I. Program Overview – A one to two-page summary of department’s vision and goals.

Overview of the Department of Psychology:

The Department of Psychology has a long and documented record of providing effective graduate education. We attract excellent graduate students, with outstanding academic records, from strong colleges and universities. The vast majority of these students do very well in their graduate studies at Texas Tech University, they serve with talent and grace as graduate student instructors and TAs, they collaborate on important research and conduct excellent master’s theses (or the equivalent) and doctoral dissertations, and they provide a wide range of services to the department, college, university, and community. Moreover, Psychology has the largest doctoral program on campus, with 119 doctoral students currently enrolled (fall 2010) in our Clinical Psychology, Counseling Psychology, and Experimental Psychology PhD Programs. In summary, our excellent graduate students have always been one of the cornerstones to our outstanding graduate degree programs in Psychology.

Our doctoral students in Psychology come here with strong GPAs, GRE scores, academic experiences, and letters of recommendation that will compare favorably with any academic unit at Texas Tech University. They come from a broad array of undergraduate settings, including well-regarded liberal arts colleges, large state research universities, private research universities, and elite higher education institutions of every type. The vast majority of these students do extremely well in their studies, teaching, research, and service at TTU. Almost all of them find appropriate employment within one year of their doctoral graduation. A majority of the Clinical and Counseling graduates move on to applied jobs in hospitals, clinics, agencies, schools, and other organizations. A substantial minority of these Clinical and Counseling graduates, however, move to academic jobs at colleges, universities, and academic medical centers. A majority of the Experimental graduates move on to academic jobs at small and large colleges, regional and research universities, and other academic settings. However, a substantial minority of these Experimental graduates—particularly in Human Factors Psychology, but also in Applied Cognitive Psychology and Social Psychology—move on to applied jobs in government, industry, large companies, regulatory agencies, consulting firms, and so forth. Feedback that we have received from various sources during the period of this review—and actually also during the last 40 years—indicates that most of our doctoral graduates do well in the job world. They are often described as hard-working, effective, poised, articulate, professional, and gracious. We are very proud of our doctoral graduates.

The Department of Psychology also has a long and established record of having gifted, hard-working and successful faculty members. We currently have 29 tenured or tenure-track faculty positions in Psychology, including the position for a new Department Chair to begin September 2011. A search for this new chair, which is national in scope, is already underway. The Psychology faculty members consistently have records as excellent teachers, and they are highly-effective in their teaching. For example, we currently have 12 members of the TTU Teaching Academy (43% of the current psychology faculty), which is a peer-reviewed association of approximately 15% of the University faculty, and which supports and promotes teaching excellence in numerous ways. Our current faculty also boast a winner of the President’s Excellence in Teaching Award, a past-president of the Teaching Academy, a department-wide...
award from the Teaching Academy for overall teaching excellence in Psychology, 100% membership of the Psychology faculty on the TTU Graduate Faculty (peer-reviewed for teaching excellence, and for strong standing as scholars and researchers to teach graduate courses), and other indicators of teaching excellence. Furthermore, our Psychology faculty colleagues do a lot of graduate teaching. Virtually all Psychology faculty members teach at least one organized graduate course per year, some teach several such courses per year, all serve on dissertation committees, and some serve on 15-20 dissertation committees per year (department M ~ 4.5 dissertation committees per year, per faculty member). In summary, the psychology faculty members are frequent contributors to graduate education at TTU and they are outstanding teachers.

