

Committee on Academic Planning and Review
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**Review of Psychology Cluster
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Charge to the External Reviewers**

December 7, 2006

1. Current Issues in the Field.
What are the ongoing issues and debates in the field of psychology, nationally and internationally, that should be attended to as Rutgers moves forward with a plan for enhancing its excellence?
 - a. Are there topics/areas that seem to be in decline nationally?
 - b. Where are the likely areas of growth?
 - c. What trends do you see in how psychology at other universities is relating to and interacting with other units or fields of study?

2. Reputation of Rutgers Psychology.
In which areas are Rutgers' programs in psychology best known nationally and internationally, and what is the basis for their reputation? Please comment on the strengths, weaknesses, and distinctive areas of Rutgers' departments/programs/schools in psychology.
 - a. Given your assessment, in what two or three areas is Rutgers best positioned to improve its excellence and stature?
 - b. *How* can Rutgers best leverage its strengths in these two or three areas to make significant advances in psychology and related areas?
 - c. What resources and actions are needed to make significant advances in these areas?
 - d. What key strategic decisions should Rutgers consider as it decides how to advance excellence in psychology?

3. Learning From Others.
Can you identify other universities that have recently made major improvements in the excellence and stature of their psychology programs?
 - a. What factors were most important to the ability of the universities to make major improvements?
 - b. Does Rutgers have the key factors needed to make major improvements?

4. Service Activities.

Included in the mission of several of the units involved in this review is service to the public, which typically is offered in schools, clinics and corporations. These services often dovetail with training for professional practice and/or faculty research. What should the units be doing to:

 - a. Enhance the excellence of their service components?
 - b. Integrate their service activities with training or research?
 - c. Are there missed opportunities for collaboration among the cluster review units in providing these services?

5. Interdisciplinary Research Activities.

One difficulty with a discipline-centered cluster review is delimiting the cluster. The cluster for psychology focuses on units of the University with significant concentrations of psychologists. However, psychology is an interdisciplinary science, and it is important for the Psychology Department to develop appropriate connections to the rest of the university and exploit the opportunities arising from these connections.

 - a. What are the most important interdisciplinary clusters of psychological activity that the department should focus on (e.g., Neuroscience? Cognitive science? Health? Other?)
 - b. What barriers currently restrict or interfere with Rutgers' Psychology's interdisciplinary activities, if any? What are some realistic approaches to dealing with these barriers?

6. Teaching.

What are the issues to consider when deciding how much to invest in and grow the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral programs?

7. Administrative Structures.

In light of your answers to questions 1-6:

 - a. What are the most appropriate roles for centers and institutes in achieving excellence?
 - b. What on-going mechanisms could increase success in collaborative work?
 - c. Do the administrative structures now in place help (how?) or hinder (how?) Rutgers' ability to leverage its strengths and make significant advances in psychology? What alternative organizational structures should be considered, if any?

8. Should the units consider developing a common strategic plan? Who should be included? How would integration among the units and programs be accomplished?