Overview of the 1-year follow-up meeting that took place on November 19, 2012 regarding the 2010-2011 Graduate Program Review of the graduate programs in the Psychology department. Those in attendance included, Dominick Casadonte, Interim Dean of the Graduate School, Clifford Fedler and David Roach, Associate Deans, Marlene Kenady, Unit Coordinator, and Lee Cohen, Chair, Department of Psychology.

This memo will address the progress that has been made regarding the issues that the reviewers identified as part of the 2010-2011 Graduate Program Review of the graduate programs in the Psychology department. The issues raised are listed below in bold, italicized font with our response directly underneath each sub-heading.

**The need for better goals for the department**

Since the 2010-2011 review we have updated our departmental goals in TracDat and have made these goals both specific and reasonable.

**Increase research funding in the department**

Research funding has significantly increased in our department and we focusing our recruiting efforts for new faculty on individuals with a previous record of grant funding or who are in research areas with the highest probability for funding. Based on figures obtained from Brittney Moore in the Office of Research Services in FY 10 the funding credited to our department was $69,910. In FY 10 and FY 11 it increased to $565,662 and $407,513 respectively.

**Too heavy a service load for faculty in the department**

It was noted that our faculty engage in too heavy a service load. We agree that our faculty are quite busy with service demands, but this is critical for our field. Our faculty are actively engaged in all levels of service (local, state, national, international) but still manage to remain productive in research and excel in teaching. It is important that we continue these service activities so that our programs remain visible at the national level. We also want to be helpful to the College of Arts and Sciences and Texas Tech University.

It is important to note that for new hires, we minimize their service responsibility for the first 2-3 years so that they can focus their efforts on research endeavors and course preparations. That said, many of our new hires are already actively engaged in national service when they begin their positions with us.
The need for better support for graduate students

We agree. I have been working with Interim Dean Jeff Williams to do what we can to make our stipends more competitive. In years past, we have guaranteed our doctoral applicants one year of funding at \( \frac{1}{2} \) time and 3 years at \( \frac{1}{4} \) time. This year, Interim Dean Williams instructed us to award \( \frac{1}{2} \) funding for 4 years. We are also working to extend the 9-month stipend to 12 months to help with out of state tuition concerns (many of our students must enroll for 12 months due to our national accreditation standards). While it will take some time to significantly increase our overall funding packages for students, the plan is to offer 9-month stipends and 1 summer session stipend (6 weeks) and spread this out over 12 months. While this will not lead to more funding for our students, it will make our offers more competitive (we typically do not guarantee any summer funding) and the 12-month spread will help with the tuition and fee costs our students currently struggle with when they are not employed by the university for 6-12 weeks in the summer.

The need for increased time for graduate students to conduct their research

We agree with this statement as well. We are currently working in the department to increase class sizes, which would minimize our need for graduate students to teach multiple sections of a class each semester for their pay. Ideally, our graduate students will teach only one class per semester in the future (they teach two per semester currently) or will be funded as TA’s or RA’s. Reducing the number of classes taught by our graduate students and/or changing their primary job duties should lead to increased time for research. That said, our graduate students with a research focus have been quite productive even with their current course and job demands.

Better placement of alumni into academia

We have seen a steady progression of our doctoral students entering academic positions since 2000. It is important to note however, that both our APA-accredited doctoral programs (Clinical Psychology and Counseling Psychology) are considered scientist-practitioner programs. Under this model, research informs practice and practice informs research. That said, the students that we admit have a variety of career aspirations. Given this, we do not expect that all, or even the majority, of our students pursue jobs in academic settings. Ultimately we want all our graduates to secure good jobs. Taking into consideration the current job market, there are not enough academic positions to accommodate all our students so we are comfortable and satisfied with where our alumni are being employed. It is important to note that all our alumni who want jobs have them and we are very proud of that.

Enhancing the Experimental Programs

The experimental programs in our department (i.e., Cognitive, Human Factors, and Social) remain critical to our department. This year we have already made 2 social hires (to replace one faculty retirement [C. Hendrick] and another who left for a faculty position at another institution [J. Larsen]). We are currently in the process of hiring another social faculty member (in anticipation of Dr. DeMarree leaving at the end of FY 13) and a cognitive faculty member. We believe that the new hires that we have made this year will enhance our experimental programs by increasing the possibility of obtaining federal grant funding (Talley [Social] is bringing a NIH grant with her) and the others are in areas that are highly fundable (or at least as highly fundable as possible in the
current climate). It was suggested that we make each of our experimental areas programs of their own. This is not possible at this time. It would take a significant financial commitment from TTU to allow for more space and faculty lines.

Sincerely,

Lee M. Cohen, Ph.D.
Professor & Chair
(e-mail: lee.cohen@ttu.edu)