**Farmingdale State College**
**Teaching of Psychology: Ideas and Innovations**
**Proceedings of the 27th Annual Conference**
April 5-6, 2013
Tarrytown, New York

Drs. Jennifer Gonder, Marya Howell-Carter, and Ms. Jessica Anderson, Editors
Submitted June 12, 2013

# FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE 2013: CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

## Table of contents

## Introduction

The 27th Annual Conference on the Undergraduate Teaching of Psychology was held on April 5-6, 2013 at the Double Tree Hotel in Tarrytown, New York. The conference was presented by the Psychology Department of the State University of New York at Farmingdale. The theme for this year's conference was *The Science of Learning*. The Conference featured a keynote address by Victor Benassi, Ph.D., of the University of New Hampshire. The talk was entitled: *Applying the Science of Learning in Psychology Curricula.* D. Alan Bensley, Ph.D. of Frostburg State University presented an invited address titled, *Taking a Scientific Approach to Critical Thinking Instruction and Assessment*. The Conference also featured our 4th Annual Student Research Poster Session with six undergraduate student poster presentations. Conference participants also had 33 workshops, discussions, and oral presentations from which to choose and many colleagues, new and old, with whom to network. Thirty of these proposals or presentations are included in the proceedings.

The success of our conference was due to the continuing efforts of many people, particularly the enthusiastic participation of our presenters and attendees. The conference committee was co-chaired by Drs. Marya Howell-Carter and Jennifer Gonder with the support of Drs. Eugene Indenbaum, Judith Levine, Sayeedul Islam, Michael Goodstone, Barbara Pezzanite, and Department Administrative Assistant, Ms. Barbara Sarringer. We would like to recognize the contributions of the American Psychological Association as this material is based upon work partially supported by a Board of Educational Affairs grant. We also extend our thanks to the Westchester County Psychological Association for its sponsorship of a student prize and to Farmingdale State College Student Government/Psychology Club for supporting student attendance at the conference.

Dr. Marya Howell-Carter
Dr. Jennifer Gonder
June 2013

# *PROGRAM OF PRESENTATIONS*

## Friday, April 5, 2013

## *8:00 - 9:00 AM REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST*

## *SESSION 1: 9:00AM-10:00AM*

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Nick Salter, Ramapo College of New Jersey*
**Teaching Integrated Research Methods and Data Analysis Course: A Model for Enhancing Student Learning Through Intellectual Engagement and Research Experience**

**Abstract:** While psychology is an increasingly popular major for undergraduates, many psychology students are less interested in the scientific basis of our discipline than one would like them to be. In this session, two psychology professors will share their success in teaching research methods and data analyses to undergraduate psychology majors using a design that is focused on application and authentic experience with research design and implementation. The design of the course will be described in detail and students will also share their experiences in the course.

**ROOM 2:** Panel Discussion
*Kasey Powers, College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center, CUNY; Jill Grose-Fifer, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and The Graduate Center, CUNY; Eduardo Vianna, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY; Maureen O'Connor, The Graduate Center, CUNY*
**Teaching as Research: Building Community at a Large Urban University**

**Abstract:** Teaching at a large urban university presents a unique set of challenges in helping a diverse undergraduate student population to succeed both academically and socially. We present here three studies linking collaborative learning with student success. Each study uses learning communities in and out of the classroom to enhance learning: The first examines the hybrid classroom, the second focuses on interdisciplinary learning communities, and the third looks at the integration of psychosocial and academic development in peer-based learning communities.

**ROOM 3:** Workshop
*Geoff Turner, Simmons College*
**Using Google Forms to Collect Data and Present Results for In-Class and Out-of-Class Lab Projects**

**Abstract:** The ubiquity of smartphones allows for in-class data collection and presentation with little technological expertise or equipment. By setting up a Google "form" before class, students can enter data from nearly any active-learning exercise using a smartphone's browser. The data can be downloaded and added to an existing spreadsheet with pre-made figures. These figures can be incorporated into PowerPoint before class and updated as new data are downloaded. Consequently, student responses can be presented and discussed immediately, allowing for

classroom interactions that are not otherwise possible. The basic method will be demonstrated and easily adaptable sample spreadsheets and forms provided.

**ROOM 4:** Oral Presentation
*Charles LaJeunesse, Misericordia*
**The Ability of Cooperative Learning to Enhance Student Learning**

**Abstract:** This workshop focuses on the historical aspects of cooperative learning (CL) starting with Eliot Aronson's "Jig-saw Puzzle" research in Austin Texas. An overview of years of research on CL will also be addressed. CL will also be distinguished from collaborative learning. All of this information will be presented in Power Point. Later in this workshop I will discuss and provide a simulation of Quiz-quiz, a CL approach I have been using since 1994.

## ***SESSION 2: 10:10AM-11:10AM***

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Jeffrey D. Holmes, Ithaca College; Geoff Turner, Simmons College*
**Cockroaches, Monsters, and Placebos: Ten Studies to Promote Student Appreciation for Research in Psychology**

**Abstract:** Psychology instructors face a chronic struggle with getting students to appreciate research. College students arrive with long established assumptions and intuitions about human behavior, and are often reluctant to believe their intuition is fallible. Moreover, many students fail to appreciate the need to learn about psychological research and research methods. In this talk, we will explore published studies instructors can use to spark student appreciation for research. Attendees will be encouraged to share their own suggestions for studies that are useful for initiating student interest in research.

**ROOM 2:** Roundtable Discussion
*Benjamin Wood, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts; Jessye Cohen-Filipic Ph.D., Ithaca College*
**Dimensions of Teaching Counseling to Undergraduates**

**Abstract:** The roundtable discussion will address how educators can focus on several dimensions of learning to develop a counseling course to fit the needs of their specific undergraduate student body. The roundtable will include a discussion of the numerous challenges that can arise in offering a counseling course to undergraduates. The aim of this discussion will be to help educators generate new approaches to addressing possible challenges and conflicts. In particular, the roundtable discussion will focus on how to balance between focusing on teaching specific interventions versus teaching ways of understanding therapeutic attitudes.

**ROOM 3:** Workshop
*Debra Swoboda, York College, CUNY*
**Bridging the Gap between Cognitive Psychology Research and Instructional Practical: A Model for Faculty Development**

**Abstract:** This presentation introduces participants to the Bridging the Gap Seminar, a faculty development program designed to bridge the gap between cognitive research and instructional practice. Participants will learn about Seminar curriculum development and outcomes

assessment and will explore opportunities and challenges involved in developing a similar faculty development program on their campuses to support faculty application of cognitive psychology research findings to teaching and learning. This presentation is intended for psychology educators interested in utilizing research-based practices on how people learn as well as faculty development coordinators interested in developing a similar faculty program or learning community.

## ***SESSION 3: 11:30AM-12:30PM***

**ROOM 1:** Workshop
*Barbara Pezzanite, Christine Feeley, Marla Johnston, Farmingdale State College*
**Using Active Learning Strategies in the Psychology Classroom**

**Abstract:** Research has shown that active verses passive learning increases retention of new information. According to Adler (1982), "learning is a process of discovery in which the student is the main agent, not the teacher." This "active learning" workshop is designed to demonstrate interesting, and hopefully innovative, ways of presenting concepts in psychology that will grab the students' attention in the classroom, peak their interest in the material, and most importantly aid in the learning process. Sample demonstrations will cover concepts from areas of psychology including learning theory, research methods, memory, abnormal, and possibly more.

**ROOM 2:** Workshop
*Jacqueline Massa, Richard Conti, Christina Luna, Kean University*
**Learning How to Recognize Hidden Disabilities in the Classroom and Coping with the Disruptive Behavior**

**Abstract:** The need to manage disruptive classroom behavior on campuses has been recently highlighted. Both faculty and students complain about disruptive behaviors that obstruct normal classroom functioning. A challenge in effectively dealing with disruptive behavior is understanding that the cause of the behavior is related to hidden disabilities. Disruptive behavior manifests when students have unmet needs. This interactive workshop will provide information on the most common disabilities and the associated academic, social, and behavior issues. In addition, techniques will be provided to prevent disruptive behavior while proactively meeting the needs of students with hidden disabilities to ensure academic success.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*Heidi R.M. O'Connor, Anne E. Stuart, Sandra A. Sego, American International College*
**Spoiler Alert! Using Peer Role-Models to Reveal the Path to Graduation and Beyond**

**Abstract:** For many at-risk students, the path to a college degree is often obscure and filled with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. One way to help students see the path from introductory courses to graduation and beyond is to use upper-level students as role models for students who are early in their college career. Beyond the traditional use of upper-level students as tutors, they can also be role models through practicum talks, poster sessions, research symposia, and teaching assistants. In our presentation, we will discuss changes we have made in our curriculum in order to structure student exposure to peer role-models.

**ROOM 4:** Roundtable Discussion
*Mary Hebert, Ph.D., Franz Vintshger, MA, College of St. Elizabeth*

**The Integration of Literacy and Psychology in Freshmen Students**

**Abstract:** The integration of literacy and specific topic areas has become the focus of a sustained program throughout the course of incoming student's course of study at The College of St. Elizabeth. Its goal is to foster literacy skill development in the context of specific content areas. This round table forum will focus on incoming Freshmen entering 'Element One', or phase one of this endeavor addressing critical thinking and literacy in the context of the content area of resilience and self-concept.

## LUNCH/KEYNOTE ADDRESS: 12:30PM – 2:00PM

## *Keynote Address: Victor Benassi, Ph.D.*
## *Applying the Science of Learning in Psychology Curricula*

## *SESSION 4: 2:30PM-3:00PM*

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Dora Clarke-Pine, La Sierra University*
**Whatever Happened to the Storytellers? Engaging Learners Effectively Through an Underutilized Technique**

**Abstract:** Some of the most meaningful learning experiences take place when least expected. One experience buried long ago in this author's memory is when her grandmother said, "You may be poor, but you can always afford a bar of soap." This author is quite sure her grandmother was communicating something literal; however, the message absorbed was that no one can take away your dignity without your permission. Storytelling is an effective way to engage learners and teach constructs. Sadly, it is too often neglected especially in higher education. This paper illustrates how storytelling can be reintroduced in meaningful ways.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Benjamin Wood, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts*
**Teaching Qualitative Research Methods to Undergraduates: Ready to Take the Plunge?**

**Abstract:** The goal of this presentation is to show how teaching a qualitative research methods course to undergraduates is complimentary to existing research methods courses. By offering a qualitative research methods course or qualitative research methods component to an existing course students are exposed to new ways of conceptualizing scientific research, able to solidify their understanding of quantitative research methods, expand their ideas about what types of questions can be researched in psychology, and develop a more nuanced understanding of limitations inherent in any research design.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*Colleen Jacobson, Iona College*
**The Psychology Department Poster Session: Providing Undergraduate Psychology Majors with an In Vivo Research Presentation Experience**

**Abstract:** The current presentation will describe our approach to exposing undergraduate psychology majors to "real life" research presentation via our Psychology Department Poster session. This presentation will describe our psychology major research curriculum, which includes a poster session in May each year. Each student is responsible for completing an independent research project and presenting his/her findings via a poster presentation. Student presenters (n=40-60) as well as fellow students, faculty members, and members of the administration attend the poster session. This year we added a competitive component and a member of the administration judged the posters and we awarded two runners up and a first place award. Results of student ratings of the poster session and competition component will be presented. Ample time for discussion and brainstorming with audience members regarding research in the undergraduate curriculum will be allotted for.

**ROOM 4:** Oral Presentation
*Nicholas Salter, Ramapo College of New Jersey; Amanda Maynard, Mount Saint Mary College; Christina Connor, Ramapo College of New Jersey; Vivian Milczarski, Mount Saint Mary College*
**Two Teaching Methods for Teaching Information Literacy to Psychology Students**

**Abstract:** Teaching information literacy to Psychology students can be challenging. Students may be resistant to learning the topic, and faculty often struggle with how to best teach it. The goal of this session is to present two engaging and effective methods of teaching information literacy skills to Psychology students. The first method uses case studies and the second method utilizes the problem-based learning approach. Each teaching strategy was developed as a faculty-librarian collaboration and can be used by audience members in their own classrooms to better teach information literacy.

## ***SESSION 5: 3:10PM-3:40PM***

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Jeffrey Nevid, St. John's University*
**We Write, We Learn: Incorporating Writing-to-Learn Assignments in Introductory Psychology**

**Abstract:** Low-stakes writing-to-learn assignments can be incorporated in larger teaching sections to encourage deeper processing and to meet writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) objectives without imposing the burdensome grading responsibilities associated with writing-to-earn assignments, such as traditional term papers. Analysis of student performance on course examinations provided support for the learning benefits of these brief writing assignments in introductory psychology courses at St. John's University.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Eva Goldhammer, CUNY Queensborough Community College*
**Service Learning and Reflection Writing Used to Promote Active Learning in an Abnormal Psychology Class**

**Abstract:** This is a high impact pedagogical initiative, in a community college setting. The benefits of service learning were further enhanced in this project, by placement of abnormal psychology students to engage in service learning, into group homes or clinics, which service the mental health population. The course material was enhanced by this active learning

component. Furthermore, instead of a theory-bound research paper, the writing component was fulfilled with a "journaling paper -which elucidated the distinction between expectations regarding the mental health population versus their new-found understanding. Additionally, the prospect of employment in this field was highlighted. Many psychology majors are discouraged by the specter of many years of education before they are employable. This initiative made quality, psychology-related employment within reach of even community college graduates.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*Patricia Oswald, Katherine Zaromatidis, Iona College*
**Assessing Student Learning Outcomes in the Psychology Major**

**Abstract:** The psychology department at Iona College is in the process of developing a comprehensive assessment plan for the attainment of curriculum goals in the psychology major. As more and more accrediting bodies have focused on student learning outcomes, this is becoming standard practice in many psychology departments. Following a developmental perspective, the psychology department is assessing student learning outcomes to capture growth beginning with the first required psychology courses that students take and culminating with the senior-year capstone experience. Dr. Oswald and Dr. Zaromatidis and will discuss challenges faced in this process such as the creation of operational definitions and the development of course assignments that assess student attainment of the psychology major student learning outcomes. Preliminary assessment data will also be discussed.

**ROOM 4:** Oral Presentation
*Toni-Ann Mastando, Peter DelRosario, Marist College*
**What Instructors Should Know About Public Speaking Anxiety: Mechanisms, Treatments, and Multicultural Considerations**

**Abstract:** Public speaking anxiety (PSA) is the number one fear of Americans. Many students experience this issue as their coursework may require oral presentation assignments. Students with PSA tend to avoid these public speaking situations and, in extreme cases, drop out of courses with this requirement. Research has yielded positive results for PSA reduction techniques, and has recognized multicultural issues with regards to PSA among diverse students. Students may benefit from their instructors' awareness of these issues and their application of PSA reduction techniques. Students may be better prepared to enter the workplace that requires public speaking.

## ***SESSION 6: 3:50PM-4:20PM***

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*David J. Bennett, North Park University*
**Dragging vs. Drinking: Do Intro Students Take (or Even Know to Take) Advantage of Test Incentives?**

**Abstract:** Teachers at times must walk the fine line between giving students the grades "they deserved" and motivating students not only towards success but also away from frustration. Incentives in the form of additional points added to past tests were offered to Introduction to Psychology students to improve subsequent test scores. For example, if a student improved on Test 3 he/she earned one half of the improvement to be applied to his/her Test 2 score. Serial student scores are examined across the semester as related to the presence or absence of such an incentive. Retrospective and prospective metacognitive awareness was also assessed. These results are discussed within the context of incentive use and motivation as well as metacognitive evidence and theory.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Jillian Flood, Iona College*
**Utilization of the One Minute Paper in a School Psychology Graduate Program**

**Abstract:** The purpose of this presentation is to report the effectiveness of the One Minute Paper (OMP) in three school psychology graduate courses over two semesters. Previous research examining undergraduate students' perspectives yielded inconsistent results. The present study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data indicate that half of the graduate student respondents found the OMP helpful, while the rest did not. Additional research investigating the usefulness of the OMP based on student suggestions will be conducted.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*Frederick Tesch, Donna Coelho, Ronald Drozdenko, Western Connecticut State University*
**Profiling Professors: The Good, The Bad, The Gaudy**

**Abstract:** Our previous research (2011, 2012) found that college students rated the item "An instructor who is difficult to understand" as the most distracting of 56 possible classroom distracters. This study investigated what behaviors and characteristics contribute to an instructor's being perceived as difficult to understand (distracters) as well as what behaviors and characteristics students perceive as enhancing their classroom learning. Students' ratings of 56 items revealed distracting, enhancing, and neutral instructor behaviors as well as several gender differences. A factor analysis yielded five instructor profiles that accounted for 40% of the variance.

**ROOM 4:** Oral Presentation
*John Mitterer, Brock University*
**The Pedagogical Alliance and the Science of Learning**

**Abstract:** Empirical evaluations of various therapies underscore the importance of the "therapeutic alliance". This overarching relationship between therapist and client, comprising the global variables of shared goals, agreement on howto accomplish those goals, and the quality of the shared emotional bond, virtually determines therapeutic success, regardless of the type of therapy. In this talk we explore the robust analogy between therapy and teaching. In other words, the "pedagogical alliance" can similarly exert control over educational outcomes. Following the conference theme, "The Science of Learning", we conclude with an exploration of the implications of the pedagogical alliance for the science of learning.

## ***SESSION 7: 4:30 PM-5:00 PM***

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Yasmine Kalkstein, Mount Saint Mary College*
**Book Club: A Small Group Experience to Engage Students**

**Abstract:** I present a new experience I tried in my cognitive psychology class, applicable to any psychology class. Students participate in "book clubs" where they read, discuss, and present on popular press books related to the class material. Results suggest this format got students reading and engaged. Benefits and challenges to this approach will be discussed and the relevant literature on the use of book clubs in education will be reviewed.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Thomas Heinzen, William Paterson University of New Jersey*
**Gamification of a Statistics Course**

**Abstract:** Gamification is the application of principles of game design to non-game purposes. This presentation a) reviews the principles of game design; b) describes how they have been applied to non-game settings; c) and describes how they were applied to a course in statistics. Preliminary feedback suggests that gamification of this statistic course provides both opportunities and threats. The social context of gamification suggests that our students' behavior has been telling us for some time that they will work harder and achieve more if we restructure our courses according to the principles of game design.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*Stephen A. Wurst, Oswego State University*
**Rebus Puzzles in Psychology Courses: Fun and Versatile**

**Abstract:** Rebus puzzles, familiar to viewers of the old television game show Concentration, are picture puzzles that when each component picture is identified and combined, results in a recognizable phrase. By using faces of celebrities or other pop culture items, rebuses can be used in multiple ways over a wide range of psychology topics, such as visual perception (facial identification), speech perception (word segmentation), memory (applied to mnemonics), and cognition (problem solving/ insight). An additional benefit is that it promotes student interaction, and can be used as a warm-up exercise for class. Several examples will be provided in this presentation.