The Psychology faculty members have also been very successful in research. For example, we consistently publish more than 100 refereed journal articles and several books per year (e.g., M = 4.37 & 4.50 publications per faculty member, in 2009 & 2008), submit many grant proposals (e.g., M = 32 proposals in 2009, requesting over $5M total in grants) and get some of them funded, serve on numerous prestigious editorial boards (e.g., 9 editors or associate editors of journals and book series, and members of 35 journal editorial boards in 2009, including some of the most prestigious journals in psychology, such as a ½-dozen APA-journals, and journals of the Human Factors Society and Social and Cognitive Psychology Associations), and present well over 100 convention papers per year at national conventions. Our Psychology faculty colleagues include two Horn Professors, a recent Fulbright Scholar, several colleagues who are among the most-cited psychologists in their research specialties in the nation, a number of colleagues who have attracted large amounts of external grant support for research and training (e.g., two recently-funded training grants have totaled over $600K and $300K), authors and editors of several books with prestigious publishers (e.g., APA, Oxford, Guilford, Routledge, Sage, etc.) which have been well-received by the academic community, and many colleagues serving as expert consultants for a large number of pro-bono service requests. Some of this research success, of course, is reflected in the work of our faculty at more-senior levels. But our more-junior faculty members are also quite successful in research. For instance, as just one of many possible examples, one of our junior faculty members recently won a “Distinguished Research Award” from APA for her 2009 publication in the APA’s Journal of Experimental Psychology. This is an elite and long-standing journal in psychology, with a strong impact factor of about 4. In summary, the Psychology faculty members are outstanding researchers and scholars.

In our assessment, Psychology faculty members provide a remarkable amount of service to the department, college, university, regional, state, national, international, service organization, and professional communities. Some of our faculty members routinely serve on 10-15 department, college, and university administrative committees at TTU per year. During the period under focused review for this Graduate School Report (2004-2011), our Psychology faculty colleagues have provided significant service on campus— but beyond Psychology—and, for example, have included Psychology faculty members serving as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Interim Provost, an Associate Vice President for Research, two Chairs of the IRB, Presidents of two APA Divisions and of the Constructivist Psychology Network, Co-Director of the TTU Institute for Pragmatism, Supervisors for three large graduate training programs (assessment and intervention services) at the UMC Cancer Center, the Lubbock Psychology
Regional Mental Health and Mental Retardation Hospital and Clinics and the Lubbock Probation Office, Chair or Interim Chair of two CAS departments besides Psychology, Members of the Dean’s Tenure and Promotion Committees in CAS and Human Sciences, and so forth. To list all of the administrative assignments and committees that Psychology faculty colleagues serve on within the Department of Psychology would be far too long a list for this report. Suffice it to say that all Psychology faculty members serve on these committees, most serve on several of them, and some serve on over 10 per year. Our faculty members are quite active in service at the regional, state, national, and international levels, including volunteering at local agencies, serving on state and national committees, consulting and mentoring with colleagues throughout the world, and providing pro-bono service regarding expert consulting in many settings. Several of our colleagues have won service awards for this work, including the TTU President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor, the Texas Psychological Association’s Service Award, numerous Appreciation Awards from APA, Human Factors Society, etc., and we have a total of 19 faculty colleagues who served on national, professional association committees in 2009. We should add to this list the 9 editors and 35 editorial board memberships that were noted earlier in this report, for 2009 alone. In summary, Psychology faculty members do a tremendous amount of service at all levels. We are proud of this faculty service, advising, and mentoring. Furthermore, it has many positive influences, including on graduate education at TTU.

Finally, we should note that the Department of Psychology has been fortunate to have a very effective and hard-working staff, for many years, including for the period of this review. We presently have 5 full-time staff members in the department, including a Department Business Manager, Senior Undergraduate Advisor and Advising Office Manager, Psychology Clinic Manager, Senior Main Office Manager, and Senior Main Office Associate Manager. (The exact staff titles change from time-to-time, but the previous titles accurately capture the primary staff duties of each staff colleague.) Our Psychology staff colleagues work very hard, they get things done correctly and on time, they are skillful and resourceful, and they are a joy to work with. In summary, we have great staff members.

Scope and Recent Changes in the Department of Psychology:

As with any vibrant, large, and complex academic department, the Department of Psychology has gone through some changes during the period of the review (2004-2011). For example, we currently have 5 tenure-track Assistant Professors on our faculty that were hired during this interval, and they are doing very well, along with one faculty hire in 2006 that has already been promoted to tenured Associate Professor. We have had a total of 9 Assistant Professors that have been promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure during this interval. And we have had 3 Associate Professors that have been promoted to Full Professor or are under review for such a promotion now (academic year 2010-2011); these totals are for the 2004-2011 time period of the Graduate School Review. We have also had 6 Full Professors retire or move to other universities during the period of this review, with 4 retiring and 2 moving to other strong universities (Georgia Institute of Technology and University of Utah). And we have had one other tenured faculty colleague move to another university during this period (2004), taking a promotion from Associate to Full Professor and administrative appointment as Director of Clinical Training at Suffolk University in Boston. In summary, we have had a considerable amount of faculty recruiting and promotion during the interval of the review. Our faculty colleagues have been successful regarding these recruitment and promotion issues during
the review period, with a total of 10 promotions approved in previous years and 2 promotion candidates this year (totals = 9 to associate and 3 to full), 9 awards of tenure, and 6 very-successful faculty hires during the review period of 2004 to the present (with 1 of these colleagues already promoted to tenured Associate Professor).

