



EKU Department Psychology Newsletter

Eastern Kentucky
University

Fall 2018

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Critical Reading with Dr. Steffen Wilson

Recently, Dr. Steffen Wilson was interviewed regarding the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) leaders who are staff, faculty, and administrators across campus that promote the goals of ECU's QEP. The current QEP, *Read with Purpose*, calls for ECU to develop critical readers through the use of metacognitive strategies. Dr. Wilson was asked to join the QEP Design Team because she was a co-chair of ECU Reads. Although the University could not sustain ECU Reads, she continued on with the QEP and became a member of the QEP Implementation Team after completing the QEP design. She also created and implemented a critical reading assessment for the Psychology department that has been used as an early example of a department-level assessment of critical reading.

Dr. Wilson explained that, "The QEP is relevant to psychology as psychology majors have many different career and graduate training opportunities. So, they are well-served by developing transferrable skills that can be used across a variety of settings." Critical reading is a particularly timely transferrable skill in the content-rich environment of our technology-centered world.

The QEP professional development has resulted in Dr. Wilson having a better understanding of what constitutes critical reading and has influenced her teaching. Dr. Wilson explained that the workshops have helped give her a set of critical reading activities for her courses. She went on to state, "Psychology majors must read standard text books, but also a wide variety of others types of items. Due to this wide variety of material, the majors will benefit from instruction on how to adjust their reading strategies for these different texts".

The QEP also helps to unite the entire campus with a common goal and allows faculty from very different disciplines to come together to discuss a common topic. It also helps students to see the connections in skills developed across very different types of courses.

Dr. Wilson plans on continuing to promote critical reading in her course and across the university by taking some time to learn and talk about critical reading with her colleagues. Dr. Wilson asked Dr. Sara Incera to make a presentation to the faculty on different types of critical reading activities. After this presentation she spent time in groups developing critical reading activities and assessments for their three general education courses. These course assignments will benefit students from across campus who take these courses as part of their general education coursework.

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ArtVention



“ArtVention” was held at the Noel Studio on September 12th in honor of World Suicide Prevention Day. Students and other community members joined faculty and staff to make art that allowed them to express their experiences with suicide.

“ArtVention” joins other events nationally that are being held throughout the month of September. This is being done to recognize the impact that suicide has on those who have lost a loved one to suicide and those who have either struggled or made a suicide attempt. The EKU Suicide Awareness and Focus on Education (EKU SAFE) grant made “ArtVention” possible. EKU SAFE is directed by Psychology faculty Dr. Melinda Moore.

“ArtVention” will be shown through the fall at Gallery on Main, an art gallery in downtown Richmond and will continue to be displayed in Cammack throughout the spring.



OCALI Conference

In November 2018, graduate students from the ECU Departments of Psychology and Occupational Therapy attended the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Disabilities annual conference in Columbus, Ohio. Our group had the highest number of research posters accepted in the history of our program. Topics included; a comparison of diagnostic accuracy of the Autism Spectrum Rating Scale vs. the ADOS-2, a description of a social skills/friendship group intervention created by Psy.D. students, a review and assessment of interventions created through community partnerships between ECU and the Arc of Central Kentucky, and more. Dr. Bundy (Psychology) and Dr. O'Brien (Occupational Therapy) could not have been more proud of our students.



Dr. Incera Grant Award

Dr. Sara Incera, an Assistant Professor for ECU Psychology Department was recently rewarded a grant. Dr. Incera's areas of expertise and research are in the areas of Cognition, Language, Bilingualism, and Accents. This new research looks to investigate the critical reading behaviors that are most beneficial for students. Dr. Incera received the QEP Leadership Grant which is for a total of \$969.99 for her next research project, "What Critical Reading Behaviors are the Most Useful?". Congratulations to Dr. Incera and we look forward to learning about the findings of your study!



Diverse Career Opportunities

Students in Dr. James M. Davis' Psychology of Work (PSY 319) class at the Manchester Campus learned about diverse career opportunities from guest speaker Judy Bailey, MA, LPCC (center of photo). She spoke about career pathways for Bachelors and Master degree level professionals. Bailey discussed opportunities that exist with Spectrum Care Academy as well as other organizations like; Dismas, Compass, Southeast Behavioral Health, Trillum Center, ARH Psychiatric Hospital, and both Cumberland River and Kentucky River comprehensive care centers in the areas of mental health and substance abuse counseling. Ms. Bailey and Dr. Davis spoke in tandem about the importance of professionalism, communication, networking, integrity, and gaining experience in the field through cooperative placements, career shadowing, and internships.



Inner Space Camp



From June 10th to 15th, 26 high school students from areas throughout the United States joined together at Eastern Kentucky University to participate in the Department of Psychology's Inner Space Camp. This summer camp allowed students the opportunity to learn more about the exciting field of psychology and make many new friends with similar interests. The campers attended various psychology classes taught by faculty and graduate students in the department, as well as participated in many fun activities throughout the evenings.

