



## University of Alberta Quality Assurance Suite of Activities

### Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry: Academic Program Review

#### Excerpted Report 2017-2018

### Department of Psychiatry

Programs Reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Science in Psychiatry</li> <li>• Doctor of Philosophy in Psychiatry</li> </ul>
Review Dates	December 4-5, 2017
Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. George Robertson, Committee Chair, Dalhousie University</li> <li>• Dr. Julia Spaniol, External Member, Ryerson University</li> <li>• Dr. Veronica Smith, Internal Member, University of Alberta</li> </ul>

### Outcome

The External Review Committee praised the Department of Psychiatry’s efforts to provide its students with a graduate program enhanced and informed by faculty with well-established and emerging scholarly activity that is leveraged by rich interdisciplinary research. This included specific commendation for student and supervisor research productivity and publication rates.

The quality of the programs offered by the Department of Psychiatry is further supported by the low attrition and high employment rates for graduates. Most former graduates have pursued academic positions, careers in post-secondary education or worked in public (e.g., Alberta Health/Alberta Health Services) or private health care sectors. Employment in industry (biotechnology or pharmaceutical) was also well demonstrated.

### Program Strengths

- The Department of Psychiatry’s programs have garnered a high degree of student satisfaction.
- The Department of Psychiatry’s programs boast high retention rates.
- The Department of Psychiatry’s students experience high employment rates.



## **Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement**

The committee made several key recommendations:

- Increase the MSc and PhD minimal Graduate Research Assistantship Funding (GRAF) allocation.
- Organize and support events designed to foster student/faculty interactions.
- Promote interdisciplinary studies.
- Strategize to increase program visibility.
- The Department of Psychiatry should identify program-specific learning outcomes.
- Foster further expansion of clinical/translational training opportunities by adding an elective internship or job shadowing component to the curricula.
- The Department of Psychiatry, in an effort to encourage greater uptake of networking and dissemination opportunities, should require students to submit a conference abstract to at least one national or international conference per year.
- The Department of Psychiatry should maintain or increase its efforts to recruit women, individuals with Aboriginal status, and individuals without prior ties to the University of Alberta.
- The Department of Psychiatry should introduce measures aimed at increasing the success rate of Tricouncil scholarship applications.
- The Department of Psychiatry should plan for long-term faculty renewal and sustainability.

## **Implementation Plan**

In response, the Faculty made the following commitments:

- The Department of Psychiatry will raise the minimum funding for both MSc students and PhD students, applicable to all incoming full-time MSc and PhD students, starting with fall term (September) 2018 admissions.
- The Department of Psychiatry has introduced a new monthly graduate student seminar (with mandatory participation) in which students meet on a regular basis, which includes funding for hosting.
- The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry is currently developing a Clinical Research Initiative (CRI), a cross cutting clinical research services platform that is intended to facilitate the process of development and successful execution of clinical research at the University of Alberta.
- Since January 2018, a monthly newsletter has been disseminated by the Department of Psychiatry, which includes information about students, alumni, program updates, and employment information. This may also be a mechanism to attract diverse students to the programs.
- The Department of Psychiatry is currently establishing program-level learning outcomes.
- The Department of Psychiatry will continue to monitor and report on international networking opportunities, although mandatory participation may not be feasible. The



Department of Psychiatry will ensure that its students are aware of travel funding opportunities.

- Discussions are currently underway to investigate additional ways to incorporate clinical/translational opportunities for students.