

Summary:

College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
Graduate Programs in the
6th Cycle of Program Review

Academic Program Review Committee
2009-2010

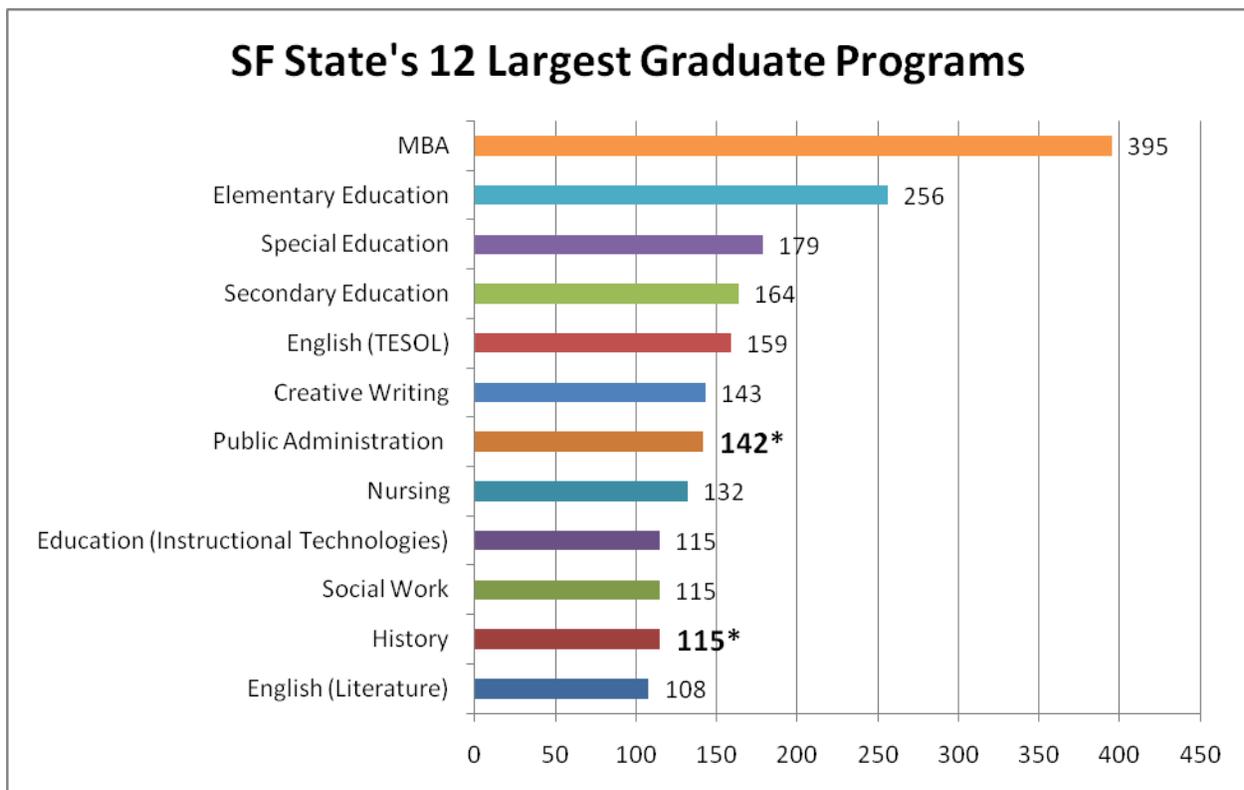
Introduction

The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) has at this point mostly completed the work of reviewing the graduate programs of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, the first college to be reviewed (Anthropology has not yet been reviewed). This report provides comparative data analysis of these graduate programs, summarizes their achievement of the University's Standards for Graduate Programs, and provides overall comments on themes and patterns that emerged from the review of the College's graduate programs. The report concludes with these patterns and with recommendations for the College's programs.

Comparative Data Analysis

Table 1 illustrates the University's 12 largest graduate programs. Of these 12, two are from the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (Public Administration, the 7th largest and History, the 11th largest). It should be noted that if the various degrees in the Department of Psychology were not separated in University data, that Department would also be among the largest in the University.

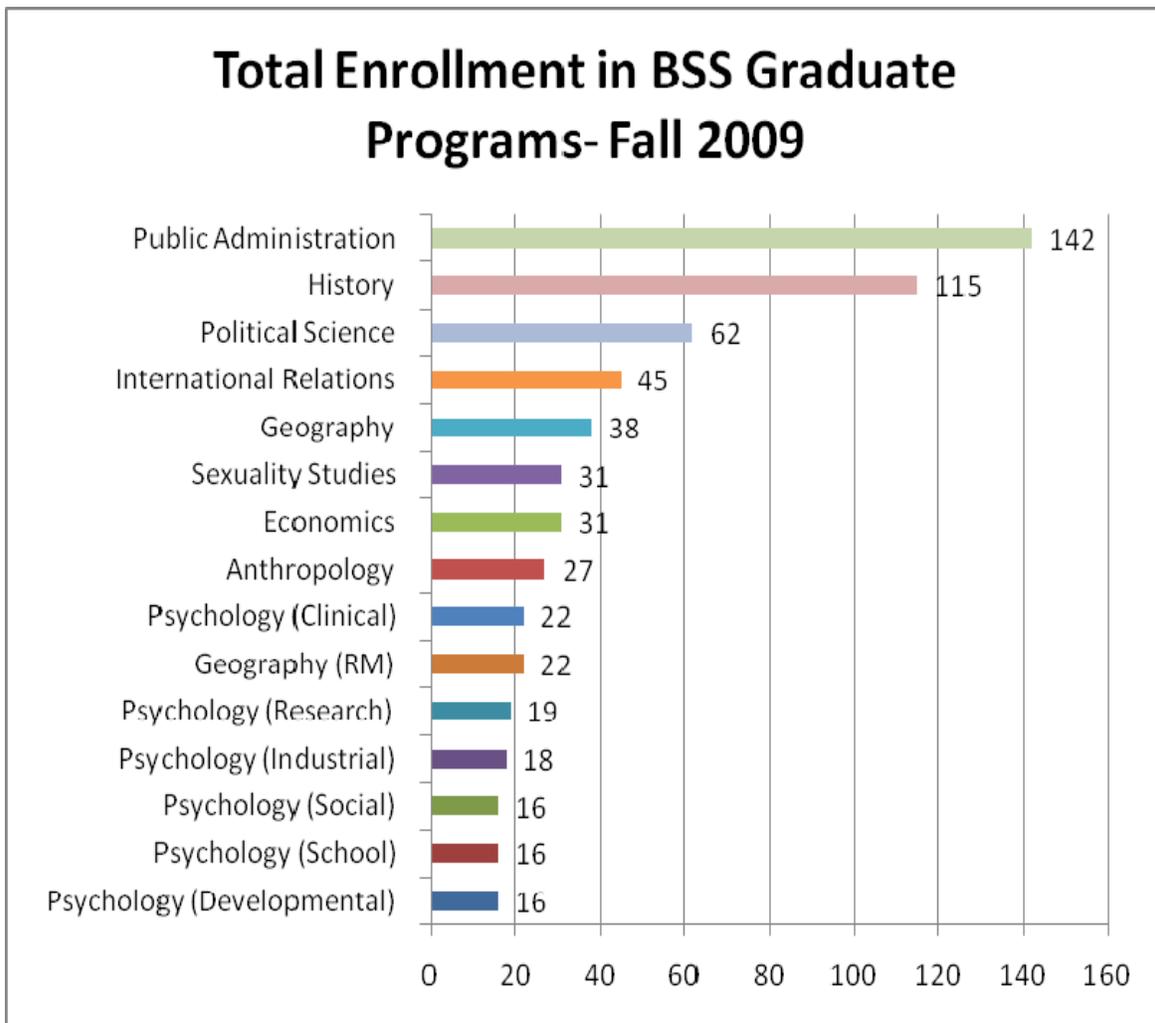
Table 1: The University's 12 Largest Graduate Programs, Fall 2009
(Number of Students Taking Classes During the Semester)



