

Psychology Newsletter



A Newsletter for Friends and Alumni of Texas Tech University's Department of Psychology

From the Department Chair



As the new Chair of the Department of Psychology, I'd like to take the opportunity to update you on recent developments, and where we plan to go in the future.

First, I would like to thank Dr. Susan Hendrick for her two years of service as chair of our department. She served the department exceptionally during a challenging time. I believe she fostered a "team" feeling in the department that is critical in these ever-changing times at TTU and in our field. I am also grateful to her for the time and energy she spent helping me transition into this position. I took over as chair in July, and in that short amount of time I have come to have an even greater appreciation for what a chair has to contend with on an almost consistent basis!

It is truly an exciting time for our department. We are one of the strongest and most well respected academic units at Texas Tech. This is because on virtually every index of educational excellence we excel. First, we are excellent teachers. Our averages on student

evaluations of our instructors (both faculty and graduate students) and courses are substantially higher than college and university averages. Further, we currently have 12 members (43% of our faculty) of the Texas Tech University Teaching Academy (TA). Membership in the TA is based on "demonstrated dedication to excellence in teaching and for furthering the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning." Fewer than approximately 15% of the faculty at TTU are selected for inclusion.

Second, we are successful in our research endeavors. For instance, our faculty and students routinely publish more than 100 refereed journal articles and several books per year. We also submit many grant proposals and are beginning to see moderate success from these efforts. We are active as editors or associate editors of journals and book series as well as serving on many editorial boards. We are also very visible nationally, regularly presenting more than 100 convention papers/posters annually.

Third, we are very involved in professional service at all levels. In reviewing the many service activities that are undertaken by our faculty, the list is truly amazing and includes service to the department, college, university, and regional, state, and national organizations. The list is too exhaustive to include in this update, however, some examples

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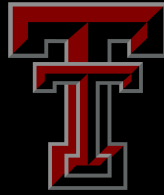
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from our current faculty include serving as President for Divisions of the American Psychological Association and of the Constructivist Psychology Network, serving or chairing the IRB, serving as an Associate Vice President for Research, and consulting at several local agencies, including Lubbock Regional Mental Health Mental Retardation Center and the Southwest Cancer Center. It is important to mention that most members of our faculty engage in several important service roles at one time.

This being said, this is no time to rest on our laurels. As many of you know, Texas Tech is pushing to become Texas' next National Research University (also referred to as Tier One). Our plan is to continue to strengthen our department by building upon our existing resources and growing in a way that is consistent with the strategic goals of the university. In order to do this, we need more space. As such, we are one of 6 departments in the College of Arts and Sciences who are vying for a building expansion/renovation. If we can secure an expansion, it would allow more adequate research space for our existing and future faculty and graduate students in the department. Already underway is a major renovation to our in-house clinic (headed up by Dr. Sheila Garos) that will modernize the way we provide services to the university and local community as well as to the supervision of our doctoral students (not to mention make our clinic more aesthetically pleasing). There is a commitment from the upper administration to increase the number of faculty at Texas Tech, and we are one of the departments that is likely to benefit

from these new lines being made available. In fact, our department's newest faculty member, Dr. Yi-Yuan Tang, is a senior hire that was initiated by the Vice President for Research's office. Dr. Tang is the Director of the Texas Tech Neuroimaging Institute (TTNI; for a virtual tour see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZhmdLCgCAc>) as well as the Presidential Endowed Chair in Neuroscience. Dr. Tang's presence (along with the TTNI) will very likely allow our department to grow in the areas of neuroscience and health psychology.

We understand that as the university invests in us, the expectations of our department also increase, and we are poised and ready for this challenge. Given our strong base, one of my goals is to enhance alumni relationships with our former undergraduates and graduate students. As such, this newsletter is devoted to outstanding alumni across the decades from the 1970's to the 2000's. A great deal of appreciation is given to Dr. Susan Hendrick for soliciting the contributions in this newsletter.

Please feel free to contact me personally at any time, and if you are in Lubbock, feel free to drop by.

Best Wishes,

Lee

Clinical Psychology Program



Dr. Joaquin Borrego

Greetings! The Clinical Psychology faculty and students have had another busy and exciting year. We would like to acknowledge the students who joined us this fall, those who left for internship, and those who have graduated.

We are excited to have the following students join our Program this fall:

Name	University (Undergrad/Masters)	Lab
Shannon Harper	Hartwick College/SUNY Brockport	Epkins
Nicole Harris	Loyola University New Orleans	Borrego
Aaron Haslam	University of New Mexico	Cohen
LeRoi Hill	University of California, Berkeley	Borrego
Tishanna Hollins	Rhodes College/American University	Clopton
Nathanael Taylor	Benedictine College	Mumma

The following students successfully obtained an internship for the 2011-2012 year:

Student	Internship Site
Chikira Barker	Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
Kristin Goodheart	UT-Dallas Student Counseling Center
David Heckler	Baylor College of Medicine
Meghan Marnell	University of Texas Health Sciences Center - San Antonio
Adrienne Sloan	VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center
David Trotter	Alpert Medical School of Brown University
Joe Vanderveen	University of Mississippi Medical Center/VA Jackson
Ben Williams	Cincinnati VA Medical Center

Finally, the following students graduated with their Ph.D. this past August:

Dr. Valerie Hobson
 Dr. Charlene Key
 Dr. Tabatha Blount
 Dr. Rocio Villarreal

We are very proud of their accomplishments!

