Author's response to reviews

Title: Toward the Future of Psychiatric Diagnosis: The Seven Pillars of RDoC

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We thank the reviewers for their careful reading and thoughtful comments about this manuscript. We provide the following responses to the reviews:

Reviewer 1

The DSM revision process: We are not quite sure how to respond to these comments, as the manuscript did not discuss the DSM revision process, nor assert that the RDoC process was based on a more rigorous evaluation than the DSM. Also, we discuss (and cite) various aspects of the debate about the current DSM revisions in the first paragraph of the Discussion section. Perhaps the reviewer mistook our comment about “cordial relations” among the DSM, ICD and RDoC groups to mean that each process in itself was cordial; what was meant was that relationships among the leaders of these three systems have been consistently cordial. Aside from reflecting our perception of these interactions, this statement reflects the importance that the NIMH places upon emphasizing the shared interests of the three groups and avoiding false controversies that could harm overall efforts to improve psychiatric diagnosis.

Potential challenges and downsides: These points are well taken, and are addressed in the last paragraph of the Discussion and in the Summary. Although a thorough consideration of these points could not be addressed due to length limitations, we added language in the summary to address the need for RDoC to be flexible in accommodating new information.

Reviewer 2:

The length limitation unfortunately precluded much consideration of the many thoughtful commentators about psychiatric diagnosis who have made contributions over the last several decades, but we added references to the work of Kendell and van Praag.

Reviewer 3:

Moving targets: We added language in the summary to reflect this cogent point.

Interval/ration scales for dimensions: We added a sentence to address the reviewers’ thoughtful comment about ratio and interval scales.
Enriching Table 2: We added the url for the RDoC web site, where the full matrices (with elements) are readily available. Due to the complexity of the matrix and the information within it, it was unfortunately not feasible to provide examples within the manuscript.

Points 4-7: We changed the language as per the reviewer's suggestions, and fixed the typos.