

Psychology Undergraduate News

Department of
Psychology
Undergraduate
Advising Office

Volume 11, Issue 2—
January 2009

Changes to your
class schedule?

Winter Quarter 2009



We hope you had a great winter break and are ready to take full advantage of all that the Department of Psychology and the Advising Office has to offer this Winter Quarter.



While it may be cold outside, we have plenty of events happening this quarter inside the warm and cozy confines to be found in the Psychology Building.

Be sure to join us for several great events this quarter, including two that are held only once a year. We will also have two talks this quarter with our ongoing PEP series.

Enjoy the quarter!



Inside this Newsletter!

Student Articles on...

- ◆ GECs, Theses, & Internships (3-4)
- ◆ Graduate School Applications (5)
- ◆ Things You Can Do with a Psychology Major (6)



Important Dates

- Friday, Jan. 9—Last day to add courses via the web.
- Friday, Jan. 16—Last day to add a course with an instructor's written permission only (use a "Course Enrollment Permission" slip and turn this form in at your College of Arts & Sciences advising office.)
- Friday, Jan. 23—Last day to add a course with the instructor's written permission and the department chair's signature.
- Friday, Jan. 23—Last day to drop courses without a "W" on your record; last day to add a course without petitioning; last day to register for Audit or Pass/Non-Pass options.
- Friday, Feb. 20—Last day to drop a course or withdraw from Winter Quarter without petitioning.

What's Happening this Quarter?

Our Annual Applying to Graduate School Workshop will take place on the evenings of Tuesday, January 13 and Wednesday, January 14.

The Psychology Career, Internship, and Graduate School Fair will take place on the evening of Tuesday, February 10 from 5:30-7:30.

For more information about both of these events, which are held only once per year, please see the Events section of our website at:

<http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu>

This quarter, we also have two intriguing talks as part of our Psychology

Enrichment Program (PEP) series. Please see inside this newsletter for details about these very interesting and informative sessions. Both of these talks will take place in room 35 of the Psychology Building.



Spring Quarter Scheduling & Course Information

Spring 2009 Registration Windows

February 2-3: University Priority
 February 4-5: Graduating Seniors
 February 6: Waitlist Rank 4
 February 9-13: Rank 4
 February 16: Waitlist Rank 3
 February 17-19: Rank 3
 February 20: Waitlist Rank 2
 February 23-25: Rank 2
 February 26: Waitlist Rank 1
 February 27-March 4: Rank 1



New (or Relatively New) Courses

Psychology 220
 Introduction to Data Analysis
 Trisha Van Zandt

Psychology 521
 Personnel Psychology
 Mark Polifroni

Psychology H594
 Psychobiology of Aggression
 Randy Nelson

Psychology 597.04
 Technology, Efficiency, & Happiness
 Richard Jagacinski

(Please note that 597.04 counts towards the GEC, but not the major)

New (or Relatively New) Courses

Psychology 695.03
 Animal Cognition
 (Seminar in Developmental Psychology)
 Sally Boysen



Honors Recognition

Recently Admitted to Candidacy for Honors:

Elaine Aldana
 Samantha Ali
 Ramona Bhatt
 Alicia Miller
 Joseph Rodriguez
 Sindhia Swaminathan
 Brandon Walz

Recently Admitted to Candidacy for Research Distinction in Psychology:

Samuel DeWitt
 Alex Finnarn
 Anna Lacey
 Miriam McAlexander
 Jessica Ramey
 Kaleigh Sands

Students completing an approved honors curriculum both in the major and GECs with a minimum of a 3.4 GPA are eligible to graduate with honors in the liberal arts. Students completing a senior honors thesis, the Psychology H783 course sequence, and graduate with a minimum 3.4 GPA overall and 3.5 GPA in Psychology are eligible to graduate with distinction in the major.

Psychology Student Organizations

Involvement in student organizations is an excellent way to network with fellow students having similar interests, discover opportunities to become a student leader, and develop fulfilling friendships. Organizations in Psychology include the Minority Psychology Student Association (MPSA), Psi Chi, and the Psychology Club.

