



PSYC INSIGHT

For Students, By Students



WHAT'S INSIDE?

SLEEP & STUDYING



What effect does sleep have on cognition?
What can you do to improve your sleep hygiene?

STUDY ABROAD



Your ticket to international education!

INTERNSHIPS IN YOUR AREA

Finding an internship can be difficult, so here are some resources to help you get started!



INTERVIEW WITH NEW FACULTY MEMBER



Get to know Towson's newest addition to the PSYC department: Professor Pearis Jean!



+ MORE!



Internships in PSYC

By: Elianna Albert & David Christian

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PSYC 435 Internships in Psychology

If you're looking for an opportunity to pursue an internship while receiving credit, you can do so through PSYC 435: Internships in Psychology! Internships for counseling, art therapy, human resource projects, animal behavior, adolescent psychology and many others are offered through our PSYC course. With a wide range of workplaces to choose from, Professor Wheeler works with you to pick the internship that best fits your interests. To apply, you need a minimum of 23 PSYC credits and a 3.0 GPA in the major. Applications should be sent the semester prior to when you want to intern.

American Psychology Association

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What better place to look for PSYC internships than the American Psychology Association (APA)? The APA offers internships (paid and unpaid) for undergraduate students seeking a career in the psychology field. Through this internship program, the APA aims to help students develop marketable skills and a better understanding of various career paths in psychology. Be sure to check deadlines and application qualifications!

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Handshake

As a TU student, you automatically have a Handshake account. Handshake is a free online database which serves as a recruitment hub for jobs, internships, and on-campus services. You filter internships based on type of work, hours, and location. With a mobile app that notifies you with possible updates, Handshake is a very convenient and accessible way to get a glimpse at possible internships in the field.

If you're struggling to find the right fit, then you can make an appointment with the Career Center or meet with your academic advisor for more ideas!

SLEEP & ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

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By: Liv Wright & Gabby Yeldell

As we get deeper into the semester, maintaining consistent habits in many areas of life is crucial to maximizing your academic potential. While it is important to maintain good study habits, your physical and mental health habits are just as, if not more, important. Thus, being mindful of behaviors that can affect your health can improve your academic performance more than you think.



POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There are several habits that are common amongst students that may be harmful for your cognition. For example, it has been found that skipping out on breakfast can negatively affect the psychosocial aspects of your life and has been found to cause mood swings in some individuals. This may impact confidence and create another barrier towards academic success. Other behaviors that can impact performance are: school attendance, proper nutritional intake, consistent exercise, and maintaining a healthy body weight. However, there may be more factors contributing to a struggle with academics.

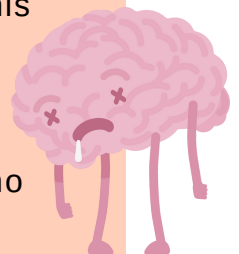


According to Hershner & Chervin (2014), 50% of college students report daytime sleepiness and 70% of students report attaining “insufficient” sleep. Sleep is an integral function for not only survival, but also cognitive performance, and its importance is sometimes underestimated by university students.

HARMFUL SLEEP HABITS

We often hear that limiting screen time before bed is beneficial, but what is the science behind this? Melatonin, A.K.A our sleep hormone, is secreted by the pineal gland in response to darkness, however, its secretion is suppressed when exposed to light after night fall. Consequently, exposure to bright light before bed disrupts our natural circadian rhythm, making it harder to both fall asleep at night and wake up in the morning.

It may be more time efficient, but eating copious amounts of fast food can also be linked to poor sleep quality and sleep deprivation in undergraduate students. This may in turn negatively affect your academic performance and also have a negative effect on your overall health. Inversely, a shorter amount of sleep can result in an increase in snack and sugary beverage consumption, but not an increase in energy input from meals. It has been found that some individuals who have slept for 5 hours or less were more likely to consume sugary beverages than individuals who slept for longer than 5 hours.





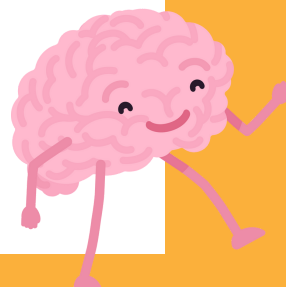
Even staying up late to cram for an exam or pulling an all-nighter for your final may both be counterproductive efforts. Chronic partial sleep deprivation (SD) can be equally impairing as short-term total SD. Total SD is extremely impairing to the body and mind, as it can result in inhibited alertness, increased cortisol secretion and blood pressure, worsened decision-making, and mood changes. A 2003 study found that participants who slept for only 4 or 6 hours per night for 14 consecutive days scored, on average, the same on cognitive performance tests as participants who had not slept at all for 48 hours. Thus, partial SD may not seem as extreme, but when it becomes chronic it may produce cognitive impairments.

