

Fall 2019

Psychological Sciences Newsletter



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Letter from the Chair

Dear Alumni, Faculty, Staff, and Current Students,

It's difficult to believe that the end of the fall semester is rapidly approaching. It feels like a short time ago when I was meeting with my pre-major advisees to plan out their fall schedules! This year has already been an eventful one for our department. One of my favorite roles as department chair is welcoming new colleagues. We have an alum, Adrian Bravo, who has joined us, after an international search, as a tenure-eligible faculty member with interests in personality psychology, focusing on aspects of addiction. We are also grateful for the contributions of our new Visiting Assistant Professor in clinical psychology, Fred Ernst. As mentioned in this newsletter, we held our first "Diversity Week", with a series of events. These events afforded numerous opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to talk about issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our department.

Currently, we are moving full-speed ahead with searches for two tenure-eligible faculty positions in clinical psychology. We look forward to meeting the candidates soon for on-campus interviews and to welcoming new colleagues in the fall semester. We are excited about the energy that these colleagues will bring along with the opportunities for our majors in the classroom and to engage in faculty research.

In the spring, our department will undergo our scheduled external review. This review will be an opportunity to have our strengths reinforced. However, I am particularly looking forward to faculty members outside of W&M offering ideas for areas of improvement. Our preparation for this review has been afforded an excellent opportunity to "step back" and consider how best to position our department over the next 10 years to offer the best education, in the classroom and our labs, to our undergraduate and graduate students. (continued on page 2)

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Overall, it has already been an energizing academic year and I look forward to the progress our department will make this year with regard to hiring and the external review.

As always, we hope to hear from you. Please consider giving us an update about how you are doing (https://www.wm.edu/as/psych-sciences/alumni/alumni_updates/index.php) and consider joining our Alumni Network (<https://www.wm.edu/as/psych-sciences/studentresources/psychology-alumni-network/index.php>).

As we gear up for the end of the semester and finals, I wish you a warm and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Josh Burk, Professor and Chair, Department of Psychological Sciences

Fall 2019 Undergraduate Science Symposium

The Department of Psychological Sciences had active participation in the most recent Undergraduate Research Symposium, organized by William & Mary's Charles Center. In past years the symposium was held only in the spring but this year the Charles Center made the decision to hold both fall and spring sessions. In addition, the name was changed from Undergraduate Science Research Symposium to simply Undergraduate Research Symposium to be more inclusive to all areas of William & Mary Arts and Sciences. The fall session was held Friday October 25th in Swem Library.

The Undergraduate Research Symposium provides an opportunity for undergrads to showcase their best research and work. It also provides students an opportunity to exchange ideas and compare notes on how they developed their research construct, operationalized it, gathered data, analyzed the data using statistics, drew conclusions, and hopefully answered the original question they had posed. In most cases students presented their data in poster form and then strolled the crowded aisles of the symposium in a high-energy environment.

The Department of Psychological Sciences was well-represented by the undergrads listed below along with the title of their poster and research:

Asia Prentiss, *The Effects of Interruption on Motivation*

Caroline Kirk, *Associations Between Use of Green Spaces, Worry, and Personality*

Elizabeth Flatt, *Family Narratives: Identity is formed based on storytelling.*

Emma Preston, *An exploration of the unique relationship between incarcerated parents, risky adult behaviors, and natural mentors.*

Grace Gilbert, *Zebrafish Learning and Memory*

Kaitlyn Maniscalco, *Benefits of Undergraduate Study Abroad and The Ideal Program*

Maddie Moore, *The Effect of Emotion Regulation on Friendship Quality*

Makenna McGill, *ERP Correlates of Reduced Spatial Working Memory Encoding Capacity in High-Functioning Older Adults*

Nick Kaufman, *The Influence of Exposure to Dark Humor on Perceptions of Tragedy and Social Issues*

Rita McInerny, *Picture This: Using Children's Family Drawings to Assess Attachment Security Representations*

Ryan Farmer, *Long-Term Effects of Nicotine on Social and Non-Social Anxiety*

Virginia Wyatt, *The Mystery of Personality: Evaluating the Psychometric Properties of Personality Tests*

2019 Homecoming

Thank you to those who were able to attend Homecoming in October! It was great to see you again and catch up with you. Some highlights of Homecoming include:



Professors Harvey Langholtz, Connie Pilkington, and Josh Burk share some discussion of events at Homecoming



Alumna Ann "Kate" (Major) Foreman (Class of 2007) with her husband



Alumnus Mason Montgomery (Class of 2010) meets MS students Luke Herchenroeder and Nick Surdel



Professor Cheryl Dickter catches up with former students Shadin Ahmed and Hanna Haile (Class of 2019)

You can check out more photos of Homecoming here:

<https://www.wm.edu/as/psych-sciences/alumni/homecoming/homecoming-memories/2019-homecoming/index.php>

2019 New Faculty



Adrian Bravo
Assistant Professor

Professor Bravo received his Ph.D. in Psychology from Old Dominion University. Professor Bravo's research focuses on examining protective/risk factors (e.g., substance use motives, substance use protective behavioral strategies, impulsivity-like traits, rumination, and mindfulness) of substance use and mental health across distinct populations (i.e., college students, clinical populations, and military personnel). He will be teaching courses including Health Psychology and Advance Research in Personality.



Fred Ernst
Visiting Assistant Professor

Professor Ernst received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from The Ohio State University. Professor Ernst recently retired as Professor in the Department of Psychological Science at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. His teaching assignments will include Abnormal Psychology, Research in Abnormal Psychology, and Behavior Modification.

You can learn more about these faculty members by visiting our Faculty Directory page:
<https://www.wm.edu/as/psych-sciences/facultydirectory/index.php>

2019 Diversity Week

During the week of September 23rd, the Department of Psychological Sciences hosted its first annual Diversity Week. The event opened with keynote speaker and alumna Crystal Joseph talking about her experiences at W&M and her work as the Clinical Executive Officer of [PsycYourMind](#). On Tuesday afternoon, undergraduate and graduate students presented posters describing their research projects on topics related to diversity. Students presented work on issues related to neurodiversity, race, gender, first-generation status, minority stress, and stigma reduction. The closing event featured a career panel in which women Psychology alumni Skyped in to offer their advice on pursuing a variety of careers including school counseling, medical research, and genetic counseling. The Psychological Sciences Diversity Committee, which is made up of faculty, staff, and students, looks forward to hosting this week-long series of events annually. We thank the Center for Student Diversity for their co-sponsorship of some events.

Would You Be Willing to Share Your Success?

Here in the Department of Psychological Sciences we try to show our undergrads some of the various paths to professional success for psych majors and of course that success can be within psychology or in a variety of other areas – public service, education, health care, law, etc. Once or twice each academic year we bring alumni to campus to meet with undergrads to discuss their own professional development to help students see various opportunities. Would you be willing to be considered for this? If so, please submit your CV or resume to psychology@wm.edu .