

department of

Psychology

Fall 2010
newsletter





Chair's Column

I am pleased to introduce the first issue of the Department of Psychology's new electronic newsletter, UB Psych. The purpose of our newsletter is to keep alumni, students, and faculty abreast of the latest events in the Department and to provide a forum through which the greater UB Psychology family can connect. We hope that this will be a lively and engaging venue for keeping everyone affiliated with this great department in touch and up-to-date. The Department of Psychology has seen considerable change over the last decade. Most notably, we have hired thirteen new faculty. Many of these new faculty are relatively recent hires, but a number of have already been promoted and tenured. Of course, we have had retirements and departures as well.

As I write, roughly half of the faculty have joined us over the last ten years, making us a decidedly younger department. So if you are thinking about catching up with an old professor that you particularly admired, there is a good chance he or she is enjoying retirement. Nevertheless, I have frequent inquiries about retired faculty and we will do our best to put you in touch – just let me know.

The Department of Psychology consists of an exceptional group of scientists, educators, and mentors. Research in the four graduate training areas – Behavioral Neuroscience, Clinical, Cognitive, and Social – spans a broad range, from the biochemistry of ingestion and maternal behavior to substance use, abuse and addiction, from music and language perception to close relationships and stress and coping. Despite the many and varied research endeavors in the Department, all of our researchers are bound by a common interest in understanding human and animal behavior. As a testament to the fundamental importance and timeliness of our research, many of our psychological scientists are supported by the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and numerous private foundations.

Every issue of UB Psych will highlight a current faculty member, a retired faculty member, or both, to let you know a little more about where we've been and where we're going. In this issue, we introduce you to Lora Park, Assistant Professor in the Social Area.

We will also have regular features focusing on the undergraduate program, the graduate program, faculty accomplishments, and alumni news. This issue contains a fascinating expose on one of the Department's more distinguished alums, Alan Zweibel. We will also highlight achievements of our undergraduate and graduate students. I think you will be impressed to learn about what our majors and grad students are up to.

So let us know about you. If you would like to contribute information about yourself, or colleagues of yours who have been affiliated with the Department, drop us an e-mail to ? And make sure to visit our website at www.psychology.buffalo.edu for the latest news.



Alumni Profile: Alan Zweibel, BA '72

BY: Julie Wesolowski

UB alum Alan Zweibel always knew he wanted to be a comedy writer—the difficult part was getting a degree that related to his career goal. The Long Island native transferred to UB after spending a year at Buffalo State College. When it was time for him to declare a major he chose psychology. “I was interested in what makes people tick and the roots of their behavior,” he says.

He admits that while he didn’t have any interest in pursuing the major as part of a career in psychology, he thought it might help him with creating his comedy routines. Zweibel explains, “I thought maybe I’d learn more about people and what affected them and this would help me understand the people I wanted to reach and the people I wanted to make laugh.”

After Zweibel graduated from UB with a bachelor’s in psychology in 1972 he moved back to New York City to start his comedy career. During a stand-up gig (that Zweibel admits he bombed), he had a life-changing meeting with producer Lorne Michaels, who saw potential in the young comedian. Michaels gave Zweibel a second chance to make him laugh and an opportunity of a lifetime—to become a writer for Michaels’ then nascent sketch comedy show Saturday Night Live (SNL).

One of the original SNL writers, Zweibel credits his time spent at UB for giving him some raw material for the groundbreaking comedy show. “The people who made my generation laugh were the counterculture, and UB was a haven for that [during that period].” He adds, “It was very good life preparation because these were my reference points.”

Ironically, for someone who credits comedy for his success, Zweibel has written two best-selling books that focus on loss and grief. He cites Woody Allen as an early comedy idol. “I like comedy that makes you think and runs the spectrum of human emotion.”

After his close friend, SNL colleague and comedian Gilda Radner, passed away from ovarian cancer, Zweibel wrote a memoir titled “Bunny Bunny: Gilda Radner – A Sort of Love Story” that chronicled his friendship with her to help him deal with his grief about her death. With the permission and blessing of Radner’s family, the proceeds of the best-selling book—and subsequent play—help fund Radner’s legacy, Gilda’s Club—the cancer support organization with chapters across the nation.

Zweibel’s other best-selling book, “Our Tree Named Steve,” was written for his children after a storm took down a beloved backyard tree. He wrote the book to cushion the blow from the loss. The book has become recommended reading for children who have experienced a loss.

As a multi-E Emmy Award-winning writer, producer and playwright, Zweibel offers his insights into the world of showbiz as an active supporter and participant in UB’s Coast-to-Coast, a symposium on arts, entertainment and media designed for students and recent graduates looking to break into the field. He feels very strongly about encouraging future generations to go after their dreams in the entertainment industry and sharing his expertise with current UB students. Zweibel says it’s his way to give back to the university, but it’s also an experience close to his heart because he wishes he had had the mentoring when he was a student aspiring to become a success. “Don’t let anybody tell you it can’t be done—I’m living proof of it.” he continues, “I’m personally offended by anybody who tells anybody else that they can’t pursue their dream.

