Over the past three summers, the Psychology department has offered an increasing number of its large undergraduate courses online. These are courses available on the web. Students register, listen to faculty give lectures, read course material, engage in chat rooms and exercises from anywhere they have access to the Internet. Since we also offer all these classes at MSU in the traditional face-to-face format as well, we encourage registration in these courses only by off-campus students during one of the two summer sessions.

This development began with an offering of Psychology 101 by Dr. Linda Jackson. Development of these courses was stimulated by university policy which returns 75% of the tuition revenue to the department for those students who are not also registered for an on-campus course at the same time. After the first successful introduction of Dr. Jackson’s course, we expanded our offerings to include courses in Abnormal Psychology, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Health Psychology, Developmental Psychology, and Child and Family Psychopathology. We also offer online the second semester of a Human Service Internship course which offers online access to Dr. Cris Sullivan and Sarah Handspike to students who are doing internships anywhere on the globe. The latter course greatly expands the possibility of supervised internships with important faculty input at many different localities. This past year we have developed three new offerings (Cognitive Psychology, Brain and Behavior, and a course on lifespan development offered as part of the Integrative Social Science curriculum) which will be offered this summer.

Continued....
The combined offerings have been very popular; last summer 840 students were registered in these courses generating 2725 student credit hours.

Our motivation in developing and offering these classes was primarily economic; the tuition revenue we have recognized has been substantial and has served to cushion us from the relatively severe budget cuts we suffered several years ago. However, the development of these courses has had several positive side effects. The first is that it has meant that we have been able to keep the enrollment in our on-campus course offerings relatively small and have typically staffed these courses with graduate students who are provided a “Teaching Psychology” course by Drs. Kevin Ford and Steve Yelon. In class observation and feedback as well as the course itself have been very popular graduate student training vehicles. A second unexpected outcome of the online offerings has been that the faculty members who have developed them have found that the technology used in these courses has been very useful as lecture material for their on-campus classes. We also believe that the availability of our courses to students who go home for their summer and who may not be fully employed means that they may be able to graduate in four years as opposed to 4.5 or five years which has become increasingly common over the last decade in higher education in general and at MSU as well.

The success of our online offerings certainly has much to do with the faculty members who have developed them, but central to our success has been the work of Dr. Cathleen McGreal who coordinates all our offerings, troubleshoots technical problems, and has proven invaluable in the development of new courses. She has become recognized as an expert across campus in virtual university offerings. In 2006, Dr. McGreal received the MSU Awards Competition in Instructional Technology for two of her online courses.

We believe these programs make a quality educational experience more readily and widely available. If there are any of you who know students who might want to enroll in these courses over the summer, we encourage you to refer them to us. If they are undergraduates at MSU and away from campus during the summer, they can enroll as they usually would. If they are not MSU students, they can enroll through the MSU Lifelong Education program. Go to our web page, click on “Undergraduate Program” and then select “Online Programs”. The section on “Preparation for Online Programs” will provide details on registration and other details about our online courses.
Taosheng Liu – Cognitive Psychology

I grew up in Lanzhou (N 36.5°, E 103.8°), a province capital in northwestern China, in a neighborhood that sounds like ‘Lansing’, although it is only now that I reached my destination in East Lansing (N 42.7°, W 84.5°). As a biology major with a specialization in biophysics at University of Science and Technology of China (Hefei, N 31.9°, E 117.3°), I thought I would come to US to pursue a doctorate in biomedical sciences. However, in my last year in college, I took a course in visual cognition and that really opened my eyes to something that seemed much more interesting. Alas, that would remain the only psychology course I took before graduate school. Thinking back, today I am glad that I pursued that interest, even though it often means not to take the easy path.

My career in psychology started at Columbia University (New York, N 40.7°, W 74.0°), where I got a PhD in cognitive psychology, and continued through postdoctoral training at the Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, N 39.3°, W 76.6°) and New York University. My research interest is in the behavioral and neural mechanisms of selective attention. The environment always contains much more information than we can process at once. For example, while reading this text, you are probably not aware of the humming noise from your computer or air conditioner, the noise outside your window, or the pressure against your body from the chair you are sitting on.