# Saturday, April 6, 2013

## 8:00 - 9:00 AM REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

## *SESSION 8: 9:00AM-10:20AM: INVITED ADDRESS*

## *D. Alan Bensley, Ph.D.*
## *Taking a Scientific Approach to Critical Thinking Instruction and Assessment*

## *SESSION 9: 10:30AM-11:30AM*

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Emily A.A. Dow, The Graduate Center, CUNY; Jeff Kukucka, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY; Magdalena Galazyn, Kasey L. Powers, Patricia Brooks, College of Staten Island, CUNY*
**A Five-Slide Model for Pedagogy**

**Abstract:** The Five-slide Model is a template-tool to (1) teach content material to students, (2) enable students to develop oral communication skills, and (3) share pedagogical practices as a

training tool in a collaborative setting. Speakers will discuss the development of the Five-slide Model and provide examples of how this model can be used in different educational settings.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Christine Floether, Centenary College*
**The Scary Psychology of Stephen King**

**Abstract:** Although Centenary College' psychology teaches theory throughout the curriculum, there has been a dearth of course where the information can culminate in a meaningful manner for the students. To overcome this issue, a Special Topics course was introduced in the Fall of 2012 entitled, "The Psychology of Stephen King". The purpose of the course was to use pop culture in a manner where discussion about psychological theory could be had while integrating a "fun" background of character analysis. The course was designed for psychology students to have an opportunity to apply their knowledge to pop culture.

**ROOM 3:** Workshop
*Kristin Kenneavy, Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Ramapo College of New Jersey*
**"Is Anybody in There?" Intellectual Engagement in the Classroom: A Sample of Successful Activities for Enhancing Active Learning**

**Abstract:** Do you ever get the feeling that while your students are physically in your classroom they are really somewhere else? As part of a faculty development initiative, presenters read Elizabeth Barkley's (2010) Student Engagement Techniques for inspiration and then went to work to engage the unengaged. Focused on the need to improve participation in class discussion, presenters designed and implemented activities to engage their students in critical thinking and to promote intellectual discussion in the classroom. In this session, presenters will describe their engagement techniques and share their experiences in implementing them. Challenges and successes will be discussed.

**ROOM 4:** Workshop
*John M. Worrall, State University of New York at Oneonta*
**Teaching Observational Coding to Undergraduates Using an Online Tool**

**Abstract:** Observational coding is a common task in psychological research. Undergraduate research assistants can benefit from learning coding skills, and coding can help increase student research engagement. However, training students to be reliable coders can be time-consuming and difficult. After a review of the challenges and benefits of teaching coding to undergraduate students, this workshop will focus on an interactive practice coding session using an online coding tool. Participants will practice coding a clip from a mock psychotherapy session, led by the presenter using the online coding tool. The workshop will include a review of resources for teaching coding skills.

## ***SESSION 10: 11:40AM-12:10PM***

**ROOM 1:** Oral Presentation
*Michael S. Gordon, Katherine Makarec, Thomas Heinzen, William Paterson University; D. Alan Bensley, Frostburg University*

**Adventures in Assessment: An Analysis of an Internet-Based Assessment Implementation**

**Abstract:** An internet-based assessment was adopted by the Psychology Department at William Paterson University to facilitate the use of a common protocol across a diverse set of lower and upper division courses, and as taught by full and adjunct faculty. The assessment included measures of general knowledge, critical thinking, and active, open-minded interest in psychology and was delivered online using Sona-Systems research tools. This research includes outcomes with specific comparisons between the upper and lower division courses. In addition to the assessment data, the challenges and tribulations of online implementation are evaluated as are the practical issues of a department-wide assessment.

**ROOM 2:** Oral Presentation
*Nicholas Salter, Shaziela Ishak, Ramapo College of New Jersey*
**Teaching Writing Skills to Psychology Students**

**Abstract:** Teaching Psychological writing is an important element to an undergraduate Psychology degree. However, there is more to making a class "writing intensive" than adding a writing assignment; there are multiple factors to consider. Through a series of informal interviews and a literature review, we have identified five topics to consider when incorporating writing into a Psychology class: Psychology-specific writing, types of writing assignments, instructor feedback, peer and self-evaluation, and rewriting. This presentation will serve as a guide to instructors who want to better teach their students to be effective Psychological writers.

**ROOM 3:** Oral Presentation
*David M. Biek, Macon State College*
**Using a Class Wiki to Engage the Millennial Psychology Student: Promises and Caveats**

**Abstract:** This presentation describes the lessons learned during three semesters of experience using wikis for the teaching of psychology at the undergraduate level. Education theorists tell us that millennial students want to find and synthesize their own knowledge, expect to create original artifacts while performing authentic tasks, prefer the collaborative spirit of group work, and openly share their work products (Price, 2009). A wiki allows for an engaging assignment that incorporates many of these ideals (Miserandino, 2009; Slotter, 2010), but such an enterprise is not without the potential for academic perils. Various software solutions are discussed and sample assignment guidelines are provided.

**ROOM 4: STUDENT POSTER SESSION JUDGING: JUDGES AND PRESENTERS ONLY FROM 11:40-12:10**

## *SESSION 11: STUDENT POSTER SESSION: Open to all participants 12:10PM-1:00PM*

**ROOM 4: STUDENT POSTER SESSION**

*Shani Martinez,* Long Island University*, Advisor: Dr. Grace Rossi*

**The Effects of Alcohol on Pregnant Mice, and the Occurrence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Developmental Abnormalities in their Offspring.**

**Abstract:** The consumption of ethanol during pregnancy has many adverse effects on fetal development, and can result in a wide range of abnormalities or deficits termed fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). The most severe form of FASD is fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). It is characterized by a pattern of anomalies including growth retardation, craniofacial malformations and central nervous system dysfunction. Cognitive and behavioral impairments reflecting brain dysfunction (e.g. deficits in learning, attention and memory) are the most commonly observed problems in children exposed to ethanol during pregnancy, and can be observed in persons without obvious physical abnormalities. These outcomes result from diverse maternal drinking patterns, ranging from the, episodic "binge" of large quantities of ethanol over a short time period, to "chronic ethanol consumption." In this study, the offspring of alcoholic pregnant mice will be tested for the occurrence of FAS and developmental abnormalities. Behavioral testing will be performed on the offspring to measure the effects on attention span, memory and motor coordination. To do this one must use the Radial Arm Maze to measure attention span and spatial memory. Then, a Rota- Rod will be used to test motor coordination. This experiment includes osmotic pumps for ethanol administration until the animals have given birth.

*Rebecca Scalabrino, Katherine Tejeda,* Ramapo College of New Jersey*, Advisor: Professor Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Ph. D*

**The Impact of Posture and Smiling on Perceiver's Judgments of Personality**

**Abstract:** This experiment examined the extent to which the manipulation of a female subject's smile and posture in a standardized photograph would influence impression formation in eighty same-sex, young adult observers. In this study, participants were exposed to one of four photograph conditions which varied in terms of the subject's facial expression (smiling versus neutral) and posture (erect versus slouching) in a 2 X 2 factorial design. Participants were then asked to rate the photographed subject on agreeableness, openness, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and extraversion using items from the Big Five Personality Inventory. Posture and facial expression in a photographed female affected impression formation across the five personality dimensions. For neuroticism, a neutral facial expression (F= 55.91, P=0.000) and slouched posture (F= 9.2, P= 0.003) contributed to higher neuroticism ratings, with their combined effect leading to slightly higher neuroticism scores (F=3.73, P= 0.057). Significant main effects for posture (F= 8.9, P= 0.004) and facial expression (F= 25.95, P=0.000) were observed for openness ratings. For ratings of extraversion, significant main effects for posture (F= 12.4, P= 0.001) and facial expression (F= 51.98, P=0.000) were observed. Facial expression influenced ratings on both conscientiousness (F = 18.6, p = .000) and agreeableness (F = 49.36, p = .000). Posture influenced Conscientiousness ratings (F = 4.99, p = .028), but not agreeableness ratings (F = 1.87, p = ns). Facial expression and posture seem to have a significant impact on first impression formation among young adults.

*Pablo A. Escotto,* Mount Saint Mary College Dept. of Social Sciences*; Chris Boydston,* Fairleigh Dickenson *University; Yasmine L. Konheim-Kalkstein,* Mount Saint Mary College Dept. of Social Sciences*, Advisor: Yasmine L. Konheim-Kalkstein*

**Priming Ethical Decisions With A Classroom Honor Code Scenario**

**Abstract:** As the continuing ascent of smart phone technology makes it ever easier to discreetly send and receive information from the palm of your hand, psychologists and educators must direct more attention to the widespread problem of academic dishonesty. Several studies indicate the significance of institutional honor codes as cheater-deterrents, suggesting that ethical choices can be influenced through the recognition of a communitarian commitment to

integrity. This study explores priming positive ethical choices through mock scenarios that include either an honor code or a religious/ethical prime.

*Sarah Heines*, Mount Saint Mary College, *Advisor: Yasmine Kalkstein Ph.D.*
**Are Students Getting the Science in Psychology Science?**
**Abstract:** Fifty one senior seminar Psychology students from a small liberal arts college reported judgments of knowledge on various subtopics in psychology as well as completing questions from a General Psychology exam. Results suggest that the seniors were overconfident in their knowledge and often lack an understanding of scientific principles in psychology.

*Nicholas Abrams, Tara Fitzgerald, Kourtney Frey, Marah Lange,* Westchester University of Pennsylvania, *Advisor: Dr. Geeta Shivde*
**Student Assessment of Senior's Satisfaction with Psychology Department**
**Abstract:** Student satisfaction is often overlooked when Psychology departments evaluate their undergraduate programs. In this paper, we describe how we created a student-designed and student-led assessment of the satisfaction of our graduating psychology majors. We administered our survey to majors in their senior year at a medium-sized, public university in Pennsylvania, then analyzed the results for patterns in student satisfaction and suggestions for improvement. We discuss our results (e.g. demographic differences in student satisfaction) and their implications for improving the department. We conclude by making recommendations for how other departments might also employ a student-run assessment of student satisfaction.

*Ahreum Kim, Jonathan Singer, Alyssa Conigliaro, Dr. Susan Petry,* Adelphi University, *Advisor: Dr. Susan Petry*
**"Perceiving" Wisdom and Dependency in Faces: the Buddha Effect and Other Stereotypes**
**Abstract:** Young and old, male, Asian, African-American and Caucasian, neutral, happy and angry faces were shown to young and old females who rated their age, wisdom and emotional dependency. Many, but not all, stereotypes were supported; most strongly a Buddha Effect (high perceived wisdom in older happy Asian men).

## LUNCH 12:30PM-2:30PM

## *Presentation of Student Awards (1:30PM)*
## *Feist-Levine Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Psychological Research*
## *WCPA Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Psychological Research*

## *Closing Remarks*

*Farmingdale State College Department of Psychology*
*Dr. Jennifer Gonder, Conference Co-Chair*
*Dr. Marya Howell-Carter, Conference Co-Chair*

*Dr. Eugene Indenbaum, Department Chairperson*
*Dr. Michael Goodstone, Director, Applied Psychology Program*
*Dr. Judith Levine*
*Dr. Sayeedul Islam*
*Dr. Barbara Pezzanite*
*Ms. Barbara Sarringer*

*Our deepest thanks for your help in creating a wonderful 2013 conference. We hope to see you again in 2014 for another great meeting!*

# We Write, We Learn: Incorporating Writing-To-Learn Assignments in Introductory Psychology

Jeffrey Nevid, Ph.D.
St. John's University

**Abstract:** Low-stakes writing-to-learn assignments can be incorporated in larger teaching sections to encourage deeper processing and to meet writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) objectives without imposing the burdensome grading responsibilities associated with writing-to-earn assignments, such as traditional term papers. Analysis of student performance on course examinations provided support for the learning benefits of these brief writing assignments in introductory psychology courses at St. John's University.

**Summary:** Writing-to-learn assignments are used widely across the educational spectrum. Unlike term papers and other high-stakes "writing-to-earn" assignments, writing-to-learn assignments typically are low-stakes writing exercises for which students earn credit but which are not graded or corrected by instructors. Writing-to-learn assignments are a type of active learning exercise designed to foster critical thinking and deeper processing (Angelo, 1995; Dunn & Smith, 2008; Wade, 1995). They are especially useful in large introductory classes in meeting writing-across-the-curriculum objectives, as they required much less burdensome on instructors than traditional term papers. This presentation focuses on the introduction of a writing-to-learn (journaling) assignment in introductory psychology courses at St. John's University (Nevid, Pastva, & McClelland, 2012). In total, 16 writing assignments (journal entries) were used, corresponding to one writing assignment per textbook chapter. For each text chapter, students were required to prepare a one to two paragraph journal entry posted electronically on the course management system (Blackboard) based on a particular psychological concept from the chapter. The writing assignments in total constituted 10% of the final grade. Journal assignments were credited by the instructor but not graded.

Analysis of student performance on course examinations provided support for the learning benefits of journaling assignments. Students performed significantly better on exam questions assessing content relating to the writing assignments than questions measuring knowledge of unrelated content. Moreover, the learning benefits associated with the writing assignments occurred both when students selected concepts to write about from a list of specified concepts and when they were assigned concepts by the instructor.

References

Angelo, T.A. (1995). Classroom assessment for critical thinking. Teaching of Psychology, 22, 6-7.

Dunn, D. S., & Smith, R. A. (2008). Writing as critical thinking. In D. S. Dunn, J. S. Halonen, & R. A. Smith (Eds.), Teaching critical thinking in psychology: A handbook of best practices (pp. 164-173). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Nevid, J.S., Pastva, A., & McClelland, N. (2012). Writing-to-learn assignments in introductory psychology: Is there a learning benefit? Teaching of Psychology, 39, 272-275.

Wade, C. (1995). Using writing to develop and assess critical thinking. Teaching of Psychology, 22, 24-28.

# The Scary Psychology of Stephen King

Christine Floether
Centenary College

**Abstract:** Although Centenary College' psychology teaches theory throughout the curriculum, there has been a dearth of course where the information can culminate in a meaningful manner for the students. To overcome this issue, a Special Topics course was introduced in the Fall of 2012 entitled, "The Psychology of Stephen King". The purpose of the course was to use pop culture in a manner where discussion about psychological theory could be had while integrating a "fun" background of character analysis. The course was designed for psychology students to have an opportunity to apply their knowledge to pop culture.

**Summary:** The presentation would be focused on the overall course, the purpose of the course, and the rationale behind discussions and assignment in the course.

I am proposing that I would present this course from development of syllabus to classroom discussions to paper assignments. I will be sharing with my colleagues some of the papers the students completed, the discussions they had in the classroom, and the comfort they felt in discussing their reactions and opinions on popular culture as a backdrop for applying and understanding psychological theory and concepts.

This was presented as a Special Topics course basically because it was felt that upperclassmen have to follow a prescribed course selection which includes: Tests and Measurements, Research Methods, Behavior Modification, Theories of Personality, and Senior Seminar. While the underclassmen are introduced to college life through Academic Foundations at Centenary, Developmental Psychology, and Social Psychology, the upperclassmen are developing, implementing, and conducting research projects. Although those courses are invaluable, there is not a course at Centenary where upperclassmen can discuss theory and concepts.

As a full-time undergraduate professor, I thought about introducing a class in which the students could enjoy themselves while learning how to apply this important knowledge. I eventually chose Stephen King due to the content of several of his books. Numerous students also had come to discuss my ideas and led me to choosing Stephen King as the basis for this class. The individual books were chosen for several reasons: chronology, content, and theoretical application.

For the purpose of the presentation, I will be using a discussion on the overview of the course, the specific assignments used during the semester, discussion material, and specific examples of instruction. I hope to give colleagues tools and techniques to teach broad-strokes of psychological theory through popular culture.

This class is considered innovative in that we do not rely on testing of the student's knowledge base, but rather we utilize their preparation and motivation to understand materials. I have discovered that by removing the anxiety associated with testing, students, who are juniors and seniors, will be relaxed in the classroom. This relaxation allows the student to learn and increase their knowledge base. Each assignment was developed based on the overarching theme of the book, and encouraged the exhibition of understanding of psychological theory. It was a tight rope to maintain academic integrity while encouraging critical thinking "outside the box". To accomplish the goals, I was attempting to achieve, the students were required to connect their experiences to classroom discussion and theoretical understanding.

The presentation will focus on explaining goals, objectives, outcomes, and development of critical thinking skills while keeping the content interesting, relevant, and psychological. The utilization of literature helped encourage students to “read for fun” and enjoyment. This will also be focused upon throughout the presentation.

This presentation is a pedagogical work in which I would like to share how to help students better understand the theories and concepts of undergraduate psychology courses. I would like to discuss with my colleagues an approach that is meaningful, innovative, and student-centered. The objective of the course was to use horror as an overarching theme, and understand why humans like to be scared. At the same time, we explored three separate novels: Carrie, Desperation, and 11/22/63, to discover psychological themes.

As an example, in Carrie, the students explored adolescent behaviors and development. They discussed whether or not the plot was plausible, as well as individual’s behaviors throughout the book. We looked at Erikson’s theory, Piaget’s theory, and Freudian symbolism. During the discussion of Desperation, the class explored Jungian thematics, family dynamics, and social psychology theories and concepts. In the discussion of 11/22/63, the students will be encouraged to explain the behaviors of the individuals with the help of learning theory and Behavior Modification. They will also be addressing the historical importance of this period in American History.

I would like to share with my colleagues, the assignments and some examples of the student’s work, as well as capture some of the discussions.

**Dimensions of teaching counseling to undergraduates: A roundtable discussion**

Benjamin Wood, Ph.D., Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts;
Jessye Cohen-Filipic, Ph.D., Ithaca College

**Abstract:** The roundtable discussion will address how educators can focus on several dimensions of learning to develop a counseling course to fit the needs of their specific undergraduate student body. The roundtable will include a discussion of the numerous challenges that can arise in offering a counseling course to undergraduates. The aim of this discussion will be to help educators generate new approaches to addressing possible challenges and conflicts. In particular, the roundtable discussion will focus on how to balance between focusing on teaching specific interventions versus teaching ways of understanding therapeutic attitudes.

**Summary:** A psychology major can open many doors. Graduates with a psychology major are primed to work in a number of different settings (e.g., business, academic, and research) and pursue a variety of different graduate educational opportunities (e.g., law, medicine, social work, etc.). However, a large proportion of psychology majors are curious about becoming a therapist. It is likely that many of these students will not become therapists after they graduate, but a psychology curriculum can respond to student interest by offering counseling or interviewing courses. If many of our students will not become therapists, how should we structure our counseling courses to meet the educational needs of our students?
The proposed roundtable discussion will address how educators can focus on several dimensions of learning to develop a counseling course to fit the needs of their specific undergraduate student body. The roundtable will include a discussion of the numerous challenges that can arise in offering a counseling course to undergraduates. The aim of this discussion will be to help educators generate new approaches to addressing possible challenges and conflicts.

