Welcome to the latest edition of the Psychology Department Newsletter!

We’re excited to introduce Dr. Aimee Stahl to the department! We asked her a few questions so you can get to know her a little better:

1. What are your research interests?
My research focuses on cognitive development. I primarily study learning, memory, and social cognition in infants and young children. For example, I examine whether infants and children learn more effectively after witnessing something that defies their expectations than something that accords with their expectations. I also conduct research on working memory in infancy, and how infants’ sophisticated knowledge of the social world intersects with their memory abilities.

2. What are your initial thoughts and impressions about working at TCNJ?
Working at TCNJ has been fantastic so far. The students are engaged, respectful, and sharp. The faculty and staff are welcoming and more collegial than any other academic environment I’ve seen. I’m thrilled to be part of this community!

3. What has been the best part about moving back to NJ?
The best parts about moving back to NJ are being close to family, and having access to good pizza again!

4. What are your other interests and hobbies?
I love finding new restaurants, and I absolutely love traveling.

5. Is there anything else you’d like to share with the Psychology Department community?
I will be looking for excited students in the spring to help conduct research in my new Cognitive Development Lab, as well as local parents and their children to participate in these studies!

Don’t forget to keep in touch with us! We’d love to hear from you!

Maddie Anthes, Program Coordinator
Assessment

Pre-post 096 surveys, and post 097-099 surveys were administered again, with help from GA Kelly Burke and Program Coordinator Maddie Weinland. This year PSY098 was revised from its previous format of attending professional events/activities to a one hour mandatory meeting over the 7 weeks of the course. PSY097 and PSY099 retained the format of attendance at professional events/activities. The PSY098 surveys were revised modestly by Dr. Dahling to assess these changes to the course. Maddie and the front office staff again collected indirect measures of learning outcomes. We will not report these measures until the cycle repeats, but the information is reviewed for any aberrations. Maddie Weinland and Jean Kirnan continued collaboration with Deb Kelly of Career Center on the conversion of TCNJ first year out alumni survey from paper and pencil/phone inquiry to on-line format using Qualtrics. This effort resulted in a low but typical response rate of 26%. Psychology sent out its own senior exit survey coordinated by Maddie with a dramatic increase in response rate to 67% from previous years of 25% and 50%. Two measures of Psychology Knowledge begun in prior years further advanced in their development through the efforts of TAPLab, front office staff, and department faculty. The General Psychology Knowledge measure was administered to all entering freshmen, students enrolled in Introductory Psychology, and a sample of PSY099 students. Following item analysis by TAPLab, the instrument has been finalized with acceptable reliability and validity. The Advanced Psychology Knowledge measure was administered to a sample of PSY099 students in the fall and all PSY099 students in the spring again with assistance by front office staff. TAPLab will complete statistical analyses in 2015-16.

PIPER

The PIPER program had another successful year, culminating in a busy Spring 2015 with 42 studies, 1682 occurrences, and 4797 credits distributed to participants. Additionally, we continued to use PIPER as an incentive to advance department assessment goals. Future priorities include addressing technical glitches and better distributing research opportunities across fall and spring semesters.

RPE

The committee reviewed and approved 13 RPE proposals during the fall 2014 semester and 6 RPE proposals during the spring 2015 semester. The committee also discussed edits to the RPE guidelines and documents to help streamline the application and review process and will propose these changes to the department before the upcoming academic year.

Brown Bag Series

- “Addressing Comprehensive Maternal Health Issues” – Talk by Yukiko Washio from the Treatment Research Institute.
- “Making Meaning of Childhood Sexual Abuse: A Narrative Approach.” - Talk by Dr. Candice Feiring
Academic Programs

During the 2014-2015 Academic Year, the Academic Programs Committee accomplished the following:

- We designated PSY 299 and all 400-level psychology courses as speaking-intensive courses and forwarded that recommendation to the Dean of HSS, per his request.
- We reviewed Dr. Bireta’s PSY 101 course for the winter term.
- We reviewed Dr. Kim-Prieto’s reconceptualization of PSY 218 into a 300-level seminar. It was eventually approved by the school as PSY 350.
- We discussed Dr. Leynes’ proposal for changing the requirements of 121 and 203. While we did not adopt Dr. Leynes’ proposal we agreed that it would be worthwhile to:
  - Outline primary topics that must be covered in each course along with other possible topics. These topics would include: reliability and validity of measurement; experimental design, including threats to validity; sampling; and descriptive statistics.
  - Provide more guidance to adjuncts teaching PSY 121, in particular;
- We also acknowledged that much of the time in PSY 121 is devoted to writing a research report and suggested that we consider other ways to work writing a research report into the curriculum.

