

A NEWSLETTER FOR UNDERGRADS AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Faculty Spotlight.....	page 2
Undergrads Getting Psyched.....	page 3
The Grad School Experience.....	page 4
Specialization.....	page 5
In the Field.....	page 6
Clubs & Organizations.....	page 7

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

From Your Academic Advisors:

If you are planning on graduating in the Spring, make sure you apply online, beginning January 3rd, and meet with your advisor with any questions and to check that you have met all degree requirements!

New Course Offering for Spring 2019:

Introduction to Human Factors, Dr. Eve Perris (CRN 22155, PSY 01423, Section 4)

The course serves as an introduction to:

- * understanding how human behavior and capabilities should inform design of technologies, systems, and processes
- * exploring interactions between humans and technology

For more information, contact Dr. Perris directly, perris@rowan.edu, or your academic advisor.

New to the Department Faculty:

We're excited to announce that several new faculty members have joined us this year!

- * *3/4 Faculty*: Richmond Carlton, MA, Jamie Yingst, MA, Ramona Ross, PsyD, and Tamara Jo Musumeci-Szabo, PhD
- * *Lecturer*: Benjamin Swan, PhD
- * *Assistant Professor*: Danielle Arigo, PhD, and Chelsie Young, PhD

WHO'S WHO IN THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Dr. Georita Frierson, Depart. Head & Professor

Mr. Dan Dantine, Assistant to Dr. Frierson

Ms. Brenda Harkins, Depart. Secretary

Mrs. Hope Nelson, Assistant to the Director of Clinical PhD Program

Ms. Megan Kately, Academic Advisor

Mr. Ron Braxton, Academic Advisor

Ms. Amanda Cox, Academic Advisor



**“Knowing others is wisdom.
Knowing yourself is enlightenment.”**

- Lao Tzu

Faculty Spotlight

An Interview with Department Head, Dr. Georita Frierson, by Asiah Smith

Although not new to the University, we would like to welcome Dr. Frierson as the new Psychology Department Head!

Professor Frierson obtained her BA with honors from Hampton University, a historically black college/university (HBCU) located in Hampton, Virginia. She is a licensed clinical psychologist trained at The Ohio State University in behavioral medicine/health psychology and quantitative psychology. Dr. Frierson completed her doctoral internship and post-doctoral training at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School.

Dr. Frierson then worked at The Cooper Institute as Scientific Director and Executive Director of The Cooper Institute Oak Cliff Center, which facilitates recruitment of underserved, under-represented, and diverse populations in the Oak Cliff and South Dallas communities. She was also the Director of Diversity Programs and Research Initiatives at Cooper. More recently, she was the Director of Clinical Training for the first and longest running APA-accredited clinical psychology program at an HBCU (Howard University in Washington, DC); mentoring over 40 racial/ethnic minority masters and doctoral students in research and professional development areas. Under her leadership, the Howard University's clinical psychology PhD program was re-accredited by APA for a full seven years in 2014. She also has a background in dance, which has given her diversity and understanding to relate to faculty, students and people from different cultures.



AS: What initially brought you to Rowan?

GF: The building of the new PhD program initially brought me to Rowan, as I was hired for the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) position.

AS: What are some challenges you have faced so far?

GF: Trying to find time for everything. Making time to build the PhD program, time for faculty and students.

AS: What are you most excited about in your new role as Head of the Department?

GF: I am most excited about faculty and students. People think my answer is funny when I say I'm here to serve. Research and teaching keep me very busy. But I enjoy being busy. I am about teaching and faculty excellence.

AS: What have you found to be the most rewarding experience or decision you have made in your life/career thus far?

GF: Meeting individuals I had not yet met before becoming the Department Head of Psychology. I enjoy interacting with administrators and advocating for the Psychology Department here at Rowan University.

**"In the depth of winter I finally learned that there was in me
an invincible summer." - Albert Camus**

Undergrads Getting Psyched!

By Angela Amankwaah



I am one undergrad who is psyched to be a Rowan Psychology student! After my upcoming graduation, I plan to pursue a doctorate in Occupational Therapy and also become a writer/editor for a major writing company one day.

One of my favorite classes I've taken at Rowan has been Social Psychology because it has given me more insight into why people of different backgrounds behave the ways they do, including prejudices and heuristics. Given my Ghanaian heritage, I identify and attribute many of the cultural differences I see to the ideals of independence learned in the US and the traditional customs which value community involvement that many West Africans uphold. The most important thing I've taken away from this course so far is that so many types of behaviors and situations have been studied via experiments. When it

comes to groups of people or a society, in many instances we can almost predict how they will behave! This knowledge helps us be more introspective about the choices we make. Are they our choices, or just the choices we have learned because they make us feel most comfortable?

“When it comes to groups of people or a society, in many instances we can almost predict how they will behave! This knowledge helps us be more introspective about the choices we make.”

