

2016 Experimental Psychology/Behavioral Science Alumni Newsletter

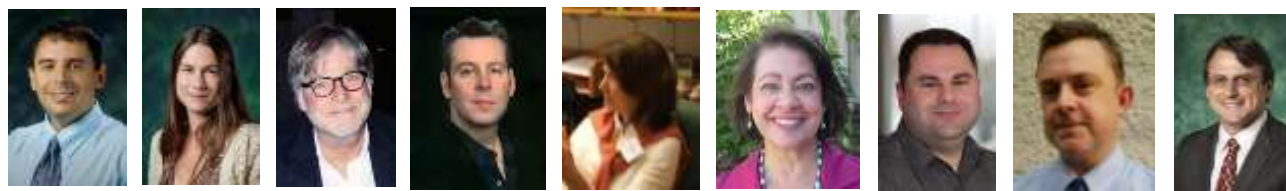
Hope all of you are doing well this new year!! One of our major goals is to build a stronger connection between our graduate students and alumni. If this is your first time seeing one of our letters or invitations to reach out, we hope these updates find you happy, healthy, and leave you interested in connecting with us again in the future!

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Welcome from the Chair: 2015 ushered in a wave of new beginning for the BSci program. Our current chair, Dr. Adriel Boals, explains the efforts behind the faculty additions and from our most recent exhaustive job search, and what his goals are for the program this upcoming year:

"The Behavioral Science (formerly Experimental) program has grown in leaps and bounds these past few years. Starting next fall, there will be 8 full-time faculty, 1 half-time faculty and 12 graduate students in our program. This will be, by far, the largest our program has ever been. With the new faculty additions, we will be adding to our list of graduate courses offered, including (but not limited to) courses covering topics of neuroscience, diversity, and memory. We are very proud of the graduates of our program and excited about the opportunities that await the new students."

Faculty Lineup: There have been many new faces in our department in recent years. Familiarize yourself with the BSci Faculty! *Press CTRL + click on each professor's picture to access his/her research or faculty page.*



Newest Faculty Spotlights: We have the pleasure of announcing new faculty members to the growing program! As they settle in, they are also excited for the prospect of new students in the future, so keep a weather eye open for any potential students for these great mentors!

Dr. Yolanda Flores Niemann (4th from right): *She comes to the Psychology Department with extensive administrative experience as UNT Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. As a mentor and a researcher, her work focuses on critical race psychology and the needs of underrepresented populations in academia. This includes the effects and social ecological contexts of stereotypes, and the psychological effects of tokenism.*

Dr. Anthony Ryals (2nd from right): *I received my B.S. in psychology from Western Oregon University in 2007, and completed my M.S./Ph.D. at Colorado State University in 2012. I just completed a four-year NRSA postdoctoral fellowship at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. My ongoing research broadly investigates how explicit and implicit processes operate in human episodic memory through behavioral experimentation and cognitive neuroscience techniques. I also study how subjective awareness of memory (or lack of awareness) relates to performance, brain function, and*

quality of life in healthy individuals and in clinical populations. I love teaching and learning at all levels, and I believe in learning from my students just as much as I believe in sharing knowledge. My family and I currently live in Evanston, IL, and we have previously lived in Colorado and Oregon. One thing I am greatly looking forward to is being part of the stellar UNT community (and plenty of sunshine will be an excellent bonus).

Dr. Casey Guillot (3rd from right): *He received his BS in Psychology and MS in General/Experimental Psychology from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and his PhD in Experimental Psychology from The University of Southern Mississippi. Most recently, he completed a three-year postdoctoral research appointment at the University of Southern California. His research interests include psychopharmacology, personality, affective disturbance, executive functioning, aggression, and psychiatric genetics. His teaching interests include general psychology, history and systems, abnormal psychology, psychophysiology, social psychology, and experimental methods. Dr. Guillot plans to establish a laboratory dedicated to investigating interrelations between dispositional attributes, emotional states, and addictive behaviors, with an initial project on anxiety sensitivity and potential mediators of associations with smoking effects during tobacco withdrawal. He is very excited about becoming a part of the Behavioral Science Program at UNT and is looking forward to living closer to family and friends.*

Other Faculty Taking Students for Fall 2017: In addition to the new faculty above, the following faculty members will be reviewing applicants for admission to BSci for the 2017-2018 school year. Applications are due December 1, 2016. Please send your strong students our way!

