for the undergraduate course offerings in their areas of expertise. The Department is clearly building as a research-intensive unit bolstered by several excellent hires in the last few years across areas. The review committee applauds the efforts of the Psychology Department Chair over the past five years. The Chair has worked hard to address issues raised in the 2012 review, and has set forth a clear set of priorities for the future. He has managed several very successful searches and is well regarded by his colleagues. He has played a pivotal role in creating a climate of warm collegiality and mutual respect that was readily apparent to the committee.

The UTSC campus has grown rapidly in recent years and serves a largely commuter student body who mostly live in the east end of the GTA, including Scarborough and Markham. The students represent a diverse array of backgrounds with a large percentage being first-generation university students coming from families who have arrived in Canada relatively recently. The Psychology Department has played a pivotal role in meeting the demands of the increased growth in undergraduate numbers over the last several years, especially since the so-called "double cohort" in 2003, created by the elimination of Grade 13 in high school, and the entry into university of both the graduating grade 12 and 13 classes in the same year. The Psychology Department serves the student community well given its faculty complement and the large numbers of students taught. The size of the student enrollment in Psychology programs has been a challenge that the Department has met in innovative ways but has led to faculty concerns about the pedagogical compromises posed by the reliance on the plethora of web-option courses. While acknowledging these concerns and various logistical limitations (such as accessing D level courses), the undergraduates interviewed all felt that they had made the right choice in attending USTC and, if they had to do it over again, readily would come to UTSC again.

1.   OBJECTIVES

•   *Consistency of the program with the University's mission, the University of Toronto Scarborough's current Strategic Plan, the University of Toronto Scarborough's current Academic Plan, and the academic unit's Academic Plan.*

The UTSC has the goal of offering a wide range of academic programs to its roughly 13,000 undergraduates. It also seeks to add value to the surrounding community, and to grow its graduate and professional programs. The programs offered by the Psychology Department fit well with the mission and strategic vision of the UTSC campus. The undergraduate programs serve a large number of undergraduate students (e.g., its first-year introductory psychology class has become the largest course at the University of Toronto and approximately 1/4 of all UTSC students are currently enrolled in one of psychology's programs). Large classes both at the entry level and in some upper year levels is an endemic issue for Psychology programs across North America and is unlikely to change soon. A strategy that some other Departments have adopted is to have larger classes in the first two years (e.g., the A and B level courses at UTSC) with smaller enrollment classes in the senior C, and D level courses where more effort can be put into the training of writing, analysis skills, experience with various methodologies and the like. Our sense is that this is the ideal to which most of the faculty at UTSC aspire but that current numbers make that impossible; indeed, C level classes can run into the hundreds of students currently. The numbers are so large that the Psychology Department has had to rely heavily on the WebOption mode of on-line instruction. The faculty have pioneered several valuable innovations in WebOption instruction (i.e., Steve Joorden's "Peer Scholar" innovation which is aimed, even at the Introductory level, at encouraging writing and the logical analysis of problems). However, even with these innovations, there also seem to be real costs incurred in terms of fewer face-to-face interactions and opportunities for in-depth analysis. The students to whom we spoke claimed that by carefully selecting their courses, if one wished, one could go all four years at UTSC without having a course with appreciable writing opportunities, with many of their classes, in principle, taken off-campus. There are solutions of course. With a greater number of faculty, the Department could offer multiple sections for the large classes thus bringing down the numbers in any one section. We notice that there are plans to make additional targeted hires in Psychology over the next few years that should prove helpful in reducing class sizes. Having a larger number of teaching assistants could also permit restructuring of classes to provide greater face-to-face interactions. It should be noted that currently there is a gap in teaching assistance support in Psychology at UTSC. One aim would be to increase TA support to levels seen at the other U of T campuses. UTSC Psychology provided 0.74 TA hours per student enrolled in a course, in contrast to the University of Toronto Mississauga which provided 1.49 hours and the Faculty of Arts and Science, on the St. George campus, which provided 1.14 hours.

With respect to the ratio of class sizes to faculty members we note the plans of the Clinical Research group. The department has developed a unique undergraduate program in clinical psychology (Mental Health Studies) as well as setting up a very promising graduate clinical program, with some excellent young hires in the last few years. This is an exciting opportunity at both the graduate and undergraduate level, and we wish them well in the forthcoming accreditation process. Although our mandate is on the undergraduate programs we would be remiss in not pointing out that the graduate program has implications for the undergraduate program - Graduate programs that meet accreditation must have a certain number of core registered clinical psychologists in the program, and must offer a certain number of very specific courses and, as such, those who teach these courses may not be available to teach as many undergraduate classes. This will undoubtedly affect the undergraduate class size/faculty ratio.

In addition to increasing the size of the faculty complement, an additional strategy for reducing class sizes would be to reduce the intake of the number of Psychology students so that students can be offered smaller-sized classes, especially for C and D courses. This strategy is favoured by almost all of the faculty members we interviewed and will be discussed further below under "admission requirements".

Admission requirements

• *Appropriateness of admission requirements to the learning outcomes of the program.*

It appears to be the generally held position by the members of the department to whom we spoke that smaller classes would permit for more and longer writing assignments, and more active

intellectual debate than is currently possible. The department faculty in all streams all feel that admission requirements need to be made more rigorous so as to reduce enrollments. This is, in fact, what is done currently in the COOP programs. We strongly agree, but only if a decline in enrollments does not result in reductions in faculty size or research support. We recommend that the Department, working with the Dean, should design appropriate higher admission requirements and determine whether these should be applied at the entry A level courses or for progression into B and higher level courses. Although we strongly support reduction in class intake, we offer a cautionary note: the Department should be cognizant that changes to admission requirements might have far more adverse consequences for the department and the faculty if a government changes the current undergraduate funding formula (such as with a return to one based on a BIU system). In short while the current strategy of reducing enrollments makes eminent good sense in the current political climate they may well wish to reconsider this strategy in reaction to changes in future funding formulae.

Curriculum and program delivery

•	An examination of the programs under review indicate a well-balanced sequence of studies. The curriculum reflects the current state of the discipline or area of study and is taught by experts in their respective fields. Some of the gaps in course offerings noted in the last review have been filled and we only heard of one area (the Developmental area) in which faculty thought there were gaps in their specialized course offerings (e.g., cognitive development).

•	*Appropriateness of the program's structure, curriculum and length to its learning outcomes and degree-level expectations.*

As noted above, the programs under review are structured appropriately, with curricula that covers the breadth of the field quite well. However, and not to be overly repetitive, the members of the external review committee agree with the majority of the faculty who are concerned that quality of the undergraduate programs suffer from the overly large enrollments. Large classes, especially when not supplemented by TA-run tutorial sessions, limits the type of teaching, and testing one can reasonably expect or the skill sets one would like their students to achieve in writing, logical analysis, experimental design and the like. The limitations here, especially at the C level courses was especially noted since this is when one would ideally introduce students to more in-depth interactive, experiential learning opportunities. It should be noted there is an additional issue created by enrollment size. The large number of students, even at the C level courses puts pressure on students in being able to select their preferred smaller enrollment D level courses. This was a concern raised by faculty members, students and support staff working with students who were frustrated by their inability to take their preferred D level courses.