Most students found the classes about social and forensic psychology to be the most stimulating. However, they also enjoyed dissecting sheep brains in the physiological psychology class and conducting mock intake interviews during the clinical psychology class. As an additional bonus,

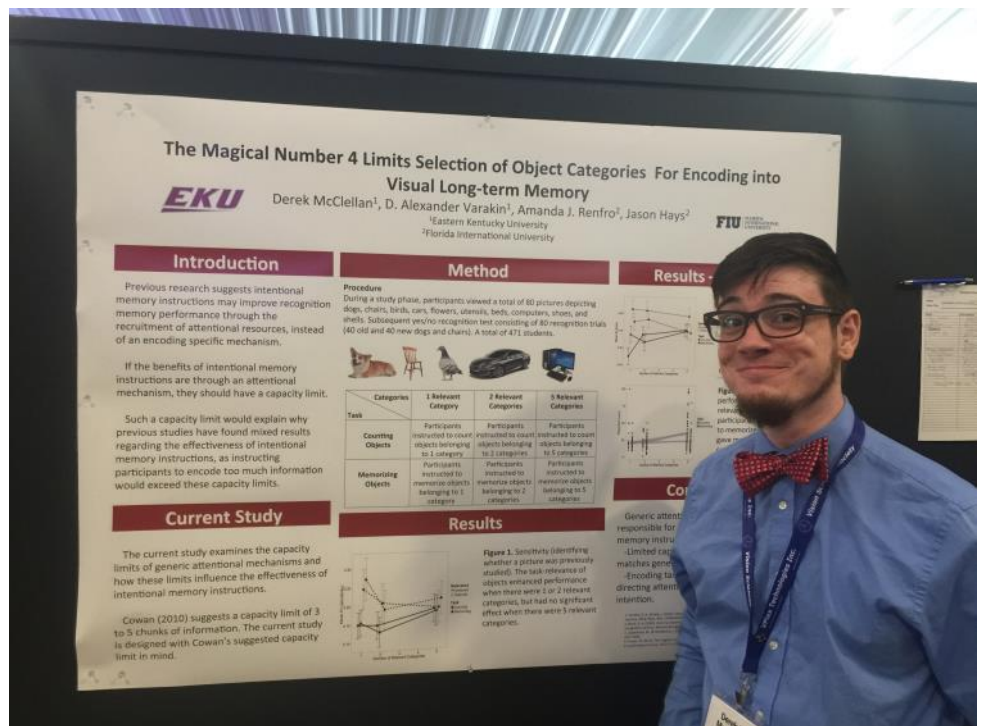
two of the camp counselors lead the group on a "ghost hunt" around campus after the parapsychology class. Aside from these class activities, the campers also enjoyed social activities throughout the evenings. A few of their favorite social activities were tie-dying t-shirts, water games, and visiting the campus bookstore. Overall the 2018 Inner Space Camp was a roaring success.

Varakin's Vision Conference

Every year in mid-May, an interdisciplinary group of scientists from around the world convene at the Annual Meeting of the Vision Sciences Society (VSS). The 18th annual meeting was held this past May in St. Pete Beach, FL. The conference is inherently multi-disciplinary, with attendees from fields such as biology, computer science, engineering, neuroscience, and of course, psychology. It is, perhaps, the largest gathering of vision scientists in the world. Dr. Varakin has attended VSS almost every year since 2003. It's a way for him to keep up with developments in the field, and stay in touch with colleagues who he only gets to see once a year. The timing of the conference is great too; abstract submissions are due at the end of the Fall semester, and the conference itself usually occurs the week after the Spring semester ends, and the week before Summer classes begin. Perhaps more importantly though, VSS is a way for Dr. Varakin to introduce ECU students to an exciting area of science in an environment that is academically stimulating *and* relaxing.

One of the best things about the conference is the poster sessions, where students can present their work alongside some of the most eminent scholars in the field from around the world. Since 2011, Dr. Varakin's students have had 12 presentations at VSS. In 2018, Derek McClellan presented the results of a project about capacity limits of encoding into visual long-term memory. Shane Baker presented a follow-up project to Matt Moran's thesis that investigated the effect of immersive technology on attention and memory. Finally, Muna Amry presented a project demonstrating that head tilt increases cuteness of puppies and adult dogs (Muna's poster was very popular). Unlike the poster sessions at some large conferences, poster sessions at VSS are bustling. In the course of a 1-2 hour presentation, presenters may speak to upwards of 100 people, and may have brief conversations with a few dozen.

