



A NEWSLETTER FOR UNDERGRADS AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY

ISSUE #7 FALL 2017

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~ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS~

- Please note that the University will be holding two commencement ceremonies this year. The university-wide commencement ceremony will be Sunday, May 6 at 4 pm. The Department of Psychology ceremony will be Monday, May 7 at 10 am. We will be in a combined ceremony with the School of Health Professions.

- The department has a new make-up exam policy. Make-up exams for psychology classes will be administered once a week on Fridays from 3:30 pm (Robinson Rm 105). Please arrive promptly. A proctor will request photo identification upon your arrival to the exam. The department strongly encourages you to make-up any missed work on the Friday that immediately follows the missed exam.

- **Graduate Student Panel:** November 13 (5:00 pm Business 131) Get all of your graduate school questions answered!
- **Dance Marathon Fundraiser:** November 17 (10:00 pm-4:00 am)
- **Paws for a Break:** November 20 (4:30-5:30 pm Rec Center)
- **ABA General Meeting:** November 29 (9pm Robinson 101a)
- **Mindfulness Meditation:** November 30 (4:30-6:30 pm Location TBA)
- **Study with Psych Alliance:** December 7 (4:30 pm Campbell Library)



~WHO'S WHO~

Dr. Mary Louise E. Kerwin, Department Head & Professor

Mr. Daniel Dantine, Assistant to Dr. Kerwin

Ms. Brenda Harkins, Department Secretary

Ms. Megan Kately, Academic Advisor

Mr. James Rodia, III, Academic Advisor



Faculty Spotlight: Getting to Know Dr. Valerie Davis-LaMastro

By Adelyn Simeone

AS: First things first, thank you for agreeing to allow me to interview you today Dr. LaMastro! To start off, where are you from and what is your educational background?

VL: I'm from North Plainfield, NJ. I got my bachelor's degree from Douglass College at Rutgers University, where I majored in Communications and minored in Psychology. I worked in communications for three years before getting my Master's in General Experimental Psychology from Villanova University. I then got my Ph.D. in Social and Organizational Psychology from the University of Delaware.



AS: Very cool! How and why did you begin with facilitating Field Experience here at Rowan?

VL: Well, I didn't really plan on it at first. Twenty years ago, when I first started at Rowan, I was asked to take over the program for a semester. After that, it snowballed into me helping with it for the past 20 years. Coming from a communications background helps me "sell" our students to certain companies when it comes to placing students at different places for Field Experience.

AS: That's so interesting! How important, would you say, is it for students to take part in Field Experience?

VL: Absolutely essential! I've found that most places won't hire students who have no experience.

AS: That's great advice! What types of internships or field experience did you participate in while in school?

VL: None in the field of psychology but I completed public relations and newspaper internships. I worked at Public Service Gas and Electric as a writer for a semester. Then I worked for Courier News up north in college and I was able to keep that job throughout college. Because of that, I was able to get an editorial assistant job a week after graduating college.

AS: That's every student's dream, to get a job right out of college! It's funny how things work out, that you began with PR and ended up with Psychology! Having dealt with many different students and their areas of interest, what would you say is your most favorite area in psychology?

VL: Definitely Organizational Psychology and Social Psychology!

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NEUROCLUB

The NeuroClub is an organization designed to create a network and support system that allows those interested in the Neuroscience field to gain knowledge, set themselves up for success, and communicate with a group of students who share similar interests. Members have the opportunity to hear from speakers, participate in community service events, and network with other students in the Neuroscience field. Given its interdisciplinary approach, this club is housed in the Biological Science department. However, psychology students are strongly encouraged to get involved!

~JUST FOR LAUGHS~

Why did Waldo go to therapy?
To find himself

What did the hippocampus say
when he retired?
Thanks for the memories



Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Valerie Davis-LaMastro (continued)

AS: Now let's talk directly to freshman or transfer students. What do you think are the most important things they should keep in mind in order to be successful in this major?

VL: Transfers have to hit the ground running and think about field experience first. They should begin to think about getting it for their second semester here, or as quickly as possible. You should expect to treat your time here differently than being at a community college. For freshman, think of new study habits and don't automatically use the same ones as you did in high school. What worked in high school may not work in college. Get involved and get to know people right away, get an idea of what's going

on. Join psychology clubs and talk to upperclassmen so you can get a feel for their thoughts on their time here and where they plan to be. Always think about what your next step may be!

AS: That's perfect advice! Now, if you weren't working in the field of psychology, what would you be doing?

VL: That's easy. I'd probably still be in advertising and writing.