Offering a counseling course to undergraduate psychology majors is an excellent opportunity to implement the APA guidelines for undergraduate education in psychology (APA, 2007). The guidelines specifically indicate that a counseling course helps achieve the goal of educating undergraduate psychology students about the application of psychology (Goal 4). Additionally, a counseling course also has the potential to contribute to the educational goals of having a knowledge base in psychology (Goal 1), developing critical thinking skills in psychology (Goal 3), fostering values in psychology (Goal 5), building communication skills (Goal 7), increasing socio-cultural and international awareness (Goal 8), promoting personal development (Goal 9), and working on career planning and development (Goal 10). Educators have the opportunity to emphasize goals that they think are most relevant to their particular psychology majors.

The facilitators of the roundtable propose that focusing on two broad dimensions will help educators determine what type of course they will implement: intervention and understanding. An educator must decide to what degree he or she will focus on teaching specific techniques and skills and on teaching an understanding of how therapy works. There is a dominant narrative within clinical research in psychology that clinicians should be learning specific interventions that are evidence based (see Kazdin, 2008). There is an alternative perspective within the field that encourages focusing on promoting a therapeutic attitude and understanding (out of which relevant techniques will follow) (Messer & Wampold, 2002). Hellmuth Kaiser is noted as saying that it is not possible to teach the correct intervention for

every circumstance but that a proper attitude is needed to approach a therapeutic relationship (Shapiro, 1989). Rollo May argues that technique should only follow after understanding within psychotherapy (May, 1983). Students who do not have as strong understanding of the theory and rationale behind interventions may try techniques without sufficient consideration. Educators must make a decision on how much they will focus on interventions and how much they will focus on promoting understanding. By considering the dimensions of intervention and understanding, an educator can shape a counseling course to promote certain APA undergraduate psychology curriculum guidelines and more importantly, build a course that fits the goals of his or her student body.

Questions that will be discussed in the roundtable include: How much time in each class is devoted to teaching about specific intervention skills? How much time in class is devoted to practicing specific intervention skills? Do educators focus on a specific set of skills within one theoretical domain (e.g., cognitive restructuring, creating fear hierarchies vs. active listening, empathic statements) or do they provide a wide exposure to a number of different approaches over the course of the semester?

Similar questions apply to the domain of understanding and include: How many theories should I present to the students? Are certain theories more relevant to psychology majors within educational settings? What are the benefits of focusing on way of understanding therapy versus focusing on multiple ways of understanding therapy?

Finally, the facilitators will speak about various challenges that educators face in offering counseling courses. Challenges include but are not limited to concerns about confidentiality, emergencies that arise in practice sessions, having unlicensed faculty offering supervision, and student hesitancy to explore personal concerns.

By participating in the proposed roundtable discussion, educators will have the tools to assess what type of counseling methods course fits the educational needs and goals of their student body. They will be aware of possible challenges that arise in offering a counseling course and ways of facing the challenges.

American Psychological Association. (2007). APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major.Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from www.apa.org/ed/resources.html

Kazdin, A. (2008). Evidence based treatment and practice: New opportunities to bridge clinical research and practice, enhance the knowledge base, and improve patient care. American Psychologist, 63, 3, 146 –159. DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.63.3.146

May, R. (1983). The Discovery of Being. New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Co.

Messer, S. B. and Wampold, B. E. (2002), Let's Face Facts: Common Factors Are More Potent Than Specific Therapy Ingredients. Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 9, 21–25. DOI: 10.1093/clipsy.9.1.21

Shapiro, D. (1989). Psychotherapy of Neurotic Character. New York, NY: Basic Books.

**Teaching Qualitative Research Methods to Undergraduates: Ready to Take the Plunge?**

Benjamin Wood, Ph.D.
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

**Abstract:** The goal of this presentation is to show how teaching a qualitative research methods course to undergraduates is complimentary to existing research methods courses. By offering a qualitative research methods course or qualitative research methods component to an existing course students are exposed to new ways of conceptualizing scientific research, able to solidify their understanding of quantitative research methods, expand their ideas about what types of questions can be researched in psychology, and develop a more nuanced understanding of limitations inherent in any research design.

**Summary:** The majority of undergraduate psychology curricula include a research methods sequence. This generally entails a course in statistics and a course in research methods. However, the research methods courses tend to focus on quantitative methodologies. The goal of this presentation is to show how teaching a qualitative research methods course to undergraduates is complimentary to existing research methods courses. By offering a qualitative research methods course students are exposed to new ways of conceptualizing scientific research, able to solidify their understanding of quantitative research methods, expand their ideas about what types of questions can be researched in psychology, and develop a more nuanced understanding of limitations inherent in any research design.

Offering a qualitative research methods course or a qualitative component to an existing research methods course to undergraduate psychology majors is an excellent opportunity to implement the APA guidelines for undergraduate education in psychology (APA, 2007). Goal two is specifically focused on educating undergraduates about research design, analysis, and interpretation. Exposing undergraduates to qualitative designs, analyses, and interpretations will widen their scope of understanding the role of research in psychological science.

The qualitative research course I teach employs three components: scientific paradigms, qualitative methodologies, and practice. The first question that many people may ask themselves is “why use qualitative research methods?” There are definite drawbacks to qualitative methods within psychology including difficulties with finding publication outlets and misunderstanding the purpose of qualitative methods. By discussing scientific paradigms it is possible to understand the place that qualitative research holds in psychology. Burrell and Morgan (1979) offer a paradigmatic framework for social scientific research methods. Each paradigm corresponds to different research goals and research assumptions. As a result of differing goals and assumptions, different methodologies (e.g., quantitative, qualitative) are warranted. The framework is based on two continua. One ranges from radical change to regulation. This continuum focuses on whether the goal of research is to change something through the research or whether it is to document the existence of a phenomena or relationship. The other continuum dimension ranges from subjective to objective. This continuum identifies whether a research paradigm is focused on the subjective experience of participants or objective facts. With an understanding of different paradigms of research students can begin to see how different methods are needed to achieve different research goals.

After discussing paradigms, it is important to survey various qualitative research methodologies. Just as quantitative focused research methods courses discuss when and how to use t-tests, ANOVAs, multiple regression, and correlations, there are many qualitative research

methods that are appropriate for various research questions. The choice of a qualitative method will depend on what question is being asked and the corresponding scientific paradigm (Creswell, 2012).

Because much of qualitative theory and research can be abstract, it is helpful to include a practice component. There are a variety of activities that can display the benefits of using a qualitative approach. One in class exercise that can be very helpful is practicing observational research. Students can compare their observations and discuss issues related to methodological rigor and trustworthiness. Outside of the class, students benefit from conducting, recording, transcribing, and analyzing interviews. Ideally, the students would be able to work on an actual study rather than using fabricated data for classroom purposes only. By participating as research assistants to a study, participants have the opportunity to learn about all aspects of qualitative research. Many of the skills they will implement will generalize to working on other research projects. Students learn about formulating methodologies that assess research questions, recruiting participants, explaining the study to participants, interviewing participants, transcribing interviews, unitizing interviews, and coding meaning units for dominant themes.

The goal of the class is not to convert psychology students to using qualitative methods only. Rather, it helps them develop a greater understanding of formulating and assessing research questions. The focus is on using appropriate methods to answer research questions rather than creating research questions that fit certain methods.

Teaching about qualitative methods can also be incorporated into existing research methods courses. Although students would not get extensive experience with practicing research methods they would be exposed to new ways of thinking psychologically and using critical thinking skills. The presentation will offer specific examples of how it is possible to integrate qualitative research methods into existing research methods sequences.

By attending this session, attendees will be able to identify key components of offering a qualitative research methods course or integrating qualitative research methods content into existing research methods courses. Attendees will learn specific course exercises that can be used to expose students to qualitative research methods. Attendees will also be able to identify how teaching qualitative and quantitative research methods work together to achieve the goal of educating undergraduates in research design, analysis, and interpretation.

American Psychological Association. (2007). APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major.Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from www.apa.org/ed/resources.html

Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979). Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis: Elements of the sociology of corporate life. London: Heinemann Educational Books, LTD.

Creswell, J. (2012). Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

# Utilization of the One Minute Paper in a School Psychology Graduate Program

Jillian Flood
Iona College

**Abstract:** The purpose of this presentation is to report the effectiveness of the One Minute Paper (OMP) in three school psychology graduate courses over two semesters. Previous research examining undergraduate students' perspectives yielded inconsistent results. The present study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data indicate that half of the graduate student respondents found the OMP helpful, while the rest did not. Additional research investigating the usefulness of the OMP based on student suggestions will be conducted.

**Summary:** One of the most useful self-assessment strategies that I learned in graduate school was the One Minute Paper (OMP). As a graduate student unaware of higher education pedagogy, I did not realize that this technique has been in existence since the early 1980s (Zeilik, 2003). What I began to quickly realize was that I wanted to become a professor myself upon graduation. To that end I sought opportunities to teach while still in graduate school and was hired to co-teach two courses prior to my graduation. I did not utilize the OMP while teaching those classes, but the strategy would soon be revisited.

When I began my career in academia as an adjunct professor at a community college in Maryland, I made use of the OMP for my students in the same way that I had learned it myself. At the end of every class I taught I asked my students to write the answer to the question "what do you want to remember from today?" I sometimes found myself elaborating the prompt to say "what did you find to be either interesting or new information?" My hope was that their OMP's would serve as a summary of the lesson to guide them in their studies for the multiple choice exams. I watched to make sure everyone was engaging in the task and then proceeded to close out my powerpoint slides. I did not collect their OMPs, nor did I seek feedback from the students about the OMPs. Whether or not my students found them effective is regrettably unknown to this day.

## Method and Results

When I was hired as an assistant professor at a college in New York I was excited to use the OMP with a new group of students. Most of the graduate courses I taught met once a week for two hours, the Practicum course met once a month. Most days I would conclude class with the OMP, except if we ran out of time. I realized that even though I found value in the OMP, it was worth asking the students what they thought about my OMP. I took advantage of the option to add items to the standard course evaluations that are sent to students to complete via e-mail at the end of every semester. I asked students to rate their agreement (1= strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) with the following statement: "How helpful were the 3 minute papers as a strategy for long term retrieval?" Results from this question in every class are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Student feedback on the one minute paper: Quantitative data

| Course | Semester | n | M | SD | Response rate % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ethics | Spring | 3 | 3.5 | 0.71 | 100% |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lifespan | Spring | 6 | 2.33 | 1.21 | 100% |
| Practicum | Spring | 15 | 3 | .82 | 79% |
| Ethics | Summer | 4 | 2.75 | 0.96 | 67% |

Note. Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

A separate, narrative question at the end of the survey provided students the opportunity to elaborate on their answer. One student said: "I dislike the three minute papers. I do not think they add anything to the class whatsoever." Contrary to previous research that stated students criticized completing the OMP at the end of every class (Stead, 2005), another student said "I didn't find the three minute papers to be particularly helpful because we did not do them with enough frequency to understand what the point was for doing them. I found that the class time itself was sufficient for remembering and storing the course information." Based on student feedback, I realized that I needed to insure that I utilized the OMP at the end of every class. I also learned that the OMP may not be helpful for students in all of the graduate level classes I was teaching.

Throughout the next semester of classes, I utilized the OMP in every class, which was on a weekly basis. At the end of the semester, student feedback was mixed. As cited in previous research, students did not always have questions to ask (Stead, 2005). One student expressed: "I wasn't really a fan of the Three Minute Paper. This isn't to say it isn't helpful for others, [but] the technique just didn't work for me. I would find myself sitting with pen in hand and nothing to write down. Any questions I had were answered during lecture, either by further explanation in the slides, by Dr. Flood elaborating, or by me or one of my classmates asking for clarification." Another student found "the three minute paper was good so that you can recap and kind of go over what we thought was important in class." As these comments indicate, student feedback yielded conflicting results.

As I mentioned earlier, I made sure to do the OMP after every class based on previous student feedback. At the end of the semester where I utilized the OMP regularly, one of the students commented: "I thought it was a good reflection time, but I didn't think it was necessary after every class." However, the same student went on to say, "I found it helpful during the next week's class in order to quickly look over what we learned in the previous class." As indicated by the student's response, the OMP was helpful when I began each class asking the students to share what they learned the previous week. Without the OMP students may not have been able to remember what they had learned.

## Discussion

Literature describing the utilization of One Minute Papers (OMP) yields conflicting results. OMPs have been described as the most widely used classroom assessment technique in higher education (Angelo & Cross, 1993) and not widely used in higher education due to professors not being aware of its existence or perceived time constraints (Stead, 2005).

Previous research has found undergraduate students to have varying perspectives regarding the utility of the OMP. The present sample of graduate students in a school psychology program also provides inconclusive results on the utility of the OMP as a helpful strategy.

In the future I am considering asking students: "What questions would you ask your students if you were the professor to find out if they understood the material?" Asking this question may serve to get a better idea of students expectations of their learning. In a study by Kremer (2003) students reflected on what they learned, what they wanted to learn, and what questions they had at the beginning of class for ten minutes twice a week. Future research may utilize a variation of the OMP at the beginning of class to have an idea of what students learned from their readings prior to material presented in class.

References

Angelo, T.A., & Cross, K.P. (1993). Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers. 2nd edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 148-153.

Kremer, M.E. (2003). Classroom assessment: Learning from students. Academic Exchange Quarterly, Fall, 109-113.

Stead, D.R. (2005). A review of the one minute paper. Active Learning in Higher Education, 6 (2), 118-131.

Zeilik, M.(c. 2003). Classroom Assessment Techniques: Minute Paper. Field-Tested Learning Assessment Guide: http://www.flaguide.org/cat/minutepapers/minutepapers7.php [accessed October 6, 2012].

# Learning How to Recognize Hidden Disabilities in the Classroom and Coping with the Disruptive Behavior

Jacqueline Massa, Ph.D., Richard Conti, Ph.D., Christina Luna, Ph.D.
Kean University

**Abstract:** The need to manage disruptive classroom behavior on campuses has been recently highlighted. Both faculty and students complain about disruptive behaviors that obstruct normal classroom functioning. A challenge in effectively dealing with disruptive behavior is understanding that the cause of the behavior is related to hidden disabilities. Disruptive behavior manifests when students have unmet needs. This interactive workshop will provide information on the most common disabilities and the associated academic, social, and behavior issues. In addition, techniques will be provided to prevent disruptive behavior while proactively meeting the needs of students with hidden disabilities to ensure academic success.

**Summary:** The higher learning environment has faced many challenges in the past decade, such as reduced budgets, reduced enrollment and difficulty retaining students. In prior generations, the academic environment was viewed as challenging, competitive and motivating. Students attended a college or university as a stepping stone to personal growth and career prosperity.

In the modern academic world, it would be nice if students arrived on campus eager and disciplined to work and equipped with a sense of respect for others. However, the truth is that students come to class late, fall asleep during lectures, miss deadlines, make inappropriate comments, insult or intimidate other students or the professor, and the large majority spend the entire meeting time on their electronic devices. Many individuals in the campus community believe that this behavior stems from poor parenting, lack of instilled work ethic, an uncertain future, apathy, or disruptive student behavior. To help faculty manage disruptive behaviors in the classroom a number of workshops and campus protocols have been developed. These workshops and protocols only provide techniques that attempt to modify the disruptive behavior as such they are only managing to place a temporary bandage on a much larger problem. The often overlooked reality is that the disruptive behavior stems from students with hidden disabilities. In support of this is the fact that the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) status question was updated in 2010 to reflect growing attention to the large number of college students who are receiving disability services for the following disorders: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Disability, and Psychological Disorder. It is important to note that of 201, 808 freshmen entering college/university for the first time in 2010, 5% reported ADHD, 3% reported LD, and 3.8% reported a psychological disorder (Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, 2011).

Unfortunately, it can be quite challenging for faculty to distinguish between individuals with disabilities and individuals who are intentionally disruptive. Even though there are a number of guidelines that can be applied to manage disruptive behavior they do not solve the larger issue of dealing with students with disabilities, such as learning disorders and mental challenges. Managing the disruptive classroom behavior, although important, does not address student educational needs and this can inversely impact student retention. The proposed workshop will provide methods to help individuals identify students with hidden disabilities. Individuals who attend the workshop will be provided with insight into the biological and neurological components of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Learning Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Depression. Further, information will be provided

to understand how these disorders manifest in academic, social, and behavioral issues that can complicate classroom instruction and appear as disruptive classroom behavior. Finally, practical techniques to manage hidden disabilities in the classroom will be addressed.

The benefits of attending the workshop:

1. Attendees will have a clear understanding of current policies and practices of educating students with disabilities in the
   21st century
   a. The civil and educational rights of students with disabilities.
   b. Research based instructional practices within the standards aligned to the instructional framework
   c. Emphasis on student centered classrooms
2. Attendees will have a greater understanding of individuals who have disabilities
   a. The biological and neurological manifestation of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Learning Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Depression.
   b. The academic, social, and behavioral issues related to these disorders with emphasis on executive dysfunction and gender differences.
3. Attendees will become familiar with research based instructional and behavioral modification strategies that support the unique academic needs of young adults with disabilities
   a. Differential instructional design
   b. Academic challenges and solutions
4. Attendees will obtain tools and strategies that will engage students with disabilities
   a. Learner centered classroom approaches
   b. Strategies that motivate and engage
   c. Problem solving strategies
   d. Making connections through cooperative group strategies to build social support
   e. Identifying students who need intensive instructional support
5. Attendees will learn specific behavioral practices that support learning through positive behavioral environments
   a. Preventing problem behaviors using practices that work
   b. Analyzing problems behaviors
   c. Primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions
6. Attendees will be equipped with skills and techniques that promote secondary education success
   a. Responsibilities of the student
   b. Responsibilities of the professor
   C. Responsibilities of the College/University

**The Integration of Literacy and Psychology in Freshmen Students**

Mary Hebert, Ph.D. and Franz Vintshger, M.A.
College of St. Elizabeth

**Abstract:** The integration of literacy and specific topic areas has become the focus of a sustained program throughout the course of incoming student's course of study at The College of St. Elizabeth. Its goal is to foster literacy skill development in the context of specific content areas. This round table forum will focus on incoming Freshmen entering 'Element One', or phase one of this endeavor addressing critical thinking and literacy in the context of the content area of resilience and self-concept.