While it is exciting to learn about the latest developments in vision science from around the world, it can also be quite tiring as VSS is a five-day conference. The organizers of VSS appreciate how draining a conference can be, and some of the conference events are just for fun. For example, on the second to last night of the conference, VSS holds a beach barbecue (with plenty of variety to accommodate all dietary preferences). The barbecue is followed by Demo Night, which is more like a pop-up science museum than an academic conference. Demo Night is a family friendly affair in which vision scientists set up interactive displays that include everything from the visual illusions, to virtual reality head-sets, to strobe-light ping-pong tournaments. In 2017, Matt Moran set up a miniature movie theater he had built for his project on immersion, and showed the movie "Gulliver's Travel's". What's in store for VSS 2019? Dr. Varakin can't say for sure, but there are a few projects in his lab that he'd like to present. If you're a student interested in getting research and conference experience, and beginning to form a professional network, VSS is a great conference to attend.

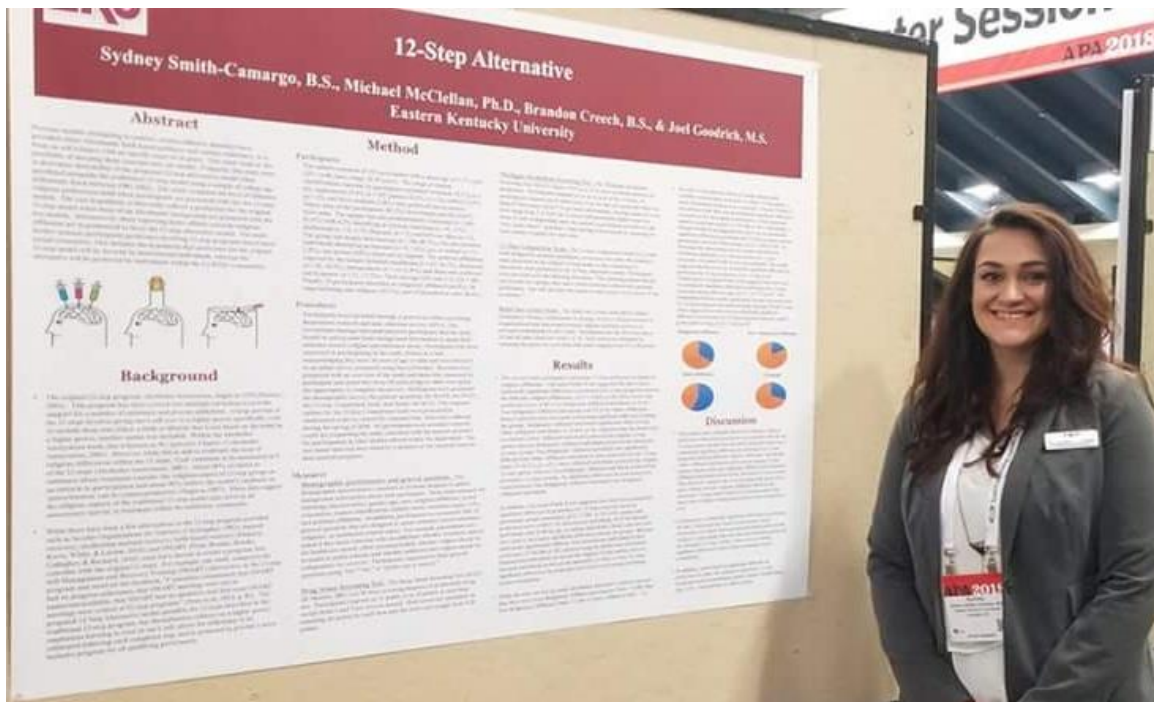


Dr. McClellan's Research

Dr. Michael McClellan, an assistant professor and licensed psychologist in the ECU Psychology Department, is actively involving students in his research. He currently has three research labs that are focusing on telehealth, cultural competency, and addictions.

His telehealth lab, made up of ECU clinical psychology graduate students, will begin offering mental health services to ECU students, faculty, and staff located at ECU's regional campuses in the fall of 2018. This research team is also currently focused on a meta-analysis project with Dr. Osbaldiston, a faculty member in the ECU Psychology Department, that is evaluating the effectiveness of using telehealth in rural and underserved populations. This research team, along with Dr. Dan Florell, Dr. Jerry Palmer and graduate student Chris Kidder from the Psychology Department, submitted a manuscript for publication this past summer. It looked at the telehealth-related attitudes of rural mental health clinicians in Kentucky community mental health centers. That study found that clinicians who had more training and exposure to telehealth tended to have more favorable attitudes toward telehealth. It also suggests that training and exposure may be key variables to more widespread use of telepsychology.