* Programs within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences

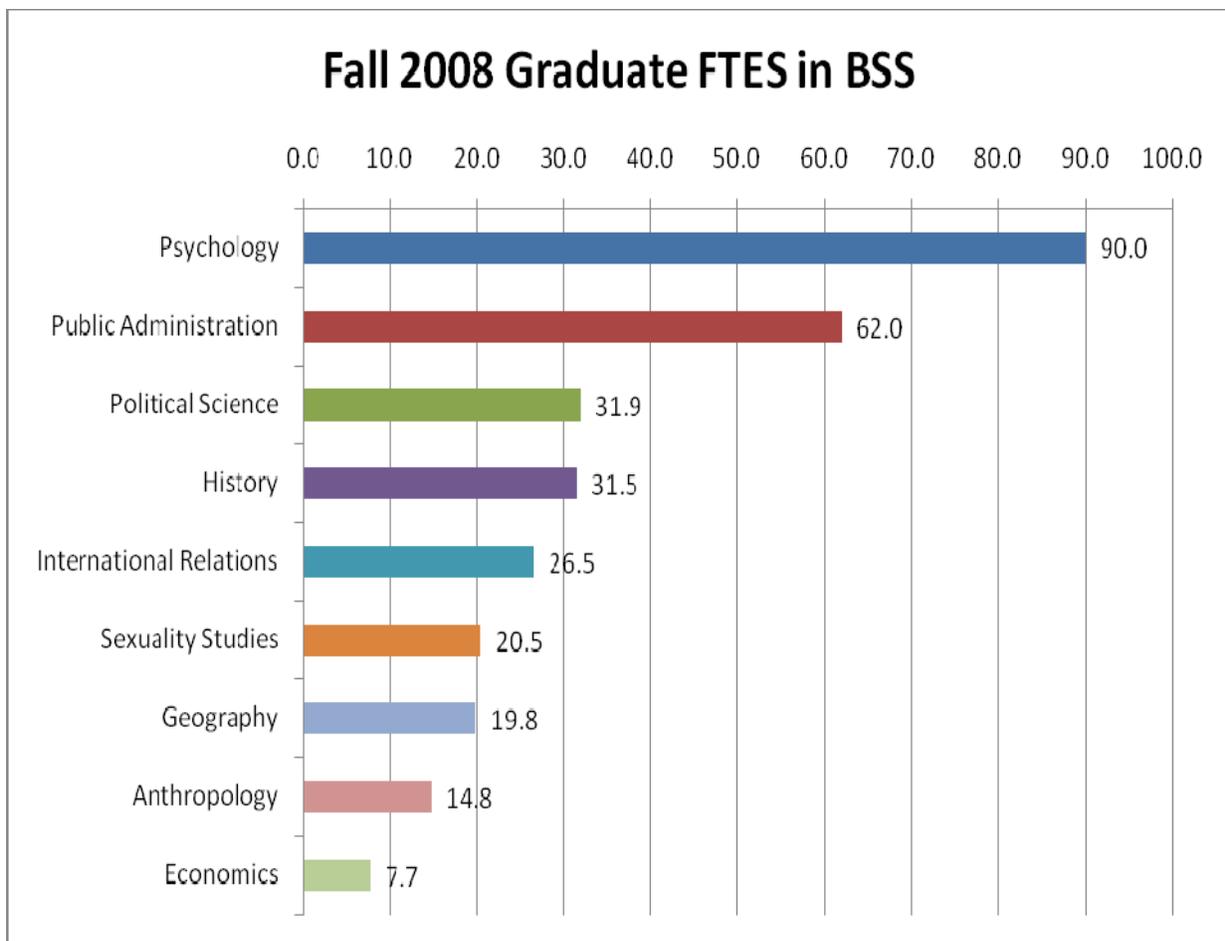
Total enrollments in the various graduate programs in the College are shown in Table 2. Programs in the College range from 142 students in Fall 2009 (Public Administration) to Developmental Psychology (16).

Table 2: Total Enrollment in BSS Graduate Programs, Fall 2009



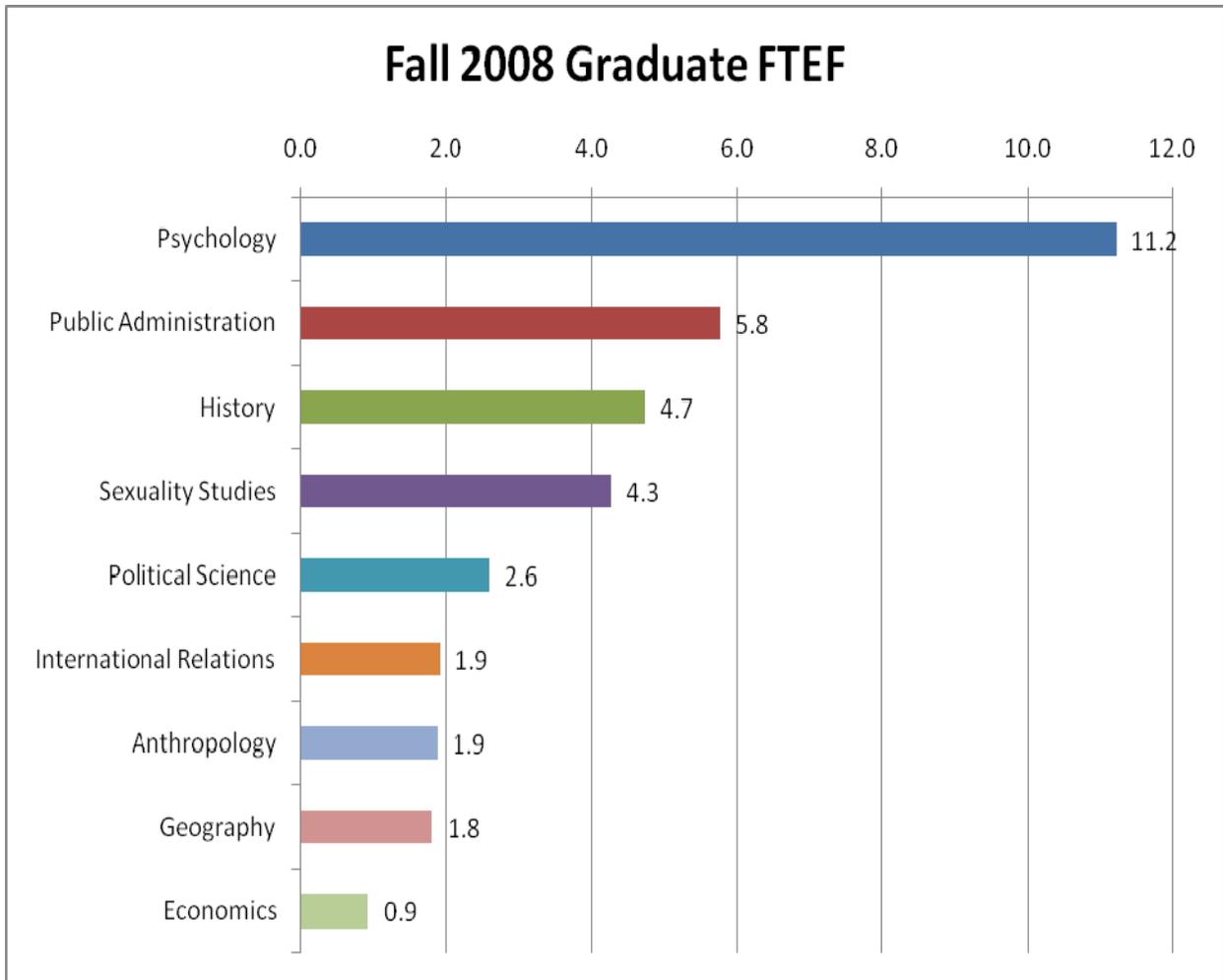
While the Psychology programs were once again shown in a disaggregated fashion in Table 2, Table 3 (Fall 2008 Graduate FTES) illustrates them all together. Once their FTES are collected together, Psychology has the largest number of FTES (90.0), followed by Public Administration (62.0). This pattern also reflects the fact that far more of the Psychology students are full-time students and therefore take more units, therefore Psychology has a higher number of FTES although Public Administration has more students. Anthropology and Economics have the fewest number of graduate FTES (14.8 and 7.7, respectively).