•	*Evidence of innovation or creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such programs.*

The WebBased contribution of Dr. Joordens and his students that attempt to build in writing and analytical skills and that encourage students to construct and defend arguments is especially worth noting. This is a creative means of recognizing the basic pedagogical skills necessary for education in the discipline and an appropriate response to dealing with large sized classes. To be clear the committee felt this initiative was particularly worthy of continued support even after admission standards are raised and enrolments drop to more reasonable levels – the new incoming students will benefit hugely from the early writing experiences afforded by the Peer Scholar program. As Dr. Joordens himself pointed out, however, a technically savvy support staff person is sorely needed to problem-solve issues that arise in the implementation of his teaching programs using his Peer-Scholar applications. The committee viewed this as a reasonable request to support an innovative, evidence-based, means of improving large-class pedagogy.

While we applaud his achievements, we do not see Peer-Scholar as a substitute for professor-student direct interaction, especially at the C and D level courses. Given that large-enrollment classes will almost certainly remain for the majority of classes at the A and B levels we

agree that a dedicated technician should be hired as a cost-effective way of supporting this innovative means of providing writing and feedback opportunities in the large enrolment classes.

• *Opportunities for student learning beyond the classroom and student research experience.*

Select psychology students have the opportunity, especially those doing honours level projects, to work in the context of one-to-one supervision in the laboratory of one of the faculty members.

In addition, the programs we were tasked to evaluate have COOP options. We had the opportunity to speak with those responsible for running the COOP programs and to students who have gone through these programs. The students who opt for these programs are those in the specialist streams and those with high grades and so will be amongst the best students taking Psychology. This option is not available to psychology majors. The students to whom we talked that were successfully placed thought it a valuable educational experience. The steady growth in interest (from both students and the parents who fund them) in the COOP programs is a larger indication of their attractiveness. Nonetheless, even with this select group of students, the rate with which students drop out of their COOP option to return to the non-coop specialist stream is surprisingly high. This may be due to difficulties in finding placements or, for those who do secure a placement, ending up in a job that does not mesh well with their expectations. There was an additional salient problem that was noted: students in placements were often at a disadvantage in getting into D level (as well as some C level) courses due to the timing of their placements. Such scheduling difficulties may, at least in part, account for a relatively large proportion of students dropping out of COOP.

In our discussions with the COOP staff and with faculty members, the committee noted a sense that communication between the two groups could be improved, with for instance, the COOP staff mentioning their provision of talks about the program and faculty seemingly unaware of these talks. In addition, the COOP staff wanted to open a discussion in making the COOP open to the major students, a possibility, when we mentioned it, that was met with relative indifference by faculty members. We would note that this may be reflective of communication problems – faculty may have simply not thought about the benefits to the students by the opening up this possibility. We encourage all levels involved (Dean, Chair, COOP) to examine how best to improve the coordination of the constraints imposed by ensuring COOP placements with the constraints imposed by the undergraduate teaching schedule.

Assessment of learning

• *Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods used for the evaluation of student learning*

It is our opinion that fewer multiple choice, and more written assignments, should be encouraged, as much as practicable. We appreciate the logistical issues this raises when one is dealing with large class sizes, and a limited number of trained TAs. When talking with the undergraduate students we heard that a disproportionate number of them had never in their three or four years at UTSC ever written a 20-page or longer paper! We recognize that there are many courses on the books involving written evaluation but, based on our conversations with undergraduates it seems one might be able to navigate the specialist stream so as to avoid those courses with heavy writing components. We recommend to the incoming Chair, in consultation with the Department and Dean, to see if the curriculum can be modified such that some minimal number of written evaluation courses is obligatory for each student in the specialist stream at least.

Quality indicators

• *Assessment of program against international comparators*

Given that most published rankings treat all three branches of the University of Toronto as a single department, it is not possible to use those sources to rank Psychology at UTSC in particular. That said, a very rough approximation of impact can be made from estimated h-index numbers for each faculty member as listed on Google Scholar. Taken together, these index rankings suggest very

prominent senior scholars in the Social and Clinical Psychology areas and exceptionally strong early career faculty in all areas. Overall, given the relatively small sizes of the developmental and behavioral science areas, we see UTSC as having established a significant international presence and one that is likely to rise considerably in future years.

• *Quality of applicants and admitted students*

The quality of applicants and admitted students compares favorably to those in other majors at UTSC. If the proposed higher admission standards are implemented, the quality will be exceptionally high. In assessing the numbers of enrolled students, we noted that UTSC admits more than twice as many students as UTM despite having a similar-sized faculty complement. This data underscores the need for tweaking admission standards to reduce this discrepancy as well as increasing the faculty compliment at UTSC.

• *Student completion rates and time to completion*

We did not have UTSC psychology-specific data here, but we note that the "Other Arts and Science" programs under which psychology falls represents the lowest completion rates at U of T and well below other Ontario Universities. It is hard to make firm interpretations of these data, but we recognize that UTSC students may have commitments outside the university that raise significant challenges.

• *Quality of the educational experience, teaching, and graduate supervision.*

This issue is addressed earlier. In short, given logistical challenges of the very-high enrollments (twice as many as UTM despite equivalent faculty complement), the department is doing an exceptional job under the constraints posed by these high numbers.

• *Implications of any data (where available) concerning post graduation employability*

Anecdotally, based on COOP program comments and those made by faculty, students are doing well in advancing in their chosen careers. Again the numbers we have are not UTSC psychology-specific but the 6 month and two year employment figures for the "Other Arts and Science" students appear slightly below other Ontario Universities, but it is difficult to know whether Psychology students are aligned with, or buck this trend.

• *Availability of student funding.*

The listing of awards and scholarships in Appendix 3 is quite comprehensive and appropriate for a large University with admirable Alumni relations. We were impressed with funding opportunities such as the Sunshine Coast Health Centre Scholarship which seems aligned to the Mental Health Studies students. The department appears to be making good use of Mitacs funding as well as more mainstream streams like the NSERC USRAs. Given the high enrolments we are working under the assumption that scholarships and bursaries are sufficient to attract large numbers of students.

• *Provision of student support through orientation, advising/mentoring, student services.*

The department is doing the best it can in light of its limited resources and a very large student population enrolled in Psychology. For the current levels of enrolments, it appeared to the committee that an additional "front line" staff person would help greatly. While we saw the request for 2 additional front line staff as reasonable under the current conditions, if enrollments are reduced by more than 30% this would ease the burden on the existing staff and make the request of one additional front line staff person a reasonable compromise. We would thus advocate for 1 new hire to split duties between supporting the PSY A01/A02 courses, and undergraduate student guidance. By splitting these duties there will be a built in back-up system (i.e., necessary redundancy) in the event of illness, family leaves etc. of existing staff.

2. RESEARCH

• *Scope, quality and relevance of faculty research activities.*

As noted above there are five research groups in the department, with excellent coverage of the main foundational areas of inquiry in Psychology. There is no unit for "Educational Psychology", or for "Industrial-Organizational". We do not see this as a weakness; in many Universities these units will be found in Faculties of Education and Business schools respectively. Corresponding to each research area there are numerous undergraduate courses that students can take.