Dr. Heidemarie Blumenthal (2nd from left): *Researching the etiology of anxiety and problematic substance use among adolescents and emerging adults, co-occurring anxiety and developmental psychopathology, and how significant facets of adolescence (e.g. puberty) related to the onset and maintenance of anxiety and drinking behaviors*

Dr. Rex Wright (3rd from left): *Concerned broadly with determinants and cardiovascular correlates of effort. His lab builds on the ideas of Jack Brehm and Paul Obrist to develop a theory of motivation intensity with wide-ranging applications to behavior phenomena. Specific interest revolves around ability factors (e.g. fatigue) affecting effort and associated CV response in performance challenges.*

Dr. Thomas Parsons (4th from left): *Intersecting novel technologies and clinical neuropsychology to understand individual and social cognition via ecologically valid virtual environments (e.g. human-computer interfaces, virtual/augmented reality, video games). His lab is aimed at producing clinical scientists devoted to the continuous development of an empirical knowledge base in neuropsychology*

Dr. Kimberly Kelly (center): *Psychoneuroimmunology, health and stress response, drug expectancy research.*

Welcome to our new BSci students in Fall 2016! We are very happy to welcome our new doctoral student for the 2016-2017 academic year:



Justin Asbee: *I am currently working on my MA in experimental psychology from Radford University in Virginia. My current research involves how the co-administration of alcohol and nicotine affect neurogenesis in adolescents. I received a BS from Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania and I am from Latrobe, Pennsylvania (about 40 minutes from Pittsburgh). I plan on working with Dr. Parsons in his CNS lab. I am interested in human-computer interfaces and applications of virtual reality. One of the things which I look forward to is the weather, I am tired of shoveling snow.*

Program News, Updates, Events:



L: Dr. Yolanda Flores-Niemann settling into her new office
R: Stephanie Agtarap (far left) at the Diversity Symposium with speakers and our department chair, Dr. Campbell

Research Experience: Not Just the Lab! Many of our students possess the unique experience of developing their research and career experience outside of the traditional laboratory or classroom. Here are a few places where Experimental/BSci students have the opportunity to develop their skills!

- ❖ Information, Research and Analysis (IRA) Lab, UNT College of Information, Denton, TX
- ❖ Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Program (GSTEP), University of North Texas
- ❖ Level I Trauma Center, Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas, TX
- ❖ Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation, Dallas, TX
- ❖ Advanced Arm Dynamics, Dallas, TX
- ❖ UT Southwestern, Dallas, TX

Statistical Theories, Analyses, and Measurement in Psychology (STAMP): Current fifth-year **Eric Schuler**, a research consultant with UNT College of Information, organized this bi-weekly event where graduate students from across the department review best statistical practices, discuss contentious or exciting new advances, and introduce ourselves to higher order quantitative methods. Thanks to Eric for initiating such a great series this January 2016!

Psychology and Quantitative Research Symposium (PQRS): Our weekly symposium, which formerly focused on Health Psychology research, has switched its focus toward weekly workshops and presentations centered around current psychological research more broadly, advanced quantitative techniques, and professional development. Students and faculty voluntarily organize and attend these meetings every Friday at noon.

GASP 2016 Diversity Symposium: Every April, GASP hosts a panel of speakers to discuss issues of mental health for two topics and/or populations of interest. This year the event focused on religious, immigrant and asylee populations, specifically highlighting phobia and stigma regarding Islam, how to approach, support and ultimately advance the welfare of those whose lives have been uprooted, and how to address issues of religion and culture with clients and communities in the field and research. Great job to **Stephanie Agtarap (GASP VP)** and the BSci officers of GASP (**Renee Cloutier, Sabrina Blackledge, Alvin Akibar**) for planning and hosting the event!

Student Happenings: Get to know some of our Experimental and BSci students through their achievements!



L: BSci Student Welcome Dinner at Green's Restaurant, August 2015

Major Milestones

- ❖ **Shana Southard-Dobbs** just accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at Lander University in South Carolina. A major accomplishment! We wish the best of luck to Shana as she embarks on this new chapter of her life.
- ❖ **Elizabeth Hamner** will be defending her dissertation this May. Congrats Elizabeth!
- ❖ **Dawn Hurst-McCaleb** defended her dissertation this Spring. Congrats Dawn!
- ❖ **Sabrina Blackledge** passed her comprehensive exams this Spring. Congrats Sabrina!
- ❖ **Carmen Liu** defended her thesis this Spring. Congrats Carmen!
- ❖ **Renee Cloutier** defended her thesis this Spring. Congrats Renee!
- ❖ **Renee Cloutier** just submitted an F31 NIH Grant for her dissertation on adolescent risk behavior with her mentor, **Dr. Blumenthal**; it is the first of its kind to be submitted from UNT. What an amazing accomplishment and milestone, Renee!
- ❖ Congratulations to the 2015-16 Psychology Department Award Winners!
 - **Renee Cloutier**, Charlotte Friedersdorff-Boyd Memorial Scholarship for Outstanding Graduate Student
 - **Carmen Liu**, Ernest H. Harrell Memorial Scholarship, Psychology Research Day Outstanding Poster
 - **Shana Southard-Dobbs**, Psychology Research Day Outstanding Poster
 - **Eric Schuler**, Outstanding Scholarly Publication Award
- ❖ Congratulations to **Lee Bedford** and **Stephanie Agtarap** on their dual-PhD acceptance to the Educational Psychology doctoral program with a concentration in Research, Measurement, and Statistics!