Table 3: Graduate FTES in BSS, Fall 2008



Of course, close to these same patterns are seen in Table 4 showing graduate program FTEF. Economics has the fewest faculty resources dedicated to graduate programs (0.9) followed by Geography (1.8) and Anthropology and International Relations (1.9 for both). At the other end of the spectrum is Public Administration (5.8) and Psychology (11.2).

Table 4: Graduate Program FTEF, Fall 2008



The combination of the student and faculty data leads to Table 5, illustrating Graduate Student Faculty Ratios (SFRs). Sexuality Studies has the lowest graduate SFR in the College (4.8), followed by History (6.7), Anthropology (7.8) and Psychology (8.0). At the other extreme is Geography (11.0), Political Science (12.3), and International Relations (13.9).

Table 5: BSS Graduate Program Student Faculty Ratios

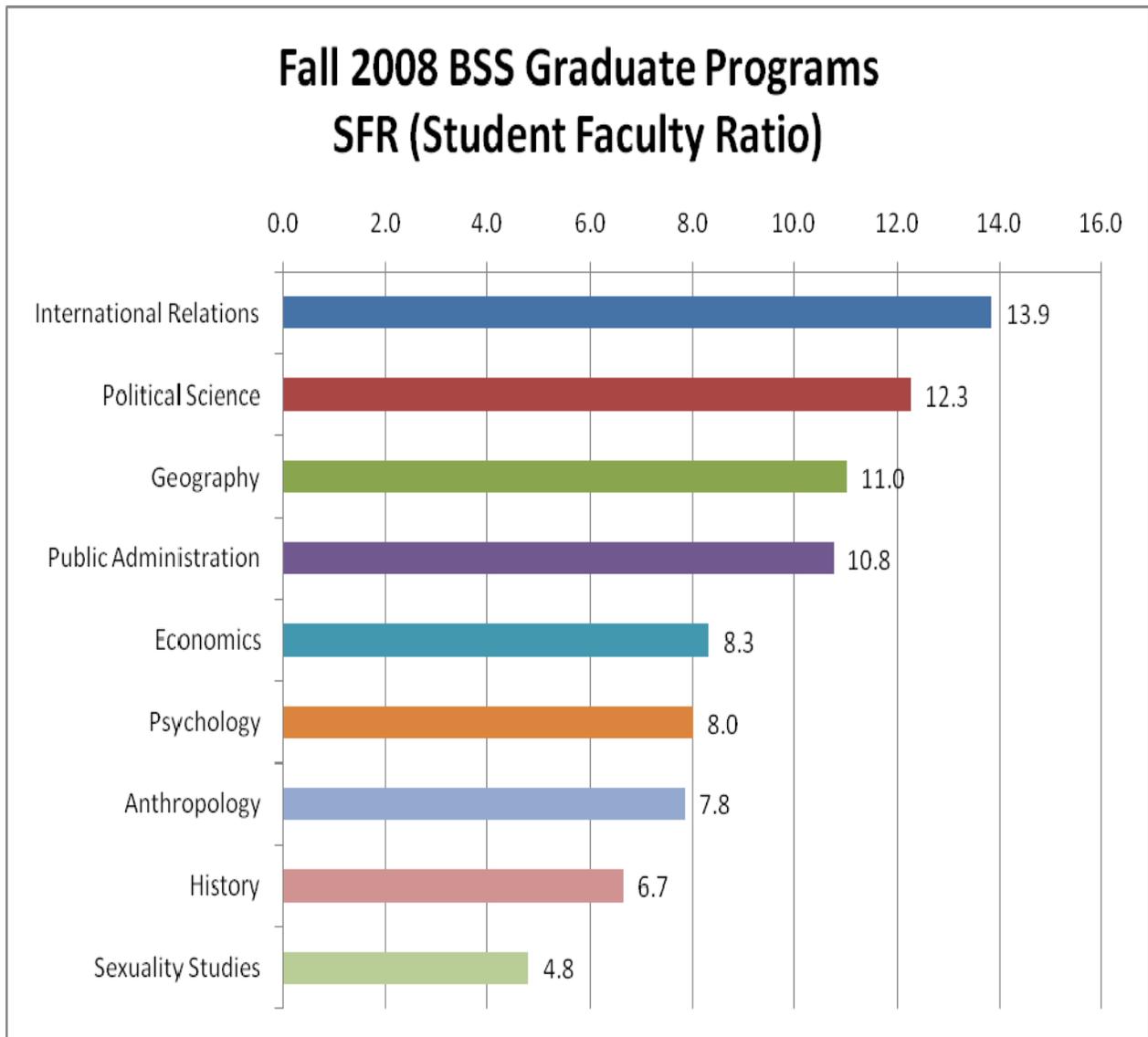


Table 5 illustrates the importance of graduate FTES as a proportion of total FTES for each Department. Public Administration is a graduate only department with very few undergraduate courses; therefore virtually all of their FTES are graduate.

Five other departments (Sexuality Studies, International Relations, Psychology, Political Science, and Geography) have graduate FTES that range closely together, from 7 to 9 percent of their total FTES. Anthropology is close behind them with approximately 6 percent in graduate FTE. History has close to five percent, also close to this bigger group. Economics receives only 1.9 percent of their FTES from the graduate program.

The patterns for the remaining departments reflects, of course, not only the size of their majors but also the dominance of their contribution to the GE program for undergraduates. This is particularly true for Sexuality Studies, with only an undergraduate major but undergraduate courses that make large contributions to GE.