We recognize that over the years there has been a culture shift in the Department from a more teaching-intensive to a more research-intensive departmental profile. This is seen in examination of the research productivity of the faculty: some highly productive senior faculty with many other senior and mid-career faculty having a lessened research profile, and finally a cadre of exceptional young hires with excellent CVs. The awarding of a recent tier II CRC reflects this excellence of the junior cohort. Clearly the future of the Department is in good hands.

We would be remiss in not noting that excellent young researchers are always in high demand from other Universities and questions of retention can be an ongoing issue. It is our experience that the main issue in retention (and indeed in making new hires) is in having sufficient resources: research space, research equipment and research funding. Part of the funding package in hiring comes through start-up funds and we did not hear any complaints about levels for start-up money. Though the levels are less than might be found in large American Universities, they appear comparable to other Canadian Universities. We examined the space currently allocated and received a sense of what space will be available after some research areas move in the near future. We were impressed with the current space for the current complement.

Without some additional space, however, attracting top-notch researchers might be problematic, as it seems that space for growth is very limited. The Department is quite collegial and we saw an instance where a faculty member is letting an incoming new hire use some of his space until her space becomes available. We applaud his action but unless space becomes available soon this is a band-aid, unsustainable solution. We did hear concerns from recent hires that promised space was very slow in becoming available. While we recognize the complexity of construction and laboratory relocations, we resonated especially with the new faculty whose productivity and clear progress toward tenure was being impacted. Given that there are plans to hire over the next few years this is an area that requires close attention by the Departmental Chair and Dean.

Finally, there is the issue of research equipment. In recent years, many areas of psychology have become increasingly dependent on sophisticated (and expensive) equipment, especially in the neurosciences (including cognitive, developmental, and social neuroscience). Increasingly this equipment permits examination of neural signatures that correspond to ongoing mental activity. In the Department Self Study there is an argument for a Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine that will permit the study of brain activity as participants engage in mental activity (fMRI). There are many researchers who argue one needs to have an MRI that is research-dedicated and spatially close to the researcher's other activities. Currently faculty employing fMRI technology use a machine at the St. George campus, or in one of the clinical adjunct sites. We heard from one faculty member who has argued the current situation is non-optimal for his research needs. That said, the sense we received from most of the relevant faculty, is that although not ideal, the current arrangement is workable, especially since the St. George machine is not over subscribed. They did lament the lack of space at St George in which they could work between scans. We are not recommending the University look into obtaining and maintaining an MRI on the UTSC campus at this time though we do recommend that they look into the longer-range possibility of obtaining one, perhaps in conjunction with the medical school we understand will be built on campus. In the meantime, in order to optimize the use of the downtown magnet by UTSC researchers, dedicated research space is needed for these researchers at the St. George fMRI facility. Given the long commute times greater productivity would ensue if faculty and students making this commute had a place near the magnet

where they could actually work between scanning sessions.

In lieu of an MRI machine, we resonated with the department's plans to bolster other types of imaging technology – namely EEG. An ongoing issue with EEG machines is the need for properly shielded rooms so that researchers are able to collect high quality data in fulfillment of their funded research, and to support the teaching of EEG imaging at the undergraduate level. Courses such as PSYC04 – an undergraduate brain imaging course, and plans to offer an undergraduate program in brain imaging are unique to UTSC. As the department seeks to distinguish itself from other competitor universities, such a program could become a valuable part of the UTSC "brand". We understand that the department was provided with 4 testing rooms in SW150 approximately 6 years ago, but that in 2016 it became known that the rooms were not properly shielded. In addition, when testing the viability of alternative spaces for EEG data collection, we learned that SW317, which is where the department planned to house the EEG teaching lab, is also not suitable for EEG data collection, due to electrical interference. We found it laudable that central administration has been responsive to these issues, and commissioned the design and building of 3 EEG rooms in the 4th floor meeting space perimeter, which became available for occupancy in April 2018.

It is our understanding that the department still requires at least an additional 3 properly shielded rooms for research and teaching. Apparently, there was a verbal commitment from the CAO Andrew Arifuzzaman that additional rooms would be built in the MW building when the clinical and developmental faculty move there in the Winter of 2018, but there is as yet, no documented verification that this will happen. To be clear, the department estimates that it needs 6 (at minimum) properly shielded EEG rooms/cabins to be able to meet research and teaching demand in the next 5 years. For the committee members, this request seemed a reasonable, fiscally responsible alternative to getting a magnet as UTSC. We urge the central administration to ensure that these needs are met so that the department can fulfill its imaging requirements and set itself apart from other comparator universities by implementing the proposed undergraduate program in imaging.

• *Appropriateness of research activities for the undergraduate and graduate students in the department or program.*

Motivated undergraduates seem mostly able to find meaningful research experiences, but the large numbers of students in relation to faculty can make it very challenging for some undergraduates to do research in their chosen area. Graduate students have ample and appropriate research activities although, for some, it can be difficult to get to and from needed activities elsewhere such as at the St. George campus. The committee was impressed with the Budding Scholars Initiative which engages the very best and brightest of the undergraduates.

3.   RELATIONSHIPS

• *Strength of the morale of faculty, students and staff.*

The Department is unusually collegial, cooperative and friendly. We found this at all levels. A word regarding Teaching-Stream faculty is in order. In many universities faculty with this type of contractual status are (mis)treated as "second-class citizens". Not so in UTSC. Here teaching-stream faculty are treated with respect, are seen to play important roles in the education and life of the Department, have their input considered seriously, take students to conferences and get the benefits given to research-stream faculty. Indeed, we see the Psychology UTSC model as one that should be adopted elsewhere. If there was one minor concern expressed, it was a sense that they are discouraged from doing research in their fields of expertise. We understand this is no longer true, and we suggest this misconception be rectified by a memo from the Dean's office and an agenda item in a future faculty meeting.

Given the tri-campus situation, and the magnetic attraction for the downtown area felt by many faculty, we encourage more gatherings where the faculty get together as a group outside of class. A start of the year family BBQ, December/Christmas gathering, end of year family BBQ and the like

could maintain contacts especially for the younger faculty just hired, and, given a diaspora to different buildings, a means of maintaining social contact. Once the new hires are in place we would encourage the department to develop a colloquium series spearheaded by the younger faculty. This will ensure a buy-in from this important cohort moving forward, and provide a meaningful gathering point for faculty, grad students and undergrads.

• *Extent to which the Department has developed or sustained fruitful partnerships with other universities and organizations in order to foster research, creative professional activities and to deliver teaching programs.*

While there are many instances of partnerships with other organizations at the graduate level (e.g. the clinical graduate program and OISE) our focus is on undergraduate studies. We were impressed by the connections with the Factor Inwentash Faculty of Social Work for a combined undergrad/grad degree for those in Mental Health Studies. A clear instance of an enduring partnership is the continued collaborations amongst the Biology and the Neuroscience research groups. Moving forward one can envision more formal ties with philosophy for instance, especially for the Cognitive Neuroscience group.

• *Scope and nature of the Department's relationship with external government, academic and professional organizations.*

Several faculty play important roles in external organizations. These seem appropriate and not so onerous as to constrain on campus contributions.