Publications

- ❖ Experimental alumni **Amanda Kraha, PhD** just published an article [on psychology graduate debt and starting salaries](#). What a great resource, Amanda!
- ❖ Experimental alumni **Jonathan Banks, PhD** with his program mentor **Dr. Boals** just recently published a manuscript to *Cognition and Emotion* based on his dissertation data. Great Job Dr. Banks and Dr. Boals!
- ❖ **Eric Schuler** recently published his manuscript, "Shattering world assumptions: A prospective view of the impact of stressful events on world assumptions", in *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*. Great job Eric!
- ❖ **Stephanie Agtarap** published an article from her thesis, "Success importance and urge magnitude as determinants of cardiovascular response to a behavioral restraint challenge", in *International Journal of Psychophysiology* with her thesis mentor **Dr. Wright**, and lab colleagues **Chris Mlynski** and **Sabrina Blackledge**. Great job Stephanie!
- ❖ **Stephanie Agtarap** also had her manuscript, "Validation of the injustice experiences questionnaire (IEQ) in a diverse trauma sample" accepted to *Rehabilitation Psychology*. Congrats Stephanie!

Appearances and Presentations

- ❖ A huge thank you to Experimental alumni **Jon Starkweather, PhD** for hosting a R+ Workshop for the Psychology Department on behalf of the Research & Statistical Support team here on campus!
- ❖ Graduate students in Dr. Boals' Lab (**Shana Southard-Dobbs, Elizabeth Hamner, Eric Schuler, Stephanie Agtarap, Carmen Liu, and Lee Bedford**) recently presented a symposium about graduate mentoring at SWPA 2016 in Dallas, TX. Great job team!

Upcoming Conferences w/ BSci Attendance: We will be representing in full force at the following conferences. If you are also planning on attending, please let us know so we can meet and greet you!

Summer

- ❖ [Intensive Longitudinal Analyses for Diary and Experience Sampling Data, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK \(May\)](#)
- ❖ [Association of Psychological Science \(APS\) 28th Annual Convention, Chicago, IL \(May\)](#)
- ❖ [APA Advanced Training Institute: Structural Equation Modeling in Longitudinal Research, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ \(May-June\)](#)
- ❖ [Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues \(SPSSI\), Minneapolis, MN \(June\)](#)
- ❖ [National Latina/o Psychological Associate Conference at Orlando, FL \(September-October\)](#)
- ❖ [APA Division 45 Research Conference at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA \(July\)](#)
- ❖ [National Council on Race/Ethnicity \(NCORE\), San Francisco, CA \(May-June\)](#)
- ❖ [American Psychological Association \(APA\) 2016 Annual Convention, Denver, CO \(August\)](#)

Fall

- ❖ [18th International Organization of Psychophysiology \(IOP\) World Congress of Psychophysiology, Havana Cuba \(August-September\)](#)
- ❖ [Society for Psychophysiological Research \(SPR\) 56th Annual Meeting, Minneapolis MN \(September\)](#)
- ❖ [The Advances in Research Design Symposium \(TARDIS\) Conference, UNT \(October\)](#)
- ❖ [Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies \(ABCT\) 50th Annual Convention, New York, NY \(October\)](#)



L: BSci and other Psychology students at the TARDIS 2015 Symposium at UNT
C: Stephanie Agtarap, Eric Schuler, and Shana Southard-Dobbs loved volunteering for APS 2015 in New York, NY!
R: Renee Cloutier and Dr. Blumenthal next to the Bean in Chicago, IL for ABCT 2015.

Invitation to connect: We want to thank you for your continued interest in the Behavioral Science Program. We are very interested in how all of you are doing! If you are willing and/or interested to share:

- Post-graduate experience
- Navigating the job market
- Wisdom and tips while in graduate school
- Post-doctoral fellowships versus the Job Market

Please don't hesitate to contact us and share! The BSci program has grown leaps and bounds and we credit its history to past graduates and professionals like you! Please write to us at our contact information below.

We wish all of you a happy summer, and a great next academic year!

Sincerely,

[Dr. Adriel Boals](#), Behavioral Science Program Chair
[Renee Cloutier](#), Behavioral Science Program Representative
[Sabrina Blackedge](#), Behavioral Science Program Representative
[Stephanie Agtarap](#), Behavioral Science Program Research Assistant

Shana-Southard Dobbs
Elizabeth Hamner
Eric Schuler
Carmen Liu
Lee Bedford

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