Dr. LaMastro's final thoughts: Come see me as early as possible to apply for Field Experience, at least one semester before or a year before. Use your time here at Rowan to explore different things within the field of psychology and understand that there are many different areas in psychology as well. Take time to learn about what it is rather than assuming it's just clinical and counseling. "Don't foreclose your identity" as Erik Erikson would say. Keep an open mind and find out as much information as you can about what interests you.

Undergrads Getting Psyched!

By Falisha Lormejuste

In this installment of "Undergrads Getting Psyched", we are proud to introduce the intelligent and perceptive, Joseph D. Mayo, a senior Psychological Science major. JD, as he prefers to be called, discovered his passion for Psychology when he stumbled upon Paul Ekman's work on emotions and their relation to facial expressions. As a result, he chose to pursue the major. Although JD is a commuter student, he remains very active on Rowan's campus. Currently, he is a Research Assistant in Dr. Kerwin's S.M.A.R.T laboratory. The research is focused on examining center-based Applied Behavior Analysis intervention for preschool children diagnosed with autism. Not only does he love the conceptual aspect of the research, he's fascinated by its real-world application. Beyond his research activities, JD is the public relations coordinator for Psychology Alliance!



So how does he maintain such a busy schedule? When asked what how he manages to excel and be so productive, JD responded, "It's not about time management, rather it's about self-management." He relies on Google Calendar and uses concepts from Maslow's hierarchy of needs. He refers to each stage to check-in with himself, making sure that his psychological, belonging, self esteem, and self-realization needs are fulfilled. Moreover, he believes that amidst his very active life, it's important to maintain one's mental, physical, and emotional health.

When he's not so busy with life and school, JD enjoys singing, especially with his church's choir. He also loves to watch his favorite television shows, which include Fringe, Adventure Time, Parks and Recreation, and reruns of Avatar: The Last Airbender.

In the future, JD hopes to pursue a career in either Clinical Psychology or Human Factors. When asked about what he'll take away from his undergraduate psychology background, he replied, "It's important to challenge yourself and do things that are scary at first." He mentions that if he were to describe his life now to his younger self, he wouldn't believe how much he has achieved. As for advice to his fellow RU psychology students, JD stresses the importance of self-care and challenging oneself!

GRE PREP OPPORTUNITY

The Princeton Review will be offering a GRE course on campus from February 20th through April 17th. Rowan students will receive a 15% discount by using the code "RowanPsych".

Call The Princeton Review to learn more!



The Grad School Experience

By Dr. Melanie Freedman

"G - R - E"

Those three little letters perhaps invoke panic, confusion, or fear in thousands of college students hoping to pursue graduate school. But they don't have to - not if you're informed and well-prepared come test day.

The GRE, or the Graduate Record Examination, is a highly popular standardized test that many graduate programs use to evaluate a student's academic readiness for graduate work. In other words, it's a benchmark that programs use to compare students from different universities and determine if a student will likely succeed in their program.

The test itself includes questions that, in theory, are assessing your analytical, writing, and verbal skills. Think sentence completions, reading comprehension, problem-solving, and algebra knowledge, for example.

With the increasing number of students wanting to pursue the mental health field, most psychology graduate programs require the GRE in their application process. Some may also require the GRE subject test in psychology, which is an additional examination that assesses a student's knowledge in psychological topics, such as learning, sensation and perception, abnormal psychology, and research methods.

So what can you do now to help you master the GRE later? Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. It's important that you're familiar with each section of the GRE, like the variety of question formats (entering a numeric value vs. selecting a single answer) and time limits for each section. You should also become familiar with any available testing tools, such as how to use the online calculator provided by the test developers.
2. Plan ahead and allow yourself plenty of time to prepare adequately. This may mean selecting a few months in your schedule that aren't filled with a ton of work, family, and school responsibilities. Many students study over the summer for this reason. Expect your GRE prep to be about 3-6 months and really commit to any study plan that you create!
3. Take as many practice exams as possible! This will help you feel comfortable with the GRE content and procedures. It'll also give you a chance to work out any test-taking nerves.
4. You may want to consider enrolling in a GRE prep class, such as what The Princeton Review and Kaplan offer. However, these intensive, live-instruction course can be quite costly. So if you think you can successfully prepare by working through a book, many are available. To start off, take a look at "The Official Guide to the GRE General Test", which was published in 2017.
5. You should definitely know the procedures in the testing center and its location. Maybe take a test drive over to the testing center a few days before your scheduled exam so you know exactly where it's located and can identify any obstacles to getting there on time.

Remember, the GRE is only one part of your application process. Grad programs take a look at your GPA, letters of recommendation (see Issue #3 of Get Psyched - October 2016), work experience, and application essays, among others.

