It’s been a full year since our last newsletter, and a lot has happened in Psychology. We’ve welcomed two new faculty members – Daniel Taylor and Julie Feldman – while our long-time colleague and friend, Elizabeth Glisky, retired after 32 years in the department. In this newsletter, you can also read about the many outstanding contributions that our faculty, staff, and students have made to the field of psychology. I’m particularly proud of the crucial role Psychology has played over the past year in helping to build a welcoming and supportive workplace within the College of Science. Here’s but a few of our activities:

◊ Our Diversity Committee hosted panels that included people of every career stage – from grad students to seasoned full professors – to share and discuss their experiences as women and minorities in science.
◊ Our faculty colleague, Jeff Stone, along with his postdoctoral fellow, Katie Wolsiefer, led workshops on ways to overcome unconscious bias that were held in over a dozen departments across the college.
◊ The newly-formed College of Science Workplace Climate Committee, where I served as co-Chair, organized a series of events including guest speakers, workshops, and discussion sessions, all focused on ways to create a more positive workplace for faculty, staff, and students.
◊ Those discussions resulted in a set of guidelines and best practices for building family-friendly workplaces, which was unanimously endorsed by every department in the College of Science.

In our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, the first “value” we listed was people – focusing on collaboration and collegiality, treating faculty, staff and students with respect, embracing diversity and diverse opinions, and inviting partnerships across the campus and in the community. In 2020, we’ll begin writing a new strategic plan to help guide us through the next five years. I’m confident that valuing people will remain at the core of that plan. We are ALL Wildcats!

Best,

Lee Ryan
Professor and Head, Psychology Department
IN THE NEWS
How the Brain finds Meaning In Metaphor

You can grasp a hand. You can also grasp a concept. One is literal. One is metaphorical. Our brains know the difference, but would we be able to understand the latter without the former? Previous studies have suggested that our understanding of metaphors may be rooted in our bodily experience. If you hear, “he’s so sweet,” areas associated with taste are activated. And when you hear action verbs used in a metaphorical context, like “grasp a concept,” regions involved in motor perception and planning are activated. A study by University of Arizona researcher Vicky Lai, published in the journal Brain Research, builds on this research by looking at when different regions of the brain are activated in metaphor comprehension and what that tells us about the way we understand language.

Read the full article from UA News

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

JULIE FELDMAN, PH.D. Associate Professor of Practice
After 24 years of outstanding service to our department in various roles, Dr. Julie Feldman officially joined us this fall as a full-time faculty member. "Welcome" Julie!

Julie Feldman earned a Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology from the University of Washington in 1995. She then moved to Tucson to complete post-doctoral respecialization in Clinical Psychology at the University of Arizona. She is an innovative teacher of both large and small undergraduate and graduate level courses. She developed and has taught a graduate course on Teaching of Psychology for 23 years. She is director of the LifeSTEP (Life Skills Training Enhancement Program) program for undergraduates providing skills training and mentorship services for children with emotional and behavior problems for 19 years. She coordinates the Clinical Psychology externship program, supervises psychology interns in the psychiatry department, and teaches psychotherapy to graduate students. Her clinical interests are in the areas of anxiety and depression. Dr. Feldman completed her clinical psychology internship at the Tucson VA Medical Center, and has been a licensed clinical psychologist in Arizona since 2002. She was a board member of the Southern Arizona Psychology Association for 13 years. She and her husband (Keith Dveirin, MD, a pediatrician) have two daughters, ages 18 and 21.

