



July 10, 2019

Daniel A. Reed  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
205 Park Bldg.  
Campus

RE: Graduate Council Review  
Department of Sociology

APPROVED [Signature] [Signature]  
R. Watkins  
7-15-19

Dear Vice President Reed:

Enclosed is the Graduate Council's review of the Department of Sociology. Included in this review packet are the report prepared by the Graduate Council, the Department Profile, and the Memorandum of Understanding resulting from the review wrap-up meeting.

After your approval, please forward this packet to President Ruth Watkins for her review. It will then be sent to the Academic Senate to be placed on the information calendar for the next Senate meeting.

Sincerely,

David B. Kieda  
Dean, The Graduate School

Encl.

XC: Ming Wen, Chair, Department of Sociology  
Cynthia Berg, Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Science

**The Graduate School**  
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## **Department of Sociology**

The Department of Sociology has built a cadre of faculty that is diverse and highly productive. They have strong undergraduate and graduate programs, including a successful new major in Criminology. During the review process, much discussion centered on the siloed nature of disciplinary organization within the graduate program, and this motivated coalescence around a more integrated model that is now in place. Addressing concerns regarding facilities is one of the important priorities in the coming years.

**The Graduate School - The University of Utah**

**GRADUATE COUNCIL REPORT TO THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND THE ACADEMIC SENATE**

*April 29, 2019*

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the **Department of Sociology**. The External Review Committee included:

Mohammed A. Bamyeh, PhD  
Professor, Department of Sociology  
University of Pittsburgh

Lori M. Hunter, PhD  
Professor, Department of Sociology  
University of Colorado, Boulder

Meredith A. Kleykamp, PhD  
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology  
University of Maryland

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

Scott Black, PhD  
Professor and Chair  
Department of English

Hilary H. Coon, MD  
Professor  
Department of Psychiatry

Gerardo R. Lopez, PhD  
Professor  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy

This report of the Graduate Council is based on the self-study submitted by the Department of Sociology, the reports of the external and internal review committees, and responses to the external and internal reports from the Chair of the Sociology Department and Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Science.

## **DEPARTMENT PROFILE**

### **Program Overview**

The Sociology Department is one of seven departments in the College of Social and Behavioral Science (CSBS). The Department was established in 1896 and went through a process of transformation to adapt to the new needs of sociology beginning in 1998. Since that time, the Department has strengthened and grown in several ways, including program development, recruitment of new faculty with strong scholarship records, improvements in teaching quality, and greatly improved morale.

Strong collaborations with other departments in the CSBS exist, which have resulted in several shared faculty appointments across departments. Collaborations with other faculty outside the CSBS, such as with the School of Medicine, have also been successful.

Two undergraduate majors are offered by the Department, in Sociology and Criminology. The graduate program was reintroduced in 2001 and now includes two primary areas: Population and Health (P&H), and Global Comparative Sociology (GCS). The Department continues to strengthen its course offerings on race, ethnicity, and gender issues.

The Department of Sociology's mission is to achieve national acclaim for excellence in both research and teaching. Strategic research goals include theoretical and methodological rigor across a broad array of topics in the field. Teaching goals include offering challenging and stimulating undergraduate and graduate courses, and providing practical training for a variety of prospective employment scenarios. Both the internal and external reviews noted that the faculty have been very successful in publishing in top journals in their field and in well-regarded university presses for monographs. The faculty have also been very successful in receiving grants. Online courses have been adopted successfully. Faculty morale appears excellent; collegiality was consistently noted as a Department strength. The internal reviewers noted the role of the current Department Chair in fostering departmental morale and growth. With the growth in graduate programs and increase in student enrollment, the internal review noted two challenges: (1) the need to more effectively integrate its graduate program; and (2) the possibility of prospective budgeting issues that could create strains on staff support, facilities, and resources.

### **Faculty**

Sociology has 18 tenure-line faculty (two full professors, 10 associate professors, six assistant professors) as well as five career-line faculty. Ten faculty members have been hired since the last review, while five have left. Many of the new hires have shared appointments with other programs such as Environmental & Sustainability Studies, Gender Studies, and Ethnic Studies. Shared appointments and faculty serving in administrative roles have reduced the Department FTE to 13.35. The Department has successfully recruited a diverse faculty. Eleven of the 18 tenure-line faculty (61%) are women and seven (39%) are faculty of color.