Table 5: Graduate FTES as a Percent of Total FTES for Each BSS

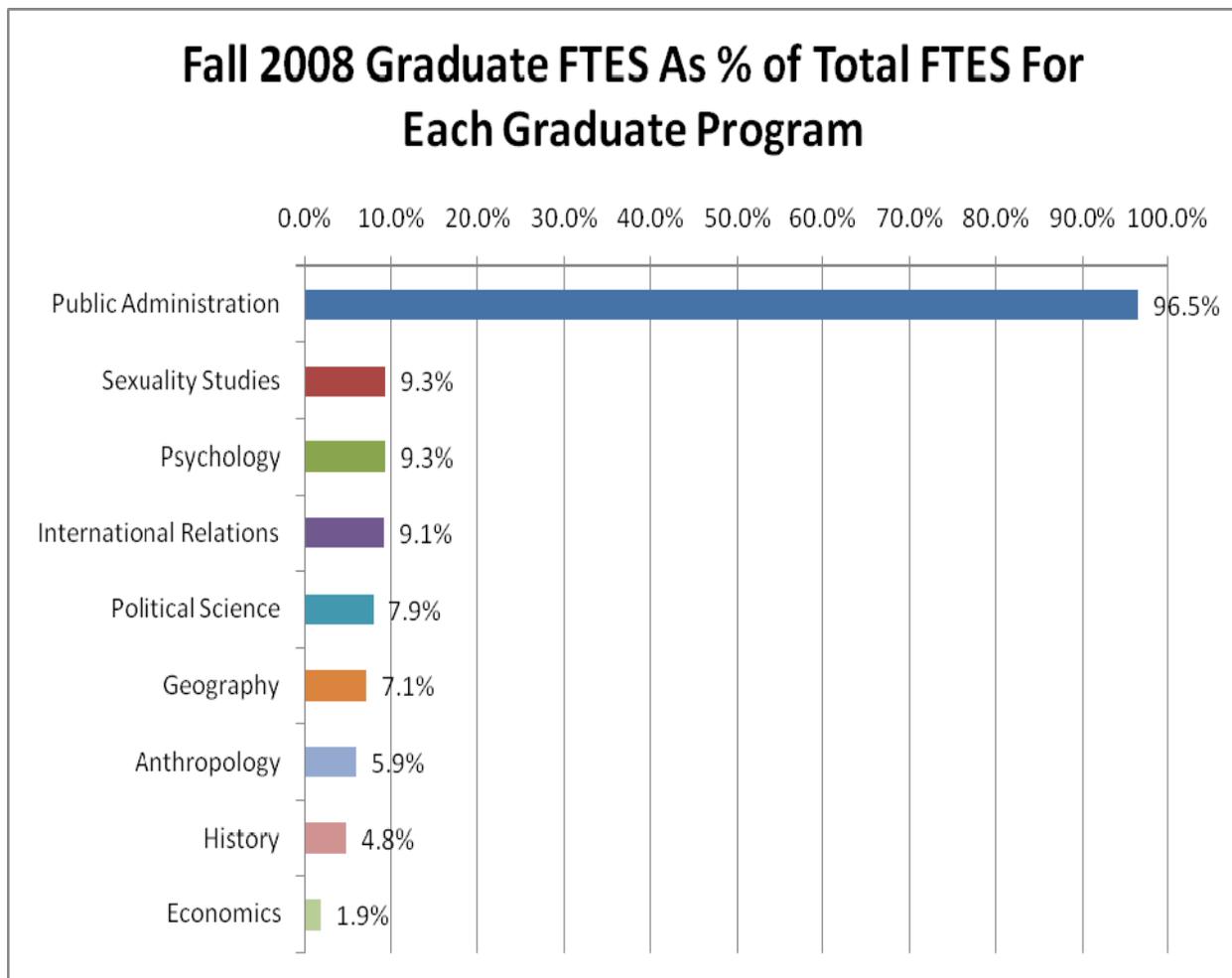
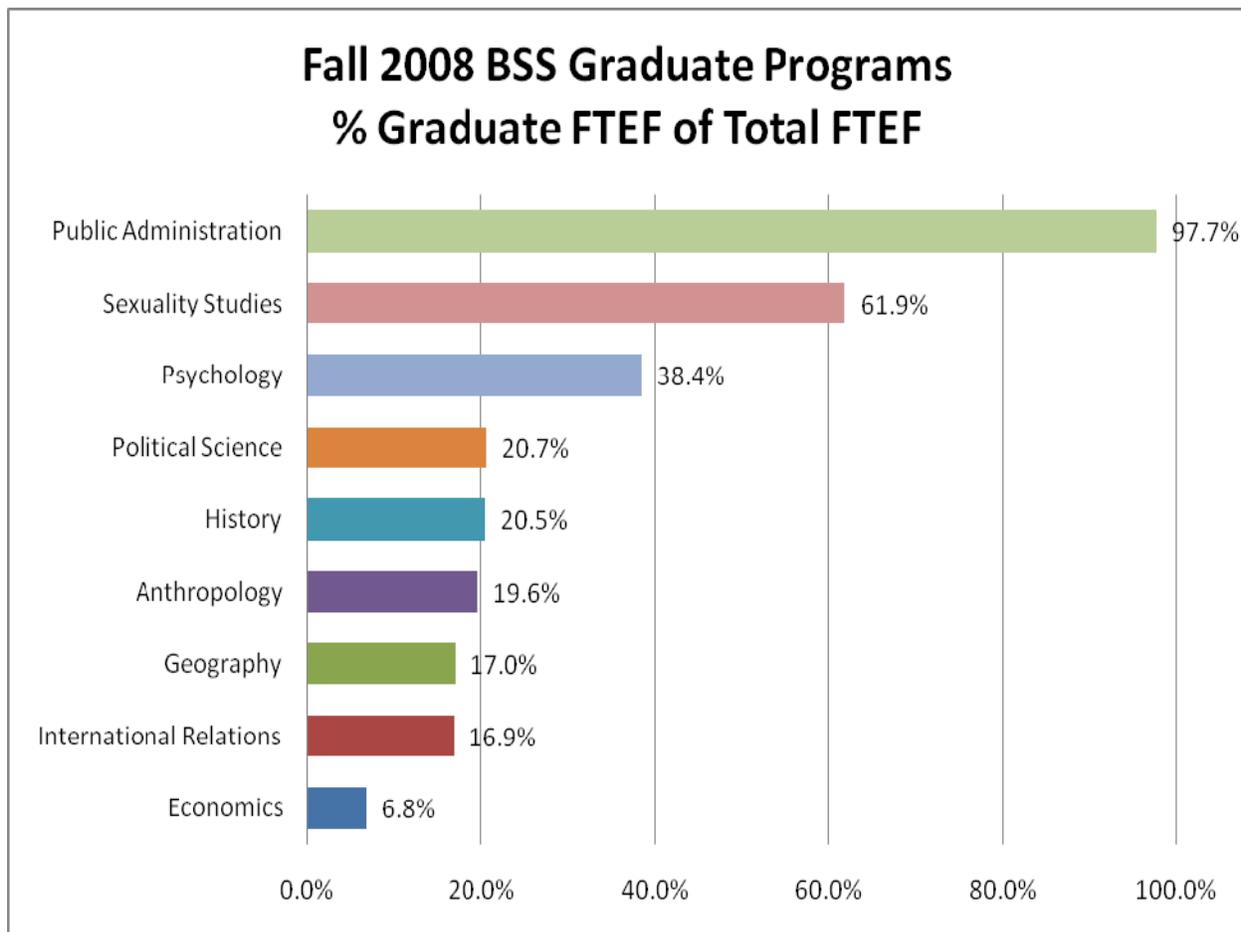


Table 6 presents the same kind of calculation, except for faculty—the proportion of faculty that were dedicated to each department’s graduate programs during Fall 2008. As would be expected for an all-graduate program, the Department of Public Administration dedicates 97.7 percent of its faculty time to teaching graduate courses. Sexuality Studies, with its primarily graduate programs, follows with 61.9 percent.