DANIEL TAYLOR, PH.D. Professor, Clinical
I am honored and excited to be joining the University of Arizona Department of Psychology within the Clinical Psychology Program. I trained at clinical scientist programs in graduate school at the University of Memphis and on internship at the Brown University Medical School Consortium and my primary areas of research are clearly in the clinical scientist domain (i.e., treatment outcome research, refining and elaborating current treatments for comorbid populations, developing and testing new assessments, and etiological research with clinical populations). So, I am thrilled with the opportunity to work with students and departmental colleagues who share my interests and passion for clinical science. Dick Bootzin, Ph.D., has always been a role model for me, being a founding father of both Behavioral Sleep Medicine and the Academy of Psychological Clinical Science, and it is a privilege to be able to follow in his footsteps. I am a licensed psychologist and am board certified in both Sleep Medicine and Behavioral Sleep Medicine. My research focuses primarily on the epidemiology and treatment of comorbid sleep disorders, primarily insomnia, nightmares, and circadian rhythm disorders. My lab utilizes state of the science assessment and treatments of these sleep disorders and I am very happy to be joining a dream team of sleep researchers at the University of Arizona. I am also excited to develop new collaborations in identifying more objective (e.g., neurologic, metabolomic, and cardiovascular) consequences of and improvements after treatment of insomnia and other sleep disorders.
Researchers Call for Personalized Approach to Aging Brain Health

People are living longer than ever before, but brain health isn’t keeping up. To tackle this critical problem, a team of researchers has proposed a new model for studying age-related cognitive decline – one that’s tailored to the individual. “There’s no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to aging brain health”, says Lee Ryan, professor and head of the University of Arizona Psychology Department. In a new paper published in the journal Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience, Ryan and her co-authors advocate for a more personalized approach, borrowing principles of precision medicine in an effort to better understand, prevent and treat age-related cognitive decline. “Aging is incredibly complex, and most of the research out there was focusing on one aspect of aging at a time,” Ryan said. “What we’re trying to do is take the basic concepts of precision medicine and apply them to understanding aging and the aging brain. There’s not just one way of aging.”

Read the full article from UA News

Four Questions: How Grief Affects the Immune System

Losing a loved one is one of the most stressful life experiences a person will endure, and its toll can be physical as well as emotional. Bereavement’s association with increased risk for disease and early mortality may be explained, at least in part, by the relationship between grief and the immune system — something researchers began studying in 1977. In a new research review article published in the journal Psychosomatic Medicine, University of Arizona psychology doctoral student Lindsey Knowles and associate professors of psychology Mary-Frances O’Connor and John Ruiz examined 41 years of existing research on bereavement and the immune system. Read the full article from UA News where Knowles and O’Connor discussed their findings and possible directions for future research.

Are Eyes the Window to Our Mistakes?

We all make poor decisions from time to time. Researchers at the University of Arizona are working to better understand why, and they’re looking to the eyes for answers. To study this question, researchers gave participants a difficult auditory test where they listed to a series of clicks, some in their left ear and some in their right, over the span of a single second. They then had to decide which ear received the most clicks. The researchers found that the participants’ eyes – specifically their pupils – indicated when an error was made. Their findings, published in the journal Nature Human Behaviour, add to our understanding of what may be happening in the brain when we make the wrong choice. “The brain is an intrinsically noisy thing, because it’s basically a computer made of fat and water. It has an intrinsic inability to represent stimuli perfectly,” said UA assistant professor of psychology Robert Wilson, who co-authored the paper with postdoctoral research associate Waitsang Keung and Todd Hagen, who was a research specialist in Wilson’s lab.

Read the full article from UA News

Sleepness Nights linked to High Blood Pressure

A bad night’s sleep may result in a spike in blood pressure that night and the following day, according to new research led by John Ruiz, Associate Professor of Psychology and graduate student Caroline Doyle. The study, published in the journal Psychosomatic Medicine, offers one possible explanation for why sleep problems have been shown to increase the risk of heart attack, stroke and even death from cardiovascular disease. For this study, 300 men and women, ages 21 to 70, wore portable blood pressure cuffs for two consecutive days, as well as actigraphy monitors at night – wristwatch-like devices that measure movement – to help determine their “sleep efficiency,” or the amount of time in bed spent sleeping soundly. Overall, those who had lower sleep efficiency showed an increase in blood pressure during that restless night.