A useful framework in studies of attention is to distinguish two aspects of the phenomenon: the effect of attention on sensory processing, and the control mechanisms of attention. One line of my research is to examine what brain regions participate in attentional control and what specific function each area serves during control. For example, we were able to isolate a disengage/shift vs. an engage/maintain component during attention to visual features. We found these different cognitive operations were mapped to distinct cortical areas in the attention control network. In particular, the medial superior parietal region seems to play a unique role in shifting attention.

I also study how attention affects sensory processing. Over the past decade it has become increasingly clear that activity in sensory areas of the brain, even primary sensory areas such as the primary visual cortex, is subject to higher-level influences, such as attention, expectation, and imagery. Indeed, it might be difficult to assign a cortical area as exhibiting the control vs. the effect of attention, as information flows in both directions among cortical areas, from sensory processing to decision making and eventual motor output. Thus it is important to characterize the neural correlates of attention at different levels of cortical processing. Current standard techniques allow us to identify 8-10 distinct visual areas, mostly in the occipital cortex; new research is constantly expanding our tools to map additional areas in the other lobes of the cerebral cortex. This fundamental work provides a scaffolding to study the mechanisms of high-level cognitive functions, such as attention. For example, we have examined the effect of attention on orientation-selective responses across the visual hierarchy using the fMRI adaptation technique. Such investigations provide quantitative evidence of how attention works in the brain, and put empirical constraints on theories and models of attention.

My general approach is to first carefully characterize the behavior in well-controlled tasks, and then measure brain activity in the MRI scanner during task performance, to seek the neural correlate of a particular cognitive operation. In addition, quantitative modeling of the behavioral and imaging data is a powerful tool in making strong links between behavior and neural activity.
Clinical Psychology Awards

The Hurley Award Goes To:

This award, in honor of the late Professor John Hurley, is given to the best dissertation in clinical each year, by a committee of clinical faculty. John Hurley was Professor of Psychology at MSU for forty-five years. He earned his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Iowa in 1953 and later earned a Diplomate in Clinical Psychology. Dr. Hurley was nationally known as a scholar in the area of group psychotherapy through his study of T-groups, group therapy processes, interpersonal theory, leadership in groups, and interpersonal perceptions. He served as the president of the Michigan Group Psychotherapy Society.

Dr. Hurley developed a unique three-tiered class format which led students from the recognition of their own group behavior tendencies (and how to research them) to the observation of group dynamics in others and finally to develop and hone group leadership skills themselves. It is in the spirit of this thoroughness that the Fellowship is offered. Award recipients must be current graduate students demonstrating exceptional academic achievement.

Michelle Martel received this year’s Hurley Award. Congratulations Michelle!

The John and Margo Reisman Award Goes To:

This award is given to a strong applicant for clinical psychology doctoral training to aid in recruitment. Dr. John M. Reisman is Emeritus Professor of Psychology at DePaul University in Chicago. He is a graduate of Rutgers University and Michigan State University (Masters 1955, Ph.D. 1958) and is the author of “A History of Clinical Psychology” and “Principles of Psychotherapy with Children.” Margo Reisman is a graduate of Michigan State University (B.A., 1956). The scholarship award they have endowed helps recruit and retain exceptional students of unusual promise, who in turn have the potential to elevate the clinical psychology program to new levels of excellence. The scholarship is awarded in situations where additional funding, over and above what could otherwise be offered, will make the greatest differences in recruiting top clinical psychology graduate students of the highest caliber. The scholarship provides a distinct honor to the student whose accomplishments merit such recognition.