The Clinical Psychology program loves to hear from alumni so please stay in contact by sending an email to the Director of Clinical Training: Joaquin.Borrego@ttu.edu.

Counseling Psychology Program



Dr. Sheila Garos

The Fall 2011 semester the counseling program welcomed six new students: Lauren K. Buscher from the University of Missouri, KC; Samantha Christopher from Ohio University; Melanie Longhurst from the University of Texas, El Paso; Yuki Shigemoto from Penn State, Harrisburg; Danielle Sirles from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor; and Kathryn White from American University. We also said goodbye to Ashlee Brown, Cynthia Sperring and Sandra Rodriguez-Siutz, who graduated this summer. Ashlee hasn't gone far though, as she joined the staff at the Student Counseling Center. Another of our students, Amanda Wheeler, also joined the SCC staff and is due to graduate soon. The Fall semester was a busy time of year. This year we had seven students applying to internship! They submitted application materials and had lots of interviews.

Several of our students have accomplishments worth noting. Megan Thoen, formerly Megan Martinez, was named the APA Div. 17 Positive Psychology Student Researcher of the Year for 2011 and also earned a departmental research award (see photo). Another department award winner was Amanda Edwards, who received an award for top Psychology 1300 instructor. Jennifer Vencill was selected as a committee member for the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) Committee on LGBT Concerns. Her committee position is a two-year appointment. Congratulations to all! One of our graduates deserves congratulations as well. Aven Senter, Ph.D., was one of 38 early career psychologists awarded a prestigious Early Career Psychologist (DCP) Credentialing Scholarship by The National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology (National Register), in conjunction with the American Psychological Association Committee on Early Career Psychologists.

There are notable accomplishments to mention with regard to our faculty as well. Dr. Steve Richards has several interesting publications in progress, including "Treating Depressed and Anxious Smokers in Smoking Cessation Programs" (Richards, Cohen, Morrell, Watson, & Low; under journal review) and "The Oxford Handbook of Depression and Comorbidity" (Richards & O'Hara, editors; 37 chapters; under contract with Oxford University Press and is in progress). Steve continues to teach Psychopathology and Practicum at the graduate level. His adult daughters are doing well and living in New York City, NY and Berkeley, CA. His wife is doing well and works as a home-health-care nurse. His 65-pound collie, Max, is doing great and wants to walk ten miles a day...

Dr. Hendrick stays busy supervising students in practicum placements at the TTU Health Sciences Center. We now have students placed in the Southwest Cancer Center, University Medical Center Pediatrics and more recently in TTUHSC Department of Internal Medicine. These practicum placements have become popular with students and support a growing health psychology focus among many faculty in the department. She continues to teach graduate counseling courses, supervise research, and enjoy being a Professor.

One of the newest changes in our program involves Dr. Garos, who recently became the Director of the Psychology Clinic. Dr. Garos remains as the Director of the Counseling Program as well, but most of her time during the Summer and Fall was spent reorganizing and updating clinic procedures. The clinic was recently outfitted with new software and soon all therapy rooms will be set up with PC computers and digital recording technology via webcams. Dr. Garos was recently awarded a \$133K internal grant that will provide funding for much-needed renovations to the clinic. These are exciting

Counseling Psychology Program



Dr. Sheila Garos

times for the counseling and clinical students training in the clinic, and we look forward to expanding our services to the TTU and Lubbock community.

Additionally, Dr. Garos will be instituting a new practicum placement with the TTU Athletic Department which will begin in the Spring 2012 semester. The details are still to be decided, but we will begin with one counseling or clinical doctoral student and hopefully expand our presence in Athletics over time. The practicum student will work with athletes from all sport divisions with problems such as depression, substance use, anxiety and coping with sport-related injuries.

Finally, this year Dr. Chris Robitschek became a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17). She also received the 2011 Distinguished Psychologist Award for Contributions to Positive Psychology from the American Psychological Association, Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17), Section on Positive Psychology.