The new undergraduate Criminology major is doing well in attracting students. The demand for the major and faculty retirements indicate that a new hire with expertise in Criminology might be imminent. Given their overarching advice against expanding to offer a doctoral program in Criminology, external reviewers suggested that if a tenure-line hire is made in this area, “care should be taken to ensure hires have complementary expertise in areas of sociology where the Department has strength: population and health, political sociology, development, and environment.”

The external reviewers noted that “[t]he Sociology Department at the University of Utah is fortunate to have many highly productive scholars and committed teachers, across all ranks (non-tenure track, untenured faculty, tenured faculty).” Faculty have been successful not only in publishing in many top tier journals, but also in receiving external funding for their research. According to Academic Analytics, the Department is ranked second (of 201 departments) in articles per faculty and eighth in citations per faculty. It is above the median in faculty awards and federal grant dollars per faculty. Faculty have received four NIH R01 grants and other significant foundation grants. Fourteen tenure-line faculty and one career-line faculty have received grants in the past seven years. Despite its small size compared to many other sociology departments, this group is very productive.

The faculty are committed to the Department’s mission, the students, and both the College and University. They are collegial and morale among them is high. Both tenured and junior faculty appreciate the collegiality and productivity of the Department. They report that the Department is supportive, caring, nurturing, and collaborative. Assistant professors feel “protected” from service so that they can focus on their research and teaching. Career-line faculty commented on their stronger integration into the Department since the last review. Reviewers commented on the role of the current Department Chair in fostering a collegial and inclusive environment.

The faculty have done well on the teaching front. They have received several teaching awards, including three Distinguished Teaching Awards, six CSBS Superior Teaching Awards, and two mentoring awards. Course evaluations range from 5.28 to 5.50 (on 1-6 scale). As a complement to student evaluations, the Department recently implemented peer review of teaching, which additionally fosters conversations about pedagogy. Faculty in Sociology, given their shared appointments, regularly teach in other units (Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies, and Environmental & Sustainability Studies) and in the Honors College (including three Praxis Labs).

The faculty expressed concerns on three fronts. First, as noted in both the internal and external reviews, the Department is currently divided into two areas, P&H and GCS. These areas of emphasis have resulted in two silos. Graduate students also expressed concern about the separate tracks in the Department and would prefer more intersection between P&H and GCS, as well as the possibility of taking their comprehensive exams in more than one area. The silos created by these areas have led to discussions in the Department on how best to restructure the graduate program. Second, while faculty working in P&H are doing well by metrics used by the University, such as grants and published papers, it was noted that these metrics are not as applicable to work by faculty in GCS. Third, related to the previous point, faculty believe that GCS is central to the discipline and important to the Department’s reputation in the field. Junior faculty expressed a strong preference for the Department to reflect the field of Sociology more generally, with as much emphasis on gender, race, and politics as there is on P&H and GCS.

The external reviewers mentioned that there appears to be an absence of "...well-documented or codified by-laws by which the Department operates." Such an absence can make decision-making difficult or *ad hoc*. It was suggested that the Department "develop and pass by-laws that define Department processes with respect to governance, differential rewards, promotion and tenure, faculty reviews and evaluation, faculty searches and hiring, and more." In her response, the Chair indicated a commitment to creating documentation that articulates departmental policies and procedures.

## **Students**

### *Undergraduate students*

The Department offers an undergraduate major in Sociology with two certificate programs - in Diversity and Criminology. A new major in Criminology was initiated this past fall and has 89 students enrolled. These two majors currently have 313 students, plus an additional 100 students who have one of these specializations as their second major. The reviewers noted that the undergraduate student body is diverse: 67% are women; slightly less than 50% are students of color. Notably, over 30% are part-time students and most are working. The Department has developed several online courses to address student demand for flexibility and aims to have an online major soon.