For more information about the GRE, please check out the official website at www.ets.org/gre

PSYCHOLOGY ALLIANCE

Psych Alliance is student-run organization that combines Psi Chi and psychology club. Members are able to discuss a broad range of aspects in the field of psychology such as:

- Graduate school
- GRE prep class requirements
- Networking/social platform
- Lab involvement

*Join Psych Alliance for a graduate student panel meeting where you can hear about the grad school options and what it's really like to be a grad student! November 13 @5pm, Business 131. Hope to see you there!

ABA CLUB

Are you interested in learning more about **Applied Behavior Analysis**? Check out the ABA Club, a student-run organization that exposes undergrad and grad students to this exciting field via guest speakers, presentations, and community service projects! To learn more, search for the club on ProfLink and request to be added to the listserv! Also visit Rowan's Center for Behavioral Analysis at www.rowan.edu/colleges/csm/departments/psychology/ABA.



Specialization: So What Exactly Is...“Health Psychology”?

By Margaret Lattiere

It's time to get psyched about our health! Are you constantly overwhelmed by different stressors in your life? Did you know that stress has a major impact on your well-being, both physically and mentally? Let's face it, as we begin to enter our adult years we're faced with different daily stressors. Rather than letting constant stress consume our lives and impact our health, we should learn healthy ways to combat stress and start living the life we want!

There's a fascinating TED Talk called, "[How to Make Stress Your Friend](http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend)," by Kelly McGonigal. In this 14-minute talk, she emphasizes the risk placed on a person's health when they perceive stress negatively. Instead, she urges people to use their stress as a tool that can enhance their life. Check out <http://kellymcgonigal.com/speaking/> to view this thought-provoking video!

Health Psychology Defined

Health Psychology closely examines how biological, social, and psychological factors impact health and illness. The goal of a Health Psychologist is to apply psychological sciences to promote health, prevent illness, and improve available health care systems. Health psychologist examine individual cultures and discover different ways to promote health, regardless of one's circumstances, and take the "fear" out of going to see a professional about health issues. Throughout history, professionals were notoriously known to practice unethical methods on certain cultures. These methods have led those cultures to distrust the health care system all together. The job of a health psychologist is to break down those barriers and inform people about the risks associated with *not* seeking a professional.

A Day in the Life of a Health Psychologist

The job market has exploded recently with opportunities in this field. Health Psychologists help patients develop and sustain healthy lifestyle changes, which can both prevent common health problems, like obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes, *and* help treat them, often in combination with medicine. They also encourage other "self-care" behaviors, such as monitoring blood sugar, adhering to medication regimens, and learning good sleep hygiene, as sleep is strongly tied to both mental & physical health. Finally, Health Psychologists help people learn how to better manage stress, which can help prevent more mild symptoms like low mood, anxiety, or fatigue from progressing to more serious health problems, like major depression or hypertension.

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Specialization: Health Psychology (*continued*)

Health Psychologists often collaborate with other professionals to ensure that an individual patient is receiving comprehensive help. This field offers careers in outpatient clinics, hospital settings, and universities, among other settings. It's important to remember that our physical health is not just about prescribing medications and waiting for results, but having the opportunity to change unhealthy habits into healthy ones that can impact a person's physical and mental health throughout their entire lifetime.

If Health Psychology is something that interests you, Rowan University offers a Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology. It's a competitive, full-time program that emphasizes integrated primary care. If you're looking to go in this direction, contact our Director of Clinical Training, Dr. Georita Frierson, at friersong@rowan.edu.

I'd also recommend taking Rowan's course Health Psychology (PSY01329)!



In the Field with Dr. Andrea Papa-Molter, DO

By Victoria Santiago

VS: So I wanted to start off by asking how long have you been practicing as a psychiatrist?

APM: I've been practicing for about 10 years all together. This includes my 4 years of residency. I'm currently at a new position.

I work at the Pinnacle Behavioral Health Institute. I work part-time at an outpatient practice. I worked for a year at Drexel directly after my residency, and before I came to Pinnacle, and at a few other outpatient jobs as well. Some former colleagues from my residency told me about a job opening at their practice, so I seized the opportunity. I currently work with adult clients who are referred to me by either primary doctors, therapists, or insurance companies.

VS: Great! Can you tell me a little bit about your time as an undergraduate student and the path you took to become a psychiatrist?

APM: Well, for my undergraduate career, I actually started as a Spanish and History major. I got a degree that has nothing to do with what I do now! I didn't realize that I wanted to do psychology until I took some counseling classes at the undergraduate level. Once I realized that I was interested in psychology, I wasn't sure whether I wanted to go down the medical road and prescribe medicine or just focus more on the therapy portion.

