

# Psychology Department

Delaware Valley University

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## ***ANNOUNCEMENTS : The Psychology Department***



In January of 2016, DelVal announced the official creation of the Psychology Department. It's hard to believe that just eight years ago, there were no Counseling Psychology majors at DelVal. Our first group of counseling psychology majors graduated in 2010— a class of five students. Today, we have over 50 majors! Our undergraduates are involved in every aspect of campus life; their accomplishments place them on the Deans' Lists and they graduate with honors.

They present and participate in national and international conferences and travel around the world with study abroad programs. They complete meaningful internships in the mental health field. As our student population has grown, so has our faculty. The core members of our faculty bring together cutting-edge research, interactive teaching styles, and real-world skills. When they're not in the classroom, you can find faculty organizing workshops, presenting at conferences, and publishing articles. We also have a group of committed adjunct faculty, who bring clinical experience and a fresh perspective to their courses. Now, we have a state-of-the art counseling lab. And, of course, our program began at Delaware Valley College. Now, our department is part of Delaware Valley University. I can't wait to see what comes next!

Warmly,  
Dr. Allison Buskirk-Cohen  
Chair, Department of Psychology

### ***1ST Graduation for the Graduate Counseling Psychology Program***

The graduate counseling psychology program began in fall 2013 and is currently thriving. The MA in counseling psychology prepares culturally competent counselors to apply for Licensed Professional Counselor status in PA. We are excited that our first cohort is graduating in May, Cohort 2 members are actively completing internships and Cohort 3 members are completing their first practicum. Our students are placed in a variety of community settings including Jewish Family Service, Livengrin Foundation, Foundations Behavioral Health, Lenape Valley Foundation, Gwynedd Mercy University Counseling Center, Villanova, Eagleville Hospital, and Adlie Counseling, just to name a few. Almost 100% of our graduates find immediate employment and our students are meeting or exceeding scores on standardized national assessments such as the CPCE and the NCE. We have an impressive group of faculty members, all of whom also work in private practice and/or do research in their respective fields. It has been an honor and a privilege to watch the program grow and to see our students develop their clinical skills! We are sad to see our first cohort student's graduate but it is bittersweet as we celebrate the successes that will no doubt lie ahead. We wave farewell knowing that they are well positioned to make significant changes in their communities. Bravo cohort #1!

Warmly,  
Dr. Audrey Ervin  
Academic Program Director, Graduate Counseling Psychology

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Graduating counseling psychology majors Kelly Bonomo, Leah Brenner, Allie Grabowski, Hadar Kenig, Keith Jenkins, Kim Lopez, Hannah Maurice, Kelly McKee, Marghy Mitchell, Courtney O'Brien, Karen Pucillo, Corrine Rothberg, Alex Sturtevant, Ashley Valkavitch and Corey White completed internships as part of their DeVal Experience 360 requirement.

**Undergraduate Capstones**

On March 1st, the students shared poster presentations with peers, faculty, administration and the public, discussing their diverse experiences. Amongst these placements, Hadar Kenig had the opportunity to work with special needs students, age 18-21, in the transition program at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 called "Decision Program" which operates on DeVal's campus. Ms. Kenig notes that she found this work to be "rewarding" and encourages others to volunteer for this valuable program. Courtney O'Brien found that her experience at Bucks County Community College helped

her to discover her career path assisting students achieve academic success. Leah Brenner worked in the adult autism services department of Kaleidoscope Family Solutions, Inc., providing support to a client by focusing on communication, self-direction and socialization skills where she enjoyed watching her client develop independence. Kelly Bonomo assisted with transcription and emotional support at the Newtown Behavioral Health Recovery Center where she thrived in establishing relationships with staff and clients. Congratulations to all!



**NOTEWORTHY**



On February 11th, the Psychology Club hosted a viewing of *The Stanford Prison Experiment* movie for about 15 students. Kim Lopez (acting secretary) reported that issues related to the complications and lasting ramifications of this controversial study were discussed afterward. The club is now actively engaged in setting up volunteer opportunities at Kaleidoscope Family Solutions, Inc., which provides services to special needs children and their families. For more information about the Psychology Club, contact Dr. Matt Mutchler at 215-489-4188 or [Matt.Mutchler@delval.edu](mailto:Matt.Mutchler@delval.edu). Dr. Mutchler's comments on the relational effects of infidelity were featured in the article *Coping with Cheating: When Your Heart Has Been Crushed*, in the online magazine, *Primer: A Guy's Post-College Guide To Growing Up* ([www.primermagazine.com](http://www.primermagazine.com)).

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**DELVAL ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS :**

On March 6th, DeVal also hosted the 5th Annual Bucks County Conference, *Crimes Against Children*, which focuses on the multidisciplinary team approach to the recognition and investigation of crimes against children. The conference provides resources to professionals practicing in the field of child abuse investigation, treatment, and prevention. Undergraduates Kim Lopez, Jenna Bishop, Dominique Howard, Courtney Green, Raquel Steward, and Zach Miller introduced speakers along with professors Drs. Matt Mutchler and Allison Buskirk-Cohen.



On March 30th, DeVal's Psychology Department, in partnership with NOVA and the YMCA, presented *Darkness to Light*, a training focused on identifying, preventing, and responding to child sexual abuse.

