



News from Interim Chair, Dr. Alycia Hund

Greetings. It is an honor to serve as the Interim Chairperson of the Department of Psychology, starting August 16, 2024. I am excited about the opportunity to serve our outstanding faculty, staff, and students; to connect with alumni and friends; and to partner with community members and organizations as we seek to build expertise, champion mental health and social justice, help others, and make the world a better place.

Let me begin by expressing our thanks to Dr. J. Scott Jordan, who has served as our department chairperson since 2009. We are grateful for his leadership, as he championed our diverse expertise, supported our students, connected with alumni and visiting scholars, and ensured the department is a great place to learn and work. We look forward to his continued service as part of the Cognitive and Experimental Psychology faculty when he returns from sabbatical.

The department is looking forward to a busy academic year, back in DeGarmo Hall following extensive renovations to the DeGarmo patio and refreshing many basement spaces during Summer 2024. Please stop by to visit us in DeGarmo Hall anytime you are on campus. We invite you to join us for Alumni Day on September 27, 2024, which is part of ISU's Homecoming celebration.

We are poised to welcome our largest ever class of incoming psychology majors, along with undergraduate transfer students, new graduate students, and returning undergraduate and graduate students, making our department the academic home for over 850 current students. We are excited about the growth of our undergraduate peer mentoring program, now entering its third year. The program includes a 1-credit course called Peer Mentoring Preparation (PSY 282), which provides basic training in mentoring skills and experience interacting with Introduction to Psychology (PSY 111) students who are new to ISU and our major. Then, students can register for Peer Mentoring in Psychology (PSY 292), an out of class experience where they work with an instructor in mentorship roles. Thus far, peer mentors have been busy interacting with prospective students and families through open house and visit days; holding office hours in the Student Success Center; helping with department events such as our fall welcome; hosting workshops to help psychology students with study tips, self-care, capstone exploration, and registration questions; and supporting psychology majors in many ways. Last year, we added Advanced Peer Mentoring and Student Success Apprenticeship (PSY 393) as a capstone experience for our peer mentoring program, and we already have at least one student working toward this goal. This is our sixth capstone option for our undergraduate majors, a point of pride for our department.

News from outgoing chair, Dr. J. Scott Jordan



Esteemed Colleagues:

An academic department, just like any other organization, is made up of people who have goals, dreams, families, friends, and, hopefully, a life outside of work. My goal as chair has been to develop a department in which faculty, students, and staff are able to do

their jobs without worrying about department politics, the collegiality of their colleagues, or the worth of their work. We are all experts. Learning how to interact with each other in terms of our diverse expertise energizes us to be more open, more creative, and more seen. In addition, it makes us more excited about enhancing and sustaining diversity. I have truly appreciated your willingness to work with me in this manner, and I am extremely confident in your willingness and desire to continue doing so with a new leader.

You may have noticed during my time as chair that I encouraged emeritus faculty to keep their offices for a few years following retirement. This was more than simple kindness. My ultimate objective was for the presence of these scholars to serve as a constant reminder of just how wonderful it is to be a member of an academic department. I wanted current faculty to witness emeritus faculty being treated well, so that they might later imagine themselves being treated the same way when they reach the latter stages of their career. Grace, kindness, and mutual respect are all more likely to persist in culture the more they are modeled.

So, before I move onto other things, I'd like to leave you with the immortal words of those sage prophets, Bill and Ted; "Be excellent to each other!"

Thanks, and best!
Scott

Alumni of the Year 2024: Lifetime Achievement

Dr. Eric Wesselmann



Dr. Eric Wesselmann is a Professor in the Illinois State University Department of Psychology, where he earned his B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Film Studies in 2003,

his M.A. was in the I/O-Social Psychology sequence in 2005 and his PhD was at Purdue in the Department of Psychology in 2011. Dr. Wesselmann publishes research on social inclusion and exclusion, sexual harassment, social stigma, and the psychology of religion and spirituality. He has published in various psychology and interdisciplinary journals, including *Aggressive Behavior*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, and *Psychological Science*. Eric has co-edited special issues in the *Journal of Social Psychology*, *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, and *Self & Identity*.

Alumni of the Year 2024: Early Career

Dr. Christopher Wahlheim

Dr. Wahlheim is a first generation college graduate who earned an A. A. degree at Black Hawk College, and B.S. and M.S. degrees at Illinois State University. He completed



his Ph.D. training and two Postdoctoral Fellowships at Washington University in St. Louis. He is an Associate Professor of Psychology and the director of the Memory and Cognition Lab at UNC Greensboro. His primary research interests are in memory, misinformation, beliefs, cognitive aging, and metacognition.