Psychology follows with 38.4%. With the exception of Economics, which has only 6.8 percent of its resources dedicated to graduate resources, the other departments (Political Science, History, Anthropology, Geography, and International Relations) are all grouped with 4 percentage points of one another, in what might be considered a typical amount of faculty resources for a typically-sized graduate program (with approximately 15-20 percent of its faculty dedicated to the program).

Table 6: Graduate FTEF as a Percent of Total FTEF for Each BSS Graduate Program

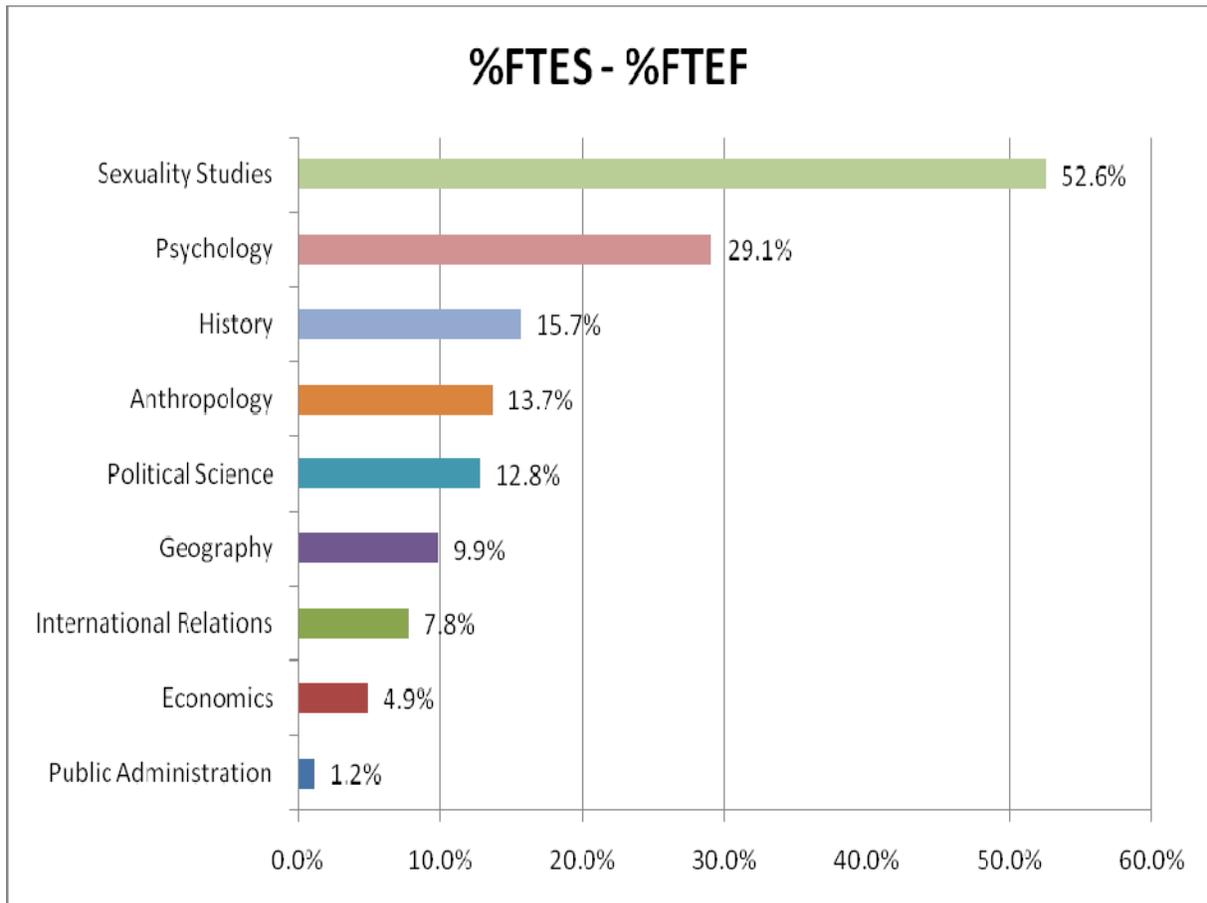


These differences are further explored in Table 7. It could be argued that, for most departments, the proportions of FTES achieved and the proportions of FTEF dedicated should be roughly comparable—except for the factor of class sizes differing numbers of units taken by graduate students across departments (departments with full-time graduate students would differ from those with only full-time students).

So Table 7 presents some interesting results. This table presents the numeric difference between the proportion of FTES achieved by the graduate program minus the proportion of FTEF dedicated to achieving it.

Sexuality Studies' large difference of 52.5% can be explained by the incredibly large undergraduate courses that distorts the FTES values. Psychology's 29.1 percent could be explained by the difference in the large classes at the undergraduate level compared to the smaller classes at the graduate level—but it is also clear that Psychology dedicates a far higher proportion of its resources to its graduate programs than any other department which also has a full spectrum of undergraduate courses.

Table 7: Differences in %FTES of Total FTES Minus % FTEF of Total FTEF



Turning now to admissions, Table 8 illustrates the place of BSS graduate programs among all University graduate programs in selectivity of admissions. For Fall 2009, 3 of BSS programs are within the top ten most selective in admissions (Clinical Psychology [accepting 9.6% of its applicants], Industrial Psychology [13.1 percent] and Social Psychology [19.2 percent]). Another 3 fall within the top fifteen (Developmental Psychology [21.2 percent], Research Psychology [25.0] and Sexuality Studies [25.4]). It is worth noting that for Fall 2010, yet another program, Public Administration, moves up into the top fifteen most selective by accepting only 25.4% of its applicants.

Table 8: SF State's Top Fifteen Most Competitive Graduate Programs, Fall 2009
(Accepted Students as % of Total Applications)



*Programs within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences – 6 of the top 15

Table 9 puts selectivity of admissions into context for all BSS graduate programs. For Fall 2009, History's graduate program was by far the least selective, accepting 89.6 percent of its applicants. This was followed by a grouping around fifty percent (Anthropology, International Relations, and Political Science) and Geography and Economics with approximately forty percent admission rates. The College average was 34.7 percent.