• *Social impact of the Department in terms of outreach and impact locally and nationally.*

A reemerging theme in the University's Mission Statement involves interfacing with the local, highly diverse community. The huge enrollment in Psychology draws heavily from neighbouring high schools and as such is playing a large part in fulfilling these interactions in important ways. Additionally, we noted that the Mental Health Studies program appears to migrate students to local area health facilities either through COOP or post graduation jobs. Further opportunities may emerge with the accreditation of the Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology should they decide to open a clinic to serve the local community as has been done with other clinical programs in Ontario (e.g., the Centre for Mental Health Research at Waterloo).

4. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

• *The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Department's organizational and financial structure.*

We laud the central administrations responsiveness to the requests from the department over the years ("the healthy support for the purchase of brain imaging research equipment" noted by Dr. Cree in the Self Study.) Similarly, the increases in TA budgets have in the past been approved, but we note that TA support lags far behind the other units at St George and especially UTM. As noted earlier, funding for course support especially for the PeerScholar program in the form of an additional staff person is warranted. The department has implemented an excellent organizational structure in recent years. The addition of the third associate chair was seen as wise move and the central administration is lauded for approving this. The committee's view was that after some initial growing pains, there are now more clearly defined administrative roles thanks in large part to the drafting of the department's constitution. The aligning of the roles of the associate chairs with the roles of the Vice Deans and VP research makes for more seamless departmental to decanal communication.

• *The appropriateness with which resource allocation, including administrative and technical staff, space and infrastructure support, has been managed.*

The management appears to have been excellent in all respects, especially given limitations of space and staffing and large student numbers. The staff is uniformly excellent and is well regarded by all members of the department. We noted the request in the Self Study for "at least" 2 new staff members over the next 2 to 3 years. With the reductions in enrolments there should be an easing of the pressure on the current staff members. That said we would advocate for 1 new hire to split duties between supporting the PSY A01/A02 courses, and undergraduate student guidance. By splitting these duties there will be a built in back-up system in the event of illness, family leaves etc. of existing staff.

- *Opportunities for new revenue generation.*

The department is in general quite well funded, but there seem to be opportunities for some mid level faculty to obtain more research grants and at minimum apply for such grants. We were unsure if the new Clinical Psychology program (at the graduate level) intended to charge higher tuition fees than other graduate students. If so this could represent an opportunity for new revenue generation, but we would urge the department to think carefully about going down this route as it creates a form of two-tiered system of graduate students – a fractionation that can lead to problems with graduate student morale.

5. LONG RANGE PLANNING CHALLENGES

- *Consistency with the University's academic plan.*

The department seems to fit well with the University's academic plan as described more fully in earlier sections of this report.

- *Appropriateness of complement plan, including balance of tenure-- stream and non-- tenure stream faculty*

As noted elsewhere, there is a need for more faculty in the developmental and behavioral neuroscience areas. There is a relatively large number of early career faculty relative to mid-career faculty but the early career hires have been of exceedingly high caliber. We noted that in the Self Study there was a request for a senior person in the Cognitive Neuroscience stream. This appeared to us to be a reasonable request especially if it supports the proposed program in imaging at the undergraduate level. Again, there is nothing like this to our knowledge at any other Ontario Universities and as such could help to set UTSC psychology apart from its competitors. Senior faculty members should be encouraged to take on more Service/Admin responsibilities to ensure the junior faculty members realize their enormous potential. The balance between teaching stream and tenure stream faculty seems appropriate. The faculty show highly commendable interactions between areas.

- *Enrollment strategy*

The department proposes to raise the admission requirements and reduce enrollments. Appendix 5 of the Self Study provides a compelling plan for exactly how they would go about reducing enrollments. As noted elsewhere in this report, this appears to be a good strategy to allow more pedagogically meaningful interactions in C and D courses. It will also ease the burden on front line staff who are clearly overworked.

- *Management and leadership.*

As reviewed earlier departmental management and leadership has been excellent and the incoming Chair is well positioned to continue that tradition. It is perhaps a bit unusual, however, not to see the most prominent senior faculty take more active roles in departmental management and leadership. The committee however recognized that sometimes the right person for the job is drawn from a younger cohort, and Dr. Cree was by all accounts and by our collective impression the right person for the job. We also lauded the choice of Dr Erb as Cree's successor. Having a senior

member of the behavioural neuroscience stream will ensure the integration of this group with the other streams. That said, now that the Department is in its second decade, care must be taken to ensure that more senior faculty members take on adequate service and that junior faculty are protected from undue (more than their 20% service weightings) so that they can firmly establish their research reputations.

6. International Comparators

•   *Assessment of the programs under review relative to the best Canada/North America and internationally, including areas of strength and opportunities.*

There are some world-class senior level faculty within the Department. Our view though however is that the Jewel in the Crown of this department overall is in the strength of the younger cohort. Their excellence shines through both the Self Study, and in our interactions with them. As aforementioned given the strength of these young faculty members the department is sure to rise in its standing on the world stage as these faculty members realize their full potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We would recommend that the department carry out their proposed plan to increase admission standards in order to reduce enrollments.

We would encourage the faculty to consider adding additional math and programming related courses geared to support the long-term objective of creating an undergraduate program in imaging.

In terms of incremental hires, we recommend two new hires in the developmental area, one new hire in behavioural neuroscience and one more senior-level hire in the cognitive neuroscience stream. We were convinced that even after the enrollment reductions this would bring the faculty complement, and more importantly the ratios of undergrads to faculty more in line with other psychology units at U of T. To be clear these are recommended incremental hires beyond existing hiring commitments already "on the books".

We recommend two new staff hires. The first is a staff person that will split duties between supporting the PSY A01/A02 courses, and front-line undergraduate student guidance. By splitting these duties there will be a built in back-up system in the event of illness, family leaves etc. of existing staff. The second staff hire should be a technically savvy person to problem solve issues that rise in the implementation of teaching programs using the Peer-Scholar application.

For the new faculty hires already agreed to, and for the incremental positions that we have recommended, we urge the department and Central Administration to work hard to ensure that adequate space is provided to these new hires in a timely fashion. For hires in the behavioural neuroscience area, "adequate space" includes vented racks for animals.

We recommend that the Central Administration provide more TA support per student – bringing the ratio up to levels comparable to other units at the University of Toronto (e.g., UTM). We recommend that with this TA support more writing opportunities are presented earlier in the students' undergraduate careers. Once more TA support is provided the onus is on faculty members to revise their B and C level courses to include these writing opportunities

We recommend that more D level courses be provided to meet student demand. This can be done by ensuring an equitable mixture of large and small classroom undergraduate teaching across the expanded faculty complement.

We recommend that all teaching stream faculty be disabused of the misperception that they are not allowed to conduct research. This can be clarified by a memo from the Dean's office, and an item in a future faculty meeting agenda.

While we acknowledge that the immediate purchase of an MRI magnet is not feasible, as a fiscally responsible compromise we recommend that the creation of dedicated research space for UTSC faculty and students in close proximity to the St George scanner. This will afford faculty and students a place to work in between scans, thereby increasing their productivity on days where they must make the long commute downtown.

We recommend that all levels involved (Dean, Chair, COOP) examine how best to improve the coordination of the constraints imposed by ensuring COOP placements with the constraints imposed by the undergraduate teaching schedule. We also encourage better communication between COOP and the faculty perhaps through presentations at faculty meetings.