We have had a large number of doctoral students graduate with approximately 10-15 students graduating with their PhD per year, totaled across the three doctoral programs of Clinical Psychology, Counseling Psychology, and Experimental Psychology. The Experimental program has several specialty areas: Applied Cognitive Psychology, Human Factors Psychology, and Social Psychology. The Clinical and Counseling Psychology PhD programs are fully accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), and the Human Factors Psychology program is fully accredited by the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES). In recent years, we have been admitting somewhat larger classes to each of the doctoral programs, transitioning from the 5-6 new doctoral students in each of the 3 doctoral programs per year (i.e., 15-18 total new PhD students per year) that was common for Psychology in the 1990s and early 2000s, to the 6-8 new doctoral students in each of the 3 programs per year (i.e., 20-22 total new PhD students per year) that we have achieved the last few years. Some of this growth is due to the Psychology Department’s cooperative response to the Higher Administration’s efforts at Texas Tech, regarding plans to position the University for achieving Tier One status. This graduate-student growth, of course, has been dependent on increased TA funding support from the administration, since a competitive, high-quality doctoral program in psychology—like ours—simply cannot recruit-and-admit strong students unless we also support them as TAs (or support them through other funding, such as RAs on research grants and Student Clinicians on training grants). To be competitive, we must also secure waivers of non-resident tuition and some university fees, and cost-effective benefits such as affordable health insurance. In our nationally-competitive environment of doctoral psychology education, strong students expect and receive this kind of excellent financial support—and they should.

Our staff members have been relatively stable during the period of this review, with all 5 current staff members having served the department and university for at least 8-12 years. As noted earlier, we have an effective and hard-working staff. This is very important for all of the usual reasons. This is also important because Psychology is large, complex, and forward-looking—we are always seeking to improve and pursue further excellence in alignment with the Strategic Plan of Texas Tech University. Witness the following positive statistics about Psychology at Texas Tech:

In the Department of Psychology, we currently have 29 tenured or tenure-track faculty members (including a slot for our new chair, F11), about 20 adjunct faculty members, 119 doctoral students (F10, total across the 3 doctoral programs in Psychology), 60-80 of these graduate students also serve as employed graduate instructors or TAs during the year for TTU, 5-10 terminal master’s students (in some of the experimental psychology programs with a terminal-MA option), about 950 undergraduate majors, hundreds of undergraduate minors, and 5 staff members. We offer over 100 different courses to graduate and undergraduate students. Our course offerings include a large Introductory Psychology course (Psy 1300), which enrolls approximately 900-1,500 students per long semester, a broad range of undergraduate courses for majors and non-majors, numerous Writing-Intensive, Honors, and Research Independent Study Psychology
courses for our undergraduate majors, and over 60 graduate courses, seminars, and practica for our doctoral students. We operate a Psychology Clinic, which is a major practicum training site for our doctoral students in Clinical and Counseling Psychology, functions as a community mental health center with approximately two-thirds of the clients coming from the Lubbock community and the rest from the TTU student community, and thereby provides important assessment, counseling, psychotherapy, consultation, and mental-health services to several hundred clients per year. Our fiscal-year (September – August) departmental budget, including all Psychology accounts and summer funding, exceeds $4M. In summary, the Department of Psychology is large, complex, and forward-looking regarding our goals to always improve and seek further excellence within the goals of the Strategic Plan of Texas Tech University.