Julie Wesolowski works at the UB News Bureau



Undergraduate Studies



Dr. Jim Sawusch, Professor, is the Director of the Undergraduate Program. He is also the Director of The Speech Research Laboratory. His research focuses on the auditory and phonetic processing of speech that maps the sounds of language onto words.

Christa Greenberg is the Coordinator of the Undergraduate Program/Academic Advisor. Christa is celebrating twenty years at UB and fifteen years in the Department of Psychology.



We take great pride in UB's exceptional psychology undergraduate students. Psychology continues to be one of the most popular majors and an even greater percentage of UB students are interested in taking psychology courses. Many of our undergraduates also work directly in the research laboratories of our faculty.

Just a few of the exciting things that have taken place this year follow. We look forward to hearing from you and encourage you to stay in touch.

http://psychology.buffalo.edu/alumni/update_information

Undergraduate Awards and Honors

2009 CAS Outstanding Graduating Senior

Katrina M. Bytschkow was the 2009 Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences Dean's award recipient for outstanding Graduating Senior. Ms. Bytschkow graduated June 1, 2009, with a BA in Psychology in the Advanced Honors Program. She graduated with a GPA of a 3.8.

Ms. Bytschkow's awards and honors include the NYS Lottery Scholarship, Fall 2005 - Spring 2009; McNair Summer Research Internship Scholarship, Summers 2007 and 2008; Golden Key International Honor Society; Psi Chi National Honor Society; and the CURCA Undergraduate Research Award, November, 2007, for her presentation at the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies entitled, "Using a modified stroop to examine trauma, posttraumatic stress, and alcohol cognitions: A pilot study." Under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Read, she completed a University Advanced Honors /Psychology Senior Honors Thesis entitled, "Development of a Measure to Assess Motives for Pre-Gaming." Ms. Bytschkow's was also one of UB's fifteen students selected to receive the 2009 SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Student Excellence. Ms. Bytschkow also served as treasurer for the Undergraduate Psychology Association (UPA) and as an undergraduate teaching assistant.

Ms. Bytschkow is currently enrolled in a dual degree program in which she is working toward a Masters of Social Work and a Masters of Business Management at UB.

2009 Chancellor's Awards for Student Excellence

SUNY Interim Chancellor Dr. John B. Clark honored 275 college students from SUNY campuses throughout the state with the 2009 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence on Tuesday, April 7, 2009.



The Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence was created twelve years ago to recognize students who have best demonstrated, and been recognized for, the integration of academic excellence with accomplishments in the areas of leadership, athletics, community service, creative and performing arts, or career achievement. The average GPA for all recipients in 2009 was 3.8.

Each year, campus presidents establish a selection committee that reviews exemplary graduating members of their college communities. Nominees are forwarded to the Chancellor's Office and are subject to a second round of review. Finalists are then recommended to the Chancellor to become recipients of the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.

In 2009, fifteen students at University at Buffalo, three of whom are psychology majors, received the Chancellor's Award:

Lisa Braun, Summa Cum Laude, GPA 3.9, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and minor in Health and Wellness. She was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the Golden Key International Honor Society. Ms. Braun has a publication from her work in Dr. Jennifer Read's Alcohol Research Lab, has been a Teaching Assistant, and was a Certified Peer Mentor. Her participation in long distance triathlons and an internship with a professional basketball team has led to a career path in sports psychology.

Katrina Bytschkow, Summa Cum Laude, GPA 3.8, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

Angel Rosario, Magna Cum Laude, GPA 3.6, received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Biomedical Sciences major with minors in Pharmacology /Toxicology and Theatre. Mr. Rosario was actively involved in the Latin American Student Association, having served as the president, secretary, and treasurer. He was a member of Phi Eta Sigma, Psi Chi, and was on the Dean's List for several semesters. Mr. Rosario was also a teaching assistant and research assistant in the Department.



2010 CAS Outstanding Graduating Senior

Ms. Chelsey Hartley was this year's College of Arts and Sciences Dean's award recipient for outstanding Graduating Senior in Psychology. Ms. Hartley graduated on June 1 with a double major in Psychology and Spanish in the Advanced Honors Program. She graduated with an overall GPA of 3.9 and a perfect GPA of 4.0 in Psychology.

Ms. Hartley is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the Golden Key International Honor Society, and the Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology. In her junior year, she was recipient of the Linda Rock Memorial Scholarship, which funded her studies abroad in Madrid, Spain.