This year Sarah Racine received the John and Margo Reisman Award. Congratulations Sarah!
The Department of Psychology would like to congratulate the recipients of the Michigan State University Freshman Psychology Kamerschen-Pearson Scholarship. Three $2000 awards were given out for the 2008-2009 academic year. In order to receive the award, students had to be an MSU Psychology freshman earning at least a 3.5 grade point average. Award winners were selected on the basis of academic achievement, leadership skills, and extracurricular activities. This award came about as a result of an endowment established by one of our alumni, Dr. Karen Kamerschen, and her husband, Dr. Robert Pearson. The department is very grateful for their generosity to the students.

**Courtney Georgopoulos** is currently an outfielder with the MSU Women’s Club Softball Team, attends Holden Hall Government, and is a volunteer in the Holden House of Power weight room. Courtney was well deserving of this award, as she not only has been a successful student, but she has done all of this while faced with much adversity in her life and the health of her family. After completing her undergraduate degree, she plans to pursue a graduate degree in Clinical Psychology.

**Chris Neilson** is currently involved in Campus Crusade for Christ, Real Life Studies, and also is an employee in the Brody Cafeteria. After the loss of both of his parents, Chris has continued to work hard and perform at the highest level. Chris Neilson’s future plans include continuing his education to get his Ph.D. so that he may open a practice. He would also love to travel any chance he gets!

**Seth Strasberger** is currently involved in the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity and MSU’s Jewish organization, Hillel. Seth has been interested in the field of Psychology ever since high school and his family has been personally touched by the field. Seth plans to pursue a career in Clinical Psychology.
Undergraduate Honors Thesis Research

Each year, a number of undergraduate honors students who major in psychology complete an honors research thesis. The thesis experience provides the psychology students with a terrific opportunity to understand the intricacies of the research enterprise. This note provides a brief description of some of the great research that is being conducted by our undergraduates here at MSU.

This year we have thirteen psychology honors students completing their honors theses. Each student is sponsored by a faculty member in the psychology department. In fact, faculty from all our interest groups – behavioral neuroscience, clinical, cognitive, ecological, industrial/organizational, and social/personality are involved in this important role. The topics being explored are very wide ranging and address important conceptual issues as well as addressing practical concerns. Each year, these research efforts are highlighted at a Psychology Research Fair. This year the research fair was April 22nd. Three example research projects are provided to give you a flavor of the diversity of research that is being conducted.

Emily Dworkin is working with Dr. Rebecca Campbell (Ecological/Community Psychology) on childhood sexual abuse and self-harm. Her research has examined whether the severity of childhood sexual abuse predicts the type and severity of self harm (e.g., cutting, burning and hair pulling) and whether self harm severity predicts mental health outcomes such as disorder eating, alcohol abuse and obsessive compulsive disorder. Initial analyses provide support for her hypotheses and currently she is exploring the mediational relationships between childhood sexual abuse, self harm and mental health outcomes.

Chen Yang is working with Dr. Fred Leong (I/O) on loss of face, social anxiety and depression in Asian American college students. They have hypothesized that for Asian American students, social anxiety will moderate the relationship between loss of face and depression.

Katie Swiderski just completed work with Dr. Erik Altmann (Cognitive) that focused on why some types of interruptions are more disruptive than others based on a working memory model. She found evidence of a practice effect with task interruptions with participants improving their performance over time (making fewer errors) with each consecutive task interruption.

Many of these student go on to graduate work in psychology. In addition, honors thesis work is often presented at national and regional conferences (e.g., Cody Weston working with Laura Symonds has already presented a portion of his undergraduate thesis at a neuroscience conference this year). In addition, we just heard that Feyza Menagi’s undergraduate thesis completed in 2007 has just been accepted for publication (with Zaje Harrell - a faculty member in Ecological Psychology) in the Journal of Religion and Health. The paper is on religiousness and college student alcohol use. So, research is alive and well at the undergraduate level here at MSU.