IMPROVING SLEEP FOR BETTER GRADES

Sleep is an integral function for cognition. Patel et al. outlines, the average night consists of four to five 90-110 minute cycles through five sleep stages: wake, N1 (light sleep), N2 (deeper sleep), N3 (deepest non-REM sleep) and REM sleep. The N2 sleep stage is experienced twice through each sleep cycle, and takes up 45% of a full night's sleep. It has been found that many of the cognitive benefits associated with sleep occur during this stage, such as memory consolidation (the strengthening of encoded memories) and sleep spindles, which are bursts of neuron firing that aid synaptic plasticity.

Whether you're studying for an exam, rehearsing a presentation, or doing readings for tomorrow's lecture, your brain is working hard to help you succeed in your studies. So how can you prioritize your nightly Z's to help you achieve A's?:

- Opting to read, journal, or meditate in dim lighting before bed may be a good replacement for screen-time to avoid the disruption of your circadian rhythm.
- Even if you're in a hurry, it is more beneficial for you to squeeze in a quick bite to eat, (grab a fruit!), rather than missing the most important meal of the day. Opt to utilize the dining hall services on campus, or, if possible, try to fit more home-cooked meals in your routine. Maintaining a healthy diet may improve your sleep which can positively affect your academic performance.
- Make sure that you are optimizing the amount of sleep you are getting, and aim for at least eight hours of sleep each night to ensure an optimal restoration period for your brain.



WHY NOT GIVE SOME OF THESE HEALTHY HABITS A TRY? HAPPY SLEEPING, TIGERS!



Get PSYChed for Study Abroad!

By: Lauren Nuetzel & Grace Pagano

This past summer, two of our staff writers, Lauren & Grace, participated in the psychology Italy: The Pursuit of Happiness study abroad program. The goal of this program was to compare the achievement of happiness in America and Italy. As two PSYC majors, this program was a wonderful way to supplement TU PSYC courses that more PSYC students should explore.

They first met with Sydney Klabnik, a fellow PSYC student, to discuss her experience with another PSYC study abroad program Culture and Psychology: Austria and Hungary. Afterwards, they interviewed Nick Campbell, a study abroad specialist at the TU Study Abroad & Away office, to discuss his input on why studying abroad is beneficial to the college experience. Studying abroad is not a one-size fits all experience. Therefore, they thought it was important to share different perspectives on PSYC programs.





Q: Could you tell us about your program?

Sydney: Our program examined the history of psychology in Austria, as it is home to many influential psychologists like Sigmund Freud and Viktor Frankl. We also participated in several volunteer experiences like volunteering at a Ukrainian refugee center and at a farm turned hotel for unhoused people. The most important psychology-related takeaway I got from this program was that people from all cultures experience mental health in distinct ways. Therefore, treatment approaches should be individually tailored in a culturally appropriate manner.

Lauren & Grace: In our program, we compared the different aspects which contribute to happiness in Italy and the United States. To do this, we learned about how cuisine, familial relationships, religions, and pop culture can influence a person's happiness and how the two countries prioritize these factors.

Q: How were classes formatted in your program?

Sydney: We had four pre-departure meetings; one in person and the other three via Zoom. During these meetings, we discussed trip logistics and covered general questions. We also completed pre-trip assignments prior to going abroad.

Lauren & Grace: We had weekly 2 hour in-person meetings in the month prior to our departure. The purpose of this was to learn as much as possible regarding the core topics of the program: memory, happiness, and culture.



Did you visit any sightseeing destinations?

Sydney: We went to many museums and even a castle or two. A memorable highlight of the trip was the Sigmund Freud museum. We got to see the apartment where he lived, and the apartment where he had his practice.

Lauren & Grace: On our trip to Italy, we saw famous landmarks like the Colosseum, Vatican City, the Pantheon, the Borghese Gallery among many others. A favorite amongst the group was the local vineyard outside of Rome where we learned how to make pizza.



Q: Do you have any advice for PSYC students interested in studying abroad?