Ms. Hartley worked as a research assistant in Dr. Julie Bowker's Child and Adolescent lab, and was a group leader in Dr. Catherine Cook-Cottone's mental illness prevention program in the



local middle schools. She also served as Community Service Coordinator for the Undergraduate Psychology Association.

Ms. Hartley's Senior Honor's Project in Psychology was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Bowker. Her honors thesis was entitled, "Best Friendship Dissolution During Early Adolescence: A Focus on Relationship Quality."

Most recently, Ms. Hartley's was chosen as one of UB's fifteen SUNY recipients of the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence for 2010.

Ms. Hartley plans to attend graduate school in clinical psychology.

UB Psychology Program in Singapore

In May 2007, The Singapore Institute of Management (SIM), together with the University at Buffalo, launched a new full-time Bachelor of Arts in Psychology degree program. UB and SIM have enjoyed a longstanding relationship, having collaborated in the delivery of a part-time Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) program since 1996, and two other highly successful full-time undergraduate programs in Business Administration and Communication. SIM is well



regarded for the excellence of its educational programs and shares UB's commitment to the highest academic standards. Faculty teaching in our program at SIM are drawn from UB as well as from other U.S. institutions.

The extension of SIM's collaboration with UB in offering a bachelor's degree in psychology enables more students from Singapore and the surrounding region to benefit from the U.S.-style curriculum. Our

new program also offers opportunities for UB students to study psychology at SIM. We currently have 338 students enrolled in the program, over double the size that was originally anticipated. The first UB graduation ceremony at SIM for psychology was held in the summer of 2010.



The Department of Psychology graduated its first class at the Singapore Institute of Management in July, 2010. UB's Provost, Dean, Vice Provost and Assistant Vice Provost for International Education, Psychology Department Chair, and Psychology Undergraduate Coordinator are seated on the front row. Psychology's validectorian at SIM is second from the right in the second row.



Fabiano Keynote Address

On May 10, 2009, the Department of Psychology honored 425 students who earned B.A. and B.S. degrees in Psychology. Over 700 students, faculty, family and friends gathered in Slee Hall to celebrate the Department and its newest graduates. Dr. Gregory Fabiano, Ph.D. 2005 and Associate Professor of Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology at the University at Buffalo gave the keynote address. In 2008, Dr. Fabiano was chosen by the White House to receive a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, the nation's highest honor for professionals at the early stages of their independent scientific research careers, recognizing them as the most promising American researchers in their fields. He specializes in research with children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD.

May, 2009, Keynote Address

Before I get started, I want to wish all the mothers in the audience a Happy Mother's Day. We would not be here celebrating without you!

Thank you to the Psychology Department for the invitation to speak at the commencement ceremony. It is a humbling honor to be standing up here in front of you, as today is the day your hard work, dedication, and good old fashioned persistence is formally acknowledged for what it is - a remarkable achievement and milemarker in your career that started when you began at UB as a psychology major.

Today is about you, and your families and loved ones who have supported you on your journey through college. It was not long ago I was walking in the same shoes, and I thought it might be interesting to tell you at least one story of what might happen as you begin traveling on your own path.

When I graduated from college, I was very proud of my undergraduate degree, but a bit underwhelmed about my first job – cleaning out ditches on a road crew. Luckily, I had made a strong connection with a research mentor in college, and she handed me an announcement for a summer internship working in a camp with children who had disruptive behaviors. The camp used research-based behavior modification programs to help treat the children and their families. It sounded right up my alley, and although I would end up working for peanuts that summer, I decided to apply. Being 1997, I did have one problem – applications had to be downloaded from something called “the world-wide web” and I had never used the internet before!

Well, I eventually figured out the internet and ended up getting hired to the program. I never worked harder than I did that summer and I learned a lot. I learned about biology – according to the kids there are things I could do anatomically with my body I was completely unaware of. I learned lots of new vocabulary words, though I can't say they helped me on the GRE. I also learned about the importance of being physically fit, as I spent the summer chasing children around the open fields of UB. I also learned how good, consistent, really carefully done behavior modification interventions can help children who are often unsuccessful reach new levels of perhaps life-changing success. I also learned that this work was something that I could really see myself doing it as a career for the rest of my life. The work was incredibly rewarding, stimulating, and interesting. I decided as the internship ended that I had found what I wanted to pursue for my life's work.





Unfortunately, I had enrolled in a master's degree program for the fall that did not match with what I found I wanted to do during the summer. I had never quit anything I started before and was truly freaking out that I had no where to go, but I decided it was important to like what I do if I was going to spend the best years of my life doing it. I went back to meet with the director of the internship, told him what had happened, and asked if he had a job. He was very nice, but said all he had available was a secretary position. I said, "I'll take it." After about two months of barely being competent as a secretary, I was able to apply for a research assistant position and begin working in the area of study I aspired toward. Following that I applied for graduate school at UB, was accepted and benefited tremendously from the training I received in the Psychology Department.