From Dr. Bob Morgan:

“It was an honor and a wonderful surprise to be awarded the John G. Skelton, Jr. Regents Endowed Professorship in Psychology. It is my plan to use the accompanying endowment as an opportunity to advance my research program, but also to enhance and promote the research mission of the department. As such, I have developed the John G. Skelton Lecture Series in Health Psychology. For this lecture series we will invite internationally renowned health psychology or behavioral medicine researchers to the Texas Tech campus to share their research and visit with faculty and students about our research. Dr. Barbara Andersen (Ohio State University), a world-class researcher on the psycho-social aspects of cancer, was the first lecturer and her visit was a resounding success. I am also working directly with

faculty to support efforts at increasing our success with getting grant proposals funded to facilitate a higher quality of psychological research in the department. I have worked with Dr. Ken DeMarree to develop a formalized grant writing mentor with Dr. Allen McConnell, a prolific researcher at Miami University. Dr. DeMarree will make several visits to Miami University and Dr. McConnell will visit TTU to work directly with Ken on developing an NSF proposal. Dr. McConnell will also offer a colloquium during his trip to TTU that will provide a useful forum for an exchange of ideas and applications involving emotions and social psychology research. Similarly, I am providing additional funds to junior faculty to support their travel to conferences and federal agencies in order to seek federal funding. It has been an enjoyable experience to be afforded such a prestigious position that allows me to contribute to enhanced quality of research in the department.”

Experimental Psychology Program



Dr. Jeff Larsen

We often talk about the importance of giving psychology away. It's obvious how practicing clinical and counseling psychologists give psychology away—they do so by working with their clients and patients. It's not as obvious how experimental psychologists can give psychology away because we spent most of our time plugging away at our research. Most often we give psychology away through our classroom teaching or perhaps the occasional interview with the media, but most of us spend the majority of our time conducting basic research. Another way we can give psychology away is by training graduate students who take what they've learned here to work in industry or non-academic areas of the public sector. I recently asked some of those graduates a few questions about how their training at Texas Tech helps them do their jobs successfully. I heard back from three of our graduates:

- Anand Tharanathan earned his PhD in human factors in 2008. He now works for Honeywell's research and development division in Minneapolis.
- Allyson Hall-Colombo earned her PhD in human factors in 2011. She is now employed as a human factors engineer at Basic Commerce and Industries, Inc., in Dahlgren, Virginia.
- Brad Stastny earned his PhD in social psychology in 2011 and is now a senior experimental psychologist at MITRE near Washington, D.C.

Not surprisingly, Anand, Allyson, and Brad all noted that their research training has been invaluable. While at TTU, Allyson's work with Keith

Jones involved visual perception, and this expertise has served her well as she designs visual displays for military application. Neither Brad nor Anand conduct research that is closely related to the work they did as graduate students, but their broad training in how to conduct research has been instrumental. Brad's job "is actually quite a bit like the graduate work I did at Tech. I spend my days analyzing data or designing experiments, except now ... I receive money for my work." (For the record, Brad did get a stipend while he was here, but perhaps it was so meager that he's forgotten about it!) For his part, Anand credits his getting hired by Honeywell "primarily due to my research experience in actual human performance, including data analyses."

All three of these young professionals also highlighted the importance of their coursework. Both Anand and Brad noted that the broad training in psychology that they received in their coursework has been beneficial. Brad mentioned, "I'm often surprised when an article I've read in class comes in handy when I'm working on projects." Allyson was perhaps the most enthusiastic: "Without a doubt, I utilize the four core Human Factors courses (Human Factors Psychology, Human Factors Methods, Perception, and Cognitive Ergonomics) on a daily basis. These courses provided me with the foundation needed to perform any task I've been given to this point."

They also told me that the teaching they did as graduate students has helped them communicate with various audiences. Allyson works with "people daily that do not have a background in human factors, cognition, perception, or psychology, so the ability to break down complex concepts and theories

Experimental Psychology Program



Dr. Jeff Larsen

and explain them on a basic level has been integral to my job.” Brad spent his time as a graduate student teaching undergraduates, but now he’s in a position to teach his superiors. He has only been on the job for a few months, but his “teaching skills may come into play more often when I give briefings to the ‘higher-ups’ based upon the work I’ve conducted.”

Social psychologist Kurt Lewin once said there’s nothing so practical as a good theory. I asked our graduates what theoretical perspectives they learned in grad school that have come in handy in their applied work. Anand noted that, “a great strength of Texas Tech’s HF program is the good blend of theory and practice. Most of the HF courses focus on theory and also teach us applications of those theories, or have class projects that force us to apply theory in practical settings.” Allyson works “to implement ecological psychology theory and principles into my visual designs,” which I find remarkable since, on its face, ecological theory seems so abstract and esoteric. Brad identified the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion and noted that, “There are many instances when it’s important to know when and how people might be persuaded.”

Both Allyson and Brad mentioned that grad school taught them the ability to learn new material quickly, which has been instrumental in their careers. Brad mentioned that, “While finishing up my dissertation, I learned how to really dig in and get things done on a tight deadline.” Allyson said that she often ends up shuffling between product lines and added that “the speed/accuracy trade-off is not permitted in these circumstances.”

Though I am content to live my life in the academy dealing with abstract theories and concepts, I find it gratifying that our students have learned so much at TTU that they can apply out in the field. Even basic experimental psychologists have a lot to give away. Faculty members like me may not spend most of our time doing it, but many of the graduates we have taught and mentored do it every time they go to work.