Minority Psychology Student Association (MPSA)

<http://mpsa.org.ohio-state.edu/>

Tiffany Henderson (.404)

Psi Chi

<http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/html/psichi.htm>

Jaimie Hoppert (.5)

Psychology Club

<http://psychclub.org.ohio-state.edu/Welcome.html>

Luke Werhan (.1)



GECs, Theses, and Internships – Oh, my?

by Josh Vittie

Josh Vittie recently received a B.A. with Research Distinction in Psychology and is now pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) at The John Glenn School of Public Affairs here at Ohio State.

Chances are, I am not like you – but you may be able to learn something from me. I came to The Ohio State University as a non-traditional student. I was a long-haul truck driver before that, before that I was a Paramedic in the State of New York, and before that...I think you get the point.

Let me paint a picture of what you can do in four years at The Ohio State University: you can graduate with Research Distinction in Psychology, you can complete a double minor in Criminology and Forensic Sciences, and you can earn 247 credits (all at OSU and all in four years) while working, at times, two jobs and maintaining an internship. It's not pretty and it's not fun, but there's no reason you can't do it if you're willing to apply yourself to that goal – I did, and I'm pretty sure some of you can as well. I hope you may be able to learn something from my experiences.



GECS

You know you have to take them, but do you truly appreciate them? One of the main reasons I followed the path that I did is because I will not take a class unless I truly want to be there. Back home, our schools were much smaller than OSU, and that resulted in a very limited number of choices for the general curriculum materials. I knew the only way I would survive four years at this university would be to enjoy virtually everything I took (unfortunately pre-calc was a requirement I could not avoid).

Do some research – go online and download a copy of the course bulletin and read it, cover to cover. I guarantee you will find a class that will fascinate you that you never knew existed. Have a face-to-face meeting with your Arts and Sciences Advisor (or Honors Advisor) and work with them to make the classes you want to take work as GECs. Choose classes that are novel, exciting, and rigorous. Rigor is the key to convincing your advisor to let you take that class in place of another on the “approved GEC list”. Take a 500 or 600 or 700 level class, and take the Honors version even if you are not in the Honors Program, for you will be pleasantly surprised.



Take a class for the sole purpose of pursuing knowledge for the sake of knowledge. The University's motto is *Disciplina in civitatem*, which roughly means “knowledge for citizenship”. The goal of many universities is to educate you to live your life as a good, knowledgeable citizen and as a productive member of society. Being as well rounded and well read in as many subjects as possible is a good way to do that – so take advantage of your GECs!



HONORS THESIS

Some of you may already know you want to complete an Honors Thesis (good for you), while others of you may be intimidated by the sound of “Honors Thesis” (don't be). If you have any inkling that you want to write a Honors Thesis, start taking classes that address the issue you want to study, and start asking faculty, staff, lecturers, TAs, advisors, friends, and students in your classes if they know anyone who has a research interest in what you would like to potentially write your Thesis on. Ask questions of as many people as possible and ask them as many questions as they are willing to answer.

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GECs, Theses, and Internships – Oh, my?

by Josh Vittie

Once you have settled on a topic and know of someone in the Department (or another Department) that has knowledge in the area you would like to write about, drop by their office and talk to them. Tell them you were in their class (if you were and when) or just tell them that you know they have an interest in the area of your topic. Ask them if you can bounce your ideas for a Thesis off them. If you get along and there is a mutual interest in each others work – ask if they would be willing to advise you. Ask early.

Starting in 2008-2009, the H783 sequence will begin in Spring; I secured my Advisors midway through my Junior year. The earlier, the better! Also, be sure to understand the existing research in your area and any issues you may have with IRB approval or finding a suitable population.

I examined sex-offender classification and treatment options; this type of population poses many problems and presents potential roadblocks, it can take a great deal of time and effort to obtain approval to study, and it may result in needing to change the entire methodology of your study. Know as much as you can before starting to avoid pitfalls such as these.

