

**5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Texas A&M**

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**2015-2020**

Approved by Psychology Faculty: 5/6/15

## **Vision**

The Department of Psychology at Texas A&M University seeks to be a leader in psychological research and education.

## **Mission**

The Department of Psychology conducts and disseminates innovative scientific research that impacts the discipline and provides service to the community; trains outstanding doctoral-level research scientists and practitioners; and provides a one-of-a-kind undergraduate education that prepares students for life-long learning through the development of critical thinking skills and a broad intellectual perspective.

## **Description of Department**

The TAMU Psychology Department is housed in the College of Liberal Arts. The Department has 48 faculty, 11 support staff, and an annual budget of >\$4million. Departmental researchers generate approximately \$2 million annually in sponsored projects/contracts. The Department regularly serves between 1200-1300 majors, about 800 minors, and approximately 80 doctoral students enrolled across six Doctoral programs (Clinical, Cognitive, Developmental, Industrial/Organizational, Neuroscience, Social). The Psychology Department has the largest number of majors and generates the largest amount of extramural funding of all Departments in the College of Liberal Arts.

## Description of Strategic Planning Process

During Fall 2014, faculty voted to undergo a department-wide strategic planning process. An external consultant was recruited to facilitate this process. Fourteen representatives attended a workshop conducted by the facilitator. These representatives included faculty at each rank (assistant, associate, full), in each area (behavioral and cellular neuroscience, clinical, cognitive, industrial/organizational, social), and in each research concentration (affective science, diversity science, fMRI, personality processes), as well as representatives of graduate student interests, administrative interests, staff and business interests, and undergraduate student interests. This group generated goals, strategies, and tactics for the department and offered initial priority ratings of these for each of the department stakeholders. The information generated by the group was collated and all faculty in the department completed a survey in which they gave priority ratings for the different goals and strategies. The facilitators and administration used these ratings to identify goals/strategies that were considered important to the future of the department and developed measurable outcomes associated with each, in alignment with college and university strategic plans. Faculty and staff provided additional suggestions to refine the tactics and measurable outcomes.

## Summary of Goals

1. Generate research that impacts the discipline and community
2. Enhance the visibility and clarify the impact of Faculty's work on the discipline, University, and State of Texas
3. Promote a scientific understanding of human behavior through a rigorous program of undergraduate education that provides students with skills relevant to the needs of today's employers and enables undergraduates to achieve their goals
4. Develop and promote a leading doctoral graduate program, based on significant scholarly contributions to the discipline
5. Implement practices and policies that provide an inclusive workplace and learning environment

## Strategies for Accomplishing Goal #1

### Generate research that impacts the discipline and community

#### ***Strategy 1. Recruit, retain, and develop top scientific minds***

- a. Recruit and retain tenure-track faculty who build on existing departmental strengths and have fundable research programs
- b. Promote faculty research programs through investment of resources in research groups organized around core strengths (i.e., areas targeted for development & growth by faculty consensus) with a history of productivity or high potential for future intellectual impact
- c. Provide support for faculty to develop skills and resources needed for engagement in the field
- d. Implement formal mentoring programs for faculty and consider mentoring as important service
- e. Foster an exciting intellectual environment by providing opportunities for dialogue, engagement, and collaborations

See also Measurable Outcomes under Strategy 2

Measurable Outcome: in the three years following department investment, supported faculty demonstrate a 20% increase in publications and/or grant applications over the previous 3 years

Measurable Outcome: 40% of full rank faculty participate in department mentoring activities

#### ***Strategy 2. Increase frequency and impact of publications***

- a. Tie resource allocation and workload to number and quality of publications
- b. Evaluate the impact of work in promotion and tenure decisions
- c. Develop and enhance department infrastructure so faculty can focus their time on being research productive (e.g., hire additional staff and provide training as needed to ensure quality research administration; streamline administrative procedures; use technology to reduce administrative burdens)

Measurable Outcome: Department in the Top 10 of AAU Land-Grant Institutions in terms of journal publications and citations per faculty member by 2020

Measurable Outcome: 75% of T/TT faculty cited by experts in the field on average more than 30 times/year

#### ***Strategy 3. Increase extramural research funding***

- a. Strategically invest in research programs based on potential return on investment
- b. Secure and distribute funds to conduct required pilot investigations
- c. Create incentives for resubmission of competitively scored grants
- d. Invest in development and training resources to support faculty grant-writing
- e. Identify and disseminate mechanisms for state funding, small grant funding, and exploratory grant funding, and encourage applications to these opportunities