ELOPsy

We did not have any initiatives this year on the Independent Study portion of ELOPsy. The internship committee administered the Internship Survey via Qualtrics at the end of Summer, 2014, Fall 2014, and Spring 2015. Students in PSY 383, 399, and 499 complete the survey. Anonymous responses are added to the Internship Binder (in the front office) for other students to peruse as they are choosing internships. The surveys also allow the committee to identify internships that are not providing students with appropriately educational experiences. Totals for each ELOPsy experience can be found in the chart to the right.

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<td>25</td>
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Admissions

The Admissions committee evaluated internal transfer applications from 55 students in the Fall and 49 students in the Spring. The committee also provided recommendation to the College Admissions office on the merits of external transfer students.

Psych Club

This year, the psych club hosted or participated in the following events: NAMI, Dr. Ferguson discussed Criminal Psychology, Mental Health Awareness Month (with CAPS Peer Educators), "Psychology Movie Night" (with Psi Chi), "Cube" personality test. During regular meetings the psych club did psychology trivia, discussed registration and labs, and did guided meditation.

Psi Chi

For the 2014-2015 academic year, we inducted 68 new members into Psi Chi.


(P) and non-prefering (NP) rats using a sipper-tube within-sessions task. Alcoholism, Clinical and Experimental Research, 39 (2), 232-238.


Faculty Accomplishments: Conference Presentations

(Students Underlined)


Department Accomplishments

- Ashley Borders received a Phi Kappa Phi Student-Faculty Research Award (with Shirley Wang). She was also awarded SOSA.

- He Len Chung received the Trenton Youth Empowerment Project (2015) Grant from the City of Trenton CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Program. She was also inducted as an Honorary Member of TCNJ's chapter of the Golden Key International Honour Society (for excellence in teaching, research, profession, and service, and for making an impact on the lives of students at The College of New Jersey)

- Jarret Crawford received a Phi Kappa Phi Student-Faculty Research Award (with Stephanie Mallinas), received MUSE funding for 2015 (with Serena Wasserman), and received a Dean's office mini-grant.

- Jason Dahling was awarded sabbatical for the 2015-2016 school year.

- James Graham was an ad hoc policy council member for the Children's Home Society of New Jersey Head Start program. He was also the Review Editor for *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*.

- Art Hohmuth celebrated the birth of a grandson, Oscar, born February 10, 2015.

- Jean Kirnan received the HSS Professional Development Award to attend an APA workshop on “Testing Accommodations for People With Disabilities----Research-Based Practice.” She also received a Professional Development Award to attend several continuing education workshops at SIOP annual conference in Philadelphia. Jean also served as external reviewer for the proposed Organizational Psychology major for Rider University.

- Andy Leynes was the Spring 2015 Recipient of a Phi Kappa Phi Student-Faculty Research Award for Heather Bruett’s research project entitled “Defining the FN400 Event-Related Potential (ERP): Familiarity vs. Conceptual Fluency.” He also wrote and submitted the following grant: 2015, NSF RUI (14-579) Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences: Cognitive Neuroscience (Priority Score = under review) Title of proposal “The effects of peripheral memory details on event-related potential measures of memory for people and actions.”

- Margaret Martinetti received a Phi Kappa Phi Student-Faculty Research Award with her Senior Honors Thesis student, Mitchell Farrell.
Day to Day Activities

Many thanks to Nadirah Shakir who continues to manage the front office. We have been blessed with excellent assistance from student workers Kristina Malstrom and Alexis Jaffe, research assistant, Cliff Weekes, and graduate assistant, Kelly Burke. There is insufficient room in this newsletter to cite all the day to day contributions of staff, student workers, adjuncts and faculty. Thanks for your ongoing efforts on numerous committees and ad hoc assignments.

The department keeps functioning smoothly thanks to the following (with their chairs): Academic Programs (Shaun Wiley), Adjunct Mentoring and Support (Art Hohmuth), Admissions (Chu Kim-Prieto), Assessment (Jean Kirnan), Ceremonies & Recognition (James Graham), Colloquia (Jarret Crawford/Andy Leynes), Department Resources (Tamra Bireta), Faculty Search (Julie Hughes), Grievance (Julie Hughes) Independent Study (Lisa Grimm), Internship (Ashley Borders), PIPER (Jason Dahling), Research, Planning and Ethics (He Len Chung) Psychology Club (Tamra Bireta & Art Hohmuth), Psi Chi (Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris) & Student Awards (Margaret Martinetti).