

psych NEWS



department of psychology | NEWSLETTER | spring 2015

from the desk of the chair | CHRISTINE FIORE, PH.D.

Welcome

In my second year as chair of the Psychology Department I continue to feel honored and amazed by the achievements and hard work of our students, faculty, and staff. In this newsletter you will discover many wonderful activities of our faculty and students. Our work in clinical, experimental, and school areas of research continues to garner honors and meaningful funding. Important news of late is that the School Psychology Ph.D. program has been approved for an APA site visit in the Fall. Congratulations to Drs. Greg Machek (Director), Anisa Goforth and Jacquie Brown for all of their hard work bringing this to fruition as well as Dr. Margaret Beebe-Frankenberger who retired last year and who also guided efforts towards accreditation previously. We have research being conducted in the schools, on campus, in the community and at multiple sites across the US. This includes two NIH funded grants one by Dr. Luke Conway (in this issue) and the other by Dr. Cameo Stanick investigating "Advancing Implementation Science through Measure Development and Evaluation." Dr. Daniel Denis has also been hard at work on a statistics textbook about to be published. There is a lot of activity and this place is busy! The most wonderful aspect of this department is that we enjoy our work and each other. I believe this benefits all who work with us and I am thankful that we have such a healthy and warm environment. With the many challenges going on in the US and world, it is nice to know that the Psychology Department at the University of Montana continues to do its part to address well-being! If you are getting this because you have been a student as an alumnus or because of other connections, please let us know your important achievements. We like to know what happens in the lives of those who share time with us.

Have a great summer,
Chris

Our Faculty

Back row: Paul Silverman, Greg Machek, Yoonhee Jang, Jacqueline Brown, David Schuldberg, Nicole McCray, Allen Szalda-Petree, Bryan Cochran, Craig McFarland, Luke Conway, Daniel Denis, Lois Muir, Stuart Hall

Front row seated:
Gyda Swaney, Anisa Goforth, Cameo Stanick, Christine Fiore, Laura Kirsch, Duncan Campbell

Not pictured:
Jennifer Robohm,
Jennifer Waltz



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DR. JACQUELINE BROWN | school psychology | NEW FACULTY HIGHLIGHT



Jacque, tell us about where you came from academically.

I obtained my PhD degree from the APA-accredited combined Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology program with an emphasis in School Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). During the last year of my degree, I completed an APA-accredited-doctoral internship at Boys Town Center for Behavioral Health within the Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology. Prior to enrolling in the UCSB PhD program, I obtained a Master's degree in School Psychology at the University of British Columbia.

What are your current research projects and goals for your lab?

My current research interests include international school psychology and school-based crisis prevention and intervention. I am also interested in bereavement and trauma. I am in the process of starting my research program and plan on beginning a few projects this year. One project will focus on interviewing school psychology experts around the world to obtain information about the state of international school psychology research and where the field is heading. A second project will focus on evaluating and promoting resilience in a sample of at-risk youth within a residential treatment program. Finally, I also hope to help integrate bereavement services into schools and evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of these services. As of spring 2015 I've been able to have undergraduate students start working in my lab. I have also accepted a school psychology doctoral student for the 2015-2016 school year.

What courses will you be teaching?

I am currently teaching two first year graduate courses in School Psychology. The first one, Principles and Practices of Professional School Psychology, introduces students to the theory, role, and function of school psychology as an academic discipline and professional field. My second course, Tests and Measurement, provides an introduction to psychological and educational measurement. I will also be supervising a second year school psychology graduate practicum course in the spring and teaching a school psychology consultation course in subsequent years. I am excited to be part of a program working towards accreditation. I look forward to contributing to many aspects of our dynamic program.

What has surprised you most about UM? How about Montana, in general, and Missoula in particular?

I have only yet had pleasant surprises! I truly appreciate the supportive atmosphere and sense of community within both my department and the university. I did not realize that Missoula would be such a dynamic and lively city. Despite its size, there is always something to do. I also appreciate the abundance of outdoor activities available in Missoula and Montana.

Finally, please tell us a little about yourself.

I love spending time outdoors, which is why Missoula is a great place for me to live. Some of my hobbies include hiking, cycling, and skiing. I also enjoy traveling, reading, and am very much a foodie.

Welcome, Dr. Brown!

The general focus of the lab is to look at peer aggression in school-aged children. This is a broad description and specific projects deal with this theme from varied perspectives. For example, we have done research looking at the social cognitions of bystanders in incidents of bullying, we are looking into the social validity of Social and Emotional Learning curriculum efforts, and we have sought to better understand how various aspects of the school climate, including direct supports, have an impact on LGBT youth who may be victimized.