So, I tell this story to illustrate one potential career path and to emphasize it is unlikely to be a straight and narrow one for you. Your job now is to go forward and forge your own career path. There will be ups and downs, key forks in the road, and unpredictability, but in the end one of the best things is that things usually work out the right way and for the right reasons.

You are all sitting here because you are the absolute best that psychology's next generation has to offer. We live in a time today when the country and the world is in desperate need of an infusion of new ideas, new ways of thinking, and new ways of doing – we are all eagerly awaiting your contributions to turning things around. I'd like to leave you with a few thoughts about lessons I've learned or things I wished I knew 12 years ago as you move on to bigger and better things.

1. The first comment should be obvious from what I told you - Always be nice to secretaries. It is not an easy job!
2. Find a mentor or mentors who will help support you as you find your way. This is especially important in a human service field such as psychology. Most people in the field have gotten where they are due to someone else's support and mentorship and are glad to give back. A strong mentor in your field of study will help you reach your full potential, and they will end up learning as much from you as you learn from them.
3. Be a good observer of behavior and a good listener when other people tell you things, and always keep an open mind. Some of the best research ideas and clinical innovations come directly from the people we work with every day.
4. A bad reputation is easy to get – just screw up once. Good reputations are created through consistent good work. Make yourself stand out – volunteer for things, go the extra mile, treat every task as important and a direct reflection on you.
5. While we are on lessons learned, don't get so wrapped up in your work you forgot what is really important – your family and loved ones and things like your wedding anniversary. Seriously, do not forget a wedding anniversary.
6. Finally, make sure you find a job and establish a career in something you are passionate about and find rewarding beyond the paycheck – this will payoff in your own happiness, longevity, and the people you work with and those you serve will notice the difference.

It is really quite an honor to be standing here before you today. Good luck, and please accept my most sincere congratulations for a job well done!



Dr. Greg Fabiano received the the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers at the White House in 2008.

Feeney Keynote Address

On May 9, 2010, the Department of Psychology honored 400 students who earned B.A. and B.S. degrees in Psychology. Students, faculty, family and friends again gathered in Slee Hall to celebrate their accomplishments. Dr. Brooke Feeney, Ph.D. 1999 and Associate Professor of Psychology at Carnegie Mellon University gave the keynote address. Dr. Feeney was recently honored with a Junior Endowed Chair at CMU. Her research examines care-giving and support behaviors in relationships. Excerpts from her address to our graduates follow.

My address to you today is called “My Favorite Things”. First, I’ll reminisce a little bit and tell you my 5 favorite things about Buffalo and UB. Then I’ll try to be a little inspirational and tell you the 5 favorite things I’ve learned on my journey to where I am now – with the hope that those things might be useful to you for the journey on which you’re about to embark.

Favorite Memories of Buffalo and UB

So, first is my reminiscing and list of 5 favorite things about Buffalo and UB.

1. My first favorite thing about Buffalo and UB is the people who have influenced my life and career here. I, personally, have great memories of faculty in the psychology dept, my fellow classmates, and many undergrads who worked with me on research projects while I was here.

I’m sure you have many people here who have influenced you as well – and who will continue to influence you after graduation. These people are your professors, the friends you’ve met here, your roommates, your classmates. You’ll even remember and learn from the people who might have given you a hard time while you were here.

2. My second favorite thing about Buffalo and UB is the campus itself. I have many memories of Park Hall – the psychology building where I spent many hours taking classes and conducting my research.



Also, I've always appreciated that the buildings are connected at UB so that I never had to walk outside in the cold to get from building to building if I didn't want to. In the winters, I often wish the buildings at CMU (where I now teach) were connected as well.

3. Although the cold weather and the lake effect snow were NOT among my favorite things about Buffalo, my 3rd favorite thing about Buffalo is how skilled this city is at clearing snow off of the road. I didn't appreciate this until I moved away and lived in other cities that have a hard time getting just an inch or two of snow off the road.

4. My 4th favorite thing about Buffalo is the Buffalo wings. My lab manager at Carnegie Mellon is from Buffalo – and whenever we want to order wings for a lab function, we commiserate that we cannot find anywhere in Pittsburgh that makes wings as good as the Buffalo wings. So, believe me...the wings will never be as good anywhere else you go!

5. My 5th favorite thing about Buffalo is the team spirit in this city. When I lived in Buffalo, I always knew that if I ever needed to run errands or go shopping in a hurry without having to deal with traffic or long lines, I'd just have to go when the Buffalo Bills were playing a game because the streets and stores were completely empty then.

