Message From the Chair

Dr. Jeanette Taylor

Perhaps the biggest news of the new academic year in the Department of Psychology is the addition of six new faculty (see p. 2). The department continues to impress through the accomplishments of its faculty and students. Five faculty were awarded a combined total of over $11.3 million in new federal grants since May. Incredible! Our faculty continue to be recognized with prestigious awards (see Spotlight on p. 4). The department also began its bittersweet farewell to Dr. Ellen Berler, who will retire in August (see p. 2). Alumni continued doing well with new promotions and new positions, and several current graduate students received scholarships. Please continue reading for more highlights from FSU’s Psychology Department.

In Appreciation for 33 Years of Service

On November 22, faculty, students, and friends gathered to honor Ellen Berler’s many years of service to the department with the dedication of a legacy bench in the Stan and Paula Warmath Courtyard of the Psychology Department Building. The inscription reads, “In appreciation for her 33 years of service to the Department of Psychology and FSU in various roles but especially as Psychology Department Associate Chair from 1989-2017”. During her long tenure as Associate Chair, Ellen has overseen a variety of tasks critical to the success of the department. FSU psychology wouldn’t be what it is today without Ellen!

Undergraduate Awards & Honors

Kimberly Ramcharran received the Marion Jewell Hay Award, which is given to the top graduating student member of Phi Beta Kappa by the local chapter of this scholastic honor society. Kimberly has worked in several research labs, and has been instrumental in developing the “children and families” database from which many of the developmental faculty recruit participants. Additionally, Kimberly was inducted into Seminole Torchbearers, an organization comprised of students and alumni who are exceptional leaders. Kimberly also received the department’s Mark A. Berkley Award for research.

Undergraduate psychology majors and graduating seniors Alison Datoc, Raychel Feldman, and Jessica Whittington were inducted into the Garnet and Gold Scholar Society. This group recognizes undergraduates who excel within and beyond the classroom in at least three of the following areas: international experience, internship, leadership, research, and service.
Six new faculty joined the department this fall. **Aaron Wilber (Neuroscience)** studies the brain dynamics that allow us to derive a sense of location from a body-centered view of the world and how these brain systems participate in learning and memory. **Alexandria (Alex) Meyer (Clinical)** examines error-related brain activity in an effort to better understand trajectories of risk for anxiety and thereby illuminate novel treatment and prevention methods. **Derek Nee (Cognitive)** uses fMRI and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to investigate cognitive control, working memory, and the prefrontal cortex in populations of healthy individuals as well as those with psychiatric disorders. **Joe Franklin** (Clinical) seeks to provide new insights into psychopathology (especially suicidal and non-suicidal self-injury) and to leverage technology to transform these insights into major declines in mental illness. **Therese Kemper** (Associate Director of Psychology Clinic) was formerly the Psychologist in Residence at the Clinic and will continue to supervise students and will take on administrative tasks at the Clinic. **Tiffany Hardy** (Associate Chair of Psychology) will work with the current Associate Chair, Ellen Berler, during the coming year and will take over the responsibilities associated with that position when Ellen retires in August 2017.

**Graduate Students, Postdocs, & Alumni on the Move**

**Brandon Aragona** has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Psychology, University of Michigan. Brandon received his Ph.D. in neuroscience in 2004 under the mentorship of Zuoxin Wang.

**Tiffany Brown** is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, San Diego. Tiffany received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in August under the mentorship of Pam Keel.

**Tom Curtis** was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Pharmacology and Physiology, Oklahoma State University. Tom worked with Zuoxin Wang as a postdoctoral fellow.

**David Dietz** is now Chair of the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the College of Medicine at SUNY Buffalo. David received his Ph.D. in neuroscience under the mentorship of Mohamed Kabbaj and Rob Contreras.

**Daniel Hollar** accepted an Assistant Professor position at Bethune-Cookman University. Daniel received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 2010 under the mentorship of Thomas Joiner.