DR. GREG MACHEK faculty lab & research | HIGHLIGHT

We have a number of ongoing projects spearheaded by myself, as well as each of our doctoral students: Lauri Lindquist, MA, Laura Ambrose, MA, and Miriam Rose-Baker. One is collecting data from regional schools about their use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This project seeks to understand the prevalence of PBIS use as well as gaining an understanding of its general fidelity, or how well and consistently it is being implemented. Another project, just begun, will look at whether the grade that a teacher works in influences their recognition of relational bullying. This type of peer aggression can happen in elementary aged children, but it is not known how well teachers at this stage (a) recognize and (b) intervene. Another project that we're preparing to undertake will look at the implementation of Social and Emotional learning curricula aimed at bringing about more socially aware and acceptable behavior among children at risk of peer aggression. This project will be run in the UK and will likely look at characteristics of teachers and teacher's assistants in successfully implementing the curriculum. Another project is looking at whether certain school supports change the relationship between sexual and gender identity nondisclosure and negative psychological and academic outcomes by improving the school climate for sexual and gender minorities. Finally, unrelated to peer aggression, we are collecting data from all 50 states regarding their policies on licensing and certifying School Psychologists.

Currently, there are five students participating in my lab and their level of involvement is high. Undergrads generally put in nine hours a week towards lab efforts. In terms of Ph.D. students, this is a major portion of their careers so they tend to be highly involved. What the future holds and how I see the research evolving depends a lot on the graduate students. I may be somewhat atypical in that I do not dictate specifically the research that my graduate students do. My main concern is that it fits within a general realm that informs our understanding of, and intervention with, peer aggression in school children. That said, I would like to take some of what we are learning to tweak existing social and emotional learning curricula to better address how school children can evaluate their peers' roles in situations of aggression.

DR. LUKE CONWAY | faculty lab & research | HIGHLIGHT

What is the general focus of your lab?

We have two separate research labs: The *Cognitive Complexity* lab focuses on the causes, correlates, and consequences of complex versus simple thinking. The *Culture* lab examines where cultural beliefs come from and what causes they have. Both labs are mostly run by my two awesome graduate students, Shannon Houck and Meredith Repke. So when I say “we” below, I mostly mean “them!”

Specifically, what projects are you currently running?

Right now, we’re running projects comparing the complexity of news media outlets (e.g., Fox News versus MSNBC), the complexity of Political Debates throughout history, whether or not lies are more complex than the truth, and the complexity of social media such as twitter. Further, we recently got a grant from National Cancer Institute/NIH to apply complexity research to smoking cessation, so we’re working on that project as well. Finally, on the culture side, we’re studying things that affect people’s perceptions of torture, precursors to terrorism, and a lot of things relevant to environmental psychology and the psychology of climate change and sustainability.

Tell us a little bit more about the research and studies and what is involved for each study.

On the complexity side, we often do “archival” research where we score pre-existing material for how complex it is and test various theories about when complexity might go up or down, and what its consequences might be. (Some of that work was featured in the Washington Post, on BBC radio, and in USA Today.) We’ve also tried to apply complexity research in real-world contexts by using it to understand the cognitive psychology of healthy behaviors – for example, quitting smoking. On the culture side, we often use laboratory methods where we ask people to report culturally-relevant attitudes and beliefs under various circumstances. So, for example, in one line of research run by Shannon Houck, we’ve tried to understand better when people might (or might not) endorse the use of torture. In another line of research run by Meredith Repke, we’ve tried to understand the consequences of viewing nature scenes on one’s subsequent ability to engage in impulse control.

How are your projects and studies funded?

We’ve recently gotten two grants through NIH (one for \$82,000 and one for \$426,000) to fund our work on complexity and smoking. In the past, our work has been funded through the Department of Homeland Security, among other organizations.

How many students currently work in your lab? And what is their level of involvement?

We currently have 2 graduate students and 9 undergraduate students. My graduate students run almost every aspect of the lab. Right now, Meredith Repke is the Lab Director and Shannon Houck supervises specific projects; last year, Shannon was the Lab Director and Meredith supervised specific projects. Our undergraduates have various levels of involvement: Some of them are supervisors who help train and supervise other undergraduate RAs; some of them are the hands and feet of the lab who find and enter data, run the actual study sessions, score archival materials, among many other possible tasks. We would be nowhere without all their hard work and dedication!

What does the future hold and how would you like to see your research evolve?

Our lab recently published a new system for scoring complexity via computer – something that’s difficult to do – and as a result of this, right now we’re doing more studies using that automated approach to scoring complexity. There is a lot of “big” data out there and we’d like to figure out how to use it to test scientific theories of human cognition and culture, so being able to automate the things we’re interested in for faster scoring is paramount to this effort. At the same time, we’d like to do more and more lab-based studies where we continue to test really interesting theories of the human mind in a controlled environment. And, although we have a basic research focus, we want to continue to branch out into more applied areas, such as using research to encourage healthy behaviors and to foster sustainable environments. Along those lines, we’d like to continue to pursue Federal grant funding. So basically, we want our research to evolve to do...everything!