Table 9: Admissions Rates and Selectivity Among BSS Graduate Programs, Fall 2009

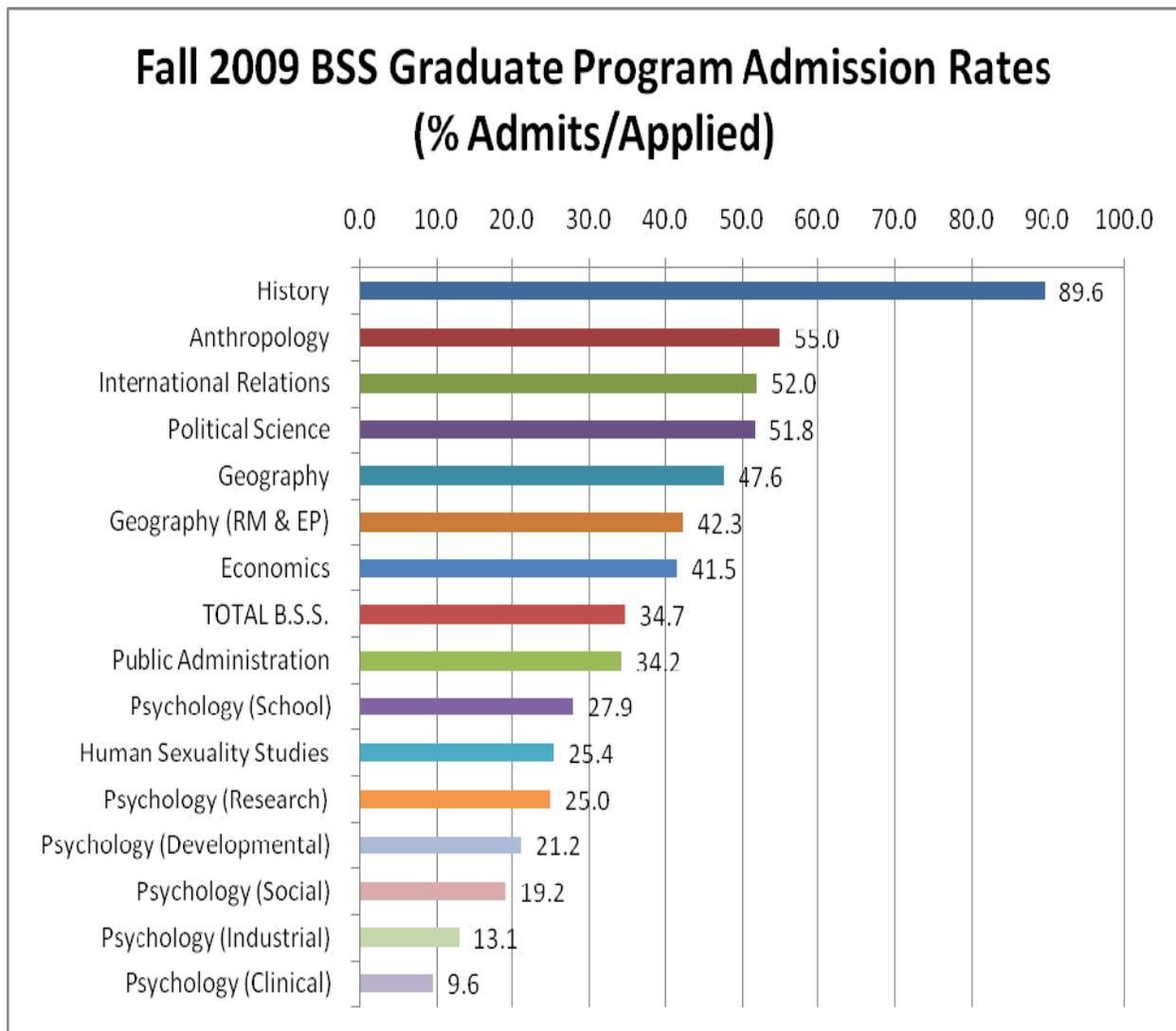
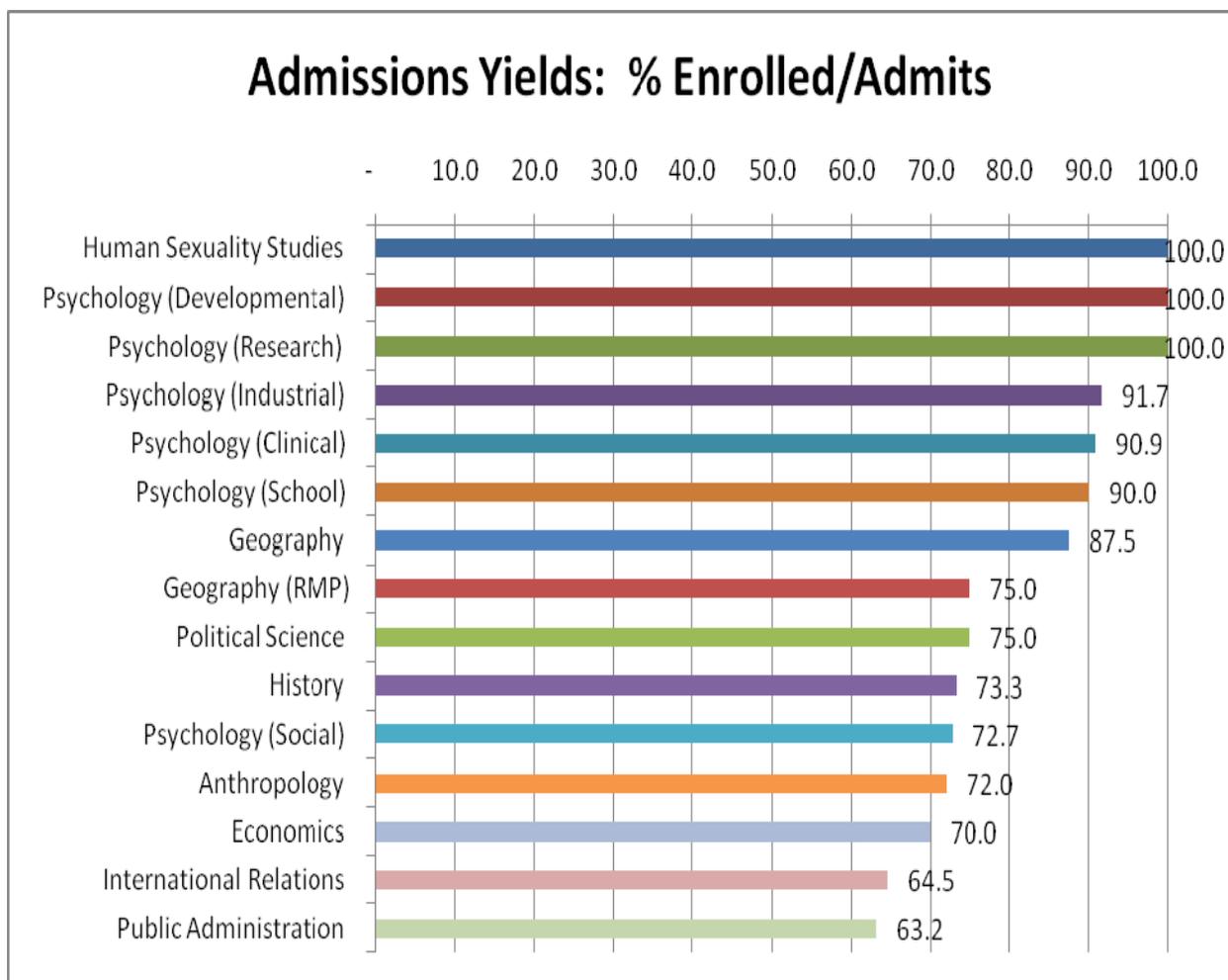