VS: What medical school did you go to? What was it like?

APM: I went to Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine ("PCOM"). The first two years of medical school consisted of all studying. All I did was study, study, and then study some more. Those were definitely the most stressful of the four years. The third and fourth year became a lot more enjoyable. I was actually able to get into a clinical setting and worked in hospitals and physicians' offices. While in my 3rd and 4th years of medical school, I learned medicine under the supervision of other attending physicians.

VS: What is the most meaningful part of your career?

APM: What I think is most meaningful is really watching people get better. Some people come in extremely depressed and I've seen a lot of people return back to their healthy mental state. It really makes the job meaningful and I can see that I'm truly making a difference.



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In the Field: Dr. Andrea Papa-Molter (*continued*)

VS: What does an average day for you look like?

APM: So an average day consists of lots of medication checks. I work three days a week. I see about three or four people every hour and about 25 to 30 people a day. Most days are usually busy. We get about 15 minutes with each of our patients to see how they're doing. It's not so easy to get everything done and evaluated in 15 minutes! Luckily, if I do have a new patient scheduled that day, I'm able to get 45 minutes and assess them.

VS: What is the hardest part of being a psychiatrist?

APM: I think the hardest part about being a psychiatrist is trying not to take my work home with me. Though I work part-time, patients will still call the office with questions or concerns when I'm not there. Therefore, I do have to tend to their issues when I'm not in the office. So because of that, it's hard to leave my work and not let it affect me. The only time I'm ever truly away from work is when I'm away on vacation! When I first started, it was much harder not to take things home but I'm getting better with it these days.

VS: What, if anything, has significantly changed in medicine since you began?

APM: Nothing really within medicine since I've begun. But what I can say is that in the past, it was definitely easier to get to know patients. The insurance companies dictate a lot of how doctors practice these days. They often allow certain formulary of medication that can be used, which often makes it difficult to treat certain patients.

VS: So insurance can be an issue in a lot of practices and it sounds like it might be in yours too. What are your general thoughts about insurance companies?

APM: Yeah, so insurance companies indirectly dictate the time we spend with our patients. Unfortunately, cost for them is significant in the decisions they make. Some companies are extremely hard to work with because if we feel a certain medication will help a patient but it's not on their formulary we need to try to get it approved, which can be a long process. So it's a little annoying and it makes the job a bit harder.

VS: Can you tell us a bit about your family and how you like to spend your free time? Do you have any hobbies?

APM: Sure! I'm married with two children. My husband is also a doctor and he specializes in physical medicine, sometimes called a physiatrist. My children, a six-year-old son and a four-year-old daughter, are extremely active. My father is a doctor and one brother is a psychiatrist in the Air Force. I have another brother who is also a physical medicine doctor. And some of my favorite things to do are exercise and travel. I just recently visited Israel.

VS: Awesome! Well thank you so much for meeting me - this was a great interview!



Have you heard about the counseling services provided on campus? The **Counseling & Psychological Services** staff provides free confidential therapy for students regarding a wide range of mental health issues. They help students develop effective coping strategies, manage their stress levels, and make healthy decisions to improve their overall well-being. Contact the CPS staff to schedule an appointment. If you're not quite sure if therapy is for you, *Let's Talk* is a program that gives you the opportunity to chat with a counselor without making an appointment ahead of time. Drop-in hours are held at different sites on campus.—check it out!

For more info, call 856-256-4333 or visit www.rowan.edu/studentaffairs/counseling
The Wellness Center @ Winans Hall

Hours

8:00am to 5:00pm Monday - Thursday
8:00am to 4:00 pm Friday

After Hours Emergencies

Call Public Safety at 256-4911 and ask for *Counselor on Call*

Emergencies During Office Hours

Visit the Wellness Center and ask to speak with someone immediately

“I HAVEN’T FAILED. I’VE JUST FOUND 10,000 WAYS
THAT WON’T WORK.”

-THOMAS EDISON

“DON’T LET YOUR FAILURES DEFINE YOU -
LET THEM TEACH YOU.”

- BARACK OBAMA



The Get Psyched Team for Fall 2017

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***Got ideas, suggestions, questions?
Know any great jokes, trivia or teasers?
Like to talk and write about psychology?
Interested in joining us next academic year?***

Send all comments and inquiries to Dr. Freedman
and the newsletter team at getpsyched@rowan.edu

For more info about Psych Alliance and Psi Chi, please contact psychalliance@students.rowan.edu.
Or psichi@rowan.edu; To apply to Psi Chi online,
please visit: <http://memberapp.psichi.org/cfamember/applicationform.aspx>

*some content has been edited and condensed for clarity and space

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