All this is to say that you're going to carry your own great memories of Buffalo with you throughout your life too. I graduated from UB in 1999, and I still have these and many more special memories of UB and Buffalo. So, I'm really happy to be back here on campus again.

5 Things I've Learned on My Journey

Now I'd like to tell you about 5 of my favorite things that I've learned on my journey to where I am today – with the hope that these things might be useful to you for the journey on which you're about to embark.

1. First, I've learned that it's important to be OPEN...open to new experiences – open to receiving influence from others – and open to change. I'll give you a few examples about what I mean from my own journey...

a. My first example of this is that I almost wasn't a Psychology major. I didn't decide to be a psychology major until my junior year of college when I took my 1st introductory psychology course. Before that, my majors were in elementary education and English. But when I took this Psychology course, I loved it and discovered that I wanted to learn more about Psychology. I was reluctant to change my major at that point because I had already invested so much time in my other majors – but I eventually opened myself up to it, realized that it would cost me much more in the end to not switch, so I did – and I'm much happier now than I would be if I hadn't – because I'm doing something I truly love.

2. A second thing I've learned on my journey is to enjoy the journey itself and not focus on the outcome so much.

I learned this when first joined the faculty at Carnegie Mellon University and was on a very rigorous tenure track. Getting tenure there is an 8 year process – and I knew of some great psychologists before me who did not get tenure at the end of that process – despite the fact that they worked hard and were prominent in the field.



Shortly after I arrived there, one of my senior colleagues told me to just enjoy the process of working toward tenure...He said that (in retrospect) he misses the years that he was working toward tenure – and that it was one of his favorite times in his life. I was a bit surprised to hear that at first because I think most people focus on just doing what they have to do to reach the end goal – without considering (or even caring about) whether or not they're enjoying the process of getting there. But I've learned that if you work only for the end state, then it can be a big letdown once you get there.

So I took this advice to heart and I did enjoy my journey to getting tenure. I selected research projects that I was excited about, and I tried to enjoy where I was at each moment in the process.

If you enjoy the journey to wherever you're going, you'll not only be more likely to have a positive outcome – but you'll also find that it doesn't as much matter what the outcome is. If your heart is truly in the work – then regardless of what comes of it, you'll still be happy.

3. A 3rd important (related) thing I've learned on my journey is to appreciate the “growing pains” in life. What I mean by this is that when you're doing something worthwhile, it usually takes a lot of time and effort and focus and energy, and there are no short-cuts to doing things well, so accomplishing something worthwhile can sometimes have some pain associated with it – but good pain.

To explain a bit about what I mean, imagine that you've spent some time working out in the gym. After you're finished either that day or the next day, your muscles are likely to feel very sore. This soreness is a type of “growing pain” and is something that you should appreciate...It means you're getting stronger and more toned and muscular.

I think the same principle applies to other things in life as well. When you're trying to accomplish a goal, if you put the appropriate amount of time and effort and sweat into it, you're probably going to feel some degree of soreness during or after your efforts. You might feel exhausted or burnt out for a period of time, but those are good sensations. Appreciate them. That tells you're trying hard enough. Very rarely will you accomplish something really good without putting the appropriate amount of effort and time into it.

4. A 4th important thing I've learned on my journey is that although you'll encounter many wonderful people along the way, at some points along any life journey, you're going to encounter a person or two who, for no obvious reason, will not treat you very kindly. Everyone encounters these people at some point or another – and you may have already encountered one or two.

And there are 2 things I've learned about this:

- a. First, I've learned that how people treat others is a reflection of how they feel about themselves. So, when people treat you badly, it's usually a manifestation of their own fears and insecurities, and it has very little to do with you.
- b. Second, I've learned that it's best to stay positive and focused on your goals in these situations because that disarms negative people more than anything else – and it keeps you healthy, because these people can usually only harm you or take away your happiness to the extent that you let them affect you.

5. Finally, the 5th important thing I've learned on my journey is to have people in your life who support you – and to support other people as well.

I'm a relationships researcher, and my research centers around the general question of how relationships help people thrive in the face of challenges in their lives and how relationships with others can help people function to their full potential (by providing a base from which people can grow and learn and discover and accomplish important goals).

There have been some key people in my life who have provided this base for me – and you'll want to keep such people in your life as well.

In fact, it is likely that one or more people at UB (as well as people in your personal life) have provided the base that has helped you get to this special day. These are the people you need to keep in your life and appreciate.

It's also important to give back to others as well. One of the things I like best about my job is that it gives me an opportunity to provide a base from which students can grow and learn and discover and accomplish their important goals. Hopefully, in whatever career path you choose, you will do the same for others around you.

I'd like to conclude my address today with one of my favorite quotes, which is this:

“If you can see your path laid out in front of you step by step, you know it's not your path. Your own path you make with every step you take. That's why it's your path.”