Read the full article from UA News
UA PSYCHOLOGY IN THE COMMUNITY

STUDENTS EDUCATE CAMPUS COMMUNITY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Dr. Jamie Edgin’s undergraduate Sleep and Sleep Disorders course (PSY 478) includes a community outreach component in which students design materials such as websites, flyers and videos centering on an issue they want to communicate to the public. Over the course of two days in April 2019, Dr. Edgin’s students connected with over 100 people in the campus community and shared information on the importance of sleep, such as the hazards of driving while sleep deprived, and the negative impact that all-night study sessions have on health. In addition to educating others, Dr. Edgin’s students learned valuable skills in effective communication, while also experiencing the satisfaction that comes from community outreach.

NEW IN UA PSYCHOLOGY

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE HOSTS EVENT TO EDUCATE OTHERS

As part of a larger effort, the Psychology Department’s Diversity Committee held an event this past April in conjunction with the Psi Chi National Honor Society to discuss the importance of diverse perspectives in graduate school. At this event, graduate students from various disciplines in psychology spoke about how attending graduate school can be both a rewarding experience and a trying one. Particularly for those students who are members of an underrepresented group in academia – based on gender, race, or health status, for example – the fear of rejection is real. What do these experiences mean to the people who are living through them? How can we overcome imposter syndrome, provide more positive support for our graduate students, and change the system to allay those fears?

The Diversity Committee was established to ensure that issues of diversity are addressed in every aspect of the department. These efforts include identifying and disseminating information and resources to facilitate our students’ and colleagues’ success, supporting and promoting department efforts to be a leader in diversity scholarship, and advocating for the valuing of diversity in curricula, recruitment of graduate students, faculty, and staff, and beyond. Indeed, valuing diversity is a core tenet of what it means to be a Wildcat. For more information on the Psychology Department Diversity Committee, visit psychology.arizona.edu/diversity

PSYCHOLOGY ADVISING RECOGNIZED

Psychology’s entire advising team was honored individually for their excellence in advising. Roxie Catts, Director of the University of Arizona Advising Resource Center said: “In partnership with the University Professional Advising Council, I want to recognize each of you as one of our our most professionally active and engaging advisors on campus.” Congratulations to our entire Advising team on this recognition and thank you for continuing to provide outstanding service to our students.

After 14 years in the Department of Psychology, we would like to congratulate Christy Ball on her new position as Director, Transfer Credit and Articulation, Provost Office, and thank her for her exceptional leadership and service. Melanie Lipton, our Arizona Online advisor, assumed the role as our new Assistant Director of Academic Advising in September. Melanie brings a wealth of advising and program management experience from Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona, and has been a key player in building our Arizona Online program.
Research in my lab focuses on the neuroscience of decision making - that is, what happens in our brains when we make a choice? To this end, we use a variety of techniques, from brain imaging with fMRI and EEG to brain manipulation with transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), which can effectively “turn off” specific brain regions with strong magnetic fields. In addition, we use computational modeling to make sense of the complex data we acquire and to derive mathematical equations that can actually predict the choices people make.

In one line of work, we are using all of these techniques to study how people decide between “exploring” something new (e.g. eating dinner at a new restaurant) and “exploiting” what they already know (e.g. going back to an old restaurant they know and love). Behaviorally, we have found that people can tradeoff the relative benefits of exploring and exploiting almost perfectly. Neurally, we have found that this sophisticated behavior relies on a network of brain areas at the front and in the center of the brain. Beyond the basic science, these results are helping us to shed light on how decision making changes with age and in mental disorders such as schizophrenia.

**GRADUATE STUDENT**

Ariana Stickel  
*Ph.D. student in Clinical Psychology*

I first became interested in the aging brain when I volunteered in an assisted living home. The differences in cognition from person-to-person intrigued me. As I became involved in cognitive aging research, I noticed a lack of information on aging Hispanics. It hurt to see that the majority of aging research may not apply to many of my family members. I joined the University of Arizona’s doctoral program in clinical psychology in order to improve my skills in cognitive aging research with the hopes of one day applying such skills to investigations of aging in Hispanics. With the guidance and support of my research advisor, Dr. Lee Ryan, that day has arrived. My dissertation compares the influence of cardiovascular health and genetics on brain structure and cognition between Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites. My previous graduate research suggests that cardiovascular risk factors, such as obesity, and genetics have complex and interactive effects on brain structure and cognition. Further, the impact of such factors may change from middle age to older adulthood and still more into late older adulthood. With the support of many individuals and organizations —the Ford Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization)— I will now be able to test if similar patterns are observed in Hispanics. The University of Arizona’s Psychology Department has laid the foundation for me to engage in collaborations, give back to the community, mentor students, and perform high quality research.