New Students

Clinical



From left to right: Shannon Harper, Nate Taylor, Tishanna Hollins, Aaron Haslam, Nicole Harris, LeRoi Hill

Counseling



From left to right: Lauren Buscher, Samantha Christopher, Katy White, Melanie Longhurst, Danielle Sirles, Yuki Shigemoto.

New Students

Experimental



From left to right: Doug Preddy, Jared Inting, Sam Levulis, Eevin Jennings, Patrick Crittendon, Adam Cann, Trevor McIntyre

Awards



From left to right: Dr. Christine Robitschek (Chair of Teaching Awards Committee)
Rachelle Smith – Best Advanced Course Instructor
Chelsea Klinkebiel – Best Teaching Assistant
Amanda Edwards – Best PSY 1300 Instructor



From left to right: Dr. Jeff Larsen (Director of the Experimental Program)
Brad Stastny – Graduate Research Award – Experimental

Awards



From left to right: Megan Thoen – Graduate Research Award – Counseling
Dr. Sheila Garos (Director of Counseling Program)



Sandra Rodriguez-Siuts – Diversity in Psychological Science Research Award

Graduate Research Award for Clinical – David Trotter, no picture available

Diversity Research

Sandra Rodriguez-Siuts

My personal experiences, clinical work, and interpersonal relationships have all informed and impacted my research interests. As a recent recipient of the Diversity in Psychological Science Research Award, I am excited to share the findings of my dissertation research and its potential impact for the field of psychology with you. My master's equivalent thesis and dissertation research have focused on the development of a new acculturation scale, the Acculturative Self-Efficacy Scale, that considers how an individual of Mexican background's self-efficacy (an individual's perception of his or her confidence to complete a task; Bandura, 1997) towards acculturation plays a role in successful adjustment to U.S. culture. The development of this scale was a result of a collaboration of research interests with Dr. Erin Hardin. Specifically, I had an interest in examining factors that contributed to healthy adjustment and success for Latinos living in the U.S., whereas Dr. Hardin had an interest in examining how personal factors, such as self-efficacy, impact a person's well-being and development.


Until recently, research had not examined the role of self-efficacy for acculturation. The pilot study of the Acculturative Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES; Rodriguez-Siuts & Hardin, 2008), revealed confidence or self-efficacy (e.g., confidence in associating or making European American friends) is indeed an important factor to consider when examining successful cultural adjustment for Mexican Americans living in the United States. My dissertation study addressed the limitations and concerns found in the pilot study. The results confirmed that ASES had good psychometric properties, including good reliability and validity, and predicted some aspects of psychological and sociocultural adaptation above and beyond behavioral acculturation, as measured by the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARSM-A-II).

The results of both the pilot study and dissertation study revealed that self-efficacy is an important factor to consider in the acculturation process because it influences the overall functioning of individuals of Mexican descent more than simply behaviorally engaging in activities of the host culture. In other words, one's confidence in, for example, associating with European Americans or making friends with European Americans, is more important than one's

actual ability to speak English. The findings also suggested that there is an important relationship between self-efficacy and psychological and sociocultural adaptation among individuals of Mexican background that has not been previously considered. More specifically, a Mexican or Mexican American's level of confidence towards European American oriented tasks such as associating, making friends, and living within a European American community could be used to predict his or her mental health, distress, and social functioning. The Acculturative Self-Efficacy Scale reveals new information that how well someone actually speaks English or how often one spends time with European Americans appear to be less important than how well one thinks he or she makes friends with individuals of European American background. Similarly, believing you could associate with European American friends is more important than actually having European American friends. The overall findings suggest that an individual's subjective thoughts, rather than objective behaviors, may be the most helpful factor in predicting his or her success in the host culture. Further research utilizing the Acculturative Self-Efficacy Scale could offer a better understanding for healthy adjustment for Latinos living in the U.S, and knowing the impact self-efficacy has on the acculturation process has promising implications for the success of individuals of Mexican heritage living in the United States.



Alumni Voices



Dr. Ray Brown, 1970's

I entered Texas Tech University as an undergrad in 1965 and “stumbled around” until I discovered the areas of sociology and psychology, leaving behind thoughts of medical school or petroleum engineering. I began doing volunteer services at Buckner Children’s Home and developed a lifelong commitment to working with children and families. I was offered a job at Buckner in April of my senior year, in spite of anticipating being drafted into the Vietnam War. I was drafted one week after graduation but was given a one-year medical deferment and continued at Buckner in a social work position. I received a permanent military deferment after one year and by then had determined a personal need for further education to work with seriously disturbed children.

Buckner had a relationship with Dr. Beatrix (BZ) Cobb, who gave me my opportunity to enter the Masters Program at Texas Tech, putting me on scholarship after I proved myself my first year. I continued to work over half-time at Buckner during the two-year master’s program and did a one-semester internship under Dr. Josephine Stout at the local Southwest Center (Dr. Keller, Dr. Mahone, etc.). I received specialized supervision in play therapy and family work, graduating in 1972. I continued employment at Buckner for another year, during which time the need for further training

developed into my passion to go back to school (in spite of having married, adopted a three-year-old one year later, and then taking her biological sibling [age 5]), as I began my Ph.D. program in 1973 – young, and a little bit naïve!