**Summary:** In keeping with the format of the round table discussion a presentation will be made regarding the overall scope of the program of integrated literacy and content that spans the course of the four years of study the student's experience. The integrated literacy program was launched in the Fall, 2012 semester at The College of St. Elizabeth, a small, private, all female college located in Morristown, NJ.

The focus of the literacy/content programs is to developmentally expand the literacy skills of the students and increase their knowledge about a particular topic area. These skills include written skills, oral presentations skills, research literacy, as well as technology skills. These emerging skills are viewed as essential to meet the increasingly complex demands of more rigorous material and application to course content. The focus is also to design skills in this arena that are transferrable to one's major course of study, their liberal arts education, and eventual career endeavors and or graduate school experiences.

The particular focus of the round table discussion will be the Element One phase of the Four Element Model. The material regarding the Element One format and content, outcome measures, and goals will be presented. Element One is co-taught by two professors. One professor will present the expertise in literature and writing, while the other is the expert in a particular content area. In addition the implications of teaching in a collaborative model for course material, assessment of outcome measures and grading will be discussed. This round table will be represented by a literature/writing professor, as well as a Psychology professor presenting content on the psychology of resilience and its relationship to self concept.

Discussion during the round table will include prompts for discussion on areas related to content, literacy skills, assessment and outcome measures, use of technology, critical thinking skills, collaborative teaching model, and the encouragement of other institutions to share how they are addressing the similar pursuit of integrated literacy skills to specific content area in Psychology. Additional topics available to explore will include syllabi development, course materials utilized, outcome measures selected and how the development of literacy skills and the particular content of the course guide these selections.

The use of an eportfolio as an ongoing source of assessment will also be prompted for discussion. This has been identified as a specific outcome measure for students to post their work and serve as an outcome assessment tool over the course of the four years of the integrated literacy program. This assessment tool serves as an outcome tool for the students to track the development of their emerging literacy skills and content area expertise. In addition, it provides a critical tool in monitoring the effectiveness of the program and course of development the students demonstrate over time in response to the integrated literacy program.

Ongoing assessment of literacy skills, as well as critical thinking of the content area presented will be discussed in terms of the continual assessment and refinement of these skills demonstrated in the student's work over the course for their four years. Critical thinking skills are a core and integrated component to the work of the students. As a round table discussion, it will be included in questions and discussion. There will be opportunity for dialogue of how other institutions may be pursuing similar goals. Questions pertaining to what has served as effective as well as those variables found to be less effective will be discussed. Discussion regarding what other educators are identifying as successful and less effective will be prompted for discussion. The Element One Integrated Literacy program is a curriculum design that was designed to meet the increasing expectations of the demands of undergraduate work and provide transferrable skills key to future career and graduate school endeavors.

Questions will be utilized to prompt discussion of how other programs are addressing similar goals.

Utilization of technology to explore content, present topics and as an assessment tool will be prompted as well. As an innovative and newly launched program, outcome assessment and evaluations will also be a key component to the round table discussion and available for further discussion through inquiry of other programs and their methodology for the pursuit of similar goals and what has been found to be effective as well as interferences to such endeavors.

**A Five-slide Model for Pedagogy**

Emily A.A. Dow, The Graduate Center, CUNY; Jeff Kukucka, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY; Magdalena Galazyn, Kasey L. Powers, Patricia Brooks, College of Staten Island, CUNY

**Abstract:** The Five-slide Model is a template-tool to (1) teach content material to students, (2) enable students to develop oral communication skills, and (3) share pedagogical practices as a training tool in a collaborative setting. Speakers will discuss the development of the Five-slide Model and provide examples of how this model can be used in different educational settings.

**Summary:** The Five-slide Model is a template format that can be used in and out of the classroom for multiple purposes: teaching students content material, providing students with a format to present in the classroom and to develop oral communication skills, and to collaborate with other teachers. The Five-slide Model is a combination of the basic five-paragraph essay format commonly found in English composition courses with a coherent beginning, middle, and end, and the format of many teaching lessons plans that identify objectives, activity, and assessment. The Five-slide Model is designed for use with PowerPoint, but can be generalized into other technological formats.

Teaching with PowerPoint can be overwhelming at times, especially for novice teachers like graduate students. Publishers often provide supplemental slides with textbooks; instructors must avoid the pitfall of simply reading slides of material to students as a form of lecturing. As an alternative, the Five-slide Model can be used in the classroom to concisely organize content material that allows students to engage with the material. The Five-slide model is designed with an interactive activity embedded within the five slides. The first slide introduces the activity or content, 1-2 slides are devoted to the actual activity, and 1-2 concluding slides summarize and review the material. With a concise beginning, middle, and end, students are able to better process the most important information on the topic.

Jeff Kukucka will present an activity in which the Five-slide model is used to teach content material to students. This particular activity titled “Smarties and Dum Dums” will demonstrate different types of validity in a psychology research methods module. In setting up material in this format, teachers are able to organize and deliver the material effectively with a focus on student learning. When students are presented with only five slides there is a clear focus to the lesson. Students will not feel burdened to write down everything that is presented on a slide-set, but rather will participate with their classmates in an interactive activity that will facilitate long-term retention of lesson content through concrete examples and subsequent discussion. When material is presented concisely in this model, it creates an environment for student inquiry where students can ask questions and build upon the presented content.

Magdalena Galazyn and Kasey Powers will present a classroom activity developed to teach oral presentation and research skills to Introductory Psychology students. A challenge teachers face in the classroom is assessing student knowledge and providing students with the skills needed to be successful in and out of the classroom. Student presentations are one way that teachers can address both of these points. However, if left without clear instructions students often have too many PowerPoint slides, their slides are cluttered, or they are unable to accurately estimate how

long it will take them to complete their presentation. The Five-slide model can be used to help students organize material for in-class presentations and minimize overload. "Five Slides in Six Minutes" is an exercise designed by Magdalena Galazyn and Kasey Powers that requires students to concisely present material. The goals of the Five-slide model in this instance are to help students understand how to conduct research on a topic of psychological interest, find the most relevant information to include in a PowerPoint presentation, and gain experience in public speaking. Examples of successful student presentations will be shown, as well as the challenges faced when using this activity in the classroom.

Emily Dow will present how the Five-slide Model can be used as a collaborative pedagogy tool, and how it was used as template for a recent Teaching Show-and-Tell event where graduate students shared their teaching ideas. Collaborating with other teachers and graduate students is necessary for pedagogical training. The Five-slide Model can be used to tell a story of sorts in demonstrating a concept or an activity. Here, the template follows a format in which 1 slide identifies the specific objectives of the exercise or class sessions, 1-2 slides are devoted to material and activities used in the class, and 1-2 slides are summary, notes and assessment strategies for the material covered. The five-slide model is a way to share lesson plans and activities without "reinventing the wheel."

Patricia Brooks will be the discussant for this panel. Identifying challenges of teaching is always a first step, but addressing those challenges is a project in and of themselves. Teachers commonly face the challenges of covering material in a way that is clear and engaging, providing students with opportunities to share their knowledge, and productively assessing student learning. The Five-Slide Model is a template that has been successfully used in these specific contexts. This model is not limited to the medium of PowerPoint but rather can be generalized as a planning tool for organizing and presenting ideas across media.

**Teaching as Research: Building Community at a Large Urban University**

Kasey Powers, College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center, CUNY;
Jill Grose-Fifer, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and The Graduate Center, CUNY;
Eduardo Vianna, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY;
Maureen O'Connor, The Graduate Center, CUNY

**Abstract:** Teaching at a large urban university presents a unique set of challenges in helping a diverse undergraduate student population to succeed both academically and socially. We present here three studies linking collaborative learning with student success. Each study uses learning communities in and out of the classroom to enhance learning: The first examines the hybrid classroom, the second focuses on interdisciplinary learning communities, and the third looks at the integration of psychosocial and academic development in peer-based learning communities.

**Summary:** The City University of New York (CUNY) is a university system comprised of 11 senior colleges, seven community colleges, Macaulay Honors College (housed across multiple campuses) and five graduate schools. With 540,000 students, CUNY houses a diverse population including traditional undergraduate students, immigrants who are first-generation college students, and non-traditional students seeking continuing education. This diversity creates unique challenges for effective course management and instruction.

In this panel we present three studies that specifically focus on building learning communities that help motivate students to learn in psychology classrooms. In hybrid classrooms, students collaborate online to develop written communication skills and engage in self-paced learning. In interdisciplinary learning communities, co-curricular connections between English and psychology classes help students understand psychology concepts at a deeper level. Finally, peer-activist learning communities help students to develop the psychosocial skills needed to succeed in the classroom. Maureen O'Connor, Executive Officer of the PhD program in Psychology at CUNY will be the discussant for this panel.

Introductory Psychology in a Hybrid Format – Using Technology to Build a Virtual Classroom

Kasey L. Powers, Naomi J. Aldrich, Magdalena Galazyn, and Patricia J. Brooks

With increasing enrollment and a fixed amount of classroom space, hybrid courses have become a solution to allow more course sections to run while still providing students and instructors with traditional face-to-face time. The development of an Introduction to Psychology hybrid course was a collaborative process that included several instructors where activities and exams were co-constructed. Much of the lecture material was moved to the online portion of the course, where students were able to learn content at their own pace using the online modules provided by the textbook publisher (Pearson) and through their Course Management System (CMS), MyPsychLab. The CUNY supported CMS Blackboard aided classroom communication through announcements and posting of student grades. More importantly, though, Blackboard provided a forum for students to answer post-lecture, critical thinking questions in Discussion Boards. The Discussion Boards gave students opportunities to sharpen their writing skills by expressing their ideas in written form and by responding to peers. The Discussion Boards also functioned as an introduction to learning the art of online collaboration.

In addition to creating a virtual classroom, it was important to test the effectiveness of the format using qualitative and quantitative measures. Student surveys were given three times each

semester and identical exams were administered, which suggested similar learning outcomes for hybrid and traditional sections, despite the significant reduction of face-to-face time in the hybrid sections.

Student Success in Interdisciplinary Psychology–English Learning Communities

Jill Grose-Fifer, Kimberly Helmer and Tina Zottoli

Research suggests that there should be multiple intellectual and social benefits for students who enroll in Learning Communities (LCs) where they take 2 or more classes together with the same cohort. In this study we investigated whether students in psychology-based LCs (i.e., cohorts who took Introductory Psychology and English together) performed better on psychology tests than those in standard classes. We compared psychology test scores across three different class types: Connected LC, unconnected LC, and standard classes. In the connected LC, we created interdisciplinary links by using English class readings that related to the social psychology unit, and by requiring students to produce group podcasts that connected psychology theory to books that they read in English. In contrast, in the unconnected LCs, although students took both classes together, there were no interdisciplinary connections. Students in the connected LC had higher mean test scores in psychology than both students in unconnected LCs and those in standard classes. However, the scores of the unconnected LC and standard class students were not significantly different. Additionally, the connected LC group substantially outperformed the unconnected LC group on test questions in social psychology that related to prejudice and stereotypes, and we posit that this was because the English class readings in the connected LC made this material more memorable. Our results suggest that students perform better on psychology tests when efforts are made to consolidate information through interdisciplinary links in an LC.

Peer Activist Learning Community As a Place to Build Identity Outside the Classroom for Success In the Classroom

Eduardo Vianna

Community colleges offer a wide array of academic support programs and student services. Community colleges are challenged to engage in critical dialogue and jointly construct a curriculum of learning activities geared to the developmental needs of a diverse student body. However, such services typically remain fragmented and poorly coordinated, as institutional practices typically separate learning from student psychosocial development. Higher education research has indicated that such a gap negatively impacts student success, despite the role of co-curricular activities in overcoming this gap.

To address this issue, a voluntary, peer-based learning community was developed. The current project was inspired by sociocultural theory, which posits that learning leads development and constitutes an important gateway through which cognitive and identity development proceeds. As such, this project engages students in collaborative learning activities where knowledge construction is geared to developmental needs. Theoretical concepts are introduced as tools with which students can critically examine a range of social and psychological phenomena. Students apply theoretical concepts to better understand their own situation and positioning toward society. In this process and through various activities (e.g. students can chart their life agendas) new learning identities are formed. Students, along with the instructor and peers shape the development of coordination between overall life goals and the pursuit of learning. Simultaneously, knowledge construction is rendered an increasingly meaningful process. This co-curricular activity provides an example of how academic learning and student development can be integrated to produce high impact practices.

This work has allowed for data collection on synergistic changes in learning and identity development. These changes were operationalized in a threefold manner by monitoring students' (1) goal achievement and development (e.g., life goals, career goals, plans for graduation), (2) academic performance (e.g., grades and self-reports on academic participation in the college), and (3) participation and positioning in the group.

**Spoiler Alert! Using peer role-models to reveal the path to graduation and beyond.**

Heidi R. M. O'Connor, Ph.D., Anne E. Stuart, Ph.D.
American International College

**Abstract:** For many at-risk students, the path to a college degree is often obscure and filled with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. One way to help students see the path from introductory courses to graduation and beyond is to use upper-level students as role models for students who are early in their college career. Beyond the traditional use of upper-level students as tutors, they can also be role models through practicum talks, poster sessions, research symposia, and teaching assistants. In our presentation, we will discuss changes we have made in our curriculum in order to structure student exposure to peer role-models.

**Summary:** Colleges have an increasingly high percentage of first-generation students, which puts many students "at risk." Because these students have not had role models that they can draw from, many do not understand what it takes to earn a college degree. For at-risk students, the idea of a college degree can be an "impossible goal." Even though college is something they have dreamed of for a long time, success in earning a degree may feel like an unrealistic outcome. Students may not be supported by their families. As a result, students may engage in self-handicapping behaviors due to fear of success. Faced with these obstacles, professors must develop practical interventions along the way to complement the curriculum and support student success. How can we aid our students in overcoming the anxiety involved in acquiring the skills needed to earn a college degree and pursue a professional career? One approach involves setting clear, readily attainable goals and helping students see their peers as role models engaged in vivid demonstrations of the skills needed for success.

For students, the connection between what they are learning in introductory courses and what they will be doing in upper-level courses or in their careers is not always apparent. They may view each course independently as something they need to "get through" not realizing the need to retain the information for future classes or for career. Illustrating the usefulness of this information and the skills can motivate students to put more effort into their classes and to realize that they should retain the information for the future. Making the connections between basic skills acquisition and implementation of the skills in a career setting clearer to students has many positive outcomes including: 1) acquiring basic skills for success; 2) refining these basic skills; 3) increasing compliance with current assignments; 4) retaining information across classes; and 5) motivating students to develop skills relevant to the workforce.

To be successful in academia or the workplace many students need to develop skills, knowledge, social support, and self-confidence. While most classes help students develop skills and knowledge, incorporating the use of peer-role models to demonstrate the skills can provide a scaffold to aid in skill development. For example, we have students in a basic statistics course attend a poster session held by the methodology students to see the way statistics are used within the discipline and to realize they will be held accountable for that knowledge in a future course. These interactions also result in social support among students in the major and the message that courses leading up to the methodology course will prepare them to do the same.

Additionally, we require students in introductory level classes to attend specific events that showcase the skills and knowledge our students have acquired. When students realize that they will have to use their skills in other classes and that their knowledge will be on public display it pushes them to work harder in their current classes. Generation Y students are often actively engaged in impression management, therefore having them share their knowledge in a class or to an audience will often make them step up and perform at a higher level than they otherwise would.

Having peer-role models can assist introductory-level students because the role models can illustrate the use of basic skills in advanced courses. By sharing their experiences, students can learn from each other and recognize how the basic skills in introductory courses will be used in advanced courses and in the workplace as well. When they see peers behaving in a competent, confident, professional manner in a potentially fear-producing situation they may become desensitized to feeling fear when confronting a similar situation at a later time.

Using upper-level students as role models allows introductory students to set clear goals for their academic careers. They become more aware of the expectations we have of them in the classroom and the level of competition they may face for careers. Clear goals combined with beliefs based on expectancy theory that increased effort results in improved performance and that doing well will be noticed by professors and peers and rewarded increases student motivation. By using in-class or public forums for skill use, students are more actively engaged in projects. As they achieve success in some of these venues, they develop efficacy which can carry over into the workplace. This can be a valuable experience for many students who come to college underprepared or with doubts about their ability to succeed.

As students develop their knowledge and skills and use them in internships, they begin to see the relevance of their own educational experiences. Providing a forum for them to share these experiences allows other students and faculty to see how their education benefits them in the workplace. Faculty can share these examples with many students, helping them understand the importance of many skills.

Making student learning public can also provide many opportunities for the department as well. It is a chance to show off the projects and abilities of their students to other faculty, students, and administrators. This may bring many public relations opportunities to the department, highlighting the accomplishments of the students and providing illustrative examples for admissions offices to use in recruiting students. At small institutions where resources are scarce, this can provide memorable evidence of accomplishments which may sway those who make decisions about resources. It can also have a positive effect on students as they become alumni who have clear memories of their accomplishments.

**Cockroaches, Monsters, and Placebos: Ten Studies to Promote Student Appreciation for Research in Psychology**

Jeffrey D. Holmes, Ithaca College; Geoff Turner, Simmons College

**Abstract:** Psychology instructors face a chronic struggle with getting students to appreciate research. College students arrive with long established assumptions and intuitions about human behavior, and are often reluctant to believe their intuition is fallible. Moreover, many students fail to appreciate the need to learn about psychological research and research methods. In this talk, we will explore published studies instructors can use to spark student appreciation for research. Attendees will be encouraged to share their own suggestions for studies that are useful for initiating student interest in research.

**Summary:** This year's conference theme is "the science of learning." A parallel theme – but one of equal importance – concerns the learning of science. Undergraduate psychology instructors face a chronic struggle with getting students to appreciate research. College students arrive with long established assumptions and intuitions about human behavior, and are often reluctant to believe their intuition is fallible. Moreover, many students fail to appreciate the need to learn about psychological research and research methods. In this talk, we will explore studies instructors can use to spark student appreciation for psychological research. These studies are noteworthy for using remarkable methodologies or because the findings are particularly surprising – and in many cases relevant to undergraduate students. Our objective is to reveal to students that scientific research about behavior need not be boring, and that objective data are often at odds with our assumptions. Attendees will be encouraged to share their own suggestions for studies that are useful for initiating student interest in research. Such studies could come from any area of the discipline, so the varied expertise of audience members will enrich the experience for all present. We will discuss ten studies that in our experience elicit positive engagement from undergraduates, and we will emphasize the broader theme that instructors should always look for such opportunities to increase student appreciation for research. What follows is a brief description of some of the studies we will discuss.