Sydney: I would first tell them to apply for TU Study Abroad scholarships! I think it is also important to remember to keep an open mind while traveling abroad and accept any challenges along the way. Also remember that these study abroad programs are not vacations! Make sure to enjoy your time abroad, but do not forget to apply yourself to the program's educational aspects.

Lauren & Grace: Studying abroad is such a wonderful and educational experience. If you are unsure about studying abroad, definitely attend interest meetings, explore different program options, or contact the Study Abroad & Away office for more information!

Studying abroad or away is a high-impact experiential learning experience. According to Nick Campbell, these programs allow students to expand their horizons, challenge their understanding of the world, and expand their social and professional network. He explained that studying abroad truly changed his life, and hopes to return the favor for TU's students.

Interested in studying abroad? The Study Abroad & Away Peer Advisors lead Group Advising sessions every day (**M-F at 2pm in PY 407**), which is a great place to get started or learn more.

Check out these upcoming Summer 2024 Psychology programs!

Bahamian Breeze:
**Cross Cultural
Psychology**

Summer 2024

Course: PSYC 494 (3 credits)

Faculty Director: Prof. Faizan Imtiaz

 **Bahamas**

Finding the Good Life:
**An Exploration of the
Happiest Place on Earth**

Summer 2024

Course: PSYC 494 (3 credits)

or

PSYC 594 (3 credits)

Faculty Director: Prof. Christa Schmidt

 **Denmark**

To Ask a Tiger



What advice would you give your Freshman self?



Jen Gomez

“Make sure to push yourself academically and explore different classes!”



Gina Melnik

“I would suggest not worrying too much about what your future career in PSYC looks like. You will figure it out as you take more classes and get more involved in the department!”



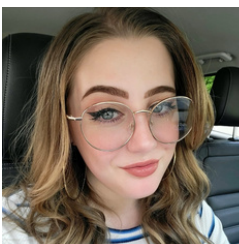
Kelly Ramirez

“Don't be afraid! Try new classes and meet new people!”



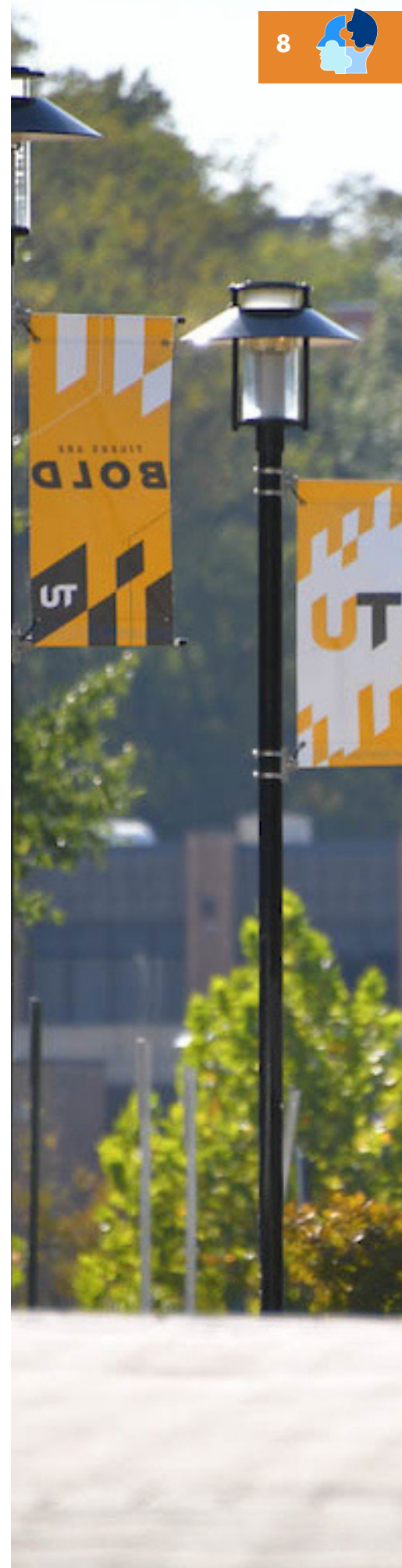
Travis McKenry

“Really think about your priorities in school and be mindful of your time. Don't say yes to everything so you can have some time for yourself!”



Hannah Lorincz

“Get involved in campus activities earlier. It enhances your undergrad experience AND looks great on grad school applications!”



New Professor On The Block!

