



Department and Program Review Response Letter Psychology

June 6, 2025

Dear Matthew, Andria, Ari, and Sean:

Thank you for taking part in Department & Program Review (DPR) this year. The DPR process reveals critical connections that link your strengths, needs, values, priorities, and plans to those of the College. Further, it supports our commitment to innovation through continual improvement. We commend your dedication to empowering our students, engaging our communities, and supporting our values. This response to your report is based on what we see as your successes, what you and we identified as challenges, and guidance on how to proceed with the goals and needs you have described.

Successes and Kudos

We want to begin with a celebration of how well psychology prepares students for transfer to universities in Oregon. While not all students who take psychology courses intend to major in the field, those who do have access to research opportunities through the Indonesia field experiences and the undergraduate research lab. Your development of the Friday learning community also gives students an opportunity to connect and interact with their professors and fellow students in order to advance their learning beyond the classroom. Classroom experiences remain strong in psychology through strong and student-centered teaching, and you are offering innovative approaches to the field through your readings course, Careers in Psychology, and the undergraduate research lab mentioned above.

Psychology has contributed well to the Strategic Plan goals of Student Readiness and Access. The discipline was an early adopter of Guided Pathways concepts, leading the way in use of the ask, connect, inspire, plan approach to helping students identify and complete coursework that leads to transfer. This includes your active club and national honor society work as well as the innovative curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Psychology has a regularly offered coursework at the branch campuses and online as well as working with eLearning to create ADA-compliant course shells for PSY 201Z and 202Z, all of which provide access to college coursework to students throughout our large, rural district.

Challenges

Psychology has also encountered several challenges. As both a popular major and a service discipline, finding adequately prepared instructors is always a concern. For the moment, you have a well-qualified staff, but should your long-time adjunct faculty member who serves the branch campuses leave, you will need to find a replacement. Watch the work of Education and Humanities, both of which are experimenting with full-time temporary faculty who are branch campus specialists. Should this prove successful. It may be something for Psychology to consider when you need a new faculty member.

You also mentioned the challenge of adequately funding student participation in some of the transfer-related work. You have employed some creative efforts to raise funds by/for students and are experiencing challenges with ASCOCC constraining the funds Psychology has raised. Work with your instructional dean to help navigate any institutional barriers that are raised, and to discuss options through Fiscal that may prove less cumbersome.

It can sometimes be a challenge for you to find an adequately sized space for a large audience. You mentioned the idea of opening up possibilities by replacing a permanent wall in Modoc with one that can be opened or closed based on the size of the audience at an event. Work with your dean to write a facilities space request so that Campus Services can begin to consider plans and get this into a queue along with other needs at the College.

On a broader scale, and like many social sciences and humanities faculty, Psychology is feeling the tension within the national political climate regarding some concepts that are challenging to students (diversity, equity, inclusion, gender). You are also struggling with student use of artificial intelligence in their course assignments and working to adjust curriculum and assessments to this new reality. Such pressures are not unique to COCC, which means that broader-based strategies will become more and more prevalent in higher education that we will need to embrace and support.

Goals and needs

You have identified several goals and needs for the next five years.

Goal 1: Enhance student research opportunities and secure professional development funds for students and faculty participation.

In addition to the student funding ideas noted above, we would like to note recent improvements made to support faculty participation in this work. Departmental professional development funds have increased to \$1000 per full-time faculty member, and there has also been non-instructional load granted next year for the coordination of the Undergraduate Research Lab (UGRL). Faculty in need of funding beyond the standard PIP allocation should also be encouraged to apply for additional PIP funds.

Goal 2: Develop internships and Cooperative Work Experience opportunities.

We support connecting this work with the psychology advising hub, and encourage you to continue to work with the Guided Pathways Subject Matter Experts team on how to institutionalize this work.

Goal 3: Create an upper campus hub for a student learning community associated with the Educational Pathway targeting Social Science students, through facilities updates to Modoc.

As a result of this DPR, your dean met with representatives of your discipline and others housed in Modoc to create a plan for requesting updates via various College processes. We are pleased to note that you have already submitted a request to the Furniture and Fixtures Fund for this year.

Goal 4: Increase staffing to support needs of students and campuses.

In addition to the potential position request noted earlier, we want to encourage you and your chair to continue your good collaboration with other disciplines that can provide Social Science Discipline Studies courses at the branch campuses to alleviate the demand on your faculty.

Goal 5: Secure FT faculty additional load or securing staffing to assist with the coordination and publicity of the different aspects of the learning community and research experiences.

Some of this work is compensated via the non-instructional load for UGRL noted under Goal 1, and some by load release granted to Subject Matter Experts. Consult with your dean for additional requests, and we encourage you to explore grant funding as well.

Goal 6: Establish better advising tools and resources.

As you note in your report, the implementation of embedded advisors in Education Pathways should help with your resource needs – we encourage you to see how this rolls out and continue to evaluate your needs. Regarding a scheduling tool to assist with advising, continue to work with your dean to identify technical needs and solutions.


Conclusion

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to student readiness. Together, we can build on our achievements, address the challenges ahead, and meet the evolving needs of our students. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out. We look forward to working collaboratively to enhance the quality and impact of the Psychology program.

Sincerely yours,



Annemarie E. Hamlin
Vice President of Academic Affairs



Jessica Giglio
Instructional Dean



Tony Russell
Instructional Dean