The Department has actively recruited from the local community and created the Sociology Community Scholarship for first-generation and historically underrepresented students "who demonstrate academic persistence and community engagement." The Department is committed to increasing student enrollment and engages in campus-wide events as well as faculty presentations at Salt Lake Community College to attract students.

The reviewers also noted that advising support was adequate for now, but with the addition of the Criminology major, demands on the advising staff would increase. Suggestions included hiring more advising staff, reassigning administrative tasks, and disseminating more information about the peer-mentoring service offered by the Department (or allocating funds expended toward different efforts). External reviewers suggested that student engagement might be enhanced by formation of a "sociology club" with activities centered around common disciplinary interests, networking opportunities where students share resources and advice, and increasing participation in faculty research (relevant to the latter point, the Department now has an undergraduate research coordinator).

### *Graduate students*

The graduate program, which was reintroduced in 2001, has two programs of study: P&H and GCS. While there was some discussion of whether the Department was expanding into graduate training in Criminology, external reviewers suggested caution in this regard, and this seemed to match the Chair's outlook. The current program areas have a total of between 15 and 25 graduate students at a given time, with the Department targeting to admit on average five students each year. There appears to be a high degree of collegiality among students in different years and quality mentoring by faculty. Internal reviewers report that faculty provide annual student reviews, which are well-received by students, yet students do not all feel adequately mentored. There was a suggestion that more career advising is needed. The Department is using a required course, the Professional Development Forum, to this end and the Dean mentioned other initiatives as well, including greater collaboration with the Career and Professional Development Center.

Budget issues stemming from recent differences in the method of allocating departmental funding mean that the Department needs to plan carefully when making final offers to students. External reviewers, however, were complimentary of current stipend levels. A concern brought up by faculty and students alike is the five-year limit on the tuition benefit. Specifically, the University offers tuition benefits to graduate students for five years (four years if the student enters with an MA). The general sentiment was that the five-year limit constrains students to choose quantitative over qualitative research projects and P&H over GCS. Students felt that they were at a disadvantage compared to their peers nationally because of this limit. The national completion average for a Sociology PhD was quoted to be seven years. Reviewers noted that expectation of completing a PhD in 5 years should be decoupled from the 5-year funding limit. The Department has been discussing ways that students can take longer in the program, when needed for their research, by considering other avenues of funding such as small grants or taking on some teaching responsibilities. Providing opportunities for graduate students to teach should take into account that larger class sizes, especially in online courses, can interfere with the research pursuits of graduate students, although the Chair noted measures the Department takes to try to alleviate the burden when class sizes are large. Some students felt that a better match between their teaching and research interests would be beneficial. The external reviewers noted that research presentations with both faculty and students taking part would increase collaboration and energize research discussions.

## **Curriculum**

Faculty are given course releases to develop online courses. The reviewers noted that online courses should not be at the expense of in-person instruction; there is a need to balance online versus in-person classes. Both internal and external reviewers expressed reservations about the number of courses being offered online and the lack of guidelines about creating new courses (a process that should be clarified when by-laws and procedures are codified, see above).

The undergraduate curriculum is well-structured. The Department has been emphasizing undergraduate research, and has appointed an undergraduate research coordinator. These efforts have paid off in significant increases in UROP awards, from fewer than five per year to 18 in 2014, 23 in 2015, 14 in 2016, and 17 in 2017.

With regard to the graduate curriculum, the differences between P&H and GCS pose challenges to the comprehensive exam for graduate students. Graduate students are currently allowed only three electives, which can be in P&H and GCS. The seminars and reading list determine the comprehensive exam questions, and the lack of overlap between specializations was brought up by the students as an issue. The reviewers suggested decoupling the reading list and the exam to make the exam more flexible, which could in time allow for a broader set of seminars. Moreover, the seminars' topics and readings are strongly connected to their ability to serve the comprehensive exam. This connection constrains not just the breadth required for research but also the potential of the faculty to offer seminars outside this comprehensive-exam-defined parameter. Department faculty have embraced external reviewer suggestions for restructuring the graduate program and have already taken steps to change their model. There appears to be scope to improve graduate student mentoring, especially in career advising, as mentioned above.

