

We've Got Issues

Willamette University Psychology Department Newsletter

From the Chair

Greetings!

Another academic year has come to an end, and with it the culmination of four years of hard work on the part of our graduating seniors. We congratulate all of them and wish them the very best as they move toward the next important phase of life: gainful employment. Juniors are busy planning their senior internships, and several of our sophomores are gearing up for a semester of study abroad, either in the fall or spring. We welcome our first year students and look forward to hosting them as newly-declared majors in our research methods sequence next year.

We had four honors recipients this year; four Phi Beta Kappa inductees; and one each for our Paul M. Evans and Noel F. Kaestner awards. All can be found on page 2 of this newsletter. Last fall we completed a search for our position in personality psychology and are delighted to welcome Prof. Erik Nofle to the department next year. You can read more about Prof. Nofle below. We're also excited to host Prof. Gale Lucas Peterson, a Willamette alum, as a Visiting Assistant Professor in social psychology. And Prof. Emily Hodell has agreed to teach for us again next year, offering courses in psychology & law and social cognition.

This year marked the inaugural year of the Noel F. Kaestner Speaker Series, and we were honored to host Prof. Helen Neville of the University of Oregon. Dr. Neville discussed much of the work she and (our own!) Prof. Courtney Stevens have conducted the past several years on attentional differences among children and its impact on early education. AY 09-10 will also be remembered as the debut of the student-faculty collaborative research program between Psychology and Exercise Science, where students are able to gain invaluable hands-on research experience under the supervision of faculty from either department. We look forward to reporting more on this in next year's newsletter.

In closing, let me remind all graduating seniors to please bring friends and family to the Psychology Department Open House this Sunday, May 16th, from 12:00—1:45 pm outside the faculty offices on the second floor of Smullin. There will be light refreshments available and it will be a great opportunity to share memories from your time as a major.

Once again seniors, please accept our sincere congratulations for all your good work!

- Mark Stewart

NEW FACULTY...

Although I was born and grew up in North Carolina, I have long had leanings towards the West. As an adolescent learning about US history, I must have taken Horace Greeley's exhortation "Go West, young man!" pretty seriously. When it came time to attend college, I decided on Grinnell College, a liberal arts college in Iowa which was halfway across the country from my east coast home. (Grinnell was in fact founded by the young man to whom Horace Greeley had supposedly first uttered the famous words!)

It was my first semester at Grinnell that helped to forecast my future as a personality psychologist. I took Introduction to Psychology that semester, which contained a unit on personality psychology near the end of the course, a topic that especially piqued my interest. I had always wondered why people were so different from one another, and why individuals were the way they were, and here was a field that attempted to scientifically answer both of those questions! The professor mentioned that a course in personality would next be offered spring semester of my sophomore year, and I resolved to take it. In fact, that course in personality convinced me to declare my major in psychology, which led to a research assistant position conducting personality research, which led to a summer research fellowship, and finally to the realization that I could continue pursuing study of this absolutely enthralling field in graduate school. I applied to several schools on the west coast, mostly because of the disproportionately large number of graduate schools with strong personality programs out here, but also because of my fondness for the region. (I had a taste of the west coast growing up: my mother (and her side of the family) is originally from western Washington and I had visited the area several times, and I had also spent a wonderful summer after my sophomore year of college living with a group of friends in Portland, during which I absolutely fell in love with Oregon.)

I ultimately decided to continue my westerly migration, and to attend UC Davis, in northern California, because of the chance to work with a couple of leading researchers with interests in personality traits, emotions, and close relationships, three fascinating topics which still comprise my major research interests. After I received my PhD, I spent two years as a postdoctoral researcher at Wake Forest University, all the way back in North Carolina, where I got the chance to learn exciting new methods for studying personality. Another important thing that the postdoc position afforded was the chance to teach a few classes. I had enjoyed mentoring students one-on-one in graduate school, and knew I liked that aspect of teaching, but hadn't taught any classes of my own, and found it to be an endeavor I really enjoyed. My love for teaching and research suggested a great career for me would be in a (familiar) liberal arts college setting where both teaching and scholarship were deemed important for faculty, and where students were encouraged to actively participate in conducting research. As such, I am very excited to join the fine group of teacher-scholars in the Psychology Department at Willamette this fall, and to end up in a wonderful part of the west coast. I am especially looking forward to including students as collaborators in my research, as well as mentoring students in their own research projects. Whether students become future psychologists or decide to pursue many other worthwhile careers, I believe learning how to conduct research allows both critical thinking and creativity to develop and flourish, and is simply a lot of fun!

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Current Student News...



Noel F. Kaestner Award
Leila Mitsunaga

Phi Beta Kappa
inductees
Lydia Marsalli
Leila Mitsunaga
Jessica Myers
Olivia Saccommanno

Paul M. Evans Award
Patrick Heck

Congratulations to those receiving departmental honors for their senior projects.

Kachina Kudroff

“Locus of Control as a Mediator in the Relationship between
Sex Education and Sexual Behavior in Adolescents”

Lydia Marsalli

“Domestic Violence Within Low Socio-Economic Status Groups:
The Role of Linguistic Sexism, Stereotypical Gender Roles, and Structural Marginalization”

Leila Mitsunaga

“The Effect of Temporal Context on the Survival Processing Advantage in Free-Recall Memory”

Olivia Saccommanno

“Improving Subjective Quality of Life for Individuals
Diagnosed with Schizophrenia: Urban vs. Rural Environments”

Congratulations to our 2010 graduates...

**David Bernstein
Amanda Boudon
Aubrey Breard
Hilde Clark-Snustad
Casey Conzatti
Leslie Cutler
Lauren Gard
Patrick Heck
Molly Hendler
Kirstin Heydel
Scott Hirschberger
Rachel Janny
Megan Jones
Kachina Kudroff**

**Jenna Larrow
Kerry Leslie
Lydia Marsalli
Rachel Mitchell
Leila Mitsunaga
Jayleen Morris
Jessica Myers
Amy Omens
Rachael Peterson
Lesley Ramos
Olivia Saccomanno
Holly Schermerhorn
Gwendolyn Schulze
Kaitlin St. John**

You're Invited!

What: Open house

Who: Graduating psych majors and their families

When: Sunday, May 16th 12:00pm—
1:45pm

Where: Smullin Hall, 2nd Floor



Willamette University Psychology
Department Newsletter

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Have a Great
Summer!



www.willamette.edu/cla/psychology

Psychology Department—Fall 2010 Courses

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Research Methods & Analysis I and labs

Jim Friedrich

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Research Methods & Analysis II and labs

Meredy Goldberg Edelson

Professor
253 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6133
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Introduction to Psychology, Major Internship I

Emily Hodell

Visiting Instructor
229 Walton Hall, 503/370-6191
ehodell@willamette.edu
Introduction to Psychology, Psych and Law

Sue Koger

Professor
201 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6341
skoger@willamette.edu
*Introduction to Psychology, Psychology of Learning,
Major Internship I*

Jeremy Miller

Assistant Professor
260 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6964
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*Special Topic: Cognition, Evolution & Society,
College Colloquium: Discovering Psychology through
Science Fiction*

Erik Nofle

Assistant Professor
207 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6896
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*Personality Psychology, Top: Personality Psychology,
Major Internship I*

Courtney Stevens

Assistant Professor
252 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6427
cstevens@willamette.edu
*Introduction to Psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience,
College Colloquium: Poverty & Public Policy:
Challenges for Education & Public Health*

Melissa Witkow

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254 Smullin Hall, 503/370.6425
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Introduction to Psychology, Developmental: Lifespan