INTERNSHIPS

Never underestimate the value of a good internship. Yes, economic times are tough and yes, there are many organizations that are not paying for interns right now. Get over it. Finding the best internship



can often lead to permanent positions, excellent letters of recommendation, vast networking opportunities, and exposure to the day to day life of what you think you may want to do as a career.

You may love your internship and look forward to going to every shift and applying your knowledge to something you want to be doing; that is the ideal situation and good for you if you find it! You may end up hating your internship and dread going to your shift. You may realize that XYZ is completely different than what you envisioned it would be; good for you! You just saved yourself a great deal of heartbreak when you graduate and go for that first job after your life as a university student has ended. Knowing what you do not like or do not want to do is at least as important as knowing what you want to do. Both experiences have value to them – the question is: what are you going to make of the experience you find yourself in?

Do not be afraid to ask the other employees for their take on what they are doing, how they got there, if they enjoy it, what their prospects are like for advancing, and anything else you can think of

asking them. Perhaps you will be lucky enough to find a mentor – someone who is dedicated to helping you navigate the rough waters that lie ahead of you in moving from school to first job after graduation to career – this person will be one of the most valuable assets you could ever find. Perhaps you will leave with nothing more than knowing what you do not want to do with your life or that your dream job does not live up to your expectations. Perhaps the most important thing is learning how to deal with a situation in the most productive manner possible, regardless of what that situation is.



My summary is short and a blinding flash of the obvious. Work hard, enjoy what you do, learn for the sake of learning, find a mentor, plan ahead, and make the most out of every situation you find yourself in – even if it is not the situation you want to be in. As in the beginning, I hope you are able learn something from my experiences.



Day in the Life of a Graduate School Applicant by Kendall Leser

This article is Part 2 of 3 in a profile of a current student applying to graduate school. Part 1 can be found in the Autumn Quarter 2008 Newsletter, located at:

<http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/pdf/AU08newsletter.pdf>

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Kendall Leser, a senior majoring in psychology, answers questions from the editor regarding what it has been like to apply to graduate school. She is hoping to enter a graduate program in Autumn 2009.

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Editor: Which graduate program(s) did you apply to and at which schools?

Kendall: I applied to only one program—the Ph.D. program at The Ohio State University for public health. After working in three psychology labs and doing my honors thesis, I realized that I have a preference for public health over clinical work in psychology.

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Editor: When did you take the GRE?

Kendall: I took the GRE at the end of September. I studied a lot for the verbal section and actually should have spent more time reviewing the math. I will admit that I was a nervous wreck in the testing center and that I will take the GRE again, because I think that the nerves got the best of me.



Editor: How did you decide who would write letters of recommendation for you?

Kendall: I asked professors that I had worked with for at least 6 months. I said "would you be willing to write me a STRONG letter?"

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Editor: Do you have any advice for students who are planning to apply to graduate programs next year?

Kendall: Do research as an undergrad! And study for the GRE when you have time, months prior to taking the exam.

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Editor: When do you expect to be hearing back from the graduate schools?

Kendall: I'd expect to hear back in March-April.

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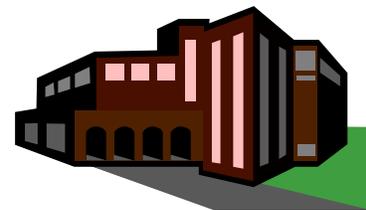
Editor: What was the most difficult part of the application process you have gone through?

Kendall: Working on the personal statement, just because it takes a lot of time and thought.

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Editor: What was the most time-consuming part of the application process you have gone through so far?

Kendall: As I mentioned, I found the personal statement to be the most time-consuming. Putting thoughts into words is difficult when there is no specific writing prompt. I probably spent 20 hours on just one draft of my personal statement.



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Editor: Now that you have gone through the graduate school application process, what would you do differently, knowing what you now know?

Kendall: I would have started studying for the GRE back in high school! Actually, I would have tried to work on studying for the GRE in the summers and the breaks off of school, just because it was a really overwhelming process for me.



Editor's note: Stay tuned for Part 3 of 3 of this series in Spring!

