Department of Child and Adolescent Studies (CAS)
Program Performance Review (PPR)
Department Response to Reviewer Report

This report is in response to the PPR Reviewer Report submitted in the spring of 2014 by internal reviewer, Dr. Carl Renold, Associate Professor, Department of Human Services, and external reviewers, Dr. W. David Wakefield, Chair, Department of Child and Adolescent Development, CSU Northridge, and Dr. Amy Strage, Department of Child and Adolescent Development, San Jose State University. The CAS Department is extremely grateful to this team for their thorough review of the program and the self-study and for their helpful observations and recommendations. Presented below are the major strengths and areas of concerns raised by the reviewers, followed by the Department's response in bold.

Strengths:

- Curriculum:
    - The curriculum required for the B.S. in Child and Adolescent Development (CHAD) should provide students with an empirically sound, current, and thorough understanding of the field. The four options in the major allow students to complete courses specific to their career interests and to network with peers with similar interests. The Department was commended for offering an option in Early Childhood Development, as this degree option meets requirements for state-funded early childhood education positions. The CAS Department has also made an effort to offer multiple sections in online or hybrid formats and at the Irvine campus, thereby increasing accessibility.

    - **Providing high-quality teaching is the number one priority of the CAS Department. Efforts will continue to ensure quality and accessibility. The Department will continue to support excellent teaching through activities such as program assessment and the use of the course coordinator system. Accessibility will be improved by offering sections in online or hybrid formats, at the Irvine campus and at various times and schedules.**

- Faculty Composition:
    - CAS Faculty has remained stable over time in number and composition. Although a few faculty members have retired or taken administrative positions at CSUF or other CSU campuses, the Department has successfully recruited several new T/TT faculty in the last several years. In addition, there is an even distribution of T/TT faculty across the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks.

    - **The Department is committed to recruit and retain a diverse and high-quality faculty. A new tenure-track faculty member joined the CAS Department in the Fall of 2014. The Department has been approved for two T/TT faculty searches over the next two years (AY 15/16 and AY 16/17). The first search is currently underway.**

- Faculty Scholarship:
  - Faculty members in the CAS Department continue to be engaged in scholarship as evidenced by their publications, professional presentations, and successful grant applications. Recently renovated lab space in the Department facilitates faculty research activities. The Department was also commended for the continued involvement of students in their research endeavors.

  - **Faculty members in the Department are committed to maintaining their research agendas and to including students in their research. However, additional resources are needed to support these endeavors, especially for post-tenured faculty and for faculty who work with undergraduate research assistants.**

- Program Assessment:
  - The CAS Department has a systematic process for assessing the quality of student learning and has been a leader on campus in the area of program assessment.

  - **The CAS Department is fully invested in a program assessment process that is both high in quality and sustainable. Rather than engaging in program assessment because it is required by the University, the Department is intrinsically motivated in the process because it recognizes the role assessment plays in improving the program and student learning. The Department will continue to devote considerable time and energy towards program assessment and related program improvement. Resources, such as release time for the program assessment coordinator, are needed to sustain the rigorous process. Additional resources for professional development and curricular revision are needed to "close the loop" when student learning outcomes do not meet satisfactory levels.**

- Advisement and Co-Curricular Activities:
  - The CAS Department has an organized and well-planned advisement system. In addition, the Department provides many opportunities for students to learn outside the classroom, such as by supporting an active student association, encouraging faculty-student research experiences, and offering international practicum experiences.

  - **Increased emphasis on advising and co-curricular activities will occur over the next several years, especially as the Department attempts to narrow the achievement gap for underrepresented students and both monitor and increase student participation in High Impact Practices (HIPs). Resources will be needed to support additional advisement for these activities.**

- Student Feedback:
  - During an hour-long session with the reviewers, students repeatedly raved about their experiences in the CAS department. Students described their experiences as CHAD majors as "lifegiving," "enriching," "experience-based," and "enjoyable." The Department was commended for offering a rich academic experience for students, as well as a warm and supportive community.

  - **Hearing the positive comments made by students was one of the highlights of the PPR experience for the Department. The Department is thrilled that students spoke so highly of their experiences as CHAD majors.**

<u>Primary Areas of Concern</u>

- Fieldwork:
  - It was recommended that the Department consider reducing the number of current practicum sites available to students to have better control over the quality of the fieldwork experience. It was also recommended that the Department identify current practicum sites that could work more closely with the fieldwork coordinator to offer a high quality practicum experience to a larger number of students.

  - **The Department first plans to measure the quality of existing fieldwork experiences among students enrolled in practicum courses and to examine associated outcomes of those experiences. Once the Department has a better understanding of the quality of existing fieldwork experiences, it will develop a plan to balance quality assurance with access and availability. Access and availability are important considerations since there are 1200 CHAD students at any given time, and each of these students is required to complete two practicum courses. In addition, students are focused on one of four options in the major (e.g., Early Childhood Development, Adolescent/Youth Development), each of which has a different career focus. Although it is important that students have a high-quality practicum experience, it is essential that there is sufficient variability in site types, locations and hours so that students are able to complete their practicum courses in the context of other life demands.**

- Faculty Workload:
  - Four key priorities with implications for faculty time and effort were identified by the Department in the self-study component of the PPR. The reviewers expressed concern about faculty workload to address these priorities. Specifically, the reviewers were concerned about faculty burn-out and fair distribution of work across faculty.
  - **Although the CAS Department is fully committed to the goals set forth in the self-study, the Department agrees with the reviewers' concern about faculty workload.**

The Department will continue to work with the Dean to identify College and University resources to hire new tenure-track faculty and to provide release time to current faculty to minimize burn-out.

- Program Assessment:
  - The reviewers suggested that the Department include part-time faculty on the program assessment committee.

  - **Currently, part-time faculty are invited to participate in the process of program assessment during Department retreats and through discussions about courses facilitated by course coordinators. Additional resources are needed to compensate part-time faculty for their participation in these activities.**

- High Impact Practices (HIPs):
  - The Department has consistently provided students with a number of opportunities for HIPS, including fieldwork, international practicum experiences, and involvement in faculty research. However, there has been no systematic data collection on the number of students who have participated in these HIPs or on associated outcomes.

  - **The CAS Department is currently designing a system to identify the HIPs offered to CHAD majors, to track student participation in these HIPs, and to evaluate associated outcomes.**

- Tracking Alumni Outcomes:
  - The CAS Department does not have a formal system for tracking the employment or post-baccalaureate educational outcomes of its alumni.

  - **The Department completed an alumni survey for the PPR; however tracking alumni over the long term is a difficult and expensive task. Resources are needed from the College or University to develop a system to track alumni outcomes.**

In conclusion, the CAS Department agrees with the strengths and primary areas of concern identified by the review team. Moreover, the priorities implied by these strengths and concerns are well-aligned with the Strategic Plans of the University and the College of HHD. Every effort will be made to continue to capitalize on our strengths and to address the areas of concern. However, these efforts will not be possible without additional resources from the College and the University.