One area that is rich with fascinating findings is placebo research. Students often begin their studies with a basic but unsophisticated grasp of what a placebo is. For example, students often think of placebos only as sugar pills that are substituted for active medications. They are therefore surprised to learn that placebo effects exist across a variety of domains and that they can be quite powerful. For example, Moseley et al. (2002) compared arthroscopic knee surgery with placebo knee surgery. The results revealed that patients who received genuine surgery experience no less pain and no greater function than patients who received placebo surgery. Students find this study interesting both because of its surprising results, and because it makes them aware that many surgical procedures have not been scientifically tested for effectiveness. There are many other placebo studies that yield equally surprising results.

Another set of studies we will discuss illustrate for students the surprising reality that many animals that are dramatically different from humans in terms of cognitive capacities nevertheless respond similarly to humans in a variety of situations. Several studies have even shown similarities in learning and social behavior between humans and cockroaches. For example, Zajonc and colleagues (1969) observed that cockroaches had enhanced performance on simple tasks but impaired performance on complex tasks when other cockroaches were present. Another set of studies using cockroaches demonstrates the fundamental nature of memory. In a

pair of studies, Dallenbach and colleagues (Jenkins & Dallenbach, 1924; Minami & Dallenbach, 1946) evaluated the claim that forgetting is primarily caused by decay – that memories simply fade with the passage of time. In these studies, humans and cockroaches learned something new. When awake and active after learning, both species lost more and more information as time passed. However, when asleep (or forced into inactivity in the case of cockroaches), both species showed minimal forgetting. In other words, humans and cockroaches show nearly identical forgetting curves, indicating that forgetting for both is a matter of interference and not decay. College students and cockroaches are nearly identical in another way. Freckleton and Wahlsten (1968) found that cockroaches show a drug-induced retrograde amnesia when given CO2 immediately after learning that is nearly identical to the alcohol-induced retrograde amnesia that college students show after binge drinking.

Because some of our mental activity is available for scrutiny, students often fail to grasp just how little of our cognition is open to introspection. For instance, most students believe that they would notice when the person they are speaking to is replaced by another person. Simons and Levin (1998) had a confederate request directions from a pedestrian. In the middle of the conversation, two construction workers carried a door between the confederate and the pedestrian. As the door passes between them, one of the door carriers switches places with the person requesting directions and continues to converse with the pedestrian. Surprisingly few pedestrians noticed the switch. In a similar vein, Wilson and colleagues (1993) showed how little insight we have into our preferences by showing that simply thinking about why we like something can reduce our enjoyment of that thing.

Finally, studies of children tend to be compelling to students. One study we will discuss demonstrates the importance of impulse control. In a set of now famous studies, Mischel and colleagues (1989) set a marshmallow in front of 4-year-olds who were told that they could either eat it immediately or wait and get a second marshmallow a few minutes later. In subsequent studies it became clear that those preschoolers who could wait showed greater cognitive and social competence in adolescence and young adulthood than those who could not. The ability to defer gratification seemed to be a characteristic that affected many aspects of the participants' lives. In a separate vein, Harris et al. (1991) assessed children's ability to differentiate fantasy from reality. The authors asked four and six year old children to imagine a monster in a box. When asked whether there really was a monster in the box, most of the children claimed that there was no monster and that they were just pretending, indicating a firm grasp of reality even among the younger children. However, very few children would agree to actually stick their hands inside the box at either age. This study illustrates both the development of fantastical thinking and the limits of using self-report.

# Service Learning and Reflection Writing Used to Promote Active Learning in an Abnormal Psychology Class

Eva Goldhammer, Ph.D.
City University of New York, Queensborough Community College

**Abstract:** This is a high impact pedagogical initiative, in a community college setting. The benefits of service learning were further enhanced in this project, by placement of abnormal psychology students to engage in service learning, into group homes or clinics, which service the mental health population. The course material was enhanced by this active learning component. Furthermore, instead of a theory-bound research paper, the writing component was fulfilled with a "journaling paper -which elucidated the distinction between expectations regarding the mental health population versus their new-found understanding". Additionally, the prospect of employment in this field was highlighted. Many psychology majors are discouraged by the specter of many years of education before they are employable. This initiative made quality, psychology-related employment within reach of even community college graduates.

**Summary:** Being a professor at one of the community colleges of City University of New York, poses several challenges. It is a system where all students are entitled to college education, but the lesser prepared ones are filtered to the community college system. If they can maintain their grades and earn an Associates' degree, they may continue on at one of the senior colleges, and earn a Bachelor's degree. This means that we get a disproportionate number of students who are unprepared or unmotivated. Many of them must work to contribute to family income, or have their own families. We struggle against a poor retention rate, a three year graduation rate of 14%, and a six year graduation rate of 31%. We notice a pattern of enrolling and leaving, as family and financial pressures mount, and occasionally returning, if possible.

We are dealing with a competing pair of challenges. On one hand, we are serving a population of students who have not had great education in the public school system, or have sociocultural expectations which undermine their success or present with language difficulties.. On the other hand, we have a responsibility to our material. We are, after all, psychologists. We are teaching the same psychology courses, the same material, coming from the same textbooks, and test, utilizing questions from the same test banks, as our colleagues at senior colleges. How can we bridge the gap between the population we are handed, and the educational outcomes we must generate? The answer is simple. We, the faculty, are the bridge. There is a premium on clarity and concrete examples in our classes, naturally. But, in addition to this, we are always looking for better and better pedagogical initiatives, and evaluating their efficacy, in promoting our students' success. My colleagues and I look for ways of improving student performance/motivation/satisfaction/retention, and ultimately, graduation rate. This is a description of a pedagogical innovation which appears to be helpful, at least at this preliminary assessment.

The "high-impact" methodologies that I have been using for several years include writing in the course. The concept of "writing to learn" is a well-understood and respected technique, which will be further elaborated in the presentation. Writing helps us to organize our thoughts, aid in information memory and processing. It also helps us generate new ideas. In addition to this writing component, I have added service learning, which is essentially volunteer work in a setting which enables my students to be exposed to the population which I am describing in class. This way, they are engaging in "active learning". Both of these techniques have been

shown to benefit the depth and complexity of students' understanding. My purpose of incorporating service learning in the class was for more than typical reasons. I wanted to go beyond enhanced student satisfaction, or a sense of communal involvement, as lofty a goal as that may be. I am interested in making the location of service learning match well with the material being taught in class, thereby offering active learning of the material.

In place of a theoretical paper, I asked students in my abnormal psychology class to write a "reflection" report. Loosely, they were asked to write about their experience either in a group home, or in a clinic setting. Both of these locations were populated by schizophrenics, and consumers who present with various kinds of developmental disabilities. This form of "expressive writing" is personal, more emotional, less reliant on evidence, and draws more from impressions. It allows for hunches, suspicions, even detouring on some tangents. The purpose here is not to repeat other peoples' thoughts, but to generate novel ideas, as part of this exercise in active learning.

A strong motivational component was also added to the aforementioned strategies. This particular class was an evening class. The average class age is significantly older than standard college students. Many are returning to college ten, twenty or more years later, interested in further education, to enhance their career prospects. They focus less on what is the easier course, and more on what will make them more lucratively employable. Since abnormal psychology is not requisite for any major, most are in this class because of a genuine interest in the material. But interest is not enough. They are also looking for improved job opportunities. In the past, as they inquired about the requirements to practice psychology, my response about Master's degrees and Doctorates, and the typical amount of time necessary to complete them, chased many students away. In this intervention, I made it clear that caring for the developmentally delayed and psychologically disabled population is a large, and growing area of consistent employment. Even entry level positions offer candidates about double the minimum wage, and wages climb consistently with experience and motivation. My students were eager and delighted to participate in the active learning component of the course, and gain this experience.

# "Is anybody in there?" Intellectual Engagement in the Classroom: A sample of successful activities for enhancing active learning

Kristin Kenneavy, Lysandra Perez-Strumolo
Ramapo College of New Jersey

**Abstract:** Do you ever get the feeling that while your students are physically in your classroom they are really somewhere else? As part of a faculty development initiative, presenters read Elizabeth Barkley's (2010) Student Engagement Techniques for inspiration and then went to work to engage the unengaged. Focused on the need to improve participation in class discussion, presenters designed and implemented activities to engage their students in critical thinking and to promote intellectual discussion in the classroom. In this session, presenters will describe their engagement techniques and share their experiences in implementing them. Challenges and successes will be discussed.

**Summary:** While active intellectual engagement is a necessary element of significant learning, it is often difficult to engage our students actively in the process of learning. This is especially true of class discussions. Not only can it be very difficult to effectively engage students in class discussion but it is almost impossible to determine any a particular student's level of intellectual engagement when the instructor has to do most of the talking in a learning space.

While we may value dialogue and scholarly conversations as an important vehicle for creating and sharing ideas, students most often resist opportunities to engage in this type of activity. Student resistance can certainly be quite strong, and the lack of dialogue in the classroom may condition the instructor to rely on lecture as a primary mode for teaching. Although students may prefer a passive role in the classroom, such a position is not ideal for promoting learning. While some students can benefit from this mode of teaching, many can become disconnected: physically present, but cognitively and emotionally absent.

Faced with the challenge of student disengagement and resistance to discussion, the presenters participated in a faculty development initiative designed to promote intellectual engagement in the classroom. As part of this initiative, an interdisciplinary group of faculty members read Elizabeth Barkley's (2010) Student Engagement Techniques and met over the course of one semester to discuss the reading with their peers. Each member of this group was then invited to develop an engagement technique for one of their courses and to implement the technique the following term.

In this session, two instructors who participated in this initiative will share their experiences in developing and implementing activities designed to improve the quality and frequency of class discussion. Each presenter will describe the specific challenges they aimed to address as part of their faculty development work. Presenters will briefly describe their courses, providing a context for their engagement challenge. We will then move to describe the specific techniques identified for implementation in detail and will provide sample materials, such as instructions and rubrics for activities as appropriate. A variety of techniques will be presented including:

(a) Quotes: The instructor leads class discussion by identifying important quotes from the reading and from other sources and asks students to do the same in preparation for class. During

class, students and the instructor share their quotes and discuss each in the context of the specific reading, their prior learning in the discipline and their experience

(b) Analytic discussion teams: Students are assigned to teams of 4 at the start of term. The role of the team members is to read the assigned material, devise discussion questions and be prepared to lead discussion in class when randomly selected to do so; teams are graded for the effectiveness in leading discussion and engaging their peers. Students receive detailed instructions for their work on the teams as well as a rubric that is later used to grade their performance. In advance of their team work, students complete a team agreement.

(c) Concept puzzles: A technique used to help students review concepts involves the preparation of a puzzle by the instructor prior to class. In class, students work in small groups of 2 or three to put the puzzle together.

(d) Team quizzes: Prior to discussion of an assigned reading, students work in pairs to complete a quiz; especially fun if an immediate feedback assessment form (IFAT) is used.

(e) The snowball technique: When students are especially disengaged, each is asked to jot down a question they have about the material on a piece of loose paper. Students are then instructed to crumple their paper and to pass it to another student, who then is asked to read the question and to attempt to answer it.

As a way to illustrate the effectiveness of these engagement techniques, the presenters will demonstrate each of the activities with the audience, creating an engaged atmosphere in the session. In the context of these demonstrations presenters will discuss the use of the activities for promoting critical reading and discussion of course content.

Following each demonstration, presenters will describe each activity and then discuss the challenges and successes they experienced as they piloted each of them. Presenters will address the use of instructions, criteria, and grading methods for the purpose of promoting intellectual engagement in discussions and for reducing resistance. We will then discuss student resistance to these activities as well as student feedback and instructor impressions regarding the effectiveness of each. Potential problems in implementing these techniques will also be identified as well as the methods for preventing and/or responding to them.

**Teaching Integrated Research Methods and Data Analysis Courses: A model for enhancing student learning through intellectual engagement and research experience**

Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Nick Salter
Ramapo College of New Jersey

**Abstract:** While psychology is an increasingly popular major for undergraduates, many psychology students are less interested in the scientific basis of our discipline than one would like them to be. In this session, two psychology professors will share their success in teaching research methods and data analyses to undergraduate psychology majors using a design that is focused on application and authentic experience with research design and implementation. The design of the course will be described in detail and students will also share their experiences in the course.

**Summary:** While across the nation, young adults are increasingly interested in the field of psychology, most psychology majors almost dread the idea of having to take a research and/or statistics course as part of their curriculum. The anxiety, disinterest, and confusion about the scientific basis of the discipline can often limit the ability of students to develop and benefit from an understanding of research methods and the scientific basis of our field.

In this session, two instructors will share their success in teaching research methods and data analyses to undergraduate psychology majors. The design of the course is one that is heavily focused on application and authentic experience with research design and implementation as the primary vehicle for learning. Moreover, the design of the course is integrated in that it teaches data analysis in the context of teaching methods.

Presenters will begin with a discussion of the specific challenges faced in teaching research methods and statistics to psychology majors. We will specifically focus on student perspectives and will summarize data collected over several years regarding challenges to success that students expect to face when they enroll in research methods and statistics courses. The primary themes of math anxiety, fears related to the rigor of the course, and concerns about managing the workload will be emphasized. As the presentation progresses to a discussion of the course design, elements aimed at responding to these student concerns will be highlighted.
The presenters will then continue by reviewing some of the literature on undergraduate research and the benefits of this experience for students, faculty members and their institutions. The research of Wayment and Dickson (20080 will be reviewed with an emphasis on the ways undergraduate research can enhance student learning, improve teaching effectiveness, and promote institutional goals.
Theoretical models used as a foundation in the design of the course presented will also be discussed, with an emphasis on Fink's taxonomy for significant learning (Fink, 2003) and the concept of authentic tasks as presented by Herrington and Reeves (2003). Fink's taxonomy will be referenced as a context for the development of course goals, assessment tasks, and in- and out-of-class learning activities.

The work of Herrington and Reeves 92003) will provide a context for understanding the conceptualization of the course as an opportunity for students to engage in the authentic task of research development and implementation. We will review the model proposed by Herrington

and Reeves 920030 for conceptualizing authentic learning tasks and will discuss these elements as they apply to the research work of our students in research methods. We will focus on the role of experience in the learning process as a vehicle for improving student motivation. We will also discuss how research, conceptualized as an authentic learning task, can move students toward a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the course content in research methods and statistics.

Following a review of relevant research and theory, presenters will describe the design of their research methods and data analyses courses in detail. We will discuss learning goals, assessment tasks, and learning activities, with an emphasis on the integration of these course components through the process of backward course design. Links between assessment tasks and learning goals will be explicitly presented. The use of various in- and out-of-class learning activities will be discussed as well as their aims in enhancing student understanding and skills development. Presenters will then review a variety of sample course materials, including samples of student work that demonstrate growth in various areas over the course of the semester.

Students participating as co-presenters will share their experiences in the course. They will discuss their impressions of the course prior to enrollment, the challenges they expected to face as well as other preconceptions about the topics of research methods and statistics. Students will then identify and discuss aspects of the course they found most helpful and most challenging, and will describe the methods they used to cope with the aspects of the course that most challenged them.

Students will then provide an overview of their own research projects completed in the course and will discuss the ways their research supported their development along the learning goals. We expect that student presenters will submit proposals for the poster session at the conference. Those participants who attend the session will then have an opportunity to more closely examine the work our students completed in the course.

Instructors will wrap up the session with a discussion of their experiences with challenges and successes in teaching the course and with some time for questions and comments from the audience.

# Teaching Observational Coding to Undergraduates Using an Online Tool

John M. Worrall
State University of New York College at Oneonta

**Abstract:** Observational coding is a common task in psychological research. Undergraduate research assistants can benefit from learning coding skills, and coding can help increase student research engagement. However, training students to be reliable coders can be time-consuming and difficult. After a review of the challenges and benefits of teaching coding to undergraduate students, this workshop will focus on an interactive practice coding session using an online coding tool. Participants will practice coding a clip from a mock psychotherapy session, led by the presenter using the online coding tool. The workshop will include a review of resources for teaching coding skills.

**Summary:** Introduction

Observational coding is a common task in psychological research. Learning to code well on a research project can be challenging and time-consuming, requiring a range of well-developed observational and organizational skills. Teaching undergraduate research assistants to code as part of their involvement in psychological research can have several benefits, such as increased student engagement. Coding gives students exposure to substantive research content in an active rather than passive way, and may provide an incentive for involvement in other research activities, such as data entry and administrative tasks. The skills, including observational and organizational skills, that a student develops while learning to code can generalize to her or his career or personal life, and in particular represent a valuable addition to a curriculum vita for a student considering graduate school. Finally, research teams, which often struggle to train enough reliable coders to meet their needs, can have access to more coders.

Training students to be reliable coders in a protocol can be time-consuming and difficult, requiring multiple practice sessions and a lot of faculty or senior research staff time. New methods are needed to more effectively help students to practice the skills necessary to be reliable coders and learn coding protocols. An online coding tool has been developed to facilitate the teaching of coding skills, and to allow students to practice with less need for supervision.

The online coding tool, which was developed by the author, can work with different coding protocols. However, for the purposes of this workshop, we will use the validation coding protocol (e.g., Shenk & Fruzzetti, 2011) as an exemplar to illustrate the process. The validation coding protocol has been used to code therapist validating and invalidating behaviors in psychotherapy and clinical research (Shenk & Fruzzetti).

## Validation Coding and Online Coding Tool Overview

The validation coding protocol is an effective vehicle for training undergraduate students in coding skills. The protocol, although quite complex in its entirety, can be introduced to students in stages. It was designed to code specific therapist and client in-session behaviors during clinical outcome research. It will be used as an exemplar in this workshop to illustrate the use of

the online coding tool for teaching coding skills. The online coding tool with the validation coding protocol can be seen at: www.dbt-its.com/v-code/main.html.

There are many definitions of validation. However, in this context it may be defined as the communication of one's acceptance and understanding of another person's feelings, thoughts, desires, or actions. In contrast, invalidation may be thought of as communication of a failure to understand or accept (Fruzzetti & Worrall, 2010). There are several levels of validation, which are reflected in the coding protocol (Linehan, 1993; Lynch, 2006).

The online coding tool used with the validation coding protocol can greatly speed up a new coder's learning curve. The tool uses a drag-and-drop interface to simplify the coding process, and it helps novice coders to start coding with relatively little orientation or prior training.

Activity - Coding Therapy Behaviors Using the Online Coding Tool and Validation Coding Protocol

This activity will be the main focus of the workshop. It will involve watching and coding as a group, therapist and client validating or invalidating behaviors during a five-minute clip of a mock psychotherapy session in which both the therapist and client are actors.

The video will be shown in one-minute segments during which participants will be asked to attempt to code validating and/or invalidating behaviors using a provided form, and printed step-by-step coding instructions and key. After participants have coded a segment, we will watch the same segment again as a group. Participants will be asked to call out when the video reaches a point where they coded a validating or invalidating behavior. The video will then be stopped and a code will be entered using the online coding tool. There will then be a brief discussion about the code entered, and if necessary a correction will be made. Participants will be asked to note on their form whether or not the code that they entered (if any) matched the consensus code entered using the online tool.