You can contact Kevin Ford (fordjk@msu.edu) if you are interested in learning more about research that is happening at the undergraduate level!
Launching of the MSU Center for Multicultural Psychology Research

Frederick Leong

In the Fall of 2006, I was hired to lead the Multicultural Initiative within the Department of Psychology. Since arriving to take that position I have scheduled regular meetings with a core group of faculty to implement the initiative. Based on these meetings, we decided to start a Center for Multicultural Psychology Research within the department with me serving as the Director. The Center consists of a Director, Secretary, Steering Committee, Core Faculty and Affiliate Faculty members. All these individuals are members of the Psychology Department. We also have Center Associates (individuals in other MSU departments and units) and Research Fellows (individuals at universities and agencies from across the country and the world). Please visit our website to learn more about the people involved in the Center: [http://psychology.msu.edu/cmpr/](http://psychology.msu.edu/cmpr/)

The Center’s primary mission is to generate and apply psychological science to increase our understanding of multicultural issues in both domestic and international contexts. The development of the Center came from the recognition that changing demographics within the United States and globalization has increased the importance of cultural diversity for both our country and our discipline. In recognition of this fact, the Psychology Department at Michigan State University launched a Multicultural Initiative which was funded jointly by the Department, the College of Social Science, and the Office of the Provost. A primary goal of this Multicultural Initiative is to take advantage of the multicultural expertise already existing within the Department and from across campus in order to advance multicultural psychology research. Currently, the Center is organized into Research Networks, Data Archive, Visiting Scholars, and Special Activities. The Research Networks are intellectual communities that bring together faculty, staff, and student investigators pursuing a common multicultural issue in psychology. The Center currently has research networks organized around five programmatic areas: (a) Culture and mental health, (b) Culture in organizations, (c) Culture in communities, (d) Culture and human development, and (e) Cross-cultural assessment and research methods. They serve as the core activity of the Center by bringing together faculty, staff, and student investigators to pursue collaborative research projects within multicultural psychology. Each of the networks, which is focused on a particular theme and functions independently, is lead by a coordinator. Individuals interested in participating in a research network should contact the coordinator listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Network</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Culture and Mental Health</td>
<td>Fred Leong</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fleong@msu.edu">fleong@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Culture and Organizations</td>
<td>Ann Marie Ryan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ryanan@msu.edu">ryanan@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Culture and Communities</td>
<td>Robin Miller</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mil1493@msu.edu">mil1493@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Culture and Human Development</td>
<td>Linda Jackson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jackso67@msu.edu">jackso67@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Assessment and Research Methods</td>
<td>Fred Oswald</td>
<td><a href="mailto:foswald@msu.edu">foswald@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

The Data Archive housed at the Center allows for secondary analysis in order to advance multicultural psychology research. Therefore, we have selected data sets that have significant numbers of cultural, racial, and ethnic groups and/or multiculturally relevant variables and elements. A primary reason for developing a data archive is that collecting data on culturally diverse populations can be challenging. In addition, secondary analyses of data sets can also serve as an excellent training opportunity for students.

**Visiting Scholars Program**. In order to accomplish the mission of the Center, we have established a Visiting Scholars Program that encourages multicultural researchers from around the country and other parts of the world to spend time with us to collaborate on various research projects in conjunction with our research networks. Visiting Scholars will

Continued....
spend anywhere from one week to one year at the Center for Multicultural Psychology Research in order to plan, execute and complete research projects.

In addition to the Research Networks, Data Archives, Visiting Scholars Program, the Center undertakes Special Activities, in order to achieve its mission. Currently, these activities include: (a) the Annual Distinguished Lecture in Multicultural Psychology, (b) the MSU Symposium on Multicultural Psychology (a biennial invitational conference from which a book will be published), and (c) the APA Advanced Training Institute on Research Methods with Diverse Racial and Ethnic Groups (Summer), and (d) Psi Alpha Omega, a national undergraduate honor society for ethnic minority students and those interested in the study of ethnic minority issues in Psychology.