Measurable Outcome: 90% of T/TT faculty submit an application for extramural research support in the past three years

Measurable Outcome: Research expenditures per T/TT faculty that are at the 70th percentile based on Academic Analytics data (in 2015, \$167,239)

## Strategies for Accomplishing Goal #2

### Enhance the visibility and clarify the impact of Faculty's work on the discipline, University, and State of Texas

#### **Strategy 1. Proactively publicize and promote Departmental research, teaching, and service activities to relevant general and technical media**

- a. Build an online presence reflective of the department's dynamic research and educational programs
- b. Engage academically-oriented social media
- c. Regularly engage university-level media specialists to provide support to faculty in disseminating work
- d. Develop connections with department alumni and produce a department newsletter that goes out to alumni every year
- e. Develop connections with community through outreach opportunities

Measurable Outcome: 25% of T/TT faculty have their research covered in regional, national, or international media outlets per year

Measurable Outcome: 50% of graduating psychology majors recruited into the alumni system and receive the yearly newsletter

Measurable Outcome: Established system for alumni donations with yearly increases in donations

#### **Strategy 2. Seek and obtain professional recognition and/or awards, including election to editorial boards and grant review panels**

- a. Develop a mechanism to position faculty for awards, and to identify and nominate faculty for awards and prizes
- b. Consider recognitions and awards in promotion and tenure decisions and the distribution of resources within the department
- c. Develop a mechanism to position faculty for invitations to prestigious editorial boards and grant review panels

Measurable Outcome: T/TT faculty receive an average of .40 professional recognitions or awards (e.g., fellow status) per faculty member in a 5 year span

Measurable Outcome: 50% of T/TT faculty serve on journal editorial boards (with 5-year IFs over 2) and/or grant review panels in a 5 year span

#### **Strategy 3. Actively participate in College, University, and discipline governance/leadership**

- a. Consider governance and leadership roles in promotion and tenure decisions and the distribution of resources within the department
- b. Develop a mechanism to identify, promote, and train people to serve in key leadership positions across the university

Measurable Outcome: 70% of faculty serve in College or University committee or in leadership roles in professional organizations in a 5 year span

Measurable Outcome: Departmental representative on each major university committee or group within a 5 year span

### Strategies for Accomplishing Goal #3

## **Promote scientific understanding of behavior through a rigorous program of undergraduate education that provides students with skills relevant to today's employers and enables undergraduates to achieve their goals**

### ***Strategy 1. Deliver high-quality undergraduate education that is modern and end-focused***

- a. Develop online or hybrid courses, based on department needs and faculty training and interest
- b. Develop courses and curricular tracks that include skill-focused knowledge and experiences
- c. Provide resources for course development relevant to study abroad opportunities for undergraduates, with a focus on globalization
- d. Provide resources to support and recognition for faculty-student interactions that promote mentoring and skills training
- e. Recognize and promote pedagogical innovations and strong teachers who are responsive to students

Measurable Outcome: 90% of faculty consistently receive 4 out of 5 or better ratings by students

Measurable Outcome: 90% of faculty actively mentor undergraduate researchers and facilitate honors research and independent study students

Measurable Outcome: 70% of undergraduates complete at least one high-impact learning experience, including research study, independent study, or study abroad opportunities

### ***Strategy 2. Develop innovative methods to enhance the advising of large numbers of undergraduate students given limited advising resources***

- a. Support creative solutions to advising issues and provide resources for their implementation
- b. Support the professional development of advisors, including training in best practices for advising in higher education
- c. Promote mechanisms to offer advice about career and post-secondary educational opportunities to undergraduates

Measurable Outcome: 80% of undergraduates report satisfaction with their advising experiences upon graduation

Measurable Outcome: 70% of full-time freshman undergraduates complete their degree within four years, 80% in five years

### ***Strategy 3. Place graduates in relevant and prestigious jobs and programs***

- a. Establish an advisory council made up of alumni and members representative of the diverse group of employers who hire psychology majors
- b. Identify those skills most desired by employers and build upon those aspects of the undergraduate curriculum
- c. Build upon the existing curriculum to develop courses and structures that prepare students interested in graduate school
- d. Generate internship opportunities for undergraduates that match their professional aspirations