The group will watch, code and discuss as many one-minute segments as time permits. Participants will be asked to comment on whether their accuracy improved as they coded more segments.

Debrief and Discussion

Providing undergraduate students with opportunities to learn and apply observational coding skills on research projects can increase student engagement and learning, and increase research productivity. For many students coding may be a preferred activity, especially when compared with other research tasks: it may be used as an incentive to encourage more research participation. A coder's duties may expand over time to include, for example, the training of other coders, the calculation of inter-rater reliability scores, and other tasks.

In any research ethical issues must be addressed, including obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of mechanisms to permit student involvement. This is especially important for research in, for example, the fields of clinical and counseling psychology, where the coding of

individual or group psychotherapy sessions will likely require, at a minimum, client and therapist consent.

The online coding tool demonstrated in this workshop can be used in a class setting to teach coding concepts and skills experientially. It can also be used to help individual learners more quickly build skills with little prior training needed. The tool is freely available and it can be easily customized to incorporate different coding schemes used by research projects.

Fruzzetti, A. E. & Worrall, J. M. (2010). Accurate expression and validation: A transactional model for understanding individual and relationship distress within couple interactions. In K. Sullivan & J. Devila, Support processes in intimate relationships, Oxford.

Linehan, M. M. (1993). Cognitive-behavioral treatment of borderline personality disorder. New York, NY US: Guilford Press.

Lynch, T. M. (2006). Mechanisms of change in dialectical behavior therapy: Theoretical and empirical observations. Journal Of Clinical Psychology, 62(4), 459-480.

Shenk, C. E., & Fruzzetti, A. E. (2011). The impact of validating and invalidating responses on emotional reactivity. Journal Of Social And Clinical Psychology, 30(2), 163-183.

Worrall, J. M., & Fruzzetti, A. E. (2009). Improving peer supervisor ratings of therapist performance in dialectical behavior therapy: An Internet-based training system. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 46(4), 476-479.

**Rebus Puzzles in Psychology Courses: Fun and Versatile!**

Stephen A. Wurst
Oswego State University, SUNY

**Abstract:** Rebus puzzles, familiar to viewers of the old television game show Concentration, are picture puzzles that when each component picture is identified and combined, results in a recognizable phrase. By using faces of celebrities or other pop culture items, rebuses can be used in multiple ways over a wide range of psychology topics, such as visual perception (facial identification), speech perception (word segmentation), memory (applied to mnemonics), and cognition (problem solving/ insight). An additional benefit is that it promotes student interaction, and can be used as a warm-up exercise for class. Several examples will be provided in this presentation.

**Summary:** Rebus puzzles, familiar to viewers of the old television game show Concentration, are picture puzzles, that when each component picture is identified, results in a recognizable phrase. By adding faces of celebrities or other pop culture items, rebuses can be used in multiple ways over a wide range of psychology topics, such as visual perception (facial identification), speech perception (word segmentation), memory (the keyword method of mnemonics), and cognition (problem solving/ insight).

To make the idea of the rebuses more concrete, here is a verbal description of a simple puzzle. The first picture is a photo of NBA star Jeremy Lin; the second picture is a photo of singer Cee-Lo Green, and the third picture is Harrison Ford as Han Solo from Star Wars. Students are told that the correct solution will involve using either the first or last name of the person or the character. With some trial and error, the solution emerges: "Lin – CeeLo –Han" is re-segmented as "Lindsey Lohan". (These puzzles can also be thought of as a visual version of the board game MadGabs. )

There are two major topics in perception that can be related to these puzzles: Facial identification, and speech stream segmentation. Each face must be identified to solve the puzzle, so visual perception concepts such the difference between facial recognition and identification, top-down processing, prosopagnosia, and the Fusiform Facial Area can be related to the rebuses. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the solution also involves word segmentation in a speech stream, again showing that top-down processing occurs when perceiving ambiguous speech patterns. The emphasis on top-down processing also can be discussed in relation to how a human may be better at solving the rebus better than a computer (e.g., Goldstein, 2010). For example, a class discussion question would be if a skilled human beat IBM's "Watson" at solving these puzzles.

These puzzles can be related to mnemonics as well, especially using the keyword method to learn people's names. One noteworthy example would be Joshua Foer's best-selling book Moonwalking with Einstein, in which Foer practices for a memory competition using mnemonics. Even on page 1 of the book, Foer references Dom DeLuise, Rhea Perlman, Michael Jackson Albert Einstein, and Manute Bol, as keywords in his mnemonic. But without increasing your knowledge base, a person's ability to use the keyword method would be limited. (Maybe not too surprisingly, most students do not know Dom DeLuise or Rhea Perlman). Using rebuses

helps increase this base in a fun way, and provides support for the adage “The more you know, the better your memory”.

Rebuses have been used in problem solving research also. Cunningham, MacGregor, Gibb and Harr (2009), and MacGregor and Cunningham (2008) are two articles that employ rebuses (although in a simpler form), that are at a level appropriate for undergraduate students to analyze in a research methods course, or in cognition. Smith and Blankenship (1989) also demonstrated incubation effects when participants solved rebuses.

An added benefit of using the rebuses is that it can be used as a warm-up exercise as the professor sets up for class, and that it promotes student interaction. The puzzles are constructed in a way that it is difficult for one person to get the solution, since each component can be selected from different generations and profession. For example, one puzzle has the golfer Michelle Wie; the American humorist Will Rogers; the 1950s-1960s movie star Rock Hudson; current movie star Will Smith; and the character “Q” from the James Bond movies.

This presentation will provide several examples of the rebuses, and will be related to the topics discussed above. Audience participation will also demonstrate the more social aspects of using the rebuses in a classroom setting.

References

Cunningham, J.B., MacGregor, J.N., Gibb, J., & Haar, J. (2009). Categories of insight and their correlates: An exploration of relationships among classic-type insight problems, rebus puzzles, remote associates and esoteric analogies. The Journal of Creative Behavior, 43, 262-280.

Foer, J. (2011) Moonwalking with Einstein. New York: Penguin Press.

Goldstein, E. B. (2010). Sensation and perception (8th ed). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

MacGregor, J.N., & Cunningham, J.B. (2008). Rebus puzzles as insight problems. Behavior Research Methods. 40, 263-268.

Smith, S. M., & Blankenship, S. E. (1989). Incubation effects. Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society, 27, 311-314.

**Using Active Learning Strategies in the Psychology Classroom**

Barbara Pezzanite, Christine Feeley, Marla Johnston
Farmingdale State College

**Abstract:** Research has shown that active verses passive learning increases retention of new information. According to Adler (1982), "learning is a process of discovery in which the student is the main agent, not the teacher." This "active learning" workshop is designed to demonstrate interesting, and hopefully innovative, ways of presenting concepts in psychology that will grab the students' attention in the classroom, peak their interest in the material, and most importantly aid in the learning process. Sample demonstrations will cover concepts from areas of psychology including learning theory, research methods, memory, abnormal, and possibly more.

**Summary:** The following is a list of some of the demonstrations/concept checks that will be conducted during the workshop:

- Shaping Exercise
- Classical Conditioning exercise using balloons and a clicker
- Health Psychology – utilize the College Life Stress Inventory (CLSI) or an abbreviated version (College Life Stress Inventory Exercise)
- Correlation Concept Check
- Independent & Dependent Variables Concept Check
- Experimental Concept Check – Coke vs. Pepsi Taste Test
- Selecting Appropriate Research Methods
- Matching Parenting Styles with Research Results
- The Heinz Dilemma
- Gorilla in the Scene
- Health Psychology – Are You Getting Enough Sleep?
- Hypnosis – Can You Be Hypnotized?
- Classical Conditioning Concept Check
- Negative Reinforcement vs. Punishment Concept Check
- Classical vs. Operant Conditioning Concept Check
- Short-term Memory Test (In-class Demonstration)

**The Psychology Department Poster Session: Providing undergraduate psychology majors with an in vivo research presentation experience.**

Colleen Jacobson
Iona College

**Abstract:** The current presentation will describe our approach to exposing undergraduate psychology majors to "real life" research presentation via our Psychology Department Poster session. This presentation will describe our psychology major research curriculum, which includes a poster session in May each year. Each student is responsible for completing an independent research project and presenting his/her findings via a poster presentation. Student presenters (n=40-60) as well as fellow students, faculty members, and members of the administration attend the poster session. This year we added a competitive component and a member of the administration judged the posters and we awarded two runners up and a first place award. Results of student ratings of the poster session and competition component will be presented. Ample time for discussion and brainstorming with audience members regarding research in the undergraduate curriculum will be allotted for.

**Summary:** The current presentation will describe our approach to exposing undergraduate psychology majors to "real life" research presentation via our Psychology Department Poster session. This presentation will describe our psychology major research curriculum, which includes a poster session in May each year. Our goal for the poster session is to give the students a complete academic and professional experience. Each student is responsible for completing an independent research project and presenting his/her findings via a poster presentation. Student presenters (n=40-60) as well as fellow students, faculty members, and members of the administration attend the poster session. Faculty members visit the posters and ask the students to describe their projects, noting strengths, weaknesses and future plans. This year we added a competitive component and a member of the administration judged the posters and we awarded two runners up and a first place award. Results of student ratings of the poster session and competition component will be presented. Ample time for discussion and brainstorming with audience members regarding research in the undergraduate curriculum will be allotted for.

**Dragging vs. Drinking: Do Intro Students Take (or even know to take) Advantage of Test Incentives?**

David J. Bennett, Ph.D.
North Park University

**Abstract:** Teachers at times must walk the fine line between giving students the grades "they deserved" and motivating students not only towards success but also away from frustration. Incentives in the form of additional points added to past tests were offered to Introduction to Psychology students to improve subsequent test scores. For example, if a student improved on Test 3 he/she earned one half of the improvement to be applied to his/her Test 2 score. Serial student scores are examined across the semester as related to the presence or absence of such an incentive. Retrospective and prospective metacognitive awareness was also assessed. These results are discussed within the context of incentive use and motivation as well as metacognitive evidence and theory.

**Summary:** Teachers at times must walk the fine line between giving students the grades "they deserved" and motivating students not only towards success but also away from frustration. Sometimes frustration is itself motivating but we need to be wary of the degree of frustration, lest it then hinder their future motivation towards improvement. Introduction to Psychology provides a challenge to the teacher given the diversity of interest and/or investment in a typical classroom. At North Park University the course is a single semester and serves both psychology majors and non-majors. Students sometimes seem to approach the course as though it will be less challenging than some of their major courses. The inherently interesting nature of the topic might also help to create in a student a positive bias, that is, they may underestimate the amount of work needed to succeed in the course. This may be compounded by their assumption that their friends find them "easy to talk to." It is not uncommon then, that they sometimes do poorly on exams. Several years ago I battled with what might be an appropriate incentive that was not so generous as to reward their earlier sloth. The proposed presentation will contain a description of this strategy and an analysis of relevant data. The analysis is ongoing.

In the spring of 2012, on the heels of a low average on an Introductory Psychology test I decided to reward students for improving on a subsequent test. As a control, no incentive was offered between Test 1 and Test 2 but instead between Test 2 and Test 3. If a student improved on Test 3 he/she earned one half of the improvement to be applied to his/her Test 2 score (e.g., score 50 on Test 2 and 70 on Test 3: 70-50=20/2=10 points added to Test 2 thereby increasing it to a score of 60). If they did not improve on Test 3, they saw no addition to their Test 2 score. The current study, though far from free of potential threats to internal validity, does use as a control the change in scores between Test 2 and Test 1 when no incentive was offered. Of additional interest to the investigator was the students' metacognitive awareness both retrospectively and prospectively.

Immediately before each exam (pretest) and immediately after each exam (post test) each student answered three questions: (1) My recollection of my point total of [the previous test] (1-100) was; (2) My prediction of my point total (0-100) on this test is; and (3) My predicted Final letter grade (A, A-, B+, B, etc.) for this course is. These estimates are then examined for the degree of relationship (correlation) with actual earned totals.

Although there are many analyses to follow on this work in progress, some early results are presented here. Despite this course not maintaining grades online, students were quite

successful when attempting to recollect their earlier test scores (e.g., Test 2 pretest recollection of Test 1 r = .98; and Test 4 pretest recollection of Test 2 r = .90). This is consistent with the belief that a student does have a fair awareness of how he/she is currently performing in the course. When predicting their point total for the entire course their predictions became more accurate with each subsequent test (e.g., Test 2 r = .69; Test 3 r = .87; and Test 4 r = .89), as would be expected. These and other results are explored in the context of metacognitive evidence and theory, along with other pedagogical suggestions to nurture this developing skill.

On the issue of motivation, when comparing the differences between Test 3 and Test 2 to Test 2 and Test 1, students as a group showed significant improvement. These results and others will be presented within the context of incentive use and motivation.

# Using Google Forms to Collect Data and Present Results for In-class and Out-of-class Lab Projects

Geoff Turner
Simmons College

**Abstract:** The ubiquity of smartphones allows for in-class data collection and presentation with little technological expertise or equipment. By setting up a Google "form" before class, students can enter data from nearly any active-learning exercise using a smartphone's browser. The data can be downloaded and added to an existing spreadsheet with pre-made figures. These figures can be incorporated into PowerPoint before class and updated as new data are downloaded. Consequently, student responses can be presented and discussed immediately, allowing for classroom interactions that are not otherwise possible. The basic method will be demonstrated and easily adaptable sample spreadsheets and forms provided.

**Summary:** As resources across college campuses shrink, the number of lab-based courses at my institution has declined. Faculty are faced with the choice of either eliminating the laboratory-based active-learning exercises known to foster student learning and engagement or finding creative workarounds. One such workaround is to have students engage in brief laboratory exercises in class or on longer exercises on their own as out-of-class homework assignments.

In either case, by setting up a Google "form" before a class period, students can enter data from nearly any kind of active learning exercise via a web-browser. The data can be downloaded as a spreadsheet and added to an existing Excel spreadsheet that has had a chart or figure created without data. This pre-made chart or figure can be incorporated into a PowerPoint presentation before class so that the data are linked. Once the data have been downloaded – either before or during a class – the chart or figure is automatically and immediately updated. Consequently, a display of student responses to complex or involved activities can be presented to a class and discussed, allowing for interactions not otherwise possible, even with "clicker" technology.

The ideal case involves using Google forms as part of out-of-class homework assignments. In this case, even data from relatively time-consuming or complex activities can be recorded and analyzed. For example, Psychology 101 students can recreate Milgram's (less famous) conformity and crowd size experiment. In this lab, student groups of varying size stand on the public sidewalk in front of a building and stare at the roof without talking or gesturing. Other students observe passers-by and record the number who look up and the number who both stop and look up. Students then use a Google form (specially created by the professor) to record the number of passers-by who look up and the number who stop and look up for each of the group sizes tested. The Google form collects the students' entries and saves them to a spreadsheet that can be downloaded as a Microsoft Excel file.

A second Microsoft Excel spreadsheet can be created (either before or after the Google spreadsheet is downloaded) that computes averages (and/or standard deviations, frequencies, etc.) using references to the cells in the Google generated spreadsheet. When the statistics are computed using references for which there are no data (because, for example, the Google spreadsheet hasn't been downloaded yet), error messages are generated within the cells, but the

formulae remain intact and "wait" for the data. All that is required is that the name and location (folder) where the Google generated spreadsheet is (or will be) located be known. Because the Google generated spreadsheet can be named and saved to any location arbitrarily, this restriction poses no problem whatsoever. The pre-created Excel spreadsheet (that calculates descriptive statistics, etc.) can also have charts or figures associated with those pre-calculated descriptive statistics. As with any calculated statistics, the chart or figure will remain empty (or show an error) until the reference cells are populated with data (from the downloaded Google spreadsheet). Until that time, however, they remain "waiting" for input.

In the case of the Milgram study, the data from several student groups is combined into one dataset and the average number of "lookers" and "stop and lookers" are computed by an Excel worksheet before the data are collected. Further, those averages are graphed. As the data are downloaded with a specific, pre-arranged file name and folder location, the cells in the Excel worksheet change. If the chart is also saved in a PowerPoint presentation, it can be instantly updated as well. Thus, the same assignment can be completed semester after semester with minimal work for the faculty member. Most importantly, students can see their data in class.

Unlike with traditional "clickers," smartphones (like the iPhone) are nearly ubiquitous. The increasing popularity of smartphones allows for in-class data collection and presentation with little technological expertise or equipment. All that is required is a cellular or WiFi connection for students' phones and a WiFi or Ethernet connection for the faculty member's computer (which has Microsoft Excel – and possibly Microsoft PowerPoint). Again, Google forms can be used – students simply enter the data from shorter studies (such as line length comparisons illustrating Weber's Law) using the web browser on their smartphones. If the task is short enough, students can share phones with minimal loss of class time. The data generated and recorded in-class can be collated, analyzed, and graphed in real time. The "work" takes place before class; so automatic (and instantaneous) updating is all that happens in class. And again, students see the results of their data (almost) immediately and become witnesses to the psychological phenomenon under discussion.

In this workshop, I will provide a brief demonstration and easily adaptable sample forms and Excel files (that include both calculations and charts and/or figures) for participants to use as they are subsequently guided through the above-mentioned three-step process of spreadsheet creation, form creation, and chart/figure placement in PowerPoint. Participation will require the use of a computer that has an Internet connection and web browser as well as Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint.

# Gamification of a Statistics Course

Thomas Heinzen
William Paterson University of New Jersey

**Abstract:** Gamification is the application of principles of game design to non-game purposes. This presentation a) reviews the principles of game design; b) describes how they have been applied to non-game settings; c) and describes how they were applied to a course in statistics. Preliminary feedback suggests that gamification of this statistic course provides both opportunities and threats. The social context of gamification suggests that our students' behavior has been telling us for some time that they will work harder and achieve more if we restructure our courses according to the principles of game design.

**Summary:** Gamification is the application of principles of game design to non-game purposes. A game is a situation in which participants voluntarily try to overcome unnecessary obstacles – an apt description of what takes place in many of our classrooms. This presentation a) reviews the principles of game design; b) describes how they have been applied to non-game settings; and c) describes how they were applied to a course in statistics.

Although it is a recent term, gamification has a long history. Greek philosopher Heroditus recounted a story asserting that games were invented during a time of an 18-year famine when the king alternated days of distracting games of dice with days when food could be eaten. Game design relies on theoretically diverse yet well-established psychological principles such as partial reinforcement, the importance of flow, social comparisons, and the ability to manipulate emotions and create alternate states of consciousness. The principles of game design encourage us to rethink course design according to alternative criteria: 1) distinguishing between hard and soft fun and consciously embedding fun in course design; 2) rewarding achievement through a combination of points, leader boards, and badges; 3) taking advantage of repetition; and 4) nourishing the intrinsic motivation of students to play.