**Annual Distinguished Lecture in Multicultural Psychology:** As a means of showcasing the best multicultural psychology research being conducted around the country and as a means of facilitating research collaboration, the Center has established the Annual Distinguished Lecture in Multicultural Psychology. This lecture, which is usually held in Spring, will consist of the leading authorities and researchers in multicultural psychology who will be invited to present the lecture and spend a day in the Psychology Department and the Center for Multicultural Psychology. The annual distinguished lecture for 2008 will be given by Professor Gordon Nagayama Hall from the University of Oregon on April 21, 2008. He will be presenting on “The Cultural Contexts of Men’s Sexual Aggression”.

**APA Advanced Training Institute:** In order to promote multicultural research, the Center for Multicultural Psychology Research has collaborated with the American Psychological Association Science Directorate in establishing the APA Advanced Training Institute (ATI) on “Research Methods with Diverse Racial and Ethnic Groups”. This inaugural ATI will be held at MSU in the summer of 2008. Details concerning this summer training institute can be found at [http://www.apa.org/science/ati_rmg.html](http://www.apa.org/science/ati_rmg.html).

**MSU Symposium on Multicultural Psychology:** Learning from the highly successful Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, the Center has established the MSU Symposium on Multicultural Psychology which will consist of an invitational conference that will eventually be published as a book. The topic for the MSU Symposium will rotate among the various research networks and it will be held in the Fall on a biennial basis. The first MSU Symposium on Multicultural Psychology has been scheduled for Fall 2009 and it will focus on international organizational psychology research. Please see our web site for detailed descriptions concerning the 2009 MSU Symposium on Multicultural Psychology.

**Psi Alpha Omega:** In order to support and recruit future generations of multicultural researchers and scholars in Psychology, the Center is also supporting the formation of Psi Alpha Omega, the national honor society in Psychology for students of color and students interested in the study of ethnic and cultural issues. This honor society is sponsored by APA’s Division 45, Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues in Psychology: [http://www.psialphaomega.com/](http://www.psialphaomega.com/)

**Outstanding Multicultural Dissertation Award:** To promote and recognize outstanding multicultural psychology research among graduate students in the department, plans are also underway for the establishment of an Outstanding Multicultural Dissertation Award which will be given annually.

We will be celebrating the official launching of the at the reception following the inaugural Annual Distinguished Lecture in Multicultural Psychology on April 21, 2008.
The MSU Psychological Clinic, in operation since 1948, is one of few agencies providing low-fee mental health services to the Lansing community. We offer treatment and psychological assessments to children, adults, and the elderly.

With a third of our clients living in poverty, even our lowest fees are often a financial hardship for those families seeking help. Thanks to the generosity of donors, an assistance fund is currently available to provide subsidies to low-income families seeking assessment services for children.

We also offer no-fee help and outreach through community-based agencies. At local Head Start sites for example, our students implement a research-based approach for treating children between the ages of 3 and 6 years who have experienced family conflict, family violence, and/or traumatic loss of an important attachment figure due to death, or separation due to divorce or incarceration. These groups help children identify and express their feelings and teach problem-solving and conflict resolution skills. These groups also provide a safe place for children to correct the often painful misconceptions that arise out of experiences of early loss, such as the notion that it is the children themselves who are responsible for family conflict, violence and loss.

While our no-fee community outreach efforts and our subsidized assessments allow us to help families who could not otherwise afford our sliding-scale fees, we would like to expand our efforts to offer psychotherapy to those who are unable to afford our current psychotherapy fee of $15.00. This includes the unemployed, those on a fixed income or those who are having difficulty providing for multiple dependents.

If you would like more information on our efforts to build an assistance fund for psychotherapy, or to make a donation to the Clinic, please visit our website: http://psychology.msu.edu/Clinical/clinic/index.html
Graduate Student Appreciation Week, sponsored by the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, is designed to celebrate and raise awareness of the role of graduate and professional students within America’s colleges and universities. This year we continued our tradition of appreciating our outstanding graduate students with a Graduate Student Appreciation Lunch, this year held April 24th.