**Lauren Holland-Carter** is a postdoctoral fellow at the Medical University of South Carolina. Lauren received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in August under the mentorship of Pam Keel.

**Callie Little** (major professor: Sara Hart) will graduate this fall and begin a postdoctoral fellowship in 2017 at the University of New England (Australia), working with Dr. Will Coventry.

**Caroline Silva** is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and is working with Kim Van Orden, a 2009 FSU clinical psychology alumna. Caroline received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in August under the mentorship of Thomas Joiner.

**Adam Smith** accepted a tenured-track position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, University of Kansas. Adam received his Ph.D. in neuroscience in 2013 under the mentorship of Zuoxin Wang.

**Liz Tighe** began a tenure-track job this fall in the Department of Psychology at Georgia State University. Liz received her Ph.D. in cognitive psychology in 2015 under the mentorship of Chris Schatschneider.
Faculty Awards & Honors

Wally Boot was awarded Fellow status by the American Psychological Association.

Arielle Borovsky gave a keynote presentation in October at the Embodied and Situated Language Processing Conference, in Villarrica, Chile. Additionally, Arielle’s paper “Lexical leverage: Category knowledge boosts real-time novel word recognition in 2-year-olds” was selected for the cover of the November 2016 issue of Developmental Science.

The Center for Research and Education on Aging and Technology Enhancement (CREATE) team, which includes Neil Charness and Wally Boot, as well as collaborators at the University of Miami and Georgia Tech, was selected as the American Psychological Association’s inaugural recipient of the APA Prize for Interdisciplinary Team Research. This prize was developed to recognize interdisciplinary research teams that include one or more psychological scientists in major roles and have produced significant scientific work.

Neil Charness received two awards from the American Psychological Association. Neil was awarded The Franklin V. Taylor Award for Outstanding Contributions in the Field of Applied Experimental / Engineering Psychology by Division 21 and the M. Powell Lawton Distinguished Contribution Award for Applied Gerontology by Division 20.

Ed Hansen received the university’s Transformation Through Teaching award. Ed was nominated by his student, Emilee Cruz. This award honors faculty that have had an intellectual, inspirational, and integrative impact on the lives of their students.

Sara Hart received the 2016 Fuller and Scott Award from the Behavior Genetics Association. This is an early career award presented to a young researcher for outstanding scientific accomplishments early in their career.

Orenda Johnson was promoted to Teaching Faculty II (Associate Teaching Professor).

Program News

The department’s SRAD distribution was, again, the highest in the College of Arts & Sciences and was higher than all colleges except Medicine for fiscal year 2016. This reflects the outstanding success of our faculty in regard to grant funding.

In the Spotlight

FSU Faculty Senate Recognizes Warmath

Each year the FSU Faculty Senate recognizes individuals who have contributed to the university’s excellence by bestowing Torch Awards, which are named for each of the three torches in the university’s seal: Vires, Artes, and Mores. This year, Stan Warmath received the Mores award, given in recognition of his untiring reverence for the customs that distinguish our university. As the department’s long-time Facilities Manager, Stan oversaw the construction of the Psychology Department Building and the courtyard is dedicated to he and his wife, Paula. Thanks to Stan’s innovative ideas, Ph.D. graduates have engraved bricks in this courtyard to symbolize that they are forever part of FSU Psychology.

In the Spotlight

Staff News

John Chalcraft has reached his 20-year employment landmark with FSU during 2016. At the Employee Awards Ceremony, John was awarded with a plaque celebrating his 20 years with FSU in the Psychology Department. John Chalcraft is a publications and graphics artist and works with faculty and students across all areas.

Torrey Evans was welcomed to the grants team this summer as a Grants Specialist.

Audrey Milnes was welcomed to the main office this fall when Lynda Gibson moved to the Office of Graduate Studies to be our Graduate Program Associate. Lynda took over from Cherie Miller, who retired after 32 years of service to the department.
Faculty Grants

Don Compton received a 4 year $2,544,000 grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The title of his project is “Experiential and child factors that determine acquisition of orthographic-phonological regularities in a quasi-regular writing system: An integrated behavioral/computational/neurobiological approach.”