I was one of only two new students accepted into the rehabilitation program, by this time under the direction of Dr. G. Frank Lawlis. By virtue of completing the terminal masters program, continuing to take some courses, and then coming back into the Ph.D. program, I had the opportunity to take the core counseling courses, the additional rehabilitation courses, and most if not all of the clinical specialty courses, including for example, two semesters of projective testing. During my time in the psychology program at Tech, I had the opportunity to spend time in a private practice; provide services at TRC, the Texas State Commission for the Blind, and various children’s homes and boys’ ranches in the area. In addition, I was able to do extensive evaluations in the inpatient psychiatric facility at Methodist Hospital.

I applied for three internships that were to begin in the Fall of 1975. The system was quite different then – no matching, no date for offers and acceptances, etc. I (probably rather foolishly) turned down my first offer, to NYU, because the stipend was only \$2000 per year, and the girls were both in school by then. I then was offered a very intriguing internship at a child guidance

center in the Oklahoma City area, but turned it down due to the reality of having only one supervisor for the year (and I later learned that he exited during that year). I then settled in to an internship at the Veterans’ Administration Hospital in Temple, Texas. I began the internship with great concerns about my training and was uncertain about my ability to compete with other interns from rather prestigious universities. I quickly learned that my training had been good, the competition was not a concern, and the Tech graduates quickly became leaders in the setting. While the VA setting was not my forte, I, in many respects, was able to carve out my initial exposure to neuropsychology testing, experience a wonderful rotation in Darnell Army Hospital (Fort Hood) Department of Pediatrics, and greatly expand my professional horizons. I was also exposed to the families and children of some 50,000 GIs during the Vietnam War. In addition, I had the opportunity to do evaluations within the special education department of the Temple school system.

While it was not my original plan, all roads lead back to Lubbock, and I had multiple opportunities for private practice, consultation, and new experiences. The part of my practice that never changed was an abiding commitment to work with children, adolescents, and families. That has been a part of my practice from the beginning until now. In addition, Dr. Jim

Alumni Voices



Jenkins (my first practice partner) and I stumbled into a relationship with an accomplished anesthesiologist who did pain rehabilitation work with head injuries, stroke patients, and others in the area of rehabilitation medicine. Together, we began to do some office and hospital-based pain management work, and we then saw this grow into the development of the first multidisciplinary rehabilitation center in Lubbock (South Plain Rehabilitation Center). We partnered in this endeavor and developed a sister facility in San Antonio. In that setting, I was actively involved in management, administration, as well as clinical work in neuropsychology, pain management, etc. We maintained these facilities for a number of years before selling them somewhere around 1990.

This same group of investors yielded to my persuasion when I spoke of the need for a children/adolescent treatment facility here in Lubbock. This resulted in our creating, from the ground up, Canyon Lakes Residential Treatment Center. This facility opened in 1987 and continues today as the only facility in our area where residential and day treatment services for children and adolescents are provided.

I learned early on that in spite of the love for traditional clinical services, I needed to be creative in new endeavors such as the rehab center and Canyon Lakes, and I have likewise found that diversity serves me well and allows me to work, even now,

long hours in a multitude of areas. I worked the Children's Protective Services during the early days of my practice, which placed me in the courthouse. This subsequently developed into a forensic interest, the completion of extensive continuing education, and extensive work in forensic psychology, mostly within the scope of family law, but also in other areas from time to time. In turn, I have developed a very strong interest and commitment to an alternative to court work, namely serving as a mental health professional in collaborative law teams where alternative dispute resolution keeps divorce and other family matters out of the courthouse.


I have maintained limited involvement with the Psychology Department, having taught course work a good number of years ago, having employed many students in the early days of my practice, and having supervised students, interns, and postdocs at our Canyon Lakes facility. Additionally, I taught diagnostic course work in the education department for those students who were becoming diagnosticians, and I even taught a course in the Family Relations Department at one time. I have participated in numerous APA site visits across the years. I have enjoyed maintaining some connection to a program that has served me well, a program that prepared me well for a career, and a program that helped me develop a passion for psychology

As a student, I became involved in the local society for

psychologists, now the South Plains Association of Psychologists. I later served as president for three separate terms and was selected to a term on the TPA board back in 1998. More recently, perhaps in a weak moment, I allowed my name to be put on the ballot for President-Elect of TPA. I was elected, and am now in the second of a four-year commitment that goes with that honor. I view this as an opportunity, perhaps even a responsibility to give something back to my profession, a profession that has given much to me. In recent years, I was the 2007 recipient of the Liberty Bell Award, granted by the Lubbock County Young Lawyers Association for commitment to the field of law from a non-lawyer. In 2009, it was my honor to accept an award from TPA for "Outstanding Contribution to Public Service."