I like this because, to me, it means that, although it's important to keep taking steps forward, it's not important that you know exactly where you're going or where you'll end up. As long as you're doing what you enjoy and taking steps forward, you'll most likely end up in a place that's even better than you could have ever planned or predicted or imagined.

Congratulations again on your wonderful accomplishment. You've all worked very hard to get where you are now, and you all have a special future ahead of you. Thank you for allowing me to share this special day with you.



Graduate Program

Dr. Craig Colder is the Director of Graduate Studies. He is a member of the Clinical Training Program, and studies adolescent substance use. Dr. Colder serves as the liaison between The Department of Psychology and the Graduate School, and facilitates the progress of our students to their degree. Our graduate programs are internationally recognized for excellence and continue to be a vibrant part of the academic community at UB. We currently have 89 doctoral students and 13 master's students.

We offer M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in four areas of psychology – behavioral neuroscience, clinical, cognitive, and social psychology. Our goal in graduate training is to give our students the skills to assume positions in academic institutions or professional practice and to make new contributions to bodies of knowledge through independent research.

Our training programs represent wide ranging faculty and student interests. Research in behavioral neuroscience examines topics such as, neural mechanisms and the psychobiology of cognitive filtering and attention, sexual, maternal, and social behavior, addiction, feeding, emotion, analgesia, and learning and memory. Our researchers in this field also analyze EEG correlates of brain lateralization and dysfunction, sound, perception and acoustic communication.

Faculty and students in the clinical program research topics such as alcohol and substance use and abuse, mood disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, developmental psychopathology, social development, and temperament, personality pathology, and assessment.



Research in the cognitive program examines issues as diverse as animal cognition, attention, auditory perception, categorization, eye movements and cognition, learning and memory, metacognition, motor control, and music.

Members of the social-personality program study close relationships, self-concept and self-esteem, stress and coping, and psychophysiology.

We are very proud that our faculty and students are recognized as among the very best in the nation. Here are some highlights:

Joe Baschnagel (Ph.D., 2006), Assistant Professor, Rochester Institute of Technology.

Jeff Ciesla (Ph.D., 2004), Assistant Professor, Kent State University

Andrea Chronis-Toscano (Ph.D., 2002). Associate Professor, University of Maryland.

Kathy Conklin (Ph.D., 2005), Lecturer, University of Nottingham.

Greg Fabiano (Ph.D., 2005), Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo.

Brooke Feeney (Ph.D., 1999), Associate Professor, Carnegie Mellon University; named Junior Endowed Chair.

Jennifer Freeman 1999 Assistant Professor (Research), Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, Brown University School of Medicine Staff Psychologist, Division of Child and Family Psychiatry, Rhode Island Hospital, Co-Director of Pediatric Anxiety Research Clinic

Mauricio Carvalho (Ph.D., 2007). Assistant Professor, University of Oklahoma.

Tracy DeHart (Ph.D., 2003), Assistant Professor, University of Chicago Loyola. Paula Fite (Ph.D., 2007), Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee.

Jessica Hamblen 2000 Deputy for Education, National Center for PTSD
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Dartmouth Medical School

Todd Kashdan (Ph.D., 2004), Associate Professor, George Mason University, Early Career Award from the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies; Mery Wagner Research Award from the South Caroline Psychological Association.

Conor McLennan (Ph.D., 2003), Assistant Professor, Cleveland State University.

Rochelle S. Newman (Ph.D., 1997). Associate Professor, University of Maryland, Associate Editor, Journal of the Acoustical Society of America.

Roisin O'Connor (Ph.D., 2007). Assistant Professor, Concordia University.

Sarah Palyo (Ph.D., 2008). Clarence J. Rosencrans Scholarship from The American Psychological Foundation and the Council of Graduate Departments in Psychology.

Jillian Shepherd 2001 Clinical Research Psychologist, Women's Health Sciences Division, National Center for PTSD



Department Endowments and Awards

The teaching and research missions of the department are supported in part through the generous contributions of department alumni and friends. Charitable donations to any of the funds listed below can be made by visiting the Department's website at www.psychology.buffalo.edu and clicking on *Support the Department* at the bottom of the page. If you wish to donate to the Feldman-Cohen fund, click on the corresponding link. If you wish to donate to one of our other funds, click on *Psychology Department Resource Fund Donation Form* and indicate the designated fund under *Special Instructions*. You will receive a thank you letter from the Chair confirming your donation.

Bugelski Fellowship Fund: Provides support for the dissertation research of advanced graduate students.

Charles Meyer Psychology Fund: Provides support for graduate students to travel to conferences and present their research through posters and talks.

Dr. Donahue Tremaine Memorial Lecture Fund: Provides support for a lecture series on Learning Theory.