**WELCOME NEW GRADUATE ASSISTANT, KELLY BONOMO, TO THE COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM!**

## Conferences and Events

Dr. Audrey Ervin and graduate students Elizabeth Swift, Laurinda Hellwig, Brian Mullan, Rebecca Kornberg, and Susan Sklaroff-Van Hook attended and co-presented structured discussions at the 2016 Association for Women in Psychology conference, Strong Girls and Wise Women: Sustaining Feminism for the Future. Dr. Ervin will be presenting at two

up-coming conferences: *Working with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults: Trans-Affirmative Ethical Practices*, at the Philadelphia Society of Clinical Psychologists on May 20th and *Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Adults: Guidelines, Ethics and Affirmative Practices for Transcending Stigma* at the Pennsylvania Psychological Association on June 15th, along with co-presenter and Cohort 3 member of the graduate counseling psychology program, Lynsey Reiss. Dr. Ervin also co-authored the article, *Predictors of Sexual minority Youth's Reported Suicide Attempts and Mental Health*, recently published in the Journal of Homosexuality.

Graduate students Melissa Moreno and Susan Sklaroff-Van Hook attended

*Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Therapy: Bringing the Body into Treatment*, offered through the Trauma Center of Justice Resource Center in Brookline, MA. TSY has foundations in trauma and attachment theories and neuroscience as well as Hatha Yoga practice. Both felt that the conference was extremely beneficial in deepening their understanding of trauma informed care.

Dr. Matt Mutchler and Susan Sklaroff-Van Hook attended the annual Pennsylvania Association for Marriage and Family Therapy conference, *Transparency in Relationship and Clinical Practice*. Presenter Suzanne Midori Hanna, PhD, LMFT, discussed the implications of current neurobiological understanding as applied to adult relationships as well as a session entitled: Ethics, Values, and Transparency.



### 2ND ANNUAL GRADUATE COUNSELING SPEAKER SERIES

#### TRAUMA & COPING: INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS

*personal integrity and worldview, then that individual comes to question even the most fundamental assumptions about the world. ...that person must construct a new theory of how the world works and how people behave.* “ Harris & Follot, 2001

The experience of trauma for individuals and systems was the subject of the graduate counseling psychology program's second annual Speaker Series on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Mindi Raggi led the audience of about 75 people in exercises designed to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, thereby bringing the body into a more relaxed state. The conversation started with an explanation that our brains store traumatic memory as sensory data, rather than as a coherent and explicit narrative, and the ability to access the parasympathetic response is integral to finding the path toward healing the impact of trauma on the brain. Eda Kauffman, MSW, then explored the ways in which trauma in systems or institutions can be reflected in feelings of powerlessness, fear, hopelessness, a constant state of alert/watchfulness, compromised relationships, sense of self and communities, and recurring feelings of shame, guilt, rage, isolation, and disconnection for those within the system. Further, she explored how trauma informed care seeks to realize, recognize, and respond to trauma in ways that provide safety, offers choices, embraces collaboration, is rooted in trust, consistency and transparency, and respects the person. An interactive session of questions, responses, and comments emerged in as what many characterized as a tremendously helpful and enriching experience. The GCP annual Speaker Series seeks to provide culturally competent and relevant information and support to prospective counselors and the community at-large.

*“When an individual is bombarded with repeated traumas that constitute threats to her*

## Student Profile: Social Justice Focus



Lynsey Reiss has always been interested in the correctional system and criminal justice so when the opportunity arose for her to complete her graduate counseling psychology program practicum at the Bucks County Correctional Facility (BCCF) she knew immediately that she had found the ideal placement. Lynsey is finishing her first year in Cohort 3 and works full-time in case management at Penn Foundation where she interacts directly with clients to help them implement their goals. After receiving a Bachelors in English, Lynsey taught for three years before moving to the area in 2010 and becoming a direct care worker and home administrator for Salisbury Behavioral Health as she turned her attention toward the mental health field. While at BCCF, Lynsey was assigned to conduct biopsychosocial intakes for individuals with mental health needs and co-facilitated a women's therapeutic group that included 12-14 inmates. Lynsey shared that she had a positive experience working with mandated clients, typically "mistrustful", with whom she was able to build rapport by taking her time with the informed consent process. Soon after this work began, Lynsey realized that substance use and trauma was the norm rather than the exception for the people she was working with. She estimates that 90% of her clients had co-occurring substance use disorders associated with trauma and feels that it is important that systems treat the whole individual rather than separating mental health needs. To this end, Lynsey will be completing her internship next year as a recovery coach in the outpatient clinic of the Penn Foundation.



## Welcome 1st Cohort: Undergraduate Counseling Psychology at Delaware County Community College!



Uzo Oyibo  
Ebo Mgbeohere

DelVal University is now offering a Bachelor's degree completion program at Delaware County Community College. (DCCC). Working as a cohort, the first group of 10, who have earned their associate degrees at DCCC, will complete their program as part-time evening students in eight consecutive semesters. Students are able to take classes at one of two convenient locations – the Marple Campus in Delaware County or the College's Exton Center in Chester County. The flexibility and cohort model of this program helps to support students who have busy lives, including full-time work and family obligations. One such student, Uzo Oyibo Ebo Magbeohere, is a certified nursing assistant who works at Maxim Health Services, Inc. and is the mother of an eight-year old. Uzo especially appreciates the easy location of classes and flexibility of instructors. Her goals are to utilize her counseling skills while remaining at Maxim, a company she "loves", and developing a program to help employees and family members of clients receive the psychological and psychoeducational support they need to be more effective caring partners. For more information about the Counseling Psychology program at DCCC, contact Linda Lefevre, Director of Continuing and Professional Studies Admission, at 215.489.2933 or cpsadmit@delval.edu



Congratulations to graduating Cohort 1 of the Graduate Counseling Psychology program (pictured left to right): Heather Hass, Susan Sklaroff-Van Hook, Melissa Moreno, Mariana Rodriguez, and Sean Galiczynski !