Pam Keel has been awarded a new five-year grant for $2,134,341 from the National Institute of Mental Health to study “Biobehavioral prediction of illness trajectory in bulimic syndromes”.

Andrea Meltzer is a Co-Investigator on a grant awarded via the Ministry of Education Tier 1, Singapore. It is a $105,609 grant entitled “A life history mismatch perspective on low fertility in modern nations”.

Derek Nee was awarded a Provost’s Faculty Travel Grant. This award is given to full-time faculty who are committed to the dissemination of new research.

Chris Schatschneider, along with colleagues from Florida State University and Northwestern University, has received a $3.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to test the effectiveness of several interventions to improve language and literacy skills of children who are using cochlear implants.

Brad Schmidt, with Co-PIs Arielle Borovsky, Neil Charness, Paul Conway, and Thomas Joiner received a $35,041 Equipment & Infrastructure Enhancement Grant from the university’s Council on Research and Creativity.

Zuoxin Wang received two new NIH R01 grants. The first is a $1,900,000 grant with Co-PI Mohammad Kabbaj in the College of Medicine. Co-investigators include Yan Liu and Florian Duclot. The title of the project is “Epigenetics of social bonding in prairie voles.” The second grant is with co-investigator Yan Liu for $1,250,000 from the National Institute of Mental Health. The title of the project is “Stress, social buffering, and oxytocin regulation.”

In the Spotlight

The Society for Research in Child Development is awarding Colleen Ganley with an Early Career Research Contribution Award for 2017. This award is given to those who distinguish themselves as researchers and scholars, as evidenced through research, publications, and scholarly activity, within six years of earning their Ph.D. Colleen was recognized for her work investigating social, cognitive, and affective factors related to math learning and achievement.

Graduate Student, Postdoc, & Alumni Grants, Awards, & Honors

Tania Reynolds (major professor: Roy Baumeister) was a finalist in the FSU 3-Minute Thesis competition. Tania won the People’s Choice Award.

Megan Rogers (major professor: Thomas Joiner) is a recipient of the American Psychological Association’s 2016 Violet and Cyril Franks Scholarship. She will receive $4,622 to support her research.

Sara Brislin (major professor: Chris Patrick) and Jean Forney (major professor: Pam Keel) each received the APA Dissertation Research Award. This program assists science-oriented doctoral students with research costs.

Sherelle Harmon (major professor: Janet Kistner), Brittany Morris (major professor: Chris Lonigan), Colleen Osborne (major professor: Chris Lonigan), Ian Stanley (major professor: Thomas Joiner), and Sarah Wood (major professor: Rick Wagner) received the department’s DeGraff Research Fund Scholarship. Awardees are psychology students who intend to conduct research related to factors that influence the growth and development of youth or who intend to work professionally with youth and their problems.

Connie Barroso-Garcia (major professor: Colleen Ganley), Mia Daucourt (major professor: Sara Hart), Taylor Day (major professor: Amy Wetherby), Elyssa Geer (major professor: Colleen Ganley), Rasheda Haughbrook (major professor: Sara Hart), and Mercedes Spencer (major professor: Rick Wagner) were awarded the department’s Jane West Fellowship, which provides support to psychology graduate students who have an interest in issues related to child development or family processes.

Carol Chu (major professor: Thomas Joiner), Sherelle Harmon (major professor: Janet Kistner), and Irene Huang (major professor: Joe Franklin) were awarded the College of Arts and Sciences’ Ermine M. Owenby Jr. Travel Award. This competitive award provides up to $500 toward conference costs for students who present a paper or poster.
Recent Publication Highlights

Note: The names of current and former graduate students and postdoctoral fellows are underlined and the names of faculty are in bold.


Meltzer, A. L., McNulty, J. K., & Maner, J. K. (2016). Women like being valued for sex, as long as it is by a committed partner. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. OnlineFirst.