Eleanor Jacobs Scholarship Fund: Provides tuition scholarships to support the training of female graduate students. Keri Shiels (profiled below) credits her success in graduate school to her support through this scholarship.

Feldman-Cohen Award in Psychology: Provides an award to the undergraduate honors student recognized as conducting the best honors thesis project. Michael Connolly and Elizabeth Gyoerkoe (profiled below) are our most recent recipients of this award.

Robert W. Rice Memorial Fund: Provides an award to the graduate student recognized as publishing the best first-authored research article in the prior year.

PSI CHI National Honor Society for Psychology: Provides support for the annual Psychology undergraduate convocation ceremony.



The Marvin Feldman and Walter Cohen Award

Recipient: Elizabeth Gyoerkoe

“The four years that I spent at UB were the best of my life...”

Each spring, the Department recognizes the most outstanding undergraduate honors thesis with the Marvin Feldman and Walter Cohen Award. Named in honor of two of the Department’s most distinguished former faculty, the cash award goes to the undergraduate whose honors thesis receives the highest rankings by the student’s examination committee, Director of the Honors Program, and advisor.

Over a year ago, Elizabeth Gyoerkoe, B.A. Psychology, began to formulate a hypothesis for her senior honors thesis on early adolescent ‘crushes’. She says that at the time, it was nearly impossible to imagine her thesis as a finished project. However, under the guidance of her thesis advisor, Dr. Julie Bowker, as well as the helpful assistance of the Honors Program Director, Dr. Wendy Quinton, she learned a great deal about the research process and brought her project to fruition.

According to Ms. Gyoerkoe, completing her thesis, entitled “Crushes in early adolescence: Implications for social anxiety and self-esteem,” was the biggest accomplishment of her undergraduate career. The findings of her study indicate that during early adolescence, the psychological impact of the ‘crush’ experience, for both the recipient and the object, differs for girls and boys.

Ms. Gyoerkoe felt exceptionally honored to be the recipient of the 2009 Feldman Cohen Award, which she described as “truly amazing.” “I cannot thank the faculty enough for the bestowal of such a great honor. I was fortunate enough to receive honors scholarship funding from UB throughout my years as an undergraduate, which assisted me in pursuing my passion for psychology,” says Ms. Gyoerkoe. She said that the four years she spent as a psychology student at UB were the best of her life, in no small part due to the guidance of the faculty in the Department. She is confident that receiving the Feldman-Cohen Award will open many doors for her and provide support as she hopes to enroll in a clinical psychology graduate program in the fall.



The Marvin Feldman and Walter Cohen Award

Recipient: Michael Connolly

Winning the 2010 Feldman Cohen Award has been a great honor for me. This award represents a fantastic finish to a very challenging year in the Honors Program. About half way through the spring semester, I had to switch the topic of my honors thesis due to health reasons. My final project, titled *“Sensory reinforcement: The role of stimulant drugs, the superior colliculus, and a potential link to neurological disorders,”* focused on a possible association between eye movements controlled by the superior colliculus and disorders such as schizophrenia and Parkinson’s disease, both of which are heavily regulated by dopamine activity.

Switching the topic of my honors thesis so late in the process was a bit of a hurdle to overcome, but I had a lot of help from Dr. Wendy Quinton, my honors thesis advisor. In fact, through all of my experiences, including high school, my time in the Navy, and all of my work experience, I would be hard pressed to find another example of the support and insightful feedback that I received while in the Honors Program. Not only was Dr. Quinton a big help, but the guest speakers, the other honors students, and my honors thesis defense committee members, Dr. James Sawusch and Dr. Scott Wersinger, all offered something valuable to the honors thesis process.

I would recommend the Honors Program to anybody who is willing to commit to a year of intense work. Although the program can seem somewhat intimidating at first, the results are certainly worth all of the hard work that I put in, with or without an award. Again, I am extremely honored to receive the Feldman Cohen Award and would like to thank everyone in the Department of Psychology at UB who was involved in the process.



The Eleanor Jacobs Scholarship Fund In Psychology

Keri Shiels, M.A.
Clinical Psychology

“I do not believe that [my goals] would have been possible without receiving this award and I am extremely grateful.”

Established in 2004 by Dr. Eleanor Jacobs, Ph.D. 1955, to provide scholarships for young women pursuing their academic goals in the Department of Psychology, the Eleanor Jacobs Scholarship Fund in Psychology exists today as one of the Department's great resources

working to overcome both gender and financial disparity.

Keri Shiels, M.A. Clinical Psychology, was fortunate enough to receive the Jacobs funds for the 2009-2010 academic years, her fourth year in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program. At that point in the program, she says she had completed her course work and was primarily working on her dissertation and the preparation of publications. Most graduate students are required to teach during this period in the Psychology Department, or find work outside of the Department, but Ms. Shiels was fortunate to receive the Jacobs Award, which enabled her to spend the majority of her time focused on research.