As a transfer student from George Washington University, I am still getting used to the small-town Rowan environment but am excited to become more involved here on campus. I am an avid writer and editor of a blog and content curator for the online magazine *Brittle Paper*. I also host a podcast titled *Cut from the Cloth*, highlighting the pinnacles and trials of what it means to be a part of the West African diaspora, but also evaluating and navigating life as a young-adult and student. Additionally, I am a contributor to our very own Get Psyched newsletter, which allows me to combine both my love for writing and psychology.

My advice to incoming first and second year students is to apply what you're learning in classes to the way you treat people. As you learn different concepts in psychology, you will realize that knowing the theories of why people behave a certain way is a privilege that not many people have. Utilize that knowledge in as many ways as possible: your sports teams, your internships, and all your relationships. Making the best of my Rowan experience, all around, has been a challenge but also rewarding. I have made more connections with my peers and professors than I anticipated, and it makes me feel not so lonely and as though they are people rooting for me to succeed.

"I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet."

- Mohandas Gandhi

The Grad School Experience

An Interview with Danika Charles, by Nadia Tis

Many of us undergrads who are interested in grad school probably are interested in learning about transitioning between the two. Danika Charles is enrolled in Rowan University's Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program and is currently going through this challenging transition but was able to take the time to answer questions undergrad students may have while applying to graduate programs.

NT: What is the most difficult part of the transition from undergrad to grad school for you?

DC: The most difficult part of the transition was adapting to the periodic evaluation. Having regular evaluation is important for your graduate career and highlights strengths and limitations. This is beneficial for me as a student and helps faculty identify areas for improvement and take immediate action. But I found myself constantly analyzing my every move and at times overthinking things. Over time this went away, but it's something that's always in the back of my mind. The nature of graduate school is different from undergrad. You are soon-to-be professionals, so how you go about your graduate career should be different than your undergraduate career.



NT: Since grad school is very stressful, what ways do you relax from the overload of work?

DC: I'm a big advocator of self-care. It's extremely important to create a balance and allocate time to take care of yourself. As a clinical psychology graduate student, you ought to be mindful of the information you pass on to clients and take your own advice. After a long day, I like to kick my feet up and get lost in a good novel or television series. To get active, I like to blow off some steam at the gym and play some of my favorite tunes. I highly suggest spending time exploring your interests and developing hobbies; set aside time to indulge in those activities.

“It's extremely important to create a balance and allocate time to take care of yourself.”

NT: What should one expect going into graduate school?

DC: Graduate school is full of surprises and lessons along the way. Be open to exploring various options to get a holistic feel of your field of study. As one would expect, organization is extremely helpful and increases productivity. Be prepared to collaborate and network through your department and external events available to students. Keep in mind the size of your classes decreases exponentially. Depending on your program, your class size could range from 4-20 peers. It's a very intimate setting — you really get to know everyone and everyone gets to know you. With that being said, you want to come to class prepared to participate in discussion and with questions. There are different expectations from you as a graduate student, and a lot of the responsibility and day-to-day things fall in your hands. So, you want to make sure that you've developed a habit of maintaining open communication with your cohort, other students, and faculty.

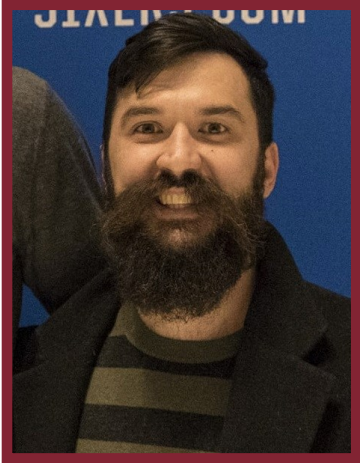
Graduate school can be a difficult experience for many students who are not prepared for the challenges ahead. As Danika stated, making time for yourself and being organized are major keys in enjoying the experience. Take Danika's advice and grad school won't be as scary as you may think!

“We are made to persist... that's how we find out who we are.” - Tobias Wolff

Specialization: Social-Cognition

by Jamie Yingst, Instructor

Because psychology is comprised of a myriad of different disciplines and subfields, each of us may think of something slightly different when we hear or read the word *psychology*. For me, I think of topics such as stereotyping and cognitive biases, which form the backbone of a subfield called social-cognition.



I came to psychology by route of a social-cognition course I took as an undergraduate neuroscience student - which began a rapid slide into becoming an experimental psychologist. What I found so appealing about social-cognition was the social aspect of the field not found in neuroscience. As a social-cognitivist, I get to examine interesting cognitive ideas framed by social issues that interest me on a personal level, particularly sociopolitics and civil rights.

Social-cognition refers to a cognitive approach to social psychology. It is chiefly concerned with how cognitive processes (e.g., decision-making, encoding and retrieving information, perception, and judgment) affect our social interactions; and vice versa, how our interactions with other people influence the way we think. For instance, as with stereotyping, certain cognitive processes like judgment collide with our perceptions of social concepts such as ingroups and outgroups. A simpler way to think of it is that it deals with any mental process that involves other people (both individuals and groups).