I enjoy a deeply satisfying personal life with my wife, children, and grandchildren. I enjoy travel opportunities, volunteer work, sports, and numerous hobbies. In so many ways I have been richly blessed. In part, my acceptance into the psychology program at Texas Tech (even though it took some begging and an emphasis on my enthusiasm and work history as opposed to outstanding scores and grades!) has enhanced my opportunity to do something enjoyable, and I believe meaningful, in my life. I will be eternally grateful for the education, the opportunities, the friendships, and the various

Alumni Voices



rewards that came with that educational opportunity at Texas Tech (in spite of a fair amount of politics and a bit of academic craziness that had to be endured). I hope to continue to find ways to give back to our profession and to Texas Tech as I move forward.

Dr. Scott Robertson, 1980's

After graduating from the Counseling Master's program in 1982 and Doctoral program in 1991, I was honored and fortunate to be spared the first wave of urban impact in the managed care world of the early 1990s. I was invited to join two of our TTU faculty in their group practice here in Lubbock after having gotten my year of pre-licensure supervision at the Charter Plains Hospital. Then, the average length of inpatient stay was 40 days. Practicing in the shadows of Dr. Charles Mahone and Dr. Mike Bieber, and six other senior colleagues was an excellent, challenging and safe professional beginning. It was not so much my stellar clinical skills and promising professional potential future that took Oedipus among his fathers as much as it was their need for a reliable renter. In keeping with the mythology, however, I eventually helped to begin the Charles H. Mahone Memorial Scholarship in honor of a man from whom I had learned much, just before he was diagnosed with terminal leukemia.

I have continued to stay associated with the Department and find no small humor in the


irony of being a guest lecturer and Adjunct Faculty in a department that turned down my first three applications for their Doctoral program. The only classes that I am ever asked to teach are those in which I made Bs, only attesting to the long term predictive validity of grades in graduate programs. A great believer in the theory of sublimation, I framed my last letter of rejection and the letter of notice as Adjunct Faculty and hung them just below my Doctoral degree. They are a wonderful example of the good news that we are all horrible predictors of much, and that dissertations don't make clinicians. Perhaps I am still miffed that I was asked to remove from my dissertation preface my favorite quote from Martin Luther King: "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, I am free at last". By the time that it was all done, one committee member had died, one retired, one transferred to another university, and the other two couldn't remember what the research was about. I was narcissistically wounded that Disney declined to turn all 444 pages into a six part movie series.

Last year, I took a six month sabbatical to go to Spanish language school in Antigua and explore community development work. I have set my hope of fame and fortune on the study of such personal curiosities as altruism among agnostics and atheists, the similarities of mid-life Spanish acquisition and massive left hemisphere stroke, and the declining ability of aging

neuropsychologists to give their own tests. Several of my local colleagues have figured out how to intermittently reinforce me for leaving the country, and in 2010, nominated me for the Texas Psychological Association Outstanding Service to the Public Distinction for my work in Guatemala. Pretty sneaky. I sent the plaque to my mid-seventy year old high school psychology mentor, Joyce Weaver, only hoping to be a comparable inspiration to my replacements on planet Earth.

I maintain my private practice in Lubbock to fund the work in Guatemala, and rarely update my Vita. I enjoy anonymity among the near anonymous. I bought a cemetery plot near the orphanage where I volunteer in Villa Nueva, and enough life insurance to make my wife's next husband very appreciative. I am grateful for a life worth the living, a faith worth my devotion, stories worth retelling, friends who let me dream, and a hope worth giving away as fast as I can. In 2012, my friends and I will build a rural women and children's clinic for the village of Guayables (roughly translates to "middle of nowhere"), population of 300, in an effort to reduce mortality rates in complicated labor. I am not allowed to use power tools without adult supervision, which works out well since they have no electricity or running water. It cures me of the gripes for about six months, and makes doing psychotherapy much easier. I am, thank God Almighty, free at last. The honor of representing my

Alumni Voices



decade peers in Counseling Psychology is unspeakable, as are most of the important stories in life. Nothing counts for nothing. Everything, given enough time and grace, counts for something.

Dr. Paul D. Nicodemus, 1990's

Since graduating from Texas Tech University in 1997, I have been employed by two regional universities. I am currently at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Since my positions have been with regional universities, a heavy emphasis has been placed on teaching duties. My teaching assignments have mainly been concentrated in areas of research issues and developmental courses. Although producing scholarly work through research is not emphasized, faculty is still expected to be engaged in publishable research. In relation to scholarly work, we are strongly encouraged to involve undergraduate students in our research labs. These efforts have resulted in seven of my lab students assisting me with poster presentations at several APA national conventions, along with one student who co-authored a paper for a journal publication. My research has primarily focused on deficiencies in the frontal lobes. I am currently involved in a study in which older adults are provided cognitive tasks that activate the frontal lobe regions to provide a stimulating effect to determine if aging factors in frontal deterioration can be significantly reduced. I have also engaged in research outside of my university


responsibilities by serving as an external evaluator and co-author for federal grant proposals. These activities have led to opportunities to work with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U. S. Department of Education, and the U. S. Department of Justice. The work completed in grant proposals has resulted in my assisting local social agencies in acquiring approximately \$2.5 million in external funding. Another component of my job duties is to present myself in a professional manner while serving as a departmental representative at university functions and community events.