## **Program Effectiveness and Outcomes Assessment**

For the undergraduate program, the external reviewers noted that different forms of assessment were employed to measure outcomes and program effectiveness, such as five Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) measured over two years, exit surveys with recent graduates, and focus groups. They noted that at times it seemed that the outcomes were not being met but this was less an issue with the program and more with the way the outcomes were being measured. They noted that "... qualitative assessment of ELOs is quite onerous..." and suggested that assessments be streamlined, easy-to-measure, and a minimal burden on faculty time. Results from the exit surveys show that students rate teacher expertise and teacher support highly. The exit survey results also note that while the Department has focused on improving and expanding online courses to meet a perceived demand for flexibility, students want more face-to-face courses. It is commendable that the Department uses student data to inform decisions at the curricular and programmatic levels.

The Department's graduate committee annually evaluates the progress of individual graduate students including progress made, milestones achieved in the program, grades, and performance on comprehensive exams. The internal reviewers noted that there seems to be an absence of specific learning outcomes for the Department's graduate program; the annual reviews of graduate students are used in lieu of learning outcomes. It was suggested that the Department define learning outcomes, which is required by University policy.

## **Facilities and Resources**

The Department of Sociology is located on the 3rd and 4th floors of the Social and Behavioral Science Building. Department facilities include conference rooms, a common room for graduate student computer work, and a graduate student lounge. The facilities are currently adequate but reviewers commented that with the increase in the size of the program, requirements for the physical space would likely increase. The requirement for classrooms might be less pressing given the focus on offering online courses. However, the potential growth would lead to increase in demand for faculty spaces. Current space for graduate students is tiny and was referred to as a "closet" by the reviewers. More space for graduate students and faculty would help with community building and collaboration. Since many of the faculty hold shared appointments, a lack of space in Sociology could prompt them to spend more time elsewhere. The building has undergone several updates, e.g., seismic updates and HVAC upgrades, which has taken care of some but not all issues.

It was also noted that the Department would need to hire more staff, especially in student advising, with the increase in enrollment.

The Department currently has a website that focuses more on its teaching mission. Given the highly productive research environment, information about research achievements needs to be communicated to the outside world. Highlighting faculty research projects and faculty expertise on the website could attract more graduate applicants.



## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. The Department has a very productive and collegial group of faculty who demonstrate high morale and collaboration. Department leadership has been extremely effective in implementing strategic goals and fostering a collegial environment.
2. Faculty productivity is very high in terms of publications and grants received. Faculty are strong teachers as evidenced by various awards received. Excellent faculty hires have added to departmental strength.
3. The Department has successfully recruited a diverse faculty and student body. They support their students with scholarships and flexibility in terms of online course offerings.
4. The Department has demonstrated a strong commitment to providing a quality education to students. They have introduced undergraduate and graduate majors to meet the current interests of Sociology students. The recently added undergraduate Criminology major is enjoying notable success.
5. Faculty in the Department are willing to have difficult discussions about how to structure the graduate program so that it is less siloed and more collaborative across program areas. Continued communication, with all voices heard, is important.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. In order to continue to flourish, the Department should build on the newly-structured focal areas to create a more integrated graduate program and to strengthen the intellectual community. At the undergraduate level, a sociology club, informal gatherings, and networking workshops may assist with community building and professionalization.
2. Beyond redesign of structure, other aspects of the graduate program require attention. This includes developing expected learning outcomes, revamping curriculum, continuing efforts on career development, and providing options for funding beyond the 5<sup>th</sup> year when needed. Additionally, ensuring graduate students receive support and monitoring when they teach, especially in larger classes, is important.
3. The need for more staff should be addressed by the Department and College. Reviewers pointed to staff support for grant preparation and management and to the need for additional student advisors.
4. A set of codified by-laws should be developed that make process and procedure clear and transparent.
5. Faculty achievements in terms of research productivity, grant awards, and expertise areas should be highlighted on the Department website as part of an overall revamping of this platform. Other outreach efforts should be explored to reach potential students.
6. The expected growth in enrollment and future hires will require the Department to work with the College to identify a facilities plan for growth, in addition to addressing current constraints on graduate student office space.

Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Graduate Council:

Arul Mishra (Chair)  
Professor, Department of Marketing

Melissa J. Bernstein  
Professor (Lecturer), S.J. Quinney College of Law

Robert Zheng  
Professor, Department of Educational Psychology

Erin Parker (Undergraduate Council Representative)  
Associate Professor (Lecturer), School of Computing

College Name  
All

Department Name  
Sociology

Program  
All

## Faculty Headcount

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>With Doctoral Degrees Including MFA and Other Terminal Degrees</b>	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	5	6	8	10	9	9	8
	Full-Time Tenure Track	8	8	6	5	6	7	8
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	2	2	3	2	3	3	3
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	2	3	1	1	1	1	2
	<b>Total</b>	17	19	18	18	19	20	22
<b>With Masters Degrees</b>	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	<b>Total</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>With Bachelor Degrees</b>	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track							
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	<b>Total</b>							
<b>Total Headcount Faculty</b>	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	5	6	8	10	9	9	8
	Full-Time Tenure Track	9	8	6	5	6	7	8
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	2	2	3	2	3	3	3
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	2	3	1	1	1	1	2
	<b>Total</b>	18	19	18	18	19	20	22

## Cost Study

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Direct Instructional Expenditures</b>	2,000,832	2,078,967	2,393,389	2,340,486	2,297,078	2,540,767	2,307,166
<b>Cost Per Student FTE</b>	3,162	3,377	4,057	3,915	3,855	4,035	3,516

## FTE from Cost Study

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Full-Time</b>	15	18	17	19	22	18	16
<b>Part-Time</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
<b>Teaching Assistants</b>	5	4	5	4	2	2	1

## Funding

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Total Grants</b>	13,053	3,376	0	30,515	50,047	127,524	447,686
<b>State Appropriated Funds</b>	1,432,230	1,471,966	1,647,587	1,916,955	1,881,423	2,447,209	2,547,221
<b>Teaching Grants</b>	0	0	0	0	0	41,593	8,078
<b>Special Legislative Appropriation</b>							

## Differential Tuition

### Student Credit Hours and FTE

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>SCH</b>	Lower Division	5,128	4,672	3,849	4,015	4,392	3,979	3,897
	Upper Division	12,832	12,823	12,763	12,875	12,709	14,258	15,106
	Basic Graduate	286	233	249	208	192	182	297
	Advanced Graduate	398	418	474	488	326	255	158
<b>FTE</b>	Lower Division	171	156	128	134	146	133	130
	Upper Division	428	427	425	429	424	475	504
	Basic Graduate	14	12	12	10	10	9	15
	Advanced Graduate	20	21	24	24	16	13	8
<b>FTE/FTE</b>	LD FTE per Total Faculty FTE	8	7	6	6	6	6	7
	UD FTE per Total Faculty FTE	21	19	19	19	17	22	26
	BG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
	AG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	1	1	1	1	1	1	0

### Enrolled Majors

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Undergraduate Pre-Majors</b>	54	52	43	37	36	20	29
<b>Undergraduate Majors</b>	336	341	305	280	299	274	274
<b>Enrolled in Masters Program</b>	8	5	3	3	1	1	6
<b>Enrolled in Doctoral Program</b>	19	27	31	29	23	21	15
<b>Enrolled in First-Professional Program</b>							

### Degrees Awarded

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Undergraduate Certificate</b>	133	130	138	112	114	91	101
<b>Graduate Certificate</b>							
<b>Bachelors</b>	136	172	154	140	149	143	137
<b>Masters</b>	2	2	5	4	1	2	2
<b>Doctorate</b>	0	1	4	5	4	6	6
<b>First-Professional</b>							



## **Memorandum of Understanding Department of Sociology Graduate Council Review 2018-19**

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on June 10, 2019, and concludes the Graduate Council Review of the Department of Sociology. Daniel A. Reed, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Cynthia Berg, Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Science; Ming Wen, Chair of the Department of Sociology; David B. Kieda, Dean of the Graduate School; and Katharine S. Ullman, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, were present.