My recent experiments have investigated conspiracy theories and factors that contribute to why we believe them. Specifically, I am interested in seeing if belief in a conspiracy theory is influenced by source credibility,

sociopolitical orientations, and the proportionately bias (the tendency to think that causes and consequences should match in magnitude).

A more current theme within the field is the social and evolutionary based Terror Management Theory. It proposes that because we are cognizant of our pending deaths, we seek to find meaning in life (e.g., have children, foster relationships, careers, religion, etc.) to distract us from the terror that accompanies such knowledge. We have anxiety from this, which drives us to endorse certain social worldviews, which act as a barrier for our self-esteem and attempt to make sense of a chaotic world. Such socially poignant interactions are driven by our cognition and knowledge of life and death, the self and others.

Some major topics within the field:

- stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination
- biases and heuristics (mental shortcuts)
- implicit/unconscious and explicit/conscious processes
- attributions (how we assign causes to others' and our own actions)

Some occupations that utilize social-cognition:

- research & academia
- corporate training
- marketing
- law enforcement
- criminology
- forensic psychology
- law
- politics
- sociology
- public policy

Rowan University does not currently offer a social-cognition course, perhaps one day there will be one, but both Social Psychology (PSY 05206) and Cognitive Psychology (PSY 01327) will serve as great introductions!

**"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."
- Carl Rogers"**

In the Field: with Undergrad Research Assistant Grace Van Cleef, by Tristan Cassar

TC: Can you tell us about the lab you're in on campus and about your research interests?

GV: I am in Dr. Angelone and Dr. Joppa's ASSeRT lab, which stands for Aggression, Substance, and Sexuality Research Team. My research interests mostly align with advocating for marginalized groups, particularly the LGBT community and sexual assault survivors. I didn't necessarily think I would end up doing sex research specifically; I thought I would end up being more of an advocate in different ways.



TC: What are some projects you're working on in the ASSeRT lab?

GV: I've been in charge of a project on Romantic Orientation for about a year and a half. Basically, the idea is that romantic orientation is a separate construct from sexual orientation. We want to study it specifically in the asexual population, since sexual orientation in that case is not a variable at all. A lot of people's sexual orientations do match their romantic orientations, but some people's don't and we want to study that. The other studies I've worked on have been studies that help me continue my general education in sex research. All these projects are advocating for marginalized groups or at least deal with themes of sexual assault and violence prevention.

“We found that sexual dominance was a mediator between hostility towards women and sexually violent behavior. This means that it's not just that hostility towards women is correlated with sexually violent behavior, it's that there's a pathway through sexual dominance.”

TC: Recently, you traveled to Montreal to present a poster at the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality conference. Can you explain what your presentation was about?

GV: When you do a study, you don't compare every single variable. You measure many variables, and then pull from the results the variables that are relevant to your hypothesis. This leaves room for variables that haven't been looked at or talked about. My friend Gabby and I went into data from a pre-existing project and we wanted to use a mediation model, so we developed some hypotheses about what might have some good effect sizes. We found that sexual dominance was a mediator between hostility towards women and sexually violent behavior. This means that it's not just that hostility towards women is correlated with sexually violent behavior, it's that there's a pathway through sexual dominance. Sexual dominance is a way in which sexually violent behavior might manifest itself in people who score high on hostility towards women.

TC: Is there any advice you would offer to other students looking to gain research experience?

GV: Just be proactive. There's a good chance that there is a research lab on campus right now taking applications. Just go fill one out. If you do get into a lab, you get out of it what you put into it. Ending up at SSSS was almost exclusively Gabby's and my doing - we decided we wanted to do this, so we are going to put this together. You end up having these incredible experiences. I am a big proponent of doing things, with not just research but anything, because I see opportunity. It's so much easier to not do things than it is to do things, but when you start doing things, you'll start receiving things and you'll gain a lot of experience that way.

"The brain is wider than the sky." - Emily Dickinson

Clubs & Organizations

PSYCHOLOGY ALLIANCE

Psych Alliance is student-run organization whose 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, etc.*

For more info, please contact:
psychalliance@students.rowan.edu

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, contact: abaclub@rowan.edu

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!

Please contact neuroclubrowan@gmail.com for more information.

Save the Dates!

The Psychology Department will post further details online regarding these events.

April 4th, 2019: Rowan Psychology Job Fair

Please join us at the job fair to learn about career options within psychology and other helpful topics. This event will be held in 221 Chamberlain Student Center.

April 18th, 2019: The 45th Annual Rowan Psychology Research Conference

This event will be held in Business Hall.

Counseling & Psychological Services



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

rowan.edu/psychology 7

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***Got ideas, suggestions, questions?
Like to talk and write about psychology?
Interested in joining us next academic year?***

Send all comments and inquiries to
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