In looking back on my educational experiences at Texas Tech, it is without question that my doctoral training program prepared me well to serve as a university professor and researcher. First, credit must be given to the classroom instruction provided by the faculty who furnished knowledge in my specialty areas. I am very appreciative of the teaching provided by Drs. Robert Bell and Jeffrey Elias in the areas of developmental psychology and research designs. I also need to recognize Dr. Gregory Mumma for his instruction in multivariate statistics. My undergraduate students often compliment me on my vast knowledge levels in psychology and how informative my lectures are; however, it would be wrong not to acknowledge that my scholarship was formulated during my time at Texas Tech through the tutelage of these

professors. In addition to my classroom experiences, I also received effective modeling that shaped my teaching style while working under the direction of Drs. Steven Richards, Dennis Cogan, and Gregory Mumma in my teaching assistant duties.

I have also been very successful in the area of formulating research designs as evidenced in my success as an external evaluator and grant writer. Again, the credit must be given to Drs. Bell, Elias, and Mumma, because without their expertise and directions in the classroom and supervising my research endeavors, my skills would not be as efficient. In fact, in my work as an external evaluator, I have found that other evaluators have substantial questions concerning formulating appropriate research methodology and frequently ask for my assistance. I also receive very high scores on my portion of the grant proposals involving how the studies will be conducted and how the results will be measured. On several occasions I have had the grant directors for these projects comment on the quality of the study's research elements. Another valuable experience in research knowledge that was gained during my training at Texas Tech was the required assignment of presenting a research proposal in Dr. Phillip Marshall's Learning Theories class. I remember approaching him on multiple occasions with what I thought were excellent research ideas only to have him respond "Why is it important?" or "How would the idea be of value to the field of psychology?" In addition, I found

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his “grilling” questions during the proposal presentation to be an invaluable experience in my ability to take criticism while maintaining my composure and being able to present the rationale behind my work.

Another area in which Texas Tech was critical to my development in the field of psychology was performing as a professional. Several Texas Tech faculty members exhibited qualities that provided positive modeling patterns in professionalism. Along with the faculty members mentioned above, acknowledgement for my abilities to perform professionally in my job duties must include Drs. Susan Hendrick, Richard McGlynn, Tim Melchert, and Roman Taraban. I also have to recognize the impact that the completion of the qualifying exam and the process of the dissertation had on my professional development. Although I complained considerably during the process of completing both of these requirements, these experiences were probably the two most important events in shaping my ability to perform my duties in a professional manner. I am very appreciative of the training I received at Texas Tech University. After working in the field for several years, I find my skills to be equal to or better than colleagues who have graduated from other prestigious graduate programs. I am confident that my professional knowledge and abilities are the result of the excellent educational experiences

I received at Texas Tech. I often times reminisce about the years spent at Texas Tech with fond memories of the time I spent there with my fellow students and the professors.

Dr. Holly E. R. Morrell, 2000's


It is amazing to me that over four years have passed since I graduated from the Clinical Psychology program at Texas Tech University (TTU)! After graduating in 2007, I completed a two-year, NIH-funded post-doctoral fellowship at the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). During my fellowship, I applied for and was awarded several grants. I accepted a three-year fellowship grant from the National Cancer Institute to stay at UCSF and study the relationship between anxiety and cigarette smoking. While at UCSF, I had the opportunity to publish journal articles and book chapters, present at national conferences, mentor younger post-doctoral fellows, lead seminars, and write sections of reports of the Surgeon General and the Institute of Medicine. Two years into my grant (September, 2011), I accepted a position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Loma Linda University (LLU), which is a graduate health sciences institution in Southern California. My duties at LLU include doing research, mentoring doctoral students, and teaching graduate-level statistics

and substance abuse courses. My teaching load at LLU is very reasonable, which allows me to focus much of my energy on research and mentoring – two of my favorite things to do.

I remember when I first began to understand just how good my training at TTU was. I matched to one of the top internship sites in my area of clinical interest – the joint program at the University of California, San Diego and the San Diego VA. The other interns were all from legendary, “big name” universities and I felt slightly intimidated. Over time, however, I learned that I had been more comprehensively and rigorously trained than many of the other interns across a number of clinical domains, from assessment to case conceptualization to specific therapeutic techniques. I recall being so grateful for the supervisors and training experiences that I had at TTU!

