



Research UpDATE

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College of Education and Human Services • Office of Research Services



From the Associate Dean

Psychology Department faculty members continue to make significant contributions to the research mission of the College of Education and Human Services. Not only do their efforts contribute to the top rankings of the College in the U.S. News and World Report Graduate Survey, but those efforts have also placed the Department in the top 14th percentile among 550 departments of Psychology across the Nation in terms of external funding generated.

During FY 2006-07, the 21 full-time Psychology faculty members procured \$3.6 million in external funding, produced two books, four chapters in books, 23 refereed publications, 65 nonrefereed articles and presentations, and served on 53 editorial boards/Ad Hoc Reviews. In this issue we feature just a few of the many faculty members who have contributed to these accomplishments.

Jim Dorward

Nominations for CEHS Researcher/Scholar of the Year Award 2007-08

Deadline: February 8, 2008

For information go to:

www.cehs.usu.edu/ors/pdf/ScholarResearcherCriteria.pdf



Jamison Fargo (second from right) with graduate student assistants

Prevention of Victimization

The research interests of Jamison Fargo, assistant professor, focus on the prevention of victimization, particularly sexual assault, through behavioral epidemiological research. Dr. Fargo has collaborated with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania, Cincinnati, and Minnesota for several years on methods for improving the sensitivity and specificity of the forensic sexual assault exam. In 2007, the team, lead by Marilyn Sommers, with Dr. Fargo serving as Co-PI, was awarded a \$2.2 million grant from NIMH/NINR to work to improve methods for the detection and quantification of assault-related injury.

Dr. Fargo has recently completed a longitudinal study of risk, protective, and mediating factors of adult sexual revictimization (individuals victimized as children or adolescents who are revictimized as adults). Results of this study suggest that the linkages between instances of victimization were not direct, but rather mediated by life events that followed the initial victimization, such as later alcohol abuse/dependency, delinquent

behavior in adolescence, and degree of risky sexual behavior in adolescence and adulthood. Results find application in improved targeting of strategies for intervention and prevention of sexual violence.

Renee Galliher Considers Issues of Adolescence



Renee Galliher

The interpersonal relationships of adolescents and young adults, particularly those in rural communities, is the focus of assistant professor Renee Galliher's research. A recent study assessed associations among four obsessive-compulsive symptom clusters and academic performance in a sample of undergraduate college students. Negative, linear associations were observed between the obsessive-compulsive characteristics of doubting/repeating behaviors and academic self-concept, as well as between fears of contamination and academic self-concept.

However, a curvilinear association suggested that the symptom cluster of checking behavior and attention to detail, when exhibited at a moderate level, was found to be associated with higher academic self-concept. The results challenge previously held assumptions that obsessive-compulsive symptoms, regardless of type or severity, are negatively associated with psychosocial functioning.



Another study used a multidimensional assessment of interpersonal power to examine associations between indices of relationship power and relationship functioning in 92 adolescent romantic couples recruited from rural communities in the Rocky Mountain region of the U.S.

Significant differences emerged between girlfriends and boyfriends in their reports of decision making authority, perceptions of humiliating behaviors by the partner, and ratings of themselves giving-in to their partners. Indices of interpersonal power were associated with dating aggression and relationship satisfaction for both girlfriends and boyfriends, although gender differences emerged in the patterns of association between power and outcomes.

World Renown Authority, Frank Ascione, Edits New Handbook



Frank Ascione

Frank Ascione, psychology professor and family and human development adjunct professor, has focused his research for

more than 25 years on issues of domestic violence, child maltreatment, and child/adolescent animal abuse. Dr. Ascione's work is recognized worldwide. Dr. Ascione's most recent liter-



ary work is *The International Handbook of Animal Abuse and Cruelty*. This authoritative up-to-date compendium covers historical, legal, research, and applied issues related to animal abuse and cruelty from scholars worldwide. The *Handbook* provides professionals with contemporary reviews of the current state of knowledge on animal abuse and its relation to other forms of human violence.

George Julnes Advances the Use of Program Evaluation to Inform Public Policy

George Julnes is an associate professor of psychology in the research and evaluation methodology program. His research is focused on using the theory and methods of psychology to support more informed public policies. The goal is the better understanding of how human needs and the impacts of activities can contribute to better governance and, hence, a better society to live in.

Dr. Julnes recently coedited, with Debra J. Rog, a volume of *New Directions for Evaluation* entitled *Informing Federal Policies on Evaluation Methodology*. Background chapters discuss the premise of evaluation in support of better governance and variations in current practice; subsequent chapters highlight different forms of best practice in evaluation. Five discussants offer short commentaries on the critical themes of earlier chapters. The volume concludes with a framework that suggests pragmatic policies for federal agencies, promoting both context-appropriate method choice and the importance of maintaining a



balanced distribution of useful methodologies. The hope underlying the volume is that clarifying and reframing the current debate on methodology can help establish more informed federal policies on prioritizing methods and thus lead to more useful evaluations being supported.



George Julnes

www.cehs.usu.edu/ors/home.htm

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