We recommend that an undergraduate teaching lab be provided for those undergraduates interested in behavioural neuroscience. Ideally this would be located in the vivarium.

We recommend that there be some dedicated Psychology space in the vivarium.

We recommend that a colloquium series (four talks per year) be initiated, spearheaded by the junior faculty to provide a concrete forum for faculty wide gatherings. In addition, we encourage the department to host more annual social events to foster a sense of community among the faculty and staff at UTSC. This is especially important given the propensity of many of the faculty to live in the downtown core.

We recommend that a minimum of 6 properly shielded EEG rooms/cabins be established to meet the research and teaching demands over the next 5 years. This is especially important given the plans to implement an undergraduate program in brain imaging – a venture that sets UTSC apart from its competitors.

UTQAP Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Mental Health Studies, B.Sc. Hons.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Minor Neuroscience, B.Sc. Hons.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major Psychology, B.Sc. Hons.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Minor
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, UTSC
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	1. Professor Michael Dixon, Department of Psychology, University of Waterloo 2. Professor Albert Katz, Department of Psychology, Western University 3. Professor Frank Keil, Department of Psychology, Yale University
Date of Review Visit:	May 3-4, 2018

Previous UTQAP Review

Review Date: December 6-7, 2011

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Excellent and innovative co-op program
- Alignment of the curriculum with the current state of knowledge in the fields of psychology and mental health
- Opportunities for students to learn about cutting edge research
- Impressive laboratory facilities for teaching
- New and innovative courses and course delivery models
- Unique and attractive mental health studies program

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- Review admission criteria to the major and specialist to shape the number, quality and preparation of enrolled students
- Add some basic topics in cognition to fill gaps in the curriculum
- Increase opportunities for students to develop written and oral communication skills, engage with peers and faculty, and develop a sense of belonging within the program and university
- Increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty
- Ensure that the scope of the program covers all core areas of psychological science

Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- High quality of many faculty members; outstanding quality of new hires

Administration

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Exceptionally high staff, faculty and student morale

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- Assess whether graduate expansion in the areas of brain imaging and clinical psychology can be accommodated
- Increase the level of consultation within the Department with respect to decision-making

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

1. About the University and UTSC: UTSC Strategic Plan (2014/15 – 2018/19); UTSC Academic Plan (2015-20); UTSC By the Numbers; UTSC Admissions Viewbook (2018-19).
2. About the Review: Terms of Reference; Site Visit Schedule.
3. About the Department: External Review Report, Admin Response and Final Assessment Report (2012); Unit Academic Plan; Unit Self Study, plus Appendices.
4. About Programs and Courses: Description of Psychology programs; and description of Psychology courses; Course Syllabi; Course Enrolments from 2009 to 2018.
5. Faculty CVs.

Consultation Process

The reviewers met with the following: the decanal group, including the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, Vice-Dean Undergraduate, Vice-Dean Graduate, Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs and Equity, Assistant Dean Academic, and Academic Programs Officer; the Vice-Principal Research (Acting); the Chair of the Department of Psychology; junior and senior members of the faculty from all areas of study; undergraduate students; administrative staff from the Office of Arts and Science Co-op; departmental administrative staff; and library staff.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program

The reviewers observed the following **strengths:**

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - Reflects current state of the discipline and has appropriate breadth
  - Well-balanced sequence of curriculum
  - Many of the curricular gaps previously identified have been filled
- Innovation
  - Despite challenges faced by large and growing enrolment, the Department is meeting student need in innovative ways:
    - "Peer Scholar" tool used to build in writing and analytical skills is "creative means of recognizing the basic pedagogical skills necessary for education in the discipline and an appropriate response to dealing with large sized classes"
    - "Budding Scholars Initiative" engages top undergraduate students
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students

- o Students reported they were happy with their decision to attend UTSC and would make the same decision again
- Student funding
  - o Impressive scholarships for students in mental health studies
  - o Department is making good use of available federal scholarships

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
  - o Twice as many students are admitted to the UTSC psychology programs as compared to the UTM programs, despite having similar faculty complement
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - o Developmental area needs additional curricular content
  - o Large program and course enrolment has led to pedagogical compromises (less writing and analysis training, less exposure to breadth of methodologies)
    - Students said if they selected courses carefully, they could complete their program without taking a writing intensive course
  - o Large number of "WebOption" online course offerings
  - o Students expressed frustration with large "C" level courses which puts pressure/restrictions on their ability to select preferred "D" level courses
- Assessment of learning
  - o Assessment methods/design are limited by TA and faculty resources
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - o High student-to-faculty ratio can make it difficult for all undergraduate students to do research in their chosen area and limits face-to-face interactions with faculty
    - When the graduate program receives accreditation, faculty may be pulled from undergraduate teaching responsibilities to be available for the graduate program, negatively affecting faculty to undergraduate student ratio
    - Student-faculty engagement issues have persisted since last review
  - o Variance in TA/student ratios: UTSC is 0.74 TA hours/psychology student, UTM is 1.49 hours/psychology student, and St. George is 1.14 hours/psychology student
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - o High attrition rate of students in the specialist co-op, returning back to regular specialist program; reviewers noted issues with finding appropriate placements, and course scheduling issues for co-op students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements

- o Revise admission requirements to psychology programs making them more rigorous to reduce number of admitted students, creating smaller class sizes
    - Changes to admission requirements and subsequent enrolment reductions should not decrease faculty size
    - Ensure any changes to admissions and enrolment are considered along with government funding agreements
- Curriculum and program delivery
    - o Offer additional course meeting sections to reduce class size
    - o Introduce writing requirements earlier in the program once additional TA support has been secured
    - o Offer more "D" level courses
    - o Consider adding math and programming courses, with longer term goal of developing an imaging program
- Innovation
    - o Continue to support "Peer Scholar" initiative; and add technical support staff to assist with trouble-shooting
- Assessment of learning
    - o Have fewer multiple choice assignments in favour of more written assignments that are of a greater length
    - o Consider if a guide on the minimum number of written assignments for each course could be implemented
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
    - o Make targeted faculty hires and additional TAs to improve levels of engagement with students
        - Central administration should increase TA support
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
    - o Seek ways to improve scheduling and coordination for co-op

2. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
    - o Prominent senior faculty scholars and strong early career faculty researchers
    - o Collaborations between faculty in different research areas is encouraged
- Faculty
    - o Faculty are leaders in the field
    - o Teaching-stream faculty are very well respected in the Department
    - o Recent faculty hires are excellent
    - o Several faculty play an important role in external organizations
    - o The younger cohort of faculty are the "Jewel in the Crown" of the Department

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
    - Shortage of faculty in development and behavioural neuroscience
    - There was a sense that in the past teaching-stream faculty were misinformed about conducting their own research

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
    - Consider new hires in developmental area, behavioural neuroscience area, and a senior-level hire in cognitive neuroscience
    - Ensure accurate messaging to teaching-stream faculty regarding engagement in research
    - Encourage social events on UTSC campus to orient all faculty and consider developing a colloquium series spearheaded by junior faculty
    - Encourage senior faculty members to hold administrative roles

3. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
    - Department is collegial, cooperative and friendly
    - Department has grown into a major research and teaching force on the UTSC campus
    - Good relationships with Faculty of Social Work, Biology and Neuroscience groups
    - Department plays important role in engaging and recruiting students from the local community
- Organizational and financial structure
    - Recently implementation of administrative organization has been excellent; the addition of a third associate chair was a positive move, and clear administrative definitions have helped resolve some Department growing pains
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
    - Management is excellent, especially given the limitations of space and staff, and the large student body
    - Chair has made progress on some recommendations from 2011-12 review
    - Chair is well regarded by colleagues, and has created collegial environment

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
  - Communication between co-op staff and faculty could be improved
- Organizational and financial structure
  - Space for faculty is adequate, but if additional space is not secured then it will be difficult to accommodate new hires and possibly challenging to recruit top candidates
    - While faculty are collegial with one another, lending office space to a new hire until space is available is an unsustainable practice
    - New space promised is slow to become available, and this affects new faculty productivity and progress towards tenure
  - Access to MRI equipment (only on St. George campus) is not ideal, and the purchase of an MRI magnet for UTSC is not feasible or recommended at this time, though UTSC should look into the long-range possibility of obtaining one
  - Limited staff resources for a large student population

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - Work on improving communication between co-op staff and faculty
- Organizational and financial structure
  - Department and central administration to ensure that adequate space in provided to these new hires in a timely fashion
  - Optimize access to MRI equipment and secure additional research space on St. George campus for UTSC faculty and students who are on-site using the MRI
    - Reviewers supported the plans to increase the use of EEG technology and encouraged central administration to continue to secure adequate EEG research space
  - Make two staff hires, one to support intro level courses and to assist with student guidance, and one to support the "Peer Scholar" tool
  - Provide dedicated Psychology space in the vivarium, including a dedicated undergraduate teaching lab for students interested in behavioural psychology

Administrative response—appended

August 16, 2018

Professor William A. Gough
Vice-Principal Academic and Dean
University of Toronto Scarborough

Dear Professor Gough:

Thank you for forwarding the report of the May 3-4, 2018 External Review of the Department of Psychology and its programs. The following programs were reviewed: Mental Health Studies, B.Sc. Hons. (Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Minor); Neuroscience, B.Sc. Hons. (Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major); and, Psychology, B.Sc. Hons. (Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Minor).

As indicated in our *Statement of Institutional Purpose*, the University of Toronto is committed "to being an internationally significant research university, with undergraduate, graduate and professional programs of excellent quality." This quality is assessed through the periodic appraisal of programs and units, which considers how our research scholarship and programs compare to those of our international peer institutions and assesses the alignment of our programs with established degree-level expectations. The University views the reports and recommendations made by external reviewers as opportunities to celebrate successes and identify areas for quality improvement.

The reviewers praised the department's innovative curricular tools and initiatives, which are well suited to the increasing student enrolment. The reviewers complemented the faculty noting the scholarly strength of faculty from across all ranks. The reviewers were also pleased to see the progress made on some of the recommendations from the previous review. Overall, the reviewers reported the Department to be a collegial environment.

I am writing at this time:
1. to request your administrative response to this report, including a plan for implementing recommendations;
2. to request your feedback on a summary of the review report; and
3. to outline the next steps in the process.

   1.   Request for Administrative Response and Implementation Plan

In your **administrative response**, please address the following areas raised by the reviewers and their impact on academic programs, *along with any additional areas you would like to prioritize*.

For each area you address, please provide an **Implementation Plan** that identifies actions to be accomplished in the immediate (six months), medium (one to two years) and longer (three to five years) terms, and who (Department, Dean) will take the lead in each area.

Programs & Curriculum
- The reviewers noted large student enrolment and class size limited student-faculty engagement and recommended considering ways to reduce enrolment pressures including the option of amending the admission requirements.

- The reviewers noted challenges with integrating critical analysis and writing skills into the curriculum and with providing writing support services to students. The reviewers recommended introducing writing and critical analysis into the curriculum earlier in programs, and suggested ways to increase writing support for students.

- The reviewers observed student frustration with access to upper level courses and recommended increasing offerings.

- The reviewers noted a high attrition rate of students from the co-op program option and recommended finding ways to improve communications, coordination and the breadth of available placements.

- The reviewers encouraged creating additional math and programming courses to support any potential plans to develop a new undergraduate program in imaging.

Faculty & Research
- The reviewers recommended working with the University to ensure that new faculty receive adequate space in a timely manner and that dedicated space for Psychology be available in the vivarium.

- The reviewers encouraged ensuring that faculty in the teaching stream are aware of the full scope of activity covered under pedagogical and professional development including "discipline-based scholarship in relation to, or relevant to, the field in which the faculty member teaches."

- The reviewers suggested developing social and research events to help orient new faculty and foster a sense of community.

- The reviewers encouraged the department to ensure that senior faculty take on leadership roles and allow early career faculty to establish their research careers.

- The reviewers encouraged optimizing access to the MRI and supported plans to increase the use of EEG technology.

Administration
- The reviewers recommended providing additional administrative support in the areas of technology and student advising.

2. **Summary**

My office will provide a summary of the review of Psychology **August 2018** for your feedback regarding tone or accuracy, and response to any information that is requested in the comments.

This summary becomes part of the governance record.

3. **Next Steps**

Reviews of academic programs and units are presented to University governance as a matter of University policy. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP), the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs prepares a report on all program and unit reviews and submits these periodically to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P).

The review of the Department of Psychology will be considered by AP&P at its meeting on **October 31, 2018 from 12:10 – 2:00 pm. Please plan to attend this meeting.** Your presence is important and will allow you to respond to any questions the committee may have regarding the report, and your administrative response and implementation plan. An overview of what happens at AP&P is available on our website.

I would appreciate receiving your completed administrative response and plan for implementing recommendations, as well as any comments on the summary by **October 10, 2018**. This will allow my office sufficient time to prepare materials for the AP&P meeting.

After AP&P, we will work closely with you to develop a Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan (a summary of the review's outcomes, including plans for implementing recommendations), which is posted on our website as required by the UTQAP.

Please feel free to contact me or Erin Meyers, Acting Coordinator, Academic Planning and Reviews, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

cc.
Mark A. Schmuckler, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, UTSC
Lesley Lewis, Assistant Dean, Academic, UTSC
Annette Knott, Academic Programs Officer, UTSC
Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning and Quality Assurance
Erin Meyers, Acting Coordinator, Academic Planning and Reviews

October 9, 2018

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
Simcoe Hall
University of Toronto

Dear Susan,

<div align="center">

Administrative Response:
External Review of the Department of Psychology

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Thank you for your letter of August 16, 2018 requesting my administrative response to the external review of the Department of Psychology. I appreciate the seriousness with which the reviewers approached the external review process, as well as the thoughtful consideration given to the Department and its undergraduate programs. I am particularly pleased to note the reviewers' acknowledgement of the Department's success in addressing the issues raised in their previous external review, the high morale in the Department, and the high quality of the faculty.

The external review report was sent to the Chair of the Department and has been shared widely among faculty, staff and students. The decanal group, including myself, the Vice-Dean Undergraduate, the Vice-Dean Graduate, and Academic Programs Officer met with the Department Chair and faculty on September 10, 2018 to discuss the external review, and the recommendations from the review report; I am pleased with the depth of the discussion that took place. We are considering the recommendations of the reviewers carefully and already have begun to act upon them.