Game design has already been applied to many non-game situations. Kevin Werbach at the University of Pennsylvania pointed out that many current business activities reflect principles of game design, such as loyalty programs that reward frequent flyer miles or free Starbucks coffee after ten purchases. The Army uses games as a recruiting and selection device. A proposed traffic game rewards persistent non-speeders with money collected from speeders. There are online Green competitions to see which home leaves the smallest carbon footprint. Massive Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs) require participants to discern the trustworthiness of unknown people, make decisions under conditions of uncertainty, and practice many of the lessons we hope that a liberal education will teach our students.

Gaming is intrinsically motivating. Jane McGonigal's TED talk asserted that there are 500 million gamers who are "extraordinarily good at something." She proposed that those skills include 1) acting with urgent optimism (because an "epic win" is always possible); 2) weaving a tight social fabric (gaming creates trust); 3) experiencing blissful productivity (happily working hard); and 4) love epic meaning (note the epic story lines in many games). Successful video games are NOT just about boys blowing stuff up. Sandbox (Minecraft), Building (Civilization and Sim City), Social Building (The Sims, Farmville), MMOGs or Massive Multiplayer Online Games (World of Warcraft), and Puzzles (Portal 2, Angry Birds) all require sophisticated social interactions.

The following information was supplied from diverse sources (e.g. TED Talks by Jane McGonigal, Professor Werbach's course in gaming) and has not been peer-reviewed. However inaccurate they may be, they still suggest that gaming is a big part of our students' lives.

- Students spend as much time gaming as they spend in high school.
- Cityville, launched in 2011, went from 0 – 100 million users in 41 days.
- Video gaming is a 66 billion dollar industry (double that of Hollywood).
- China is the biggest online market.
- The average gamer is 30 years old and 47% of gamers are female.
- 97% of 12-17 year old play video games.
- There are 400,000 gold farmers in China who make actual money by selling points to other gamers.

After class disruptions due to Hurricane Sandy, I redesigned the second half of the course in statistics around some of the principles of game design. The redesign required students to demonstrate their SPSS skills every week in class and as part of their homework, and to progress repeatedly through levels of SPSS performance. I publicly rewarded achievement by assigning those who had advanced more quickly to help struggling students. And while I refrained from producing a leader board, students were aware of one another's level of achievement. Three weeks after the redesigned class began, we began assessing through class discussion the two teaching approaches.

Repetition. Some students felt irritated that I required them to repeatedly perform the same data manipulations (reversing scores in a scale, creating standardized distributions of raw data, and perform the appropriate t tests before allowing them to move on to various ANOVAs). Others felt that the repetition reinforced their skills. Like a video game in which the gamer dies and has to go back to the beginning, the starting over seemed to have skill-building benefits.
Informal Leader Board. Students liked teaching and being taught by their peers because "they say things in ways that we can understand" (!). But this informal leader board did not seem to be embarrassing. Part of the appeal of video games is the opportunity to make social comparisons.
Points. Points on the Practice Tests mattered to many students, even though they knew they were artificial and would not be counted toward their grade. They seemed to experience creating and correctly interpreting a source table and graph as something kin to an "epic win."
Badges. I did not create cyber badges, but it seemed that they were there in spirit. For example, students would proudly say, "I got to level 3," as if it were a badge. Badges initially struck me as superficial, but I suspect that students – like us – crave the tangible recognition of progressive achievement.

Gamification may be a fad but if so, it is a very large one that already has a significant history of success across multiple endeavors. Redesigning courses around the principle of gamification acknowledges the world our students have been living in, takes advantage of their intrinsic motivation to play, and creates new opportunities for both teaching and assessment.

# Two Teaching Methods for Teaching Information Literacy to Psychology Students

Nicholas Salter, Ramapo College of New Jersey
Amanda Maynard, Christina Connor, Vivian Milczarski, Mount Saint Mary College

**Abstract:** Teaching information literacy to Psychology students can be challenging. Students may be resistant to learning the topic, and faculty often struggle with how to best teach it. The goal of this session is to present two engaging and effective methods of teaching information literacy skills to Psychology students. The first method uses case studies and the second method utilizes the problem-based learning approach. Each teaching strategy was developed as a faculty-librarian collaboration and can be used by audience members in their own classrooms to better teach information literacy.

**Summary:** An important skill for all Psychology students is information literacy. Merriam, LaBaugh, & Butterfield (1992) reported the skills that Psychology majors needed not only for the major but also for lifelong learning. These researchers indicated that both instruction and practice are needed to help students develop information literacy skills (Merriam, LaBaugh, & Butterfield, 1992). More recently, the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Information Literacy Standards for Psychology details the broad range of outcomes students should be able to achieve in this field (http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/psych_info_lit), so faculty and librarians teaching this topic have a helpful foundation of information to start from. While sources both from Psychology and Information Literacy generally agree and document what should be taught, how to teach it can be challenging.

Teaching information literacy can be difficult. Students often resist learning information literacy skills such as "searching" or "topic development" – these topics can seem less interesting than what they are typically discussing in class. Students may also believe that they don't need to learn these topics – for instance, they may feel that searching the Internet using Google and other search engines is the same as searching PsycInfo and other scholarly databases. Because this is such a critical topic for Psychology students to learn, it is important to develop effective methods of teaching these skills.

Therefore, this presentation offers two methods of teaching information literacy skills to Psychology students. Each presentation is a collaborative effort between a faculty member and a librarian working together to best teach students. First, Amanda Maynard and Vivian Milczarski (Mount Saint Mary College faculty and librarian, respectively) will discuss a case study method they use to teach information literacy. Next, Nicholas Salter and Christina Connor (Ramapo College of New Jersey faculty and librarian, respectively) will discuss a problem-based learning approach to teaching the topic. Both methods are effective and engaging strategies that presentation audience members will benefit from.

## Using Case Studies to Teach Information Literacy

Amanda Maynard and Vivian Milczarski utilized a case study technique with laboratories to teach information literacy skills developmentally to Psychology majors in an experimental psychology course. This approach addresses the Psychology major outcomes, a subset of the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Information Literacy Standards for the Psychology major, and the APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (2007; information and technological literacy). The case study technique was used to increase student engagement in a content area while teaching them information literacy skills.

Specifically, in the case study technique, students were asked to imagine themselves as employees whose supervisor has asked them how to address theft and turnover in an organization. In the first lab, students were asked to: (1) make an initial judgment of whether they thought that the employer should use graphology to address the problems, (2) evaluate websites that provided general information graphology, and (3) describe the next steps of the research process before formal instruction on systematic literature search. In the second lab, a systematic literature search was demonstrated in class on graphology. Students were then asked to conduct their own Boolean search on a topic of their choice. Finally, in lab 3, students were asked to critically evaluate primary sources related to graphology and make a final recommendation to the employer in the first lab. It is expected that by using this case study technique to teach information literacy skills, students will then be better able to apply these skills to their own independent experiment conducted in the class. The process is being piloted presently with a more formal evaluation planned for spring 2013. It is expected that the students who are taught the information literacy skills via the case study method will demonstrate gains in their information literacy skills (e.g., website evaluation, systematic literature search).

## Using Problem-Based Learning to Teach Information Literacy

Nicholas Salter and Christina Connor used a problem-based learning method of teaching information literacy to Psychology students. Traditional teaching methods define and explain concepts to students (followed by examples or practice). Problem-based learning instead poses problems to students; while solving, the instructor defines and explains topics as they arise. By not explaining concepts until they are needed for the problem, students have a better context for understanding why they are important and how to use them.

In this in-class activity, students were split up into small groups, shown the database "PsycInfo," and told to "choose a topic and search for research articles on it." This was before they were taught anything about search strategies or how to develop an appropriate topic. After some time to complete the tasks, the instructors brought the large group back together and asked how it went. Students typically found too many or too few results. The instructors used their examples and asked the class "how could we do this better?" After some thought, students would often suggest broadening/narrowing the topic or adding/subtracting keywords. Once the students voiced these suggestions, the instructors reframed what they were suggesting in terms of information literacy. For instance, adding/subtracting keywords was explained as an information literacy search strategy. Broadening/narrowing the topic was also explained as part of information literacy (topic development). Through this manner, students learned the information literacy skills by discovering them themselves first and then the instructor explaining what they just discovered.

After the information literacy session (and after they had completed a research paper using their skills), students were given an assessment of their information literacy skills. Compared to a Psychology class that used a traditional method of teaching these concepts, students in the problem-based learning class were statistically more likely to use the search strategies and to actively adjust their topic.

## Conclusion

As discussed, teaching information literacy can be challenging. This presentation will offer two effective and engaging methods for teaching this topic. Audience members at this

presentation will benefit from this session by learning new teaching techniques that they can implement in their own classrooms.

References

Merriam, J., LaBaugh, R. T., & Butterfield, N. E. (1992). Library instruction for psychology majors: Minimum training guidelines. Teaching of Psychology, 19 (1), 34-36.

**Assessing Student Learning Outcomes in the Psychology Major**

Patricia Oswald, Ph.D. and Katherine Zaromatidis, Ph.D.
Iona College

**Abstract:** The psychology department at Iona College is in the process process of developing a comprehensive assessment plan for the attainment of curriculum goals in the psychology major. As more and more accrediting bodies have focused on student learning outcomes, this is becoming standard practice in many psychology departments. Following a developmental perspective, the psychology department is assessing student learning outcomes to capture growth beginning with the first required psychology courses that students take and culminating with the senior-year capstone experience. Dr. Oswald and Dr. Zaromatidis and will discuss challenges faced in this process such as the creation of operational definitions and the development of course assignments that assess student attainment of the psychology major student learning outcomes. Preliminary assessment data will also be discussed.

**Summary:** Dr. Patricia Oswald is a full-time professor of psychology at Iona College who has taught a variety of courses including introductory statistics, advanced statistics, research methods, advanced research methods, and a number of industrial-organizational psychology courses. Dr. Katherine Zaromatidis is a full-time associate professor at Iona College. Her teaching experiences include introductory statistics, research methods, educational psychology, and a variety of assessment courses.

A few years ago the psychology department of Iona College created and adopted learning goals and performance outcomes for all psychology courses modeled after the American Psychological Association Standards for Undergraduate Instruction (APA, 2002). The department created a preliminary assessment map, which includes the specific courses and the types of assessments to be used in assessing student attainment of departmental goals. More recently as part of the preparation for Middle States Accreditation, all departments have been asked to undertake a similar process in developing a comprehensive assessment plan for demonstrating the attainment of curriculum goals in the major. Following a developmental perspective, the psychology department is assessing student learning outcomes to capture growth beginning with the first required psychology courses that students take (general psychology I and II) and culminating with the senior-year capstone experience.

Dr. Oswald and Dr. Zaromatidis will discuss the challenges faced in the process of developing psychology student learning outcomes (SLOs), incorporating the SLOS into an assessment map for psychology major, creating rubrics to assess each of these psychology major SLOs, and collecting preliminary data. Challenges include the creation of operational definitions for the goals identified in the Psychology Mission Statement and developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) that are applicable to these goals. Preliminary assessment data will also be discussed.

# Teaching Writing Skills to Psychology Students

Nicholas Salter and Shaziela Ishak
Ramapo College of New Jersey

**Abstract:** Teaching Psychological writing is an important element to an undergraduate Psychology degree. However, there is more to making a class "writing intensive" than adding a writing assignment; there are multiple factors to consider. Through a series of informal interviews and a literature review, we have identified five topics to consider when incorporating writing into a Psychology class: Psychology-specific writing, types of writing assignments, instructor feedback, peer and self-evaluation, and rewriting. This presentation will serve as a guide to instructors who want to better teach their students to be effective Psychological writers.

**Summary:** Writing is a critical skill for all Psychology students to have. Faculty members don't always think to teach their students how to write; many often believe "it's not my job" or "students have already learned how to write in the general education courses." However, students benefit if their Psychology classes focus on "psychological writing."
There are many factors to consider when incorporating writing into class; there is more to do than simply assign students to write a paper. The purpose of this presentation is to offer suggestions to audience members as to how to incorporate effective writing techniques, assignments, and activities into their classes. We conducted informal interviews of Psychology eight faculty teaching courses designated as "writing intensive" as well as a literature search of the Teaching of Psychology literature. Through this, we have identified five topics to consider when teaching writing intensive courses.

## Psychology-Specific Writing

Although students have learned how to "write" in many other courses, writing for Psychology is a different skill that should be discussed in Psychology classes. An obvious topic that is typically discussed is using APA style (Fallahi, Wood, Austad, & Fallahi, 2006). Often students memorize referencing rules when learning APA style, but Goddard (2003) suggested instructors should instead show students how APA style clarifies their writing. In addition to APA style, though, our interviews suggested other writing tips unique to Psychology that can be discussed. For instance, many faculty members teach their students the "hourglass" method of writing a paper (i.e., starting broad and becoming more specific). This is one example of the many ways writing in Psychology differs from other disciplines.

Another skill that can improve students' writing is learning how to read Psychological publications. Although students may have read journal articles in previous classes, they may not have complete command of the purpose of the Introduction, Method, Results, or Discussion sections. It is important to teach this to students so they can better understand the articles they are reading as well as write better papers of their own.

## Types of Writing Assignments

When deciding what types of writing assignments to include in a course, there are many options. Instructors could have students try out different writing styles to help them become not only effective writers but also sophisticated thinkers. For instance, students could benefit by adding short in-class assignments because it improves their writing, comprehension, and retention (Drabbick, Weisburg, Paul, & Bubier, 2007; Stewart, Myers, & Culley, 2010).

Instructors could include assignments to help students develop a professional writing tone such as case reports of fictional clients or a conference abstract (Goddard, 2003) or comparisons of two theories or reaction papers to articles. To help students form their own opinions self-reflective assignments such as how theories learned in class compare to your experiences could be included. Instructors could encourage students to develop critical analysis skills by applying approaches learned in class to real problems or critiquing an empirical study. Interviews suggested that every course had assignments about using supporting evidence such as a research paper, literature review, or report on a published study.

### Instructor Feedback

Our interviews with Psychology faculty members identified several suggestions for how instructors can provide feedback and incorporate revisions into the writing process. Feedback on writing can range from providing students with highly detailed comments about the specific assignment (tone, style, consistency, organization, rewording sections, grammar, etc.) to holistic comments about the student's overall writing style. Although the typical way to deliver feedback is via written comments for students to read independently, this method has drawbacks. Students might either misunderstand the comments or simply ignore them. An alternative method is to schedule short one-on-one meetings to explain the feedback. Faculty who held feedback meetings felt their students were more likely to incorporate the feedback into future written assignments. Additionally, instructors could use 15 minutes of class time, when students receive their graded papers, to teach students how to avoid typical writing errors (Fallahi et al., 2006).

### Peer and Self-Evaluation

Although students often only think of getting feedback from the instructor, receiving feedback from other students can give insight into how they can improve their papers (and the process of reviewing someone else's work can be useful in learning how to improve one's own writing). Research on how to develop Psychological Writing classes typically includes peer review as an important component (Boice, 1990; Goddard, 2003). Students self-evaluating their own work can also be a useful tool. However, teaching students to provide useful and critical feedback can be difficult; the peer or self-feedback may be superficial and overly polite. Students should be taught how to critically think about the strengths and weaknesses of papers in a non-threatening manner to encourage improvements in the papers.

### Rewriting

Another aspect of writing intensive courses is the opportunity for students to rewrite their assignments. One obstacle to overcome is students' resistance to writing in general another is unrealistic beliefs such as "Good writers produce finished manuscripts in a single draft" (Boice, 1990). Additionally, instructors could teach students about writing as a process and the benefits of writing drafts. One way to incorporate rewriting is to allow students an infinite number of rewrites and regrades for every assignment. Another idea is to allow students to rewrite every assignment once, except the final paper. Alternatively, instructors could only allow students to rewrite the first few assignments. Another option is to build in ungraded papers into the class such as drafts of a significant term paper. One instructor said that almost every student turned in drafts for feedback and their final papers showed much improvement. Students felt it allowed them to focus on writing without the anxiety associated with grading.

## Conclusion

The decision to incorporate more writing into a Psychology course is bigger than simply assigning more papers. This presentation will discuss these five issues and open a discussion with audience members to identify best practices for how to strengthen students' writing skills.

## References

Boice, R. (1990). Faculty resistance to writing-intensive courses. Teaching of Psychology, 17, 13 – 17.

Drabbick, D. A. G., Weisburg, R., Paul, L., & Bubier, J. L. (2007). Keeping it short and sweet: Brief, ungraded writing assignments facilitate learning. Teaching of Psychology, 34, 172 – 176.

Fallahi, C. R., Wood, R. M., Austad, C. S., & Fallahi, H. (2006). A program for improving undergraduate Psychology students' basic writing skills. Teaching of Psychology, 33, 171 – 175.

Goddard, P. (2003). Implementing and evaluating a writing course for Psychology majors. Teaching of Psychology, 30, 25 – 29.

Stewart, T. L., Myers, A. C., & Culley, M. R. (2010). Enhanced learning and retention through "writing to learn" in the psychology classroom. Teaching of Psychology, 37, 46 – 49.

# Whatever Happened to the Storytellers? Engaging Learners Effectively through an Underutilized Technique

Dora D. Clarke-Pine
La Sierra University

**Abstract:** Some of the most meaningful learning experiences take place when least expected. One experience buried long ago in this author's memory is when her grandmother said, "You may be poor, but you can always afford a bar of soap." This author is quite sure her grandmother was communicating something literal; however, the message absorbed was that no one can take away your dignity without your permission. Storytelling is an effective way to engage learners and teach constructs. Sadly, it is too often neglected especially in higher education. This paper illustrates how storytelling can be reintroduced in meaningful ways.

**Summary:** It is interesting to personally note that some of the most meaningful learning experiences sometimes take place when you least expect them to in life. One experience buried long ago in this author's memory is when her grandmother once stated, "You may be poor, but you can always afford a bar of soap." Although the details of the conversation were lost long ago, for some reason those words have remained with this author and reminds her that no matter what a person may be stripped of during his or her lifetime one can always manage to hang on to one's dignity . . . or one's integrity. No one can take those things away from a human being without his or her permission. This author is quite sure that is not what her grandmother intended to communicate—it was meant to be literal, but that is the message that the author walked away with at the time and still cherishes dearly today. Some researchers refer to storytelling as simply "an ancient art." No matter what it is called, it can certainly be an effective way to communicate concepts or imbed constructs in ways that can truly engage learners and make them ponder what is being shared at much deeper levels. Storytelling is not only a useful tool for teaching, but it also a useful tool for learning. Sadly, according to the literature, it is much too often neglected in the classroom especially in higher education. This paper reintroduces the importance of storytelling to the learning process and discusses how one can develop this process in systematic ways as a predominant teaching skill.