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By: Aleeza Kerbel

This past week, PSYC Insight interviewed one of Towson's newest Psychology professors, Dr. Pearis Jean. As a new professor, teaching in both the undergraduate and graduate programs at Towson, Dr. Jean may be a teacher you have soon, so let's get to know her!



WHO IS DR. JEAN?

Professor Jean grew up in New Jersey. This past August she received her PHD in counseling psychology from the University of Florida. In fact, she is currently still in the process of applying for her licensure, all while teaching here at Towson! Professor Jean only moved to Maryland a year ago, coming here to take part in an internship for her PHD program, which was conducted at American University in the Center For Wellbeing as an intern clinician. Throughout her experiences leading up to Towson, she has had many opportunities for teaching, research, and counseling.

WHY TEACHING?

Dr. Jean explained that as a counseling psychologist, she can do a variety of different things, teaching being one of her favorites. Through teaching, she is able to engage students in creative ways, and that college students are a group that she feels she can connect with. Here at Towson, the courses that she teaches are Psychology of The Black Experience in the undergraduate program and Applied Counseling Theories for the master's counseling program.



A PASSION FOR PSYCHOLOGY:

Although Professor Jean only discovered her love of counseling psychology while an undergraduate, she always knew she wanted to support people's healing through building a supportive community. She was able to find a way to accomplish these through receiving an advanced degree in psychology. By having her advanced degree in psychology, she was able to achieve supporting people in multiple different ways, whether it be through counseling or as a teacher supporting her students. This passion helped pave the path for her career:



CURRENT PROJECTS:



In the past, Professor Jean has conducted research around black liberation and black wellness, and is currently finishing up these projects. Presently, she is working on developing a research lab, hoping to begin assembling a team in October to start her research. Her lab's research will focus on about black wellness, specifically looking for ways to support survivors of trauma in the community. She stated that her lab work will be open for students to join, so make sure to look out for posters with more information.



HIGHLIGHT OF HER CAREER

Professor Jean shared with us that the proudest moment of her professional career was in 2020, co-founding an initiative called “Academics for Black Survival and Wellness”. With the initiative, she was able to create a safe space and community that combated anti-black racism, specifically in academia but also in personal/professional lives. She expressed that this was very important during this time, with continued anti-black violence, including the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. She also felt that with Covid it was harder to find support from others in our communities due to the disconnect from face-to-face interactions. Following this initiative, in 2021 at UF, she had an idea for a Black Wellness Day, which is an event that continues on at the university. Although Professor Jean is new at Towson, she hopes to continue to create these healing spaces here as time goes on.

DR. JEAN'S ADVICE FOR STUDENTS:



Professor Jean's biggest piece of advice to students struggling with what to do next is to: “take your time to explore your options and figure everything out. Lately it seems like everyone is rushed to get everything done, especially with the pressure of social media to post your next step. It can be helpful to take your time and work around to figure out where you ultimately want to be in the field or if graduate school is right for you.” A suggestion she made for struggling students is to find someone that is doing what you're interested in. Getting to see how they got to where they are now may assist you in figuring out what your path should be. For anyone looking to get into counseling psychology, maybe Professor Jean will be that person for you!

Thank you again to Dr. Jean for speaking with us, we are excited to see what she brings to the PSYC department and to TU!

ADVISING CORNER



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- Minimester course registration begins **October 10**.
- **Spring registration will happen in November**. Your registration date and time will be posted on your Student Center page in PeopleSoft sometime in mid-October.
- If you have Advising and/or Degree Completion Plan holds, get them removed **before your registration date**.
- **Psychology classes fill quickly** so think about which non-PSYC electives to take if the PSYC classes you want are full.
- Check your Academic Requirements report on your Student Center page in Peoplesoft to **review your degree progress** and see which classes are still needed.

Check out the Advising website for TU Psychology majors:

<https://wp.towson.edu/psycadvising/>.

It's full of helpful info!

Don't Forget!

TU PsiChi meetings every
Wednesday @4:30 P.M.
(LA3315) |  @tupsichi

Study Abroad Group Advising
Mon-Fri weekly @2:00 P.M.
(PY407) |  @towsonuabroad

OCTOBER 2ND-7TH ~ Homecoming Week!

Saturday, Oct. 7~ Homecoming Football Game:
Towson vs UAlbany

- 4:00 P.M. Johnny Unitas Stadium
- Check out **@towsonstuact** on Instagram for more Homecoming Events!

OCTOBER 13TH ~ Fall Break (No classes!)



OUR TEAM

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