For her dissertation, she is examining self-regulation among children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in comparison to typically developing children. Specifically, she is examining the behavioral response and brain activity of children with and without ADHD while they complete a computer activity. The activity is designed in such a way that children are expected to make errors. The reason for this design is to examine how children with and without ADHD process their errors and whether providing rewards for their performance will alter their brain activity and behavioral performance, perhaps by improving their self-regulation. The purpose of this research is to understand how the effective treatments for ADHD work and to improve our understanding of the cognitive deficits associated with this highly prevalent disorder.

The Eleanor Jacobs Scholarship Fund in Psychology enabled Ms. Shiels to complete her dissertation proposal and defense during the first portion of the year and to conduct pilot testing and recruitment for her dissertation during the latter part of the year. She was able to complete data collection over the summer and she hopes to defend her dissertation this year. Ms. Shiels realizes how important this Department specific funding was to her overall goals and says that she does not believe any of it would have been possible without receiving this award for which she is very grateful.



Faculty Profile: Lora Park, Assistant Professor
Self and Motivation Research Lab

Dr. Park's research program focuses on self-esteem, motivation, and interpersonal processes. Broadly, her research examines how the ways in which people cope with threats to their self-esteem (e.g., failure, rejection) affect how they feel about themselves and behave toward others. Here are some highlights. In one line of research, she and her students have found that people react more strongly to self-esteem threats when they stake their self-esteem on success in the particular domain in which they failed. In a second line of research, she and her students have found that people who anxiously expect to be rejected by others based on their appearance show greater symptoms of eating disorders, body dysmorphic disorder, interest in cosmetic surgery, and a preference for avoiding other people following appearance-based rejection. In a third line of research, she and her students have found that some women may not live up to their potential in science and math classes because they experience a chronic conflict between the goal of being attractive and the goal of being smart. She and her students look forward to making new discoveries that might help people who experience doubts about themselves lead happier and more productive lives.



UB Psychology in the News

Self: We often care too much about people's opinions of us, expert says

October 1, 2009 - An article in the October 2009 issue of Self magazine about steps people can take to feel happier about their appearance quotes Lora Park, assistant professor of psychology, who says women have been socialized to notice their peers attractiveness.

San Francisco Chronicle: "Lie to Me" character based on UB psychology professor

September 26, 2009 - An article in the San Francisco Chronicle about "Lie to Me," a Fox television series about scientists who help cops catch crooks with their extraordinary ability to detect lies by analyzing facial expressions and body language, reports one of the show's characters is based on Mark Frank, associate professor of psychology, who is quoted in the article.

Live Science: Animals think about thinking, research suggests

September 15, 2009 - An article on Live Science reports UB scientists have found that some animals may share humans' ability to reflect upon, monitor or regulate their states of mind, and quotes J. David Smith, professor of psychology. The article was also distributed by ANI news service and appeared in news outlets including MSNBC, Yahoo! News, WBKO-TV in Bowling Green and WSAW-TV in Wausau, Wisc.

Boston Globe: What you don't know about your friends

August 9, 2009 - An article in the Boston Globe about studies that indicate that, on the whole, we know significantly less about our friends, colleagues and even spouses than we think we do reports that research by Sandra Murray, professor of psychology, found that couples that maintained positive illusions about each other tended to be happier than those that didn't.

Scientific American: (Imaginary) friendship may be as close as your favorite television program

July 28, 2009 - An article in Scientific American reports new research by Jaye Derrick, a postdoctoral associate in psychology, and Shira Gabriel, associate professor of psychology, suggests that loneliness can be alleviated simply by turning on your favorite television show.

Live Science: Psychologist discusses why people have different learning abilities

July 28, 2009 - An article on Live Science about what governs people's capacity to learn quotes Eduardo Mercado III, associate professor of psychology, whose research indicates that the cortical modules determine cognitive plasticity and changes in the modules may explain why people have different learning capacities as they grow older.

New York Times: Less lonely with TV?

April 28, 2009 - An article distributed by Reuters reports that four new studies by UB and Miami University of Ohio have found that watching TV can drive away feelings of loneliness and rejection, and quotes Shira Gabriel, assistant professor of psychology, and Jaye Derrick, adjunct instructor of psychology. The article appeared in a variety of news outlets throughout the country, including The New York Times.

Evidence Points to Conscious 'Metacognition' in Some Nonhuman Animals

September 14, 2009 - BUFFALO, N.Y. -- J. David Smith, Ph.D., a comparative psychologist at the University at Buffalo who has conducted extensive studies in animal cognition, says there is growing evidence that animals share functional parallels with human conscious metacognition -- that is, they may share humans' ability to reflect upon, monitor or regulate their states of mind.