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We were pleased to welcome Ms. Ally Frizzell as our second undergraduate academic advisor in April 2024. We look forward to welcoming Dr. Jacqueline Cerda-Smith as an Assistant Professor next year. Dr. Cerda-Smith's research focuses on supporting adolescent well-being in schools using a critical consciousness lens. She received her Ph.D. in lifespan developmental psychology from North Carolina State University and will join our Developmental faculty in January 2025. And congratulations are in order for the Specialist in School Psychology program for receiving full accreditation from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) for 2024-2031.

The University's Strategic Plan (Excellence by Design: 2024-2029) launched recently, and the College of Arts and Sciences' newest strategic plan is forthcoming. Our department has been busy gathering feedback from key stakeholders as we seek to understand department strengths and opportunities for growth. Thus far, students note inspiring stories of learning through coursework and mentoring from our outstanding faculty and staff; out of class teaching, research, peer mentoring, and internship experiences; participation in student organizations; and diverse capstone experiences. They also note the importance of culturally relevant training and communication skills as they look ahead to professional employment and/or graduate education. These details will be instrumental to our work in drafting our next strategic plan. I look forward to listening and learning from others in the coming year.

We have much to look forward to in the Department of Psychology at ISU. Please enjoy the many stories of excellence in this newsletter. We invite you to visit our website and interact with us on social media for more updates about the department, and we would appreciate the opportunity to hear from you as we seek to strengthen our work together. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Alycia M. Hund, Ph.D.

Associate Chair and Professor

Undergraduate Coordinator

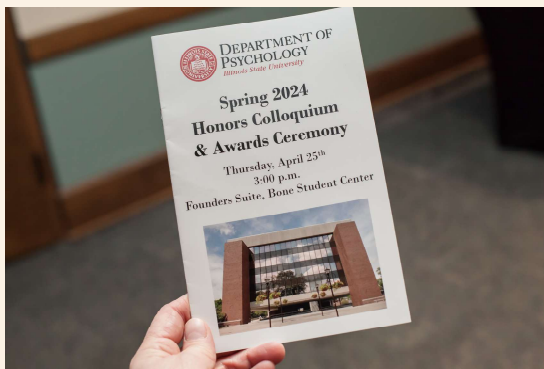
Department of Psychology

2024 Department of Psychology Spring Awards

The 2024 Spring Honors Colloquium & Awards Ceremony was held last Thursday, April 25th, in the Founders Suite at Bone Student Center. Caitlyn Weber started us off with her colloquium titled, "Understanding Resilience in Young Children", which was followed by our departmental/university awardees and nominees:

Kwesi Blankson
Lourdes Concepción Cabán
Clarissa Curescu
Megan Donnelly
Michelle Duong
Marisol Faudoa
Camila Fontes Fialho
Erin Marchand
Maisha Orthy
Eva Reyes
Audrey Strain
Jazmine Towner
Emma Walis
Katherine Waller
Sarah Williams

Thank you for all family members, faculty, and staff who attended. We are #RedbirdProud of our #PsychBirds and #GradBirds!!



Merit Scholarships

Each year the Graduate School awards four Merit Fellowships to the Department of Psychology, and we use foundation funds to supplement these four so that all seven of our graduate programs/sequences can award a Merit Fellowship to a highly deserving, incoming first-year graduate student. Congratulations to our 2023-2024 Merit Scholarship awardees:

Shari Aclibon - SP PhD
Dante Caruso - CxP
Tori Lomelino - I/OS
Raven Moore - SP SSP
Sharitah Nalule - CCP
Lauren Rogers - DEV

Illinois State University is making a concerted effort to attract high quality students to our graduate programs and to do that, we have established a \$2500 Graduate Merit Fellowship Award. This ISU fellowship is in addition to your assistantship that will be paid over your first two paychecks and is a one-time award.

2024 University Research Symposium

Friday, April 12, 2024 - Brown Ballroom, Bone Student Center

The Research Symposium is held each spring and offers an exciting opportunity for enrolled Illinois State graduate and undergraduate students to present what they have learned through their scholarship, research, and creative expression in an academic setting.

All students enrolled at the University and engaged in scholarship, research, and creative activity under the direction of a faculty mentor are eligible to register.



Save the Date!



We are excited to invite you to our

2024 Homecoming Awards Celebration

What: A celebration for the Department of Psychology community—alumni, faculty, staff, and students. Please come to enjoy good food, tasty beverages, trivia, and great company!

When: Friday September 27th, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Where: Eastland Suites & Conference Center –
Bloomington, IL

Formal invitation and registration link to follow
If you have questions about this event, please feel free to
contact Angi Davis by email (aldavill@ilstu.edu) or
phone (309.438.8687)



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PSYCHOLOGY
Illinois State University

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Memorials may be made to the Department
of Psychology, c/o Illinois State University
Foundation, Campus Box 8000, Normal IL
61790-8000 - thank you.