Mission Statement for Texas Tech University and for the Department of Psychology:

The Mission Statement in the 2010-2020 Strategic Plan for Texas Tech University, adopted by the TTU System Board of Regents, May 2010, is as follows:

“As a public research university, Texas Tech advances knowledge through innovative and creative teaching, research, and scholarship. The university is dedicated to student success by preparing learners to be ethical leaders for a diverse and globally competitive workforce. The university is committed to enhancing the cultural and economic development of the state, nation, and world.” [For more information on the TTU Strategic Plan, and this Mission Statement, see: http://www.ttu.edu/stratplan/ .]

The goals, aspirations, plans, strategies, and day-to-day work efforts of the Department of Psychology at Texas Tech are in very close alignment with the above Mission Statement. Our mission philosophy includes the following goals: We strive to be excellent teachers, advisors, mentors, and consultants in every possible way. We are absolutely committed to our students learning a tremendous amount, being successful, and engaging in excellent work in further educational settings and the international work force. We are committed to conducting research and scholarship that is interesting, important, and ambitious. We strive to conduct and collaborate on research that will make a difference. We are committed to providing skillful and generous service at every level—the department, college, university, region, state, nation, professional community, service organizations, society, and world—that is effective, professional, and kind. In addition, we understand the crucial importance of strong ethics, impeccable integrity, innovative creativity, extensive multi-cultural diversity, positive economic development, and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

Resources to Promote Further Growth and Excellence in the Department of Psychology:

In alignment with the Texas Tech University goals to grow, improve and prosper, including reaching 40,000 students on campus by 2020, the Department of Psychology is well-positioned to pursue these goals also:

We receive more graduate applications for our doctoral programs in Psychology than most of the departments in CAS, put together. For example, last year, we received 291 applications for our doctoral programs in Psychology. Many of these applicants are highly-
qualified and very strong. Therefore, with a substantial increase in TA funding, building space, operating budget, full-time tenure-track faculty positions, and staff members we could accordingly pursue a substantial increase in our total number of doctoral students. These additional doctoral students would be truly excellent students—just as the current ones are. This growth in Psychology would also mesh very well with the University goals to move to Tier One status, and thus to graduate over 200 PhD students per year, increase overall student enrollment, publish more research, apply for more grants, receive more external research funding, improve globally in research and scholarly stature, enhance academic fund raising, and generally take on a more-prominent place among the elite research universities in the nation and world.

The Department of Psychology is successful now. To even maintain its current level of success and excellence, however, will require a significant increase in the graduate instructor and TA budget (i.e., the AOF budget). For at least the last 25 years, the Department Chairs in Psychology (R. McGlynn, S. Richards, R. Maki, D. Rudd, and S. Hendrick) have had to lobby virtually every year to just get the TA budget increased to the point where we can support most of our current doctoral students. To continue to prosper and pursue educational excellence, we need a larger TA budget. To increase our number of doctoral students, we need a much larger TA budget.

More and better space, a larger operating budget, more faculty lines, and additional staff positions are also important to further growth and improvement in Psychology. But growth and improvement must start with a much larger TA budget.

Summary of the Self-Study Report for the Graduate School Review of Psychology:

By nearly every standard criterion of educational excellence, every aspect of the TTU Mission Statement, most features of the movement to elite Tier One status as a research university, strength in doctoral education and graduates, and clear ability to grow and improve even further, the Department of Psychology at Texas Tech University is one of the strongest academic departments on campus. We are doing very well. But we could do better—and we could be bigger while maintaining our high quality. To achieve these positive changes, however, we especially need significant increases in our TA budget. We also need more space, additional operating funds, more faculty members, and additional staff positions.

There are approximately 500-600 doctoral programs/departments (PhD, PsyD, EdD, etc.) in some type of psychology in the United States. Moreover, the U.S. is widely recognized as being the world leader in research psychology, compared to any other single nation. For a number of years, the academic community in the Department of Psychology at Texas Tech has aspired to be in the Top Tier or top 25% of these doctoral programs in psychology in the U.S. With further steady enhancements of the type discussed in this report, we can also move from being one of the better psychology doctoral programs in the Southwestern U.S., to being one of the best psychology doctoral programs in the Southwestern U.S.—or even in the entire nation. This is a doable, sensible, mission-driven, and worthy goal. We can do this. We need the sustained and increased support, resources, and enthusiasm of the University community, however, to make it happen. We will make excellent use of this support. Thank you for your help.