My time at TTU also prepared me exceptionally well for every aspect of my chosen career path in academia. Take teaching, for example. At TTU, I was given the opportunity to gain valuable teaching experience starting in my very first semester of graduate school. I was a TA for undergraduate Research Methods during my first year, which involved developing a syllabus, lectures, and assignments for the lab sections of the course. I took the teaching preparation course with Dr. Hardin, which was an amazing introduction to the

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methods of teaching and really helped me as I taught my own sections of undergraduate introductory psychology. The faculty were also very supportive of my love of statistics. I was given the opportunity to be a TA for all of the graduate statistics courses, sometimes more than once, as well as the advanced undergraduate statistics course. I was also given the opportunity to teach my own section of undergraduate introductory statistics. After spending time with graduates of many other doctoral programs in clinical psychology, I realize that the sheer number and variety of teaching opportunities at TTU is quite unusual and is a major advantage to its students. When I applied for my current job, it was clear that the department at LLU was looking for someone who could teach their graduate statistics courses. Thanks to my time at TTU, I had years of teaching experience under my belt, both at the undergraduate and graduate level. I had exactly the training and skills that LLU was looking for. Plus, I already knew from experience how much I liked to teach.

Through my role as a TA, a departmental statistics consultant, and a private statistics tutor, I spent a lot of time working one-on-one with students and faculty. I especially enjoyed working with younger students, and I began to see just how much I would love to mentor students. My graduate advisor, Dr. Lee Cohen, gradually gave me more mentoring responsibilities in his lab as I advanced in skills and maturity.

These experiences confirmed just how fulfilling I found mentoring to be, and helped me develop the mentoring skills I now use every day with my current students. I am also certain that I am a better mentor because of the excellent advisors I had at TTU, who were wonderful models to learn from and emulate. There are many faculty I could mention here, but of course Dr. Cohen has had the most lasting and profound effect on my mentoring abilities.

Last, but certainly not least, there is the research training I received at TTU. I learned fairly quickly that I loved research and want to have a strongly research-oriented career. Dr. Cohen went out of his way to provide me with the experiences I would need to become a good researcher, and the other faculty members were also very supportive of my goals. As soon as I joined Dr. Cohen's lab, he set me up with a dataset and collaborators, and encouraged me to submit my first poster at a national conference. He also immediately got me involved in ongoing research projects in his lab. Dr. Cohen found RA positions for me so that I could get more varied research experience, got me involved in the peer-review process, and gave me opportunities to write scholarly papers. He not only taught me great research skills, but also the politics of science. Thanks to these research experiences and Dr. Cohen's mentorship, I had the qualifications to land a research-oriented internship and a post-doctoral fellowship at tier-one research universities, and to finally

realize my ultimate goal of working in academia and running my own research lab.

Any reflection on my years at TTU would not be complete without considering my growth as a person. Most of you who are reading this article can attest to the fact that graduate school takes an incredible amount of time, dedication, and energy. It can be exhausting, and everyone feels frustrated or discouraged at some point (sometimes several points!) during the process. Looking back, however, I can see how graduate school at TTU had a strong, positive impact on who I am today. I learned profound lessons about what it means to be an ethical and caring person in a profession where I am entrusted with the well-being of students and clients. I also learned important lessons about who I am as a person, and in pushing myself to the limits, I gained self-confidence because I discovered just what I am capable of and how much I can handle.

All in all, I am overwhelmingly grateful for my time spent at TTU. Not only did my training thoroughly prepare me for my chosen career path, but it contributed to my personal growth. Of equal importance, I developed deep, meaningful friendships and collaborative relationships that I hope to have for the rest of my life.

Perspective

Dr. Susan Hendrick

Greetings to all Department Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students. Special greetings to our masters and doctoral graduates, scattered across the country – and the globe. I wrote you in the 2010 diversity-focused newsletter as the Chair of Psychology. I now write as former chair and former Director of the Counseling Program (as some of you will remember). Psychology is holding its own through the sustained efforts of all who live and work in the department, as you have seen throughout the pages of this newsletter. We have busy programs, excellent students, and wonderful alumnae and alumni of whom we are VERY proud! And this has held up across the decades, with Ray Brown's internship experiences in the 1970s paralleling Holly Morrell's internship experiences in the 2000s. The Psychology Department does its work as we have always done it – training doctoral students for academic, health, and other settings; publishing articles, chapters and books; trying to secure extramural funding; and doing all this by and large because we like (most of) what we do.

These are difficult economic times for everyone, including universities, and one of our greatest needs in Psychology is funding for graduate students.

Our stipends have changed little over the years, and we are working to improve them. However, a pressing additional need is for scholarships. Those wonderful \$200 scholarships that existed when I came to TTU in 1984 are now a mandated \$1,000, and they guarantee in-state tuition for a full calendar year. So they are very important, especially to our out-of-state students. So I am requesting of all of you graduates that you consider giving back to the Psychology Department. Whether you give \$100 or \$1000, Psychology will welcome every dollar and put it to good use in the form of scholarships (unless you designate otherwise). At some point in the past, we put our faith in you, as our four alum contributors have said so eloquently. Now please pay it forward (or backward) by contributing to our scholarships for the psychologists-in-training who are following in your footsteps.



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