Left to right: Shannon Houck, Luke Conway, and Meredith Repke

AWARD RECIPIENTS | our undergraduate & graduate students | 2014-2015

UNDERGRADUATE

Mortar Board Outstanding Senior Awards went to Lorraine Adams & Jessica Weiss

Ashton Squires, Jo Ann Choong, Megan Burchak, & Makinzie Tilleman were awarded the Kain/McKay Scholarship

Jessica Weiss received the Davidson Honors College Summer Research Fellowship as well as the Watkins Scholarship

Lorraine Adams received the W.F. Book Award

GRADUATE

Bertha Morton Fellowships were awarded to Hillary Gleason, & Julia Hammond. Nicholas Livingston received a Bertha Morton Scholarship

The Greenberger Scholarship was awarded to Brook Clark, William Meyer & Nicholas Livingston

Hillary Gleason, Shannon Houck & Erin Yosai received Graduate TA Excellence in Teaching Awards

NEWS | departmental

- New Developmental faculty member, Dr. Rachel Severson, will join the department in January 2016.
- Dr. Swaney received the InPsych grant for the next five years. This will be the 16th consecutive year that the program has been funded.
- Former student, Dr. Rita Billow's (Ph.D. Clinical Psychology 2011) post doctoral position as Psychologist at Community Health Center in Libby, MT has turned into a permanent position.
- Dr. Paul Silverman will replace Dr. Stuart Hall on the Montana State Licensing Board.
- Dr. Elizabeth Kohlstaedt (Ph.D. Clinical Psychology 1989) was honored as Distinguished Alumna during Homecoming weekend. Dr. Kohlstaedt is the first psychologist to receive this award. For more than 24 years, she has served as chief clinical officer of Intermountain, a nonprofit agency providing emotional and behavioral health services to children and their families based in Helena, Montana.
- Drs. Cameo Stanick & Anisa Goforth obtained a grant from the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education Title II Improving Teacher Quality. They are collaborating with Dr. Nichols from the Department of Counselor Education to train teachers in high-needs school districts about children's mental health and how to facilitate children's access to mental health resources and school personnel.
- Dr. Anisa Goforth is continuing collaboration with Jennifer Schoffer Closson, the Pediatric Director of RiteCare Clinic in developing and implementing a group social skills treatment for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. They have received support from the Office of Public Instruction to conduct training for special educators, behavioral specialists, school psychologists, and other school personnel on ways to implement social skills treatments in schools. They will continue this training in Eastern Montana in January 2015.
- Dr. Craig McFarland obtained his State of Montana Psychologist License.
- Dr. Anisa Goforth has become the first psychologist to be licensed in the state of Montana with a specialization in school psychology. She is now dually-credentialed as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist and licensed psychologist.
- Dr. Cameo Stanick, as Co-PI, was awarded a 3 year NIMH-funded RO1 focusing on ongoing and further development of a repository of instruments measuring implementation and refining a rating system assessing quality of the instruments. The repository will be publically available online and, to, represents 3 years worth of multi-investigator work from UM, Indiana University, and the University of North Carolina.
- Dr. Paul Silverman announced his retirement as of spring 2016.
- Dr. Christine Fiore traveled to Ethiopia to visit the University of Gondar
- Philip (PJ) Thomas, an undergraduate junior in Dr. Anisa Goforth's research lab, won a \$5000 Psi Chi Grant for Undergraduate Research. He will be conducting a single-subject research study on a child with autism participating in the Youth Engagement Through Intervention (YETI) intensive social skills treatment during the summer of 2015.
- 2nd year clinical graduate student, Hillary Gleason has been awarded a \$5000 scholarship from the Pride Foundation.
- 4th year clinical student, Nick Livingston has been awarded the 2014 Diversity Grant through the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) to help fund his dissertation project.

DEGREE RECIPIENTS & INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS | our graduate students | 2014-2015

M.A.

Laura Ambrose, School
Benjamin Eisenreich, Experimental
Desiree Fox, Clinical
Lia Harrington, Experimental
Priya Loess, Clinical
Kathryn Oost, Clinical
Meredith Repke, Experimental
Laurel Anne Yorgason, Experimental

Ed.S. | School Psychology

Jack Baldwin
Marianne Peters
Laura Silvey
Wendy Wanner

Ph.D.

Eric Aune, School
Laura Boucher, Clinical
Daniel Dewey, Clinical
Robert Enoch, Clinical
Meghan Gill, Clinical
Christian Herwitz, Clinical
Shannon Houck, Experimental
Tory Kimpton, Clinical
Zed Kramer, Clinical
Jaime Long, School
Molly McDonald, Clinical
Brandon Rennie, School

Internship Placements

Lindsay Crosby - University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute
Salt Lake City, Utah

Jennie Fretts - Rutgers Biomedical & Health Sciences
Newark, New Jersey

Lauri Lindquist - HealthPoint Community Health Center
Washington

Anayansi Lombardero - Southwest Consortium/NMVAHC
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Aryn Ziehnert - OhioGuidestone
Brook Park, Ohio

ALUMNI, we would love to hear from you. Please feel free to email us with your news: PsychologyDepartment@umontana.edu

If you would like to SUPPORT the PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT, please send a check or money order to:

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