One set of authors calls storytelling "an ancient art" that not only defines individuals but also helps them to better make sense of the world around them (Bishop & Kimball, 2006, p. 28). Another set of authors simply state that storytelling, in and of itself, can oftentimes bring "learning to life" (Fawcett & Fawcett, 2011, p. 287). Perhaps a story, in its rawest form, not only assists learning in direct ways through the choice of one's words or in indirect ways through a guided "mental construction" of concepts (Andrews, Hull, & Donahue, 2009). With so many positive educational ramifications, it is baffling why this particular learning tool is as neglected as it is in the educational arena (Bishop & Kimball, 2006).

Storytelling, is just one of many strategies used by effective teachers (Johnson-Farmer & Frenn, 2009). Some researchers have called it a powerful learning strategy (McDrury & Alterio, 2004) that can engage students, facilitate discussion, and help students solve problems (Davidson, 2003; Hernández-Serrano & Stefanou, 2009). Storytelling can also produce motivational benefits that can impact positively on learning outcomes (McQuiggan, Rowe, Lee, & Lester, 2008). For example, it can assist in the learning process by not only helping professors transfer knowledge, engage critical thinking processes, and encourage holistic perspective-taking skills, but it can also help students learn constructs or better imbed constructs into their memories

(Bullough, Jr., 2009; Denning, 2005; Ochs, Taylor, Rudolph, & Smith, 1992; Swap, Leonard, Shields, & Abrams, 2001).

According to Ray (2004), learning is much more likely to occur "when students are actively engaged, have opportunities for interaction with others, are presented with challenging situations or questions that require critical thinking skills, and are surrounded by a nurturing learning environment" (p. 58).

In that so many positive ramifications for storytelling exist, not to mention, a good story is simply enjoyable to listen to in a classroom setting, why don't more teachers consciously use the process, and is there a strategic way to implement storytelling into the classroom in more effective ways?

Certainly, this author, as a student in in higher education, did not receive the vast majority of her educational experiences within the context of a storytelling delivery system; information, instead, was primarily delivered in lecture format. The most interesting professors would weave into their lectures meaningful or thought-provoking questions (designed for individuals or small groups) in order to stimulate classroom discussions and greater understanding of the constructs being covered in the classroom. It was quite rare to encounter a professor whose primary mode of delivering material was through a story, but when it occurred, the learning process appeared more effortless and certainly more enjoyable. It is easy to understand why professors preferred lectures. After all, good storytelling takes time. In addition, embedding a story with various learning constructs takes even more work to ensure that vital pieces of information are being adequately communicated in a story.

There are four important steps to storytelling: a) looking for interesting stories, b) recording the stories (writing them down) for future use, c) finding practical applications related to the stories, and d) imbedding the stories with meaningful questions.

# Bridging the Gap between Cognitive Psychology Research and Instructional Practice: A Model for Faculty Development

Debra Swoboda
York College, CUNY

**Abstract:** This presentation introduces participants to the Bridging the Gap Seminar, a faculty development program designed to bridge the gap between cognitive research and instructional practice. Participants will learn about Seminar curriculum development and outcomes assessment and will explore opportunities and challenges involved in developing a similar faculty development program on their campuses to support faculty application of cognitive psychology research findings to teaching and learning. This presentation is intended for psychology educators interested in utilizing research-based practices on how people learn as well as faculty development coordinators interested in developing a similar faculty program or learning community.

**Summary:** A large and growing body of research-based theory and evidence on how people learn exists, much of it grounded in cognitive psychology. In recent years educators have explored links between classroom teaching and emerging theories about how people learn. Discoveries in neuroscience and cognitive psychology present new ways of thinking about the brain and the attendant perceptions and emotions that contribute to learning. Educational publishers continue to support books and scholarly articles that promote the notion that "brain research" can and should be applied to classroom teaching. Best-selling books and curriculum have entered the market to attract educators to purchase resources that will teach them how to apply information about the cognitive processes that enhance the teaching and learning process (Jossey Bass, 2008; Tate, 2003; Sousa, 2006; Jensen, 2000; Caine, et al., 2005). The idea that applying this knowledge base to educational psychology will yield positive outcomes in teaching and learning sounds promising, however there is a lack of direction regarding getting faculty to understand and apply these evidence-based principles to teaching practices.

Research in educational psychology within the past 15 years has provided many principles for designing instruction that mediates the cognitive processes of learning. The research in instructional psychology over the past 15 years provides a good start to a scientific foundation for design of effective instruction. What has recent psychological research taught us about learning and how can we best apply these findings to improve teaching and enhance student learning? How can instructors utilize and many of the principles of scientific instruction outlined in this body of scholarship? What methods to help faculty apply this research are effective? When faculty develop knowledge about these practices, how do they implement them and when they do, are these new practices effective?

This presentation describes the development of a York College faculty development program – the Bridging the Gap Seminar − designed to acquaint instructors with evidence-based cognitive psychology principles of teaching and learning that improve student performance and future learning. The first third of the session will present the Bridging the Gap Seminar, a multi-session program in which faculty explored key aspects of learning and the research that supports them. Session topics included: 1) the role of prior knowledge and misconceptions; 2) deep vs. surface learning; 3) transitioning from novice to expert learner; 4) metacognition; and 5) the role of

practice and feedback. Common readings were taken from How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching (Ambrose, et. al., 2010) and other research and scholarship describing the application of cognitive research principles to teaching and learning. During Seminar sessions, faculty examined their teaching practices and an array of research-based exemplars in order to implement new active learning strategies and approaches. Seminar faculty also convened once again in the following semester to reflect on their application of new teaching and learning strategies and approaches.

This presentation also describes how outcomes assessment, via a pre-post survey and other means, was used to evaluate Seminar faculty knowledge and implementation of cognitive learning principles and change in teaching approaches. Assessment results will be reported concerning faculty: 1) satisfaction with Seminar format; 2) understanding of cognitive science concepts discussed in the Seminar; and 3) application of new strategies and instructional approaches designed to improve student learning in post-Seminar courses; and 4) understanding of and changes in instructional role and attitudes and beliefs regarding teaching and learning. Challenges encountered among faculty across ranks and disciplines in exploring empirical evidence and research-based theories about how people learn during the Seminar will be presented.

Faculty attending the presentation are invited to consider the potential opportunities and challenges involved in developing a similar faculty development program on their campuses to support faculty application of cognitive psychology research findings to teaching and learning.

**The Ability of Cooperative Learning to Enhance Student Learning**

Charles LaJeunesse
Misericordia University

**Abstract:** This workshop focuses on the historical aspects of cooperative learning (CL) starting with Eliot Aronson's "Jig-saw Puzzle" research in Austin Texas. An overview of years of research on CL will also be addressed. CL will also be distinguished from collaborative learning. All of this information will be presented in Power Point. Later in this workshop I will discuss and provide a simulation of Quiz-quiz, a CL approach I have been using since 1994.

**Summary:** This workshop focuses on the historical aspects of cooperative learning (CL). This approach to teaching startied with Eliot Aronson's "Jig-saw Clasroom" research in Austin Texas in the late 1970s. The history of CL illustrates that it was originally applied to elementary and secondary schools before addressed the needs of college students. Johnson and Johnson, research from the University of Minnesota, have been principle players in providing the research demonstrating the efficacy of CL on higher achievement and enhanced retention; improved higher-level thinking, deeper-level thinking and critical thinking; more on task and less disruptive behavior; greater achievement motivation; more positive, accepting, and supportive relations with peers regardless of ethnic, sex, ability, social class and handicap differences; greater social support; more positive attitudes toward teachers, and other personal; more positive attitudes toward subject matter, learning in general and the school; enhanced psychological health, adjustment and well-being, more positive self-esteem based on basic self-acceptance and greater social competencies. (Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1991).

Cooperative Learning will also be distinguished from collaborative learning

I will also describe and provide a simulation of Quiz-quiz, a CL approach I developed in 1994 and have been using in several classes at Misericordia University to this day.

This information will be presented through Power Point and simulation. I will also offer some time for questions and answers as time permits.

Reference: Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Smith, K. (1991). Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom. Interactive Book Company, Edina, MN.

**The Impact of Posture and Smiling on Perceiver's Judgments of Personality**

Rebecca Scalabrino and Katherine Tejeda
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Advisor: Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Ph.D.

**Abstract:** Participants were exposed to one of four photograph conditions which varied in terms of the subject's facial expression and posture in a 2 X 2 factorial design. Participants rated the photographed subject on the Big Five Personality Traits. Posture and facial expression affected impression formation across the five personality dimensions. Smiling and straight posture led to higher ratings on most traits. Neutral expression and slouching led to higher neuroticism ratings.

**Summary:** This experiment examined the extent to which the manipulation of a female subject's smile and posture in a standardized photograph would influence impression formation in eighty same-sex, young adult observers. In this study, participants were exposed to one of four photograph conditions which varied in terms of the subject's facial expression (smiling versus neutral) and posture (erect versus slouching) in a 2 X 2 factorial design. Participants were then asked to rate the photographed subject on agreeableness, openness, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and extraversion using items from the Big Five Personality Inventory. Posture and facial expression in a photographed female affected impression formation across the five personality dimensions. For neuroticism, a neutral facial expression ($F= 55.91$, $P=0.000$) and slouched posture ($F= 9.2$, $P= 0.003$) contributed to higher neuroticism ratings, with their combined effect leading to slightly higher neuroticism scores ($F=3.73$, $P= 0.057$). Significant main effects for posture ($F= 8.9$, $P= 0.004$) and facial expression ($F= 25.95$, $P=0.000$) were observed for openness ratings. For ratings of extraversion, significant main effects for posture ($F= 12.4$, $P= 0.001$) and facial expression ($F= 51.98$, $P=0.000$) were observed. Facial expression influenced ratings on both conscientiousness ($F = 18.6$, $p = .000$) and agreeableness ($F = 49.36$, $p = .000$). Posture influenced Conscientiousness ratings ($F = 4.99$, $p = .028$), but not agreeableness ratings ($F = 1.87$, $p =$ ns). Facial expression and posture seem to have a significant impact on first impression formation among young adults.

**Priming Ethical Decisions with a Classroom Honor Code Scenario**

Pablo A. Escotto: Mount Saint Mary College Dept. of Social Sciences
Chris Boydston: Fairleigh Dickinson University
Advisor: Yasmine Konheim-Kalkstein: Mount Saint Mary College Dept. of Social Sciences

**Abstract:** As the continuing ascent of smart phone technology makes it ever easier to discreetly send and receive information from the palm of your hand, psychologists and educators must direct more attention to the widespread problem of academic dishonesty. Several studies indicate the significance of institutional honor codes as cheater-deterrents, suggesting that ethical choices can be influenced through the recognition of a communitarian commitment to integrity. This study explores priming positive ethical choices through mock scenarios that include either an honor code or a religious/ethical prime.

**Summary:** Engaging the swelling problem of academic dishonesty is the responsibility of both educators and psychologists, and both professions find themselves confronting not so straightforward a task. Even the twin badges of prestige and notorious academic rigor can't stop the tide, as made clear by the 2012 cheating allegations at Harvard University (Harrington, 2012). Students might decide to cheat in school for a variety of reasons, including parental pressure, competitive leverage, or simple academic difficulty, but what Harvard's recent experience tells us is that sometimes it might even be a case of simply misunderstanding an institution's academic honesty policies (according to the accused students). This claim suggests a potential solution in the form of honor codes, explicit institution-wide ethical guidelines to which each student and faculty member contractually commits, thereby fostering a sense of a shared pursuit of integrity. Indeed, Harvard is once again considering implementing such a code, and there is a history of educational and psychological research supporting the contention that honor codes reduce instances of academic dishonesty where they exist (McCabe, Treviño, & Butterfield, 2001).

One possible mechanism to explain this function of honor codes is by calling one's own moral standards to attention with a moral "prime." Priming is the process of influencing behavior through exposure to a stimulus. A pop culture example of priming would be "subliminal messaging," those stories about how, for example, imperceptible flashes of the words "Coca Cola" during television programs cause people to thirst for the soft drink and eventually buy some. While many of those claims are of course cultural myths, the basic idea is there. People presented with salient information – even if they are not consciously aware of it – proceed to organize their thoughts and behaviors according to that information. Innocuous exposure to the American flag, for instance, has been shown to lead to more republican-leaning voting behaviors up to eight months afterward (Carter, Ferguson & Hassin, 2011). Similarly, priming people with religious concepts has been shown to increase their prosocial behavior towards competitors in an economic scenario (Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). It is possible that the same kind of priming mechanism can influence students' ethical decisions in the classroom.

In the current study, the effects of both a general honor code concept and a religious/ethical context were used as moral primes to try stimulating positive ethical choices in two different honesty-testing hypothetical scenarios. 388 undergraduate students (267 from the University of

Minnesota, 121 from Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY – both schools without an institutional honor code) were given a survey that asked them to consider one of two mock scenarios involving cheating on a difficult exam. One scenario created an opportunity to successfully get away with copying a classmate's answers, while the other described a technical mishap providing the means to falsely inflate the grade earned on the exam. In either scenario, the student had to answer either "Yes" or "No" depending on whether he or she would indeed cheat given the circumstances. One third of the surveys primed students by including an "honor code" clause in the hypothetical scenario, reminding students that they signed an agreement to act ethically. Another third of the surveys primed students by identifying the difficult exam as part of a course on religion and ethics. The final third were control surveys, free of either honor code or religion/ethics primes. We predicted that including an honor code in the scenarios would prime more moral behavior (i.e. fewer "Yes" replies and more "No: replies).

In the first scenario (would the student report falsely inflated grades after a computer crash?), there was no significant difference in the number of students who reported that they would cheat and those who reported they wouldn't, regardless of honor code or religion/ethics prime ($p = .801$). The same can be said for the second scenario (would students copy answers from a classmate's exam) ($p = .095$), although the data did appear to exhibit a noticeable trend. In this second scenario, 53% ($n = 33$) of students in the control condition predicted that they would cheat, and 51% ($n = 33$) of students in the religion/ethics condition predicted they would cheat, but only 36% ($n = 25$) of students in the honor code scenario predicted they would cheat. If these proportions are reflective of an actual trend, then it's possible a larger number of participants might have produced statistically significant results.

One of the subtle qualifications teased out from the studies of the honor code effect is the possibility that the official policy itself actually has little to do with influencing student decisions. Rather, the heft of the effect may be a result of inclusion in a community that both vocally and habitually expresses the values enumerated by that code (McCabe, Treviño, & Butterfield, 2001). As McCabe et al. (2001, p. 224) put it, the honor code can't just be "window dressing." Accordingly, although the results of our study trended slightly in the expected direction, the data might not have achieved significance at least in part because our honor code was a mock-scenario, a hypothetical existing only on paper.

**Student Assessment of Senior's Satisfaction with Psychology Department**

Nicholas Abrams, Tara Fitzgerald, Kourtney Frey, Marah Lange
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Advisor: Dr. Geeta Shivde

**Abstract:** Student satisfaction is often overlooked when Psychology departments evaluate their undergraduate programs. In this paper, we describe how we created a student-designed and student-led assessment of the satisfaction of our graduating psychology majors. We administered our survey to majors in their senior year at a medium-sized, public university in Pennsylvania and then analyzed the results for patterns in student satisfaction and suggestions for improvement. We discuss our results (e.g. demographic differences in student satisfaction) and their implications for improving the department. We conclude by making recommendations for how other departments might also employ a student-run assessment of student satisfaction.

**Summary:** Our research consisted of designing and implementing a survey gauging student satisfaction with regard to the psychology major coursework and overall experience. Our presentation will begin by drawing special attention to the student-run process in which we designed our survey.

Our presentation will progress and discuss the implementation techniques we utilized to gather our data, and touch on the procedure of data analysis. The initiative was suggested by a student representative as a way to receive student feedback in an exit survey fashion. This student representative was a member of The Psychology Student Life Committee, an organization made up of select faculty and students members whose purpose is to improve department functioning by incorporating student input into daily decisions of the department. This organization strives to better voice the concerns, ideas, and suggestions of students to the department, so that the demands and expectations of each new student class is met. The Psychology Student Life Committee met and brainstormed various topics in which we wished to gather data, specifically on student satisfaction within the department.

In designing the instrument of research, we considered the long-term usefulness of the data collection procedure. As in all research, we desired data we could easily gather and analyze, but still reflect the opinions of the students we sampled. We decided to include both open and closed ended question types. After some time, we had a first draft of our survey and submitted it for faculty approval.

The final version of our survey included demographic questions, questions about courses, instructors, extra-curricular activities, advising, and future educational and career plans. One interesting technique we devised was to adapt items from typical graduate school recommender rating forms (in which letter writers have to rate applications). We felt such content would be important, especially for students with graduate school plans. Since we wanted to assess the satisfaction of students who had the most experience in the psychology department at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, the logical population to sample was the senior seminar courses, which consist of graduating seniors, and which all seniors must enroll.
Our committee contacted the instructors of these courses and requested that they distribute the surveys to their classes, the surveys were distributed to the senior seminar courses, and they were completed in an anonymous and voluntary manner. This survey offered no compensation, coercion, or risks to the sample.

Our group of four was split into two teams for data analysis. One team was charged with the responsibility of qualitative data analysis and the other was given the quantitative data to analyze. The team tasked with the qualitative data transcribed each individual response to all open ended questions into a word document. From this document, the team agreed upon general themes that emerged from the student survey responses. Once these themes were compiled, a summary table of responses was constructed. Some interesting themes emerged in student responses to open ended questions about course offerings and advising. We noticed an overall displeasure in advising efficacy, along with students' expressed interest in increased communication with advisers. The data also showed that students desired more opportunities for research in the fields of neuroscience and animal behavior. The second team, tasked with quantitative data analysis, collected the scantron portion of the survey, processed the data and, ran statistical testing using SPSS. The data yielded an interesting trend showing a correlation between intended graduate school applicants and higher satisfaction. This trend could be an example of bias in our survey as our style of questioning was drawn from graduate school recommender rating forms, and would be appealing in nature to graduate school-bound individuals. The data shows that the majority of the students in the psychology department were pleased with the services the department offered. An interesting finding was that a majority of students plan to seek a career in a psychological field, and a statistically insignificant, yet otherwise high percentage of students were accepted to masters programs for fields other than psychology. While both analyses yielded trends regarding student satisfaction within the department, we found moderate to strong correlations.

Our research may be of interest to other departments within the university, and can be modified to fit the needs of departments at other universities. We discuss the potential usefulness of including student input in the design and analysis of such assessment data. With the results from our survey and analysis, we will hold a presentation to our department and shared such results in an effort of furthering the goals of The Psychology Student Life Committee, and working to keep this department changing along with input from and expectations of the students.