After graduating, my overarching goal is to generate knowledge that promotes cognitive health and minimizes risk for cognitive impairments across multiple diverse groups. I also intend to work on teams to design and implement training programs to help underrepresent groups, especially people of color, overcome barriers to engaging in research.

*Note: Ariana successfully defended her dissertation in July, 2019 and has begun a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of California San Diego this Fall.*
This personal statement was written in April 2019 by recent UA Psychology graduate Jade Harader, winner of the 2019 Governal Award. The Katherine Anne Governal Award is given to a graduating senior who has demonstrated perseverance by overcoming personal, economic or physical obstacles in order to complete their undergraduate degree. Her story and her strength is inspiring.

In complete honesty, saying that I have faced major challenges throughout my life and undergraduate career is putting it rather mildly. I do not say this for pity—I say it because I am truly proud of the perseverance and determination I have shown throughout my time at the University of Arizona, and I feel that I owe it to myself to recognize these qualities of mine.

At age 14, I was diagnosed with a severe case of scoliosis. This meant that I had multiple abnormal lateral curvatures in my spine, which would impact my physical and mental health for years to come. Until age 21, I had trouble breathing, compressed nerves, displaced discs, extreme chronic back pain, and a devastating physical deformity. The psychological toll that scoliosis took on me worsened in my college years. My self-esteem plummeted, and I felt as though nobody could relate to me. I avoided countless social situations that I desperately wanted to attend, for fear of people judging my abnormally shaped body. My mental energy was spent worrying about my health and completing schoolwork, while my physical energy was used up making it to and from classes—simply getting through each day.

Last year, I decided to undergo anterior scoliosis correction surgery. In late May of 2018, at age 21, my parents and I flew to New Jersey, where I had the ten-hour procedure completed. I had 19 large titanium screws placed in my spine, along with three tethers and various types of hardware to hold them in place. I faced complications in the hospital, and was placed in the ICU for two full weeks. Once back in Arizona, I was on bed rest for months. While unable to move around, I spent my time working on a five-week online summer class for my Family Studies and Human Development minor, ensuring that I would still graduate on time, while maintaining my scholarship. I learned to sit, walk, and care for myself again. I fought with everything I had to recover, while simultaneously continuing and prioritizing my education.

Throughout my undergraduate career, I have experienced continuous physical pain and mental distress. However, I have also experienced growth, change, increased internal and external strength, and I have proven that I can overcome anything. It often feels like life is a race that I had to begin standing farther from the starting line than everyone else, but through my courage and determination, I have finally caught up.

I will graduate, and I will do so with a 3.9 GPA. Instead of focusing on how far I have to go, I am choosing to focus on how far I have come. I had the opportunity to effect massive change in my life, and I took it in full, knowing all the possible risks, knowing the pain that would come with it, and I won. This coming May will mark one year since my life-changing surgery. I will walk away from the University of Arizona knowing that I received an incredible education, amazing friends, and a degree in a subject I love. I will stand, cap and gown on, with screws in my spine, scars on my body, a diploma in my hands, and a smile on my face. Of this, I truly could not be prouder.