Let me address the specific points raised in the letter:

Programs & Curriculum:

- The reviewers noted large student enrolment and class size limited student-faculty engagement and recommended considering ways to reduce enrolment pressures including the option of amending the admission requirements.

The reviewers agree with the Department that the quality of undergraduate programs suffer when enrolments are too high. As they note, large classes – when they are not supplemented by smaller tutorial sessions – can limit both the types of teaching and

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1

testing that can be employed, and the skills students can achieve in writing, logical analysis, and experimental design. The reviewers are therefore supportive of the Department's plans to reduce class sizes through mechanisms such as increasing enrolment requirements so as to reduce student intake numbers, but they offer the caution that the Department remain mindful of the potential impacts of a reduced enrolment on research support and the size of the faculty complement.

The Department will be initiating a two-stage process to address large student enrolment and class size. First, it will gradually raise the GPA averages associated with enrolment requirements in Psychology (PSY) and Mental Health Studies (MHS) programs, but in a manner that recognizes potential impacts (e.g., on faculty complement and research) of reduced enrolments. In the 2018-19 academic year the Department increased the GPA entrance averages associated with introductory Psychology courses in PSY and MHS programs from 60% to 64% for the Major and from 70% to 72% for the Specialist. In the 2019-20 academic year the GPA entrance averages will be further increased to 66% for Major programs and 74% for Specialist programs. Second, by 2021-22, entrance requirements into the OUAC admissions category for Department of Psychology programs will be revised to include a high school math and biology course.

In addition, although it will not impact student enrolment, the Department will strengthen the research methods component of the program requirements, and locate it earlier in the program. A proposal for changes in the organization and sequencing of research methods courses in the PSY and MHS programs was approved at a Department faculty meeting in September 2018. The resulting curricular changes are being submitted in the current governance cycle, with an anticipated effective date of the 2019-20 academic year. Consideration of the research methods component for the Neuroscience program will be undertaken in the coming year.

- The reviewers noted challenges with integrating critical analysis and writing skills into the curriculum, and with providing writing support services to students. The reviewers recommended introducing writing and critical analysis into the curriculum earlier in programs, and suggested ways to increase writing support for students.

The reviewers believe there is more work to be done to ensure all students have exposure to writing opportunities both early in, and also throughout, their program. Towards this end, the committee recommends that the Department make greater use of written assignments – as opposed to multiple choice tests – as an assessment tool, and revise the curriculum to ensure students complete a minimum number of writing-intensive courses.

The Department currently is engaged in a curriculum mapping exercise that has a primary objective of identifying areas for strengthening skill development, including writing, public speaking, group work, constructive responding to feedback, etc., – from the B-level and upward. MHS will be mapped in the next six months, and PSY within the next year. Neuroscience will be mapped during the next academic year. In addition, the Department is currently reviewing a number of instructional tools that may provide richer writing opportunities to students, including continued development of peerScholar and other pedagogical tools.

- The reviewers observed student frustration with access to upper level courses and recommended increasing offerings.

The reviewers note that, in line with other Psychology departments, the UTSC Department of Psycholgy's strategy for dealing with their very large enrolments is to allow bigger classes in lower-level courses, while classes in upper-level courses are smaller. To support this effort, they recommend the Department provide more courses at the D-level.

The Department notes that, in the past 3-4 years, on average 3 new C- and D-level courses have been introduced each year, providing students with a much greater variety of courses in many areas of study from which to select; however, it recognizes there is more work to be done – particularly in areas like developmental studies. Therefore, it will continue to work to offer more C-level courses by core faculty members (these courses will be capped at 100 students), as well as to increase the number and diversity of D-level seminar courses.

- The reviewers noted a high attrition rate of students from the Co-op program option and recommended finding ways to improve communications, coordination and the breadth of available placements.

As the reviewers acknowledge, interest in Co-op is growing and students who are successfully placed in work terms are very pleased with their Co-op experience; however they express some concern about the attrition rate in the Co-op program, suggesting it may be due to difficulty finding suitable placements. They also note that scheduling issues associated with the timing of the work terms may be impeding some students in Co-op programs from accessing D-level courses. They believe better communication between the Department and the Arts & Science Co-op Office regarding placements, and better coordination of the undergraduate teaching schedule and the work term placement schedule will resolve these issues.

The Department will be striking a working committee to address the high attrition rates of students from the Co-op programs. The Department has already reached out to the Director of Arts & Science Co-op to arrange a meeting to discuss strategies for facilitiating student retention and success in the Co-op programs. Based on a recent analysis, carried out by the Co-op office, of attrition rates across units and programs, low grades (i.e., not meeting the minimum GPA requirement of 2.5) have been identified as the primary reason that students leave Co-op after the first year. That said, first year exit rates in Psychological and Health Sciences is the lowest of all Co-op program areas (25% as compared to 32% in the other Life Sciences and 45% in the Social Sciences/Humanities). Thus, although attrition rates are of continued concern for the Department, these should be considered in the broader context of Arts & Science Co-op.

- The reviewers encouraged creating additional math and programming courses to support any potential plans to develop a new undergraduate program in imaging.

The Department is planning to introduce a new undergraduate program in Cognitive Neuroscience. As part of the program development process, the Department will begin reviewing its math and programing offerings and will develop new math and programming courses as needed.

Faculty & Research:

- The reviewers recommended working with the University to ensure that new faculty receive adequate space in a timely manner and that dedicated space for Psychology be available in the vivarium.

The reviewers highlight the importance of appropriate space in attracting excellent faculty, and they express some concern regarding the availability of existing space to accommodate growth. They encourage the Department and central administration to ensure adequate and appropriate space is provided for new faculty, and that dedicated space be provided in the vivarium for faculty and students engaged in research in behavioural neuroscience.

The Vice-Principal Academic and Dean notes that there is a new process at UTSC for identifying space and equipment needs for new faculty that involves the offices of the Dean, the Vice-Principal Research (VPR), and the CAO that enables the Campus to prepare in a pro-active way for new faculty needs. This new process also encourages departments to consider the research facility needs of new faculty at the time that they develop their faculty complement plans. The availability of suitable space will be taken into consideration at the time that the campus develops its next 5-year complement plan. In addition to this process, the Department Chair recognizes there is also a need to help manage faculty expectations.

With regard to the vivarium, the VPR has reviewed the use of the vivarium, and spaces were created with shared used based on the type of research needs. The Department will continue to advocate for some dedicated space for Psychology, given that a shared model is not always appropriate for the type of work undertaken by some of its faculty members.

- The reviewers encouraged ensuring that faculty in the teaching stream are aware of the full scope of activity covered under pedagogical and professional development including "discipline-based scholarship in realtion to, or relevant to, the field in which the faculty member teaches".

As the reviewers note, the Department of Psychology is notably "collegial, cooperative and friendly" (p. 7). They stress that teaching stream faculty are treated with respect, play an important role in the education and life of the Department, and have their input seriously considered: "Indeed," they say, "we see the Psychology UTSC model as one that should be adopted elsewhere" (p.7). As a minor point, they suggest the Department

and central administration actively promote the message that teaching stream faculty are encouraged to conduct research in their fields of expertise.