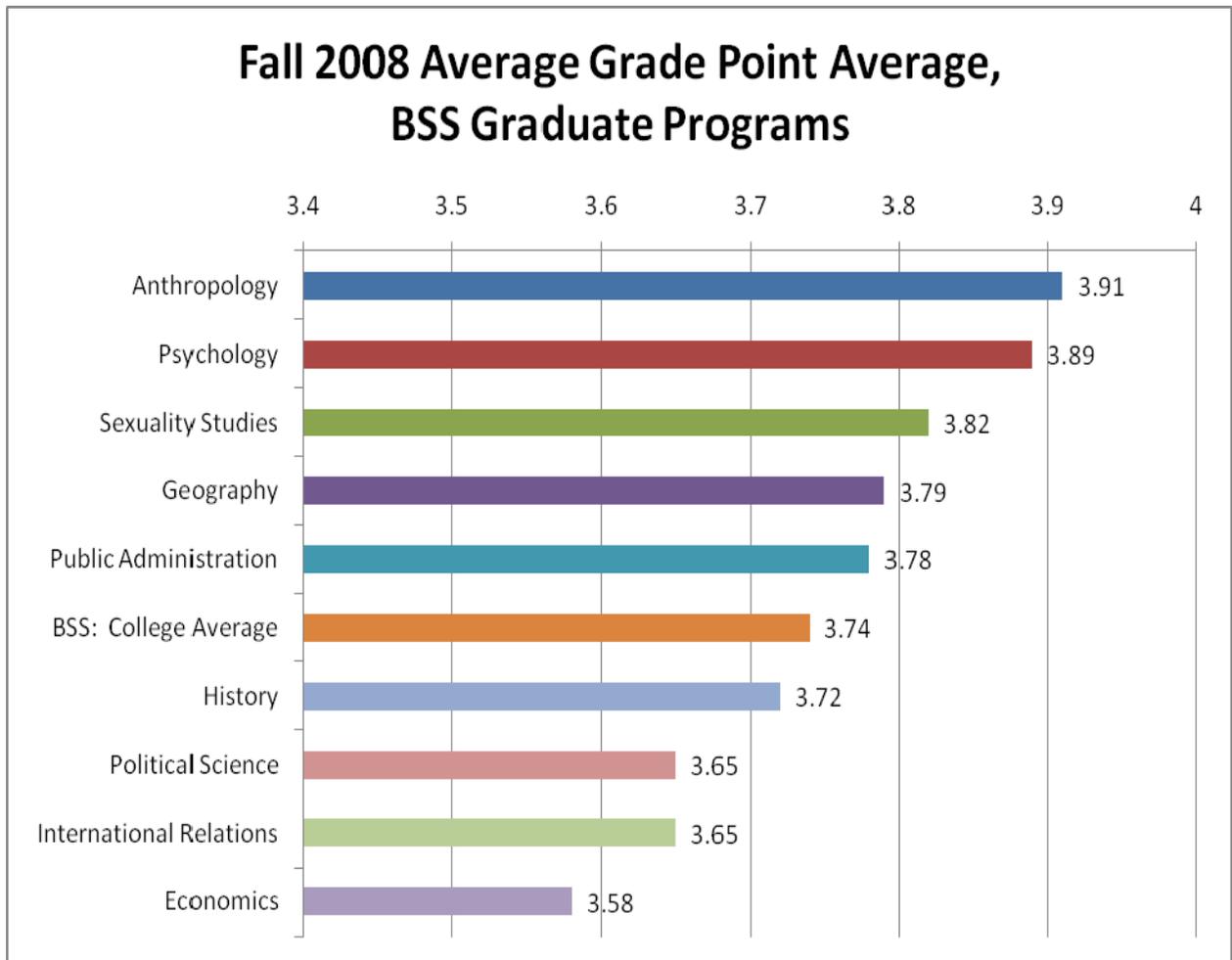
Table 10 illustrates another admissions measure—admissions yield, or that proportion of students who are accepted into a graduate program who actually attend. This can be a measure of whether a graduate program is a “destination” program, but could also reflect the availability of each type of graduate program. Table 10 indicates that all of the students accepted into the Sexuality Studies, Developmental Psychology, and Research Psychology programs attended, an exceptional achievement. This was followed closely by the yields for the Industrial Psychology, Clinical and School Psychology, and Geography programs with approximately 90 percent yields. Public Administration and International Relations had the lowest yields with approximately 63-64 percent of accepted students actually attending.

Table 10: Admissions Yields Among BSS Graduate Programs, Fall 2009



Another measure of program rigor is the average grade earned by students in each program—it can be argued that the lower the grade point average, the more rigorous the program. Table 10 presents this data for the BSS graduate programs. With a College average of 3.74, the Department of Economics has the lowest grade point average, followed by the departments of International Relations, Political Science and History. Students in Anthropology’s graduate program earn the highest grades, followed by Psychology and Sexuality Studies.

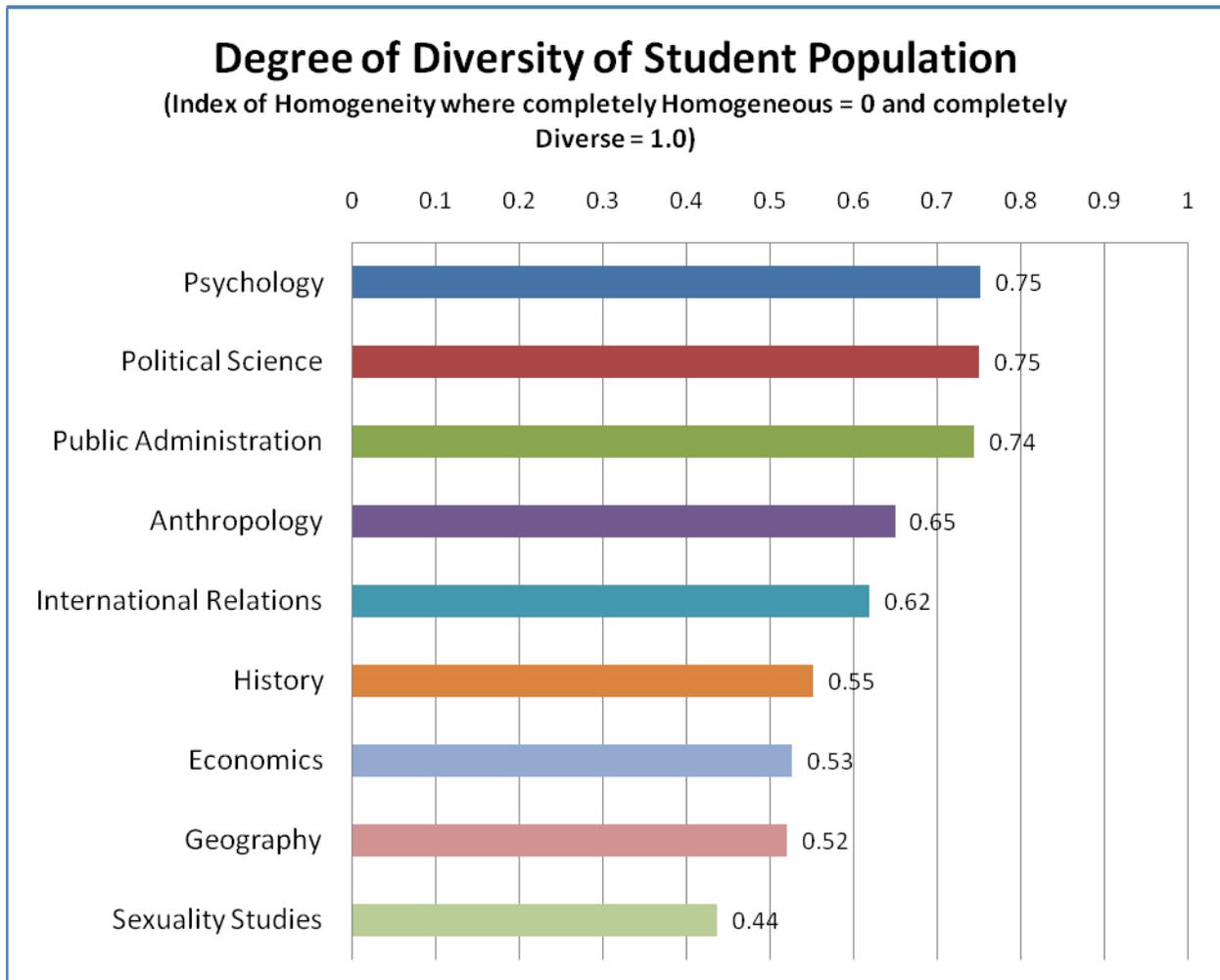
Table 11: Average Grade Point Average for BSS Graduate Programs