How I Became a Psychology Major

by Noriko Yoshida

“So, you’re going to be around serial killers, rapists, and tons of other dangerous people when you graduate? That’s what you want to do? I can’t believe what you’re saying!”



That was the first thing my mother said to me when I told her I had switched my major from Biology to Psychology. Of course, I wasn’t as extreme as my mother but I must admit, I didn’t have a positive image towards the field of psychology either before I met a career counselor here at OSU. She was the one who really supported and guided me when I was struggling to find out what I really wanted to do for a career.

At times, being unsure or doing something against your will can really hurt you. I know this from my own experience when I worked at an IT company for a few months. When I realized that this wasn’t what I wanted to do, every day was so stressful that I lost my appetite and weight, had nightmares, and felt worthless all of the sudden. If it weren’t for my career counselor, I would still be struggling with the incongruence between who I am vs. who I want to be.



My current goal is to go to graduate school, study multicultural psychology, earn a PhD, and some day go back to Japan and accomplish two things. One is to practice counseling and another is to create a PhD program that will educate future psychologists in Japan. Currently, there is a bias in Japan that if an individual is in need of help, they should go talk to a psychiatrist. While there is nothing wrong about going to psychiatrists, I believe that people should know that they have other options available too, such as therapies and counseling. Like my experience with my career counselor, I want more people to notice or understand that counseling can be as efficacious as pharmacotherapy.



To pursue my future goal, I took several psych classes here at OSU that have been helpful in my preparation for grad school. One of these classes was Psych

331 (Abnormal Psychology) with Dr. Strunk. In this course, we study each disorder and its facts, approaches and treatments. Despite the overload size of materials that we cover in class, it is an extremely interesting course to take if you are thinking of becoming a clinical or counseling psychologist.

I also took psych 699, an undergraduate research course. My job as a Research Assistant was to run sessions with participants who signed up for the experiment. It was a wonderful experience. The best part of this program is that undergrads get to both observe and experience how research is done. So when you apply to grad school, you can say that you already have some idea and experience in research, which is a great advantage.



When I first came to OSU, I often had rough times, but since I changed my major to psychology everything has changed. With great instructors and amazing classes, I can finally say that I am having the most exciting time of my life.



Did you know?

What do the following jobs have in common?

Advertising Account Manager
Assistant Director of Education
Benefits Specialist/Administrator
Case Worker/Manager
Paralegal
Protective Services Caseworker
Residence Hall Director

They all were "first job titles" of OSU alumni with a bachelor's degree in Psychology. A bachelor's degree with a major in Psychology is inherently flexible and allows for a number of potential career choices.

For additional information related to our recent survey of the Psychology Department's undergraduate alumni, please see our Alumni Survey Information:

http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/html/alumni_info.htm

Not sure where to begin your search for that future career?

Gain internship experience in Spring Quarter. If your internship experience is related to psychology, you may be eligible to take Psychology 489, Internship in Psychology (requires instructor permission).

- ◆ Small class size (under 20 students)
- ◆ Individualized attention
- ◆ Get a serious head start on your job search!



Psychology Enrichment Program

The Psychology Enrichment Program is a series of talks designed to introduce students to various topics within and related to the field of psychology. While attending these sessions, students get to know Psychology Faculty and Advising Office Staff better and become more involved in the Psychology Department.

All psychology students and students exploring the major are invited to attend. These talks are informal and encourage interaction among students and speakers. Please RSVP on our website shown on the top of this page. Refreshments are provided!

Wednesday, January 21
4:00-6:00 pm

Sexuality, Aggression, & Drugs — Oh My!

The topic of this talk will be on getting involved in research in the Department of Psychology.

Room 35, Psychology Building
<http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/>

Speakers:
Helene Cweren, Alisa Paulsen, and undergraduate students involved in research.

Monday, January 26
4:30-5:30 pm

Your Future is Our Focus



The topic of this talk will be on finding a job for Psychology Majors.

Room 35, Psychology Building
<http://undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/>

Speaker: Scott Kustis