The Department will work to improve messaging to faculty on UTSC's newly revised *Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching* which outlines the criteria required for promotion to associate and full-rank professor, in both the teaching and tenure streams. Part of the requirement for continuing status or promotion in the teaching stream is ongoing professional/pedagogical development, as is outlined in the guidelines. The Department Chair (who is new this year) attended a UTSC Chair's and Director's retreat, held in September 2018, in which the revised *Guidelines* were a key point of discussion. In addition, faculty will be directed to the workshops and information sessions that are regularly offered by the Office of the Vice-Provost Faculty and Academic Life in co-operation with the Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs and Equity. Finally, the Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs and Equity has, in the past year, introduced new mentorship opportunities and other supports for career development and progress towards promotion for teaching and tenure stream faculty across the campus, and faculty response has been very positive. This includes a Professional/Pedagogical Development Fund for the Teaching Stream, launched in April 2018 for which eligible expenses include (among other items): *Pedagogical research supporting contributions to the pedagogical literature, workshops or other pedagogical development opportunities*; and *Discipline - based scholarship in relation to, or relevant to, the field in which the faculty member teaches.* While this was widely disseminated, it will take some time for new guidelines and procedures to supplant old practice.

- The reviewers suggested developing social and research events to help orient new faculty and foster a sense of community.

The reviewers urge the Department to enage in more events designed to bring faculty and students together outside of class, so as to generate and support a greater sense of departmental life and cohesion. In particular they recommend social gatherings centred around holidays, and the development of local colloquium series. The latter could be spearheaded by junior faculty.

The Department agrees there is room for improvement in this regard. As a first step, Psychology hosted a "Welcome Back" lunch, as well as an orientation and mingle for incoming graduate students and postdocs in September 2018. In addition it has struck two new committees: a "Seminar and Events Committee" to develop a colloquium series and other academic and social events; and a "Graduate Affairs Committee" aimed at strengthening graduate student and postdoctoral presence and culture at UTSC, and building community between experimental and clinical students. The new committees have begun meeting this Fall term. The Department plans to launch the new colloquium series in the new year.

- The reviewers encouraged the Department to ensure that senior faculty take on leadership roles and allow early career faculty to establish their research careers.

The Department is making efforts to ensure an equitable distribution of service across faculty ranks, in ways that allow early and mid-career faculty more time to focus on establishing their research and teaching careers. The Department acknowledges that approximately 28% of its faculty hold the rank of Professor, however, their participation on the tenure and promotion committees of junior faculty are an important, and time-consuming component of their service.

For early and mid-career faculty, the Department is working to develop local processes to facilitate career development and progress through the ranks in a timely manner. In the coming academic year, the Department will hold "brown bag lunches" for assistant and associate professors, aimed at providing guidance and support to early and mid-career faculty; these activities are meant to complement recent mentorship initiatives by the Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs and Equity. In addition, faculty are encouraged to participate in the NCFDD Faculty Success Program, the costs of which are covered by the Provost, Dean and Chair's Offices. Feedback from faculty who have completed this program have been highly positive and enthusiastic.

- The reviewers encouraged optimizing access to the MRI and supported plans to increase the use of EEG technology.

As the reviewers note, there is a reasonable argument to be made for UTSC to obtain its own fMRI; however, they recognize this may be a longer term goal. In the shorter term, they urge the Department to optimize use of the fMRI located on the St. George campus, and proceed with plans to bolster other types of imaging technology, such as EEG. Towards this end they recommend that the Department and central administration work together to: (1) establish a dedicated research space for UTSC faculty and students at the St. George fMRI facility; and (2) resolve the inadequacies associated with existing labs being used for EEG research, as well as provide additional EEG space and equipment.

The Department is looking at cost effective ways to gain better access to the fMRI on the St George Campus, and also to expand their EEG capacity. Towards that end, Department has scheduled a meeting, to take place in the Fall 2018 term, with the Vice-Principal Research and the CAO to discuss partnerships and strategy.

Administration:

- The reviewers recommended providing additional administrative support in the areas of technology and student advising.

The reviewers encourage the Department to engage a dedicated technician to support Peer-Scholar. They also suggest that, given current enrolment levels, an additional front-line staff member would be beneficial – particularly in providing support for the introductory Psychology courses.

In the Summer, the Department was grateful to receive funding to increase a staff position from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE and the Chair is in the process of hiring a new departmental

assistant into this position. This increase in FTE allows for a significant redistribution of duties in the administrative office, and in a manner that is expected to strengthen supports in areas of instructional technology and student advising. The Chair will continue to review the Department's needs and make further adjustments in the distribution of duties amongst administrative staff in the coming year. If it is determined that a need exists, a request will be made to the Dean for an additional position.

Regards,

Professor Willliam Gough
Vice-Principal Academic and Dean

Action	Implementation Timeline	Lead
The Department will fill a new 1.0 FTE administrative staff position by November 2018.	Immediate (6 months)	Department Chair
The Department Chair will meet with the Vice-Principal Research to discuss equipment needs in Psychology.	Immediate (6 months)	Department Chair and Associate Chair, Research
The Department will advocate for dedicated space in the vivarium for faculty that need it for their research.	Immediate and ongoing (6 months and ongoing)	Department Chair.
The Department will continue to communicate with faculty about the revised *Teaching Guidelines* and provide additional resources and supports.	Immediate and ongoing (6 months and ongoing)	Department Chair
The Department's new Seminar and Events Committee and Graduate Affairs Committee will begin meeting and developing ideas for social events and a colloquium series	Immediate and ongoing (6 months and ongoing)	Department Chair and Associate Chair Research
The Department will	Immediate to Medium (6	Department Associate Chair

increase the GPA entrance averages associated with introductory Psychology courses to 66 for the Major and 74 for the Specialist.	months to 1 year)	Undergraduate and Departmental Curriculum Committee
The Department will revise the sequencing of research methods courses in PSY and MHS programs.	Immediate to Medium (6 months to 1 year)	Department Associate Chair Undergraduate and Departmental Curriculum Committee
The Department will engage in curriculum mapping for all three areas of study with the primary objective of identifying areas where writing can be strengthened.	• MHS: Immediate (6 months) • PSY: Medium (1 year to 2 years) • Neuroscience: Medium (1 year to 2 years)	Department Associate Chair Undergraduate and Departmental Curriculum Committee
The Department will convene a working group to review attrition in the Co-op programs. In addition, the Department will meet with the Director of Arts and Science Co-op.	Immediate to Medium (6 months to 2 years)	Department Chair and Faculty Advisor to Co-op
As new faculty are brought on board, the Department will continue to develop and introduce new courses to meet program needs and student demand.	Immediate to Longer (6 months to five years)	Department Chair and Associate Chair Undergraduate
The Department will work with the Registrar's Office to add high school math and biology to the requirements for the OUAC admissions catetory for all Department of Psychology programs.	Medium (1 to 2 years)	Department Associate Chair Undergraduate and Departmental Curriculum Committee
The Department will convene a committee to review math and programming offerings.	Medium (1 to 2 years)	Department Associate Chair Undergraduate and faculty