Finally, a measure of student diversity is presented in Table 12. The Index of Homogeneity is used here to compare the diversity of BSS graduate students. This measure ranges from 0 to 1; 0 represents a population (in this case, graduate students) which is completely homogeneous in ethnicity and race (i.e., consists of just one group with members of the same race or ethnicity). An indicator of 1 represents the case in which a population is completely diverse (i.e., comprised of several or many groups of smaller size). The Index is a scale so measures between 0 and 1 represent degrees of homogeneity (between 0 and .5) or heterogeneity (between .51 and 1.0).

The graduate programs in Psychology, Political Science and Public Administration all have relatively racially and ethnically diverse graduate populations with indices of .75, .75, and .74, respectively. Sexuality Studies students are the least diverse with an index of .44.

Table 12: Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among BSS Graduate Programs



University Standards

Appendix A provides a comparative analysis of the University's standards for graduate programs along with an indication of whether or not each graduate program has met the standard or not. To summarize:

- All College graduate programs meet the standard for having the appropriate mix of courses on a student's GAP.
- All College graduate programs represented in this report meet the standard for sustainability in having at least 5 graduates per year.
- All College graduate programs meet the standard for having adequate faculty teach in the graduate program.
- All College graduate programs meet the standards for frequency of course offerings and having enough offerings per year.

All but one graduate program appears to have met the University's standard for:

- Admissions with at least (now) a 3.0 minimum grade point average
- Having a Path to Graduation model for students
- Class size (not exceeding 30 students).

Only one program currently has any systematic planning process in place; the others rely on curricular reviews or hiring plans but have no overall process that ties the University strategic plan into theirs or even creates some kind of systematic cycle of review for their curricular efforts.

Most graduate programs have some community outreach activities; many have significant efforts providing students access to their professional associations in some way.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There are several themes and patterns that emerge from this analysis. The APRC would also like to take this opportunity to remark on other themes that emerged from its 6th Cycle Review of this College, overall.

1. First, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences should be congratulated on having such a disproportionate share of programs (40 percent, or 6) in the top fifteen most selective graduate programs.
2. The College is also congratulated on the job its graduate programs have done, in general, in meeting or exceeding University standards for graduate programs.
3. Departments within the College need to start processes of systematic planning for their graduate programs—and programs in general. These processes should begin with an overall mission and vision for their programs with specific goals that include their student learning goals, as well as others. From this should emerge plans for community and professional outreach plans as well as curricular and hiring plans.
4. There is a wide range of distribution of faculty resources being utilized on graduate programs across the College—from 6.8 to 38.4 percent (for the departments with a significant undergraduate and graduate presence). From the reviews, it is clear to APRC

that there is no overall strategy or even much thought going into the distribution of resources into graduate versus undergraduate programs within departments. Ideally, this distribution should also emerge from the planning processes described and recommended above. Departments need to give thought to the type of graduate presence and program they want to have—if they want a graduate program, it needs to be supported by adequate resources. The APRC doubts that a quality graduate program could exist on less than ten percent of a department's faculty resources. A range of ten to twenty percent seems considerably more appropriate.

5. There also are a wide variety of ways that different departments are addressing their culminating experience requirements, with the result that the culminating experiences are quite uneven. Graduate programs within the College could benefit from the sharing of experiences among the graduate coordinators, at the least, in order to strengthen these culminating experiences.
6. The student learning outcomes assessment processes are of uneven quality. Some departments are just beginning to assess their graduate programs while others have some assessment processes in place. The College as a whole needs to better emphasize the importance of assessment as a way to continually improve the quality of their programs and to work with departments to strengthen their assessment processes.
7. There are overlaps and duplication between department graduate programs within the College. Not only do these represent wasted resources but also lost opportunities for collaboration between faculty and students. In all cases, the students lose. The College needs to work to ensure that all opportunities for collaboration between departments are utilized, particularly those which represent shared disciplines.

Appendix A: BSS Graduate Program Adherence to University Standards

Master's Program	Sexuality Studies	Public Admin	Economic s	Psychology	History	Internation al Relations	Political Science	Geography
3.1 Evidence of Prior Academic Success-- 3.0	95%	100%	100% > 2.75	>95%	100%	100%	100%	100%
3.2 Evidence of Competent Writing	95%	100%	100%	Differs by degree.	100%	100%	100%	100% of applicants submit GRE scores
3.3 English Preparation	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
4.1 Number of Course Offerings	3 per semester	12-13 per semester	2-3 per semester	Yes.	5.1	Average 4	At least 3	3.8 courses
4.2 Frequency of Course Offerings	100%	100%	Yes.	Yes for required courses.	100%	100%	Core once every 3 semesters	69% met this requirement (once every 2 years)
4.3 Path to Graduation	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	For full time students.	Yes	No.	Yes.	Yes.
4.4 Proper Course Distribution (50%)	100% graduate	100%	75%	100%	50%	100%	60%	58%
4.5 Class Size	90% comply with standard	100% under 30.	100%	>95%; some seminars between 6-8; statistics sometimes 30-35.	100%	100%	100%	69 % of seminars had 5-15 students; the remainder have exceeded this goal
4.6 Number of Graduates	Average 9 (over 3 years)	34.	7.8	54.4	21.4	14	9.8	10 graduates

5.1 Number of Faculty	5.25	6.0	6	24.4 FTEF	21	8 active	15 faculty	11
5.2 Number of Faculty per Concentration	N/A	At least 1	6	At least 3	N/A	N/A	5	11 in GEOG, 9 in RMEP
6.0 Program Planning Process	No planning; programmatic decision making structure	Yes.	Curriculum changes only.	Retreats on topics, no planning.	Regular curricular revisions; 2 retreats per year; no formal planning.	Discuss student work and curriculum, no planning	Unclear whether any exists.	Hiring planning along with short term curricular planning.
7.0 Student Experience	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.
8.0 Program & the Community	Yes.	Yes.	Limited.	Yes.	Limited.	Yes.	Some.	Yes.
9.0 Faculty Experience	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.	Various.
10.0 Resource Support	Grants, Institute.	CEL, San Mateo, certificate.	Some.	Some grants.	CEL, donations.	Some.	Some.	CEL, certificate.