Many faculty and staff turned out to appreciate our outstanding graduate students.
Recent Faculty Awards and Grants

Joe Cesario received an IRGP from MSU entitled “How different types of framings in health messages can impact effectiveness: A regulatory focus framework.”

Brooke Ingersoll was awarded a FACT Grant from MSU for the research project “Project ImPACT: Improving outcomes for children with autism with parent training.”

Robin Miller was awarded a contract from the Michigan AIDS Fund to evaluate MPowerment Detroit. She was also awarded a FACT grant to work with the Ruth Ellis Center on a pilot intervention to reduce sexual risk taking among their female youth.

Neal Schmitt, Fred Oswald and Tim Pleskac were awarded a College Board grant.

Juli Wade received an NSF grant renewal for “Neuroendocrine regulation of behavioral differences.”

Rebecca Campbell received the 2008 Department of Psychology Teacher of the Year Award.

Bill Davidson received the 2008 Distinguished Alumnus Award from Grand Valley State University.
Recent Graduate Student Awards and Grants

Publications


Awards

Tiffeny Jimenez received a National Science Foundation (NSF) - Alliance for Graduate Education & the Professoriate (AGEP) Scholar Award.

Liz Oberlander has been selected to participate in the MCAT GSRP (Medical College Admission Test Graduate Student Research Program) for Summer 2008, where she will conduct a literature review on the reliability and validity of the use of writing samples in high stakes testing and present the results at the MCAT offices in Washington, D.C.

Sarah Racine received a Student/Early Career Investigator Scholarship funded by the Academy for Eating Disorders to attend the 2008 International Conference on Eating Disorders.
Lisa Moody, a Psychology graduate of MSU, is now President/CEO of The Paper Airplanes Project, a project dedicated to developing innovative tools designed to support the emotional quality of life for children with cancer.

[excerpt from the Paper Airplane Project website]: Cancer is the leading cause of disease-related deaths in children under the age of 20, and this year alone an estimated 12,400 children will be diagnosed with the disease. These children will learn and understand a medical language that reaches beyond the vocabulary of most adults. In our interviews with children with cancer, we found their conversations to be chiefly peppered with clinical and medical terminology. In researching the market for available tools to help these kids deal with the emotional aspects of their disease, we found little to assist them. In the data we collected from patients, families and oncology professionals, we identified several recurring psychosocial themes:

- Fear of being in the hospital
- Anxiety over being away from their families
- Isolation from friends and family
- Lack of emotional support outside the hospital or clinic setting
- Feeling like an outsider
- Challenged self-esteem and self-image

The Solution:

The Paper Airplanes Project directly addresses the emotional aspects of cancer in children, by providing imaginative products to be used initially in a hospital setting with oncology specialists and expanding beyond the unit, into the home, to outpatient clinics and even to schools. It is our goal to have The Paper Airplanes Project become a vital program component in every hospital, cancer camp and outpatient clinic across the country.

You can learn more about this impressive grad and her project by visiting http://paperairplanesproject.org
Update on Bert Karon’s Accident

I regret to report that last November Bert and Mary Karon were in a serious auto accident. Mary has since recovered, but Bert is still undergoing a very difficult rehabilitation process and will likely not be able to return home and to his university duties for quite some time. While he would rather not have visitors or phone calls at this time, he would greatly appreciate cards and letters. If you want to express your wishes to Dr. Karon, you can send them to their home address in East Lansing and I am sure Mary will deliver them to Bert. Their address is

420 Wayland Ave.
E. Lansing, MI 48823

I am sure you will join all of us in the Psychology department in wishing Bert a full and speedy recovery.

Support Your Alma Mater

Higher education faces a fiscal crisis and MSU is no exception. Now, more than ever, we need the financial support of our friends and alumni. If you visit our web page (http://psychology.msu.edu), you will see a link for Direct Giving. When you click this link, you will be on your way to a secure, encrypted, University Development page that will allow you to make a credit card donation to the Psychology Department at MSU. You can give to the department or to one of the six new funds to support a specific interest group.

Thanks for your generosity.