Measurable Outcome: 30% of undergraduates placed in a graduate or professional program at graduation

Measurable Outcome: 85% of those undergraduates not interested in graduate training report that they have obtained employment by graduation

## Strategies for Accomplishing Goal #4

### **Develop and promote a leading doctoral graduate program, based on significant scholarly contributions to the discipline**

#### ***Strategy 1. Generate high quality and impactful research***

- a. Prioritize research productivity in allocations of department funding to graduate students
- b. Consider publication with students and placement of students in academic jobs in resource allocation to faculty
- c. Provide support for graduate student applications for research grants and fellowships (e.g., NSF, NIH, Fulbright)

Measurable Outcome: 80% of T/TT faculty publish with graduate students in a 3 year span

Measurable Outcome: 50% of graduate students apply for research support and fellowships in a 3 year span

#### ***Strategy 2. Attract more, high quality graduate students***

- a. Increase the number and amount of stipends to levels consistent with the top 10 AAU Land Grant Psychology Departments
- b. Identify and reduce barriers to recruitment and retention of quality graduate students
- c. Enhance department-level and area-specific recruiting efforts
- d. Facilitate the transition of international students to the department

Measurable Outcome: The number of admitted graduate students is at least 18 per year

Measurable Outcome: 10% increase in GRE and GPA scores across areas by 2020

#### ***Strategy 3. Place graduate students in prestigious jobs***

- a. Ensure that all Departmental doctoral programs have forward thinking, structured graduate curricula designed to make students competitive for prestigious jobs in their areas
- b. Provide support for graduate students in learning pedagogical and presentation skills in order to make teaching more efficient and effective
- d. Support workshops designed to enhance productivity (e.g., grant writing, writing) and prepare for the job market (e.g., vita preparation)
- e. Develop clear standards for students to remain in good standing in the graduate program

Measurable Outcome: 65% of graduate students placed in academic postdoctoral or faculty positions upon graduation

Measurable Outcome: Of those students not placed in academic positions, 90% place in private or public sector jobs or internships in their area within 6 months of graduation

## Strategies for Accomplishing Goal #5

### Implement practices and policies that provide an inclusive workplace and learning environment

#### ***Strategy 1. Create a culture in which faculty act for the greater good of the Department***

- a. Engage full-rank faculty to lead department initiatives to attain strategic objectives
- b. Consider quality departmental service in evaluations
- c. Involve associate/assistant T/TT faculty in department committees and initiatives
- d. Encourage more positive faculty-staff interactions and a culture of mutual respect and assistance

Measurable Outcome: 40% of full-rank faculty lead department committees or initiatives related to strategic objectives

Measurable Outcome: 80% of assistant/associate T/TT faculty participate in department committees or initiatives

#### ***Strategy 2. Maintain strong, transparent Departmental leadership with active faculty and staff engagement***

- a. Engage a committee to annually evaluate progress toward the strategic objectives, provide suggestions for further development, and report to the department
- b. Engage faculty committees in standardizing and disseminating policies that impact the department (consistent with university/college policies)
- c. Develop agendas for all department committees at the start of each semester
- d. Create a feedback mechanism for the department head to be able to evaluate performance
- e. Include staff members on committees and in meetings that are relevant to their job positions or interests

Measurable Outcome: The department budget and policies align with strategic objectives, in that discretionary funds and resources are provided to faculty and initiatives that support department objectives

Measurable Outcome: Staff are represented on committees

#### ***Strategy 3. Foster a workplace and learning environment that supports and encourages diversity***

- a. Develop department programs/policies that enhance recruitment and retention of faculty and graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds
- b. Develop administrative and advising practices that enhance recruitment and retention of undergraduate psychology majors from underrepresented backgrounds
- c. Develop a mechanism to train and retain quality staff in department positions, and to foster a supportive working environment
- d. Develop guidelines for and support for academic professional faculty

Measurable Outcome: 100% of faculty receive high-quality mentoring throughout the Promotion & Tenure process

Measurable Outcome: 80% of faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and staff report satisfaction with the department climate and support

Measurable Outcome: 50% of psychology major applicants from underrepresented backgrounds enter the undergraduate program

Measurable Outcome: 90% of staff who desire job-relevant training are able to complete this training