The discussion centered on but was not limited to the recommendations contained in the review summary report presented to the Graduate Council on April 29, 2019. The working group agreed to endorse the following actions:

**Recommendation 1: In order to continue to flourish, the Department should build on the newly-structured focal areas to create a more integrated graduate program and to strengthen the intellectual community. At the undergraduate level, a sociology club, informal gatherings, and networking workshops may assist with community building and professionalization.**

Input from external reviewers helped the Department arrive at consensus in an ongoing discussion of how to align their focal areas and restructure the graduate program. The two focal areas that existed at the time of the self-study and site visit had become rather siloed. There will now be three areas (Population and Health, Development and Environment, and Political and Cultural Sociology) with issues of race, gender, and equality being cross-cutting themes. Concomitantly, changes are being implemented in graduate level training to make it more integrated and flexible, starting with a new format for qualifying exams in which reading lists are developed on an individual basis, centered on student interest areas. Future updates to the Graduate School should include an evaluation of this new exam format, including student feedback. To strengthen the intellectual community of the Department, a speaker series has been strengthened that, importantly, includes talks from faculty here, as well as from graduate students and some outside speakers. The group discussed different models that may be useful to sustaining a robust forum. Dean Kieda mentioned incorporating graduate student input into which external speakers to invite; SVP Reed noted the possibility of recognizing this as a 1-credit course. Dean Berg and Chair Wen plan to discuss different models within the College and what might best complement other initiatives, including the Department's Professional Development Forum, recently-launched extracurricular reading groups, and round-table discussions in iNterdisciplinary EXchange for Utah Science (NEXUS). Focus on the undergraduate community is an important priority as well and will require a multi-pronged approach, with strategies to connect with (and among) traditional students, distance students, part-time students, and transfer students. Accommodating distinct needs and availability of students have been challenges. An undergraduate survey

underway has so far identified the diverse needs, and the Department is making efforts in developing a range of tactics to increase student engagement. For example, the Department is interested in trying a sociology club and other ways to increase social networking in the future. Updates to the Graduate School should include descriptions of activities underway or planned, and evaluation of what seems to be effective in strengthening this aspect of the undergraduate experience.

**Recommendation 2: Beyond redesign of structure, other aspects of the graduate program require attention. This includes developing expected learning outcomes, revamping curriculum, continuing efforts on career development, and providing options for funding beyond the 5<sup>th</sup> year when needed. Additionally, ensuring graduate students receive support and monitoring when they teach, especially in larger classes, is important.**

The Department has created expected learning outcomes for their graduate program, and assessment procedures are being developed. It is a high priority to include this information in 7-year and interim Learning Outcomes Assessment reports ([https://ugs.utah.edu/learning-outcomes-assessment/loa\\_reports.php](https://ugs.utah.edu/learning-outcomes-assessment/loa_reports.php)). The group did not specifically discuss funding options for doctoral students beyond the 5<sup>th</sup> year, but Chair Wen mentioned that teaching opportunities are usually offered and research assistantships are increasingly possible for graduate students who no longer qualify for tuition benefits. Changes on the horizon are expected to make tuition more affordable for advanced graduate students working on their dissertation. Recent policy changes have also enabled faculty members to charge tuition to their grants. Faculty should therefore be encouraged to budget the newer lower cost tuition on external grants, where possible, to support graduate students who have exhausted their TBP eligibility. In addition, there are several resources available to help students write fellowship applications, including a course in the Anthropology Department and College-level workshops (also see Recommendation 3). The Department is now addressing how to best mentor, support, and supervise graduate student instructors. Certainly, current policies that limit class size or provide additional instructor and TA support are helpful. To build on this, Dean Berg suggested looking for models that support teaching in other departments, and Dean Kieda emphasized having faculty attend classes and offer individualized written and one-on-one feedback. The Department takes advantage of services offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, which is an excellent resource for graduate students. Best practices that the Department develops should be explicitly articulated in the Graduate Handbook.