Dr. McClellan's cultural competency lab is made up of undergraduate and graduate students from ECU. This lab, along with graduate student Addison Monroe and undergraduate student Tajana Graves, is currently examining how participation in college diversity courses impacts student development of awareness of privilege and oppression and cultural empathy. These are two key factors in student development of cultural competency skills. This research team, along with Dr. Yoshie Nakai and graduate students Brandon Creech and Sydney Smith has submitted two manuscripts to be considered for publication this year. One focused on developing a scale to measure awareness of privilege and oppression. The other looked at the impact of diversity training on college student's cultural awareness. In addition to these manuscripts, Dr. McClellan and his team presented this research at the American Psychological Association's (APA) Annual Convention in San Francisco this past summer.



Psi Chi In Action



Mountain Horse Oral Project

With financial support from the Kentucky Oral History Commission, a team of Animal Studies (ANS) students have been busy this summer! They have been working with Dr. Stephanie McSpirit (sociology), Neil Kasiak (archives) and Chad Cogdill (communications) on the second phase of the Mountain Horse Oral History Project. Two current ANS majors (Ashley Albano and Robin Martinez) and one ANS graduate, current Biology masters student (Tabitha Foster) have been



working to collect, transcribe, and index the stories and traditions surrounding Kentucky's mountain horses and the people, breeders and organizations behind these fine horses. By the year's end, the team will have



collected over 50 histories and will have uploaded them for public access. The team is planning a big roll-out of this digitized, indexed and searchable oral history archive for the 2019 International Living with Animals Conference which will be held in March at Eastern Kentucky University. Stay-tuned!

Psi Chi Update

Psi Chi and Psychology Club is happy to report that our past academic year involved the continuation of several established events, but also the addition of some new events. We started the year with our annual fundraising event for the Madison county Special Olympics, where the turnout was at an all-time high. Following this event, members expressed interest in being involved in the campus wide food drive for the Colonels Cupboard. The Colonels Cupboard provides emergency food boxes to currently enrolled students in need, as well as, referrals to social service agencies for further assistance. We were able to raise over 100lbs of food and will continue to be involved with the Colonels Cupboard in the future. Another first-time event for our organization, was our involvement in the Gift Tree for Madison Towers, a low income, elderly housing community in Richmond. The Psychology department has been hosting a gift tree event for Madison towers for several years and Psi Chi is happy to be able to contribute to such a great cause. We were able to raise gift donations for 79 residents. For the Spring semester we continued service projects, but also began a new research orientated component. Members collectively selected research topics and discussed specific articles they found on those topics each month. Through this we hope to further introduce students on how to find and consume research.

School Psychology Program

The graduate School Psychology program at ECU has been training future school psychologists for the state for the past forty years. Unfortunately the program was suspended this summer due to state budget cuts. This meant that the program did not take on any new students this semester. ECU is just one of three universities within the state of Kentucky that offers this type of training. In addition, there currently is a state- and nation-wide shortage of school psychologists. However, this was not enough to keep the program. While there is the possibility in the future that the school psychology faculty (Dr. Dan Florell, Dr. Teri Nowak, and Dr. Strait) will be able to resurrect the program, there are no immediate plans to do so. The school psychology graduate program will graduate its last class in the spring of 2020.

OSSR 2018

This year's Outstanding Seniors were Rebecca Bates, Chris Butcher, Emily Coleman, Heather Craig, Justice Cundiff, Allison Fornash, Hogan Gagle, Kara Gray, Caitlin Hacker, Josh Hansman, Molly King, Bailey McGuffin, Reagan Overby, Tiffani Peel, Emily Sledd, Bailey Spalding, Shelby Strong, Megan Thomas, Morgan Wherry, Savannah Williams, and Khrista Neville.

Alumni in the Workplace

A past graduate Leslie Tackett-Bussell stopped by recently to give some information on how her time at Eastern Kentucky University has prepared her for the work world. Leslie graduated from Eastern Kentucky in 2006 and is from Jenkins, Kentucky. When reflecting on her time here, Leslie explained that the faculty members in the Psychology department all played a mentorship role for her. She also expressed that she enjoyed all of her classes, and the faculty were always available to help at any time to guide her.

Leslie expressed that her degree in psychology helped her in the professional world, as psychology is a versatile major that can be used for practically anything. Leslie currently works as the Financial Center Manager at Forcht Bank. She states that she uses things she's learned in her classes all the time and that it helps her with sales processes and understanding clients and their needs. It's often thought that a bachelor's degree in psychology doesn't open doors into the professional world. However, Leslie argues that her degree allows for many different employment opportunities and that without the degree she would not have had the opportunities that she does now. With her background in psychology Leslie has been able to excel in the management arena, by being able to deal with many different personalities and situations, and working with the public and staff members. This degree allowed her to move into the current position that would have not been possible otherwise. Simply put, Leslie's degree in psychology from ECU has been invaluable to her in her life after college.

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Let's Hear from Alumni



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