About the Kathryn Anne Governal Award
Kathryn A. Governal, born in 1966 in New Brunswick, New Jersey is remembered as a kind and caring humanitarian who persevered for years through illness and disabilities to achieve both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Journalism from the University of Arizona in 1995 and 1998, respectively. In 1999, shortly after her death, the Governal family created the ‘Kathryn Anne Governal Perseverance Award’ Endowment, a 501C3 foundation at the University of Arizona. They currently include the Journalism, Communications, Philosophy, History, and Psychology departments. Plaques are proudly displayed in each of these departments showing the names and years of graduation of each award recipient. Students are chosen by faculty committees within each of these departments with multiple awards provided each year. These awards have been funded in perpetuity.
ELIZABETH GLISKY, PH.D., RETIRES

For the past 32 years, Dr. Elizabeth Glisky has served as a valued faculty member in the Psychology Department at the University of Arizona. Her ground-breaking research on memory and aging garnered international recognition and made her one of the world’s leading experts on rehabilitation methods for memory-impaired individuals. As a highly sought-after public speaker and advocate for older adults, Dr. Glisky understood the importance of contributing to the Tucson community and across the state of Arizona. At the University of Arizona, she had a major impact on policy and governance through the many administrative positions she held, including Head of Psychology (2009-2015), Associate Head of Psychology and Director of Graduate Studies (2004-2009), and the Head of the Interdisciplinary Program in Gerontology (2000 to 2002). She chaired numerous important committees on campus, including the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, and the Graduate Council, to name a few. Notably, Dr. Glisky chaired the committee that established the School of Mind, Brain and Behavior and moved the Psychology Department into the College of Science.

The faculty, staff, and students in the Psychology Department acknowledge the enormous contribution that Dr. Glisky (Betty to her friends...) has made to the Psychology Department, the College of Science, and the University of Arizona, and we thank her for her many outstanding years of service. It is our pleasure to announce that in honor of Betty’s retirement, the Dr. Elizabeth L. Glisky Endowed Fellowship will be established to support graduate students with financial need in the Psychology Department. Click here if you would like to support the Dr. Elizabeth L. Glisky Endowed Fellowship.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

University of Arizona Honors and Awards

MARY A. PETERSON
Excellence in Mentoring Award

DAVID A. SBARRA
Graduate and Professional Education Teaching and Mentoring Award

JULIE FELDMAN
Galileo Circle Copernicus Award

DANA B. NARTER
Special Recognition, University of Arizona Hillel Foundation

Promotion & Tenure

STEPHEN L. COWEN
Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

HEIDI HAMANN
Awarded Tenure

DANIEL L. SULLIVAN
Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

National Honors & Awards

JESSICA ANDREWS-HANNA
Early Investigators Award, Society of Experimental Psychologists
Lifetime Fellow, Society of Experimental Psychologists

MARY A. PETERSON
Early Career Psychologist Champion Award, American Psychological Association
Clifford T. Morgan Distinguished Leadership Award, Psychonomic Society

VICKY LAI
Fellow, Psychonomic Society

MARY-FRANCES O’CONNOR
Fellow, Association for Psychological Sciences

GENE ALEXANDER
Fellow, Adult Development & Aging, Division 20, American Psychological Association

EVE ISHAM
Appointed to International Society for the Study of Time Council
ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

In April, UA Psychology hosted a unique event for local alumni, friends and family at the Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle, Washington. Speakers for this event were Dr. Joaquin Ruiz, Dean of the College of Science, Psychology Department Head Dr. Lee Ryan, and Dr. Tammi Walker, Associate Professor of Psychology and the College of Law. As the featured speaker, Dr. Walker discussed the Department’s unique collaboration with the College of Law over more than 20 years, including our joint J.D./Ph.D. program. It was great to see over 50 people at this event, including our very first JD/PhD alumnus, Dr. Andrew Benjamin (J.D./Ph.D. ‘85). We look forward to connecting with more of our alumni soon!

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ALUMNI RESOURCES

Student Engagement & Career Development
career.arizona.edu/welcome-alumni

Alumni Association
arizonaalumni.com

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!
Facebook: @arizonapsychology
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/uapsychology
psychology.arizona.edu/alumni
beardownnetwork.com
HOMECOMING 2019

ALUMNI, FAMILY & FRIENDS
HOMECOMING TAILGATE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND
two hours before kick-off

Join us on the front lawn of
FLANDRAU SCIENCE CENTER & PLANETARIUM
for fun and refreshments, and free science demos
FREE ADMISSION to Flandrau for registered guests

Register for this free event at:
cosalumnitailgate2019.eventbrite.com