**Recommendation 3: The need for more staff should be addressed by the Department and College. Reviewers pointed to staff support for grant preparation and management and to the need for additional student advisors.**

Dean Berg recognizes the need for more staff, particularly (as pointed out by the Department) in post-award management, a need that has grown due to the success faculty members have had in increasing the Department grant portfolio. VP Weyrich has been assessing this need university-wide and so some central

solutions may become available, but it is already identified as a priority at the College level. Chair Wen indicated that help from the College in building interdisciplinary teams would also be appreciated by faculty and may facilitate applications that require larger breadth. The infrastructure offered by NEXUS is well-suited to this need. The group talked specifically about National Science Foundation opportunities, including Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) and doctoral completion awards. Dean Kieda said there were important considerations to take into account for these mechanisms and offered to meet for follow-up discussion. Other units on campus that have successfully competed for these awards would also be good resources. Turning to the topic of student advising, Dean Berg stated that the growing number of students has put a real strain on advising capacity in the College, with advisors' loads well above recommended levels. A solution is not immediately evident, but this will continue to be a high priority budget item.

**Recommendation 4: A set of codified by-laws should be developed that make process and procedure clear and transparent.**

This recommendation is intended to spur the Department to articulate their operating policies for items ranging from travel to standing committees. SVP Reed pointed out that this raises awareness, creates protections, and -- above all -- ensures fairness, although certain decisions will still require the discretion of the chair. He also pointed out that it is an opportunity to think about things the Department is not yet doing and whether particular policies would lay a path forward for upcoming initiatives. Dean Berg offered to help gather examples from other departments. The goal is to have a draft by the end of Fall semester that can be put into final form in Spring 2020, at the same time recognizing that work on this will be ongoing as it involves continuous process improvement.

**Recommendation 5: Faculty achievements in terms of research productivity, grant awards, and expertise areas should be highlighted on the Department website as part of an overall revamping of this platform. Other outreach efforts should be explored to reach potential students.**

The Department is now working with the College web development team to improve their site and will have much of this in place by the end of 2019. Additional updates will be added in Spring 2020 once particular curricular changes are approved. This too will need to be an ongoing process in order to maintain and build features that inform and attract students. The Department has several additional outreach efforts in progress, including circulating a newsletter, marketing their online major, participating in the creation of a non-credit certificate in Social Determinants of Health, and fundraising. Although not specifically discussed, engaging current students in some of these efforts may be one avenue for building community.

**Recommendation 6: The expected growth in enrollment and future hires will require the Department to work with the College to identify a facilities plan for growth, in addition to addressing current constraints on graduate student office space.**

The Department would very much like to find a way to improve the graduate student office space. While they do not have the funds for the full project, they propose to invest in a feasibility study to explore possible ways to make this a more welcoming touchdown space. It was generally agreed that this was important for student success and general morale. SVP Reed felt that there would be a way to facilitate this once they had a plan figured out and a better sense of the costs. Dean Kieda suggested looking at where the Department wants to be in five years and how this renovation will help in that context. With upcoming College-wide strategic planning scheduled for the Fall, the timing is good to make a plan for moving forward on this renovation. The biggest facilities concern at the moment, however, is the fact that some faculty offices are too hot to work in and, while Dean Berg will look into the status of thermostat repairs now that the chiller is fixed, addressing this in a comprehensive manner will require ongoing conversation and a large-scale funding plan at the university level.

At the conclusion of the meeting, SVP Reed commended the accomplishments that were outlined in the report, and Dean Berg emphasized that it reflected a true success story for the Department. Chair Wen was praised for her outstanding work and she in turn praised the faculty and staff. We look forward to learning how the Department builds on this success in future updates.

This memorandum of understanding is to be followed by regular letters of progress, upon request of the Graduate School, from the Chair of the Department of Sociology. Letters will be submitted until all of the actions described in the preceding paragraphs have been completed. In addition, a three-year follow-up meeting may be scheduled during AY 2021-22 to discuss progress made in addressing the review recommendations.

Daniel A. Reed  
Cynthia Berg  
Ming Wen  
David B. Kieda  
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David B. Kieda  
Dean, The Graduate School  
July 10, 2019