Brief History of NRC Rankings and Comment on their Importance

The National Academies

- Non-profit institutions that, under a congressional charter, provide policy advice and services to the government, the public, and to the communities of science, engineering, and health
  - National Academy of Science
  - National Academy of Engineering
  - Institute of Medicine
  - National Research Council
National Research Council

- Established in 1916
- NRC has become the principal operating agency of both the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering
- Beginning in 1983, the NRC has evaluated research doctorate programs about every 10 years (most recently in 1995)

NRC Evaluations/Rankings

- Began primarily as a ranking base on reputation
- Have become increasingly quantitative
- The current ranking will be entirely quantitative
- Very detailed methodology that clearly surpasses that in similar ranking efforts
Concerns of CCPTP with the NRC Methodology

- Current evaluation process began with the development of a taxonomy of fields and subfields
- Major categories:
  - Life Sciences
  - Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering
  - Social and Behavioral Sciences
  - Arts and Humanities

Criteria for Fields

- Began with NSF’s Doctorate Records File
- Added new fields that met quantitative criteria
  - 500 doctorates in past 5 years
  - At least 25 institutions with programs that produced at least 3 doctorates in the last 3 years
- Psychology emerged as a field
### Subfields for Psychology

- Subfields originally proposed for psychology were very limited and archaic
- Omissions included clinical psychology, social psychology, counseling psychology, and others
- APA and CCPTP formally responded to the request for comments in about 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subfields for Psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition &amp; Perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Final Subfields for Psychology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Subfields for Psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition &amp; Perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I/O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality and Social Contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Early Concerns about the Omission of Counseling Psychology**

- Would rank clinical programs but not counseling
  - Bad press, bad for recruiting, and potentially threatening to survival
- The productivity of counseling psychologists would not be counted toward department’s ranking
  - Definite threat to the survival of programs in psychology departments

**Actual Outcomes will be Less Severe**

- NRC will rank only fields and not subfields
- The work of all faculty in psychology departments will be counted
  - But counseling faculty will have to list clinical as the closest subfield
We Should Still be Concerned

“The names of subfields are provided to serve two purposes:
- To assist institutions in placing their programs in the fields of the taxonomy
- To indicate areas of research of program faculty so that prospective students will have an indicator of what research specialties exist in each field”

We Should Still be Concerned (cont.)

- Close relationship between the NRC and granting agencies, particularly NSF
  - May make it harder for counseling faculty to obtain funding
- Perpetuates the perspective of counseling psychology as being an “illegitimate outsider”
  - Within our institutions
  - Within our field
Ten Years to Fix the Problem

- **Obstacles**
  - Most programs are in colleges of education (not evaluated by NRC)
  - It is not clear that quantitative criteria were applied to subfields, but this is a potential problem
  - CP not well recognized as a research discipline
  - Division within our own ranks on how to respond to this issue

Ten Years to Fix the Problem (cont.)

- **Assets**
  - Produce many doctorates
  - Have become much more politically influential within APA, creating a strong potential ally
  - Have committed leaders who can educate the NRC, and other groups, about our commitment to science and research and our research productivity
Goal

- Counseling Psychology listed as a subfield
  - Minimally listed as clinical/counseling
- Will greatly assist programs in psychology departments
- Will benefit all programs by raising the visibility of the discipline