The University of Utah
Department of Psychology Newsletter
Volume 6, Issue 2

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Give to Psychology
Back Cover (p.16)
Welcome to another academic year! We are pleased to be joined by four new faculty members (Craig Bryan, Brian Baucom, Matthew Euler and Katherine Baucom), and the newsletter includes an introduction to each of them and a description of their new roles. In addition, we welcome 9 new graduate students, all with strong backgrounds and different paths to our program. We also have a new webmaster, Namita Mahtta, who will be pursuing a MS in the computer science program at the U while maintaining our web presence. The new faces bring new energy and new directions, and I know that we’re looking forward to an interesting year!

Over the past year, faculty continued their strong record of publications and of submitting and obtaining grants and fellowships while also maintaining their strong contributions to our teaching mission (with several faculty nominated by students for teaching awards). Our graduate students and undergraduate students have obtained many awards and scholarships (see some examples in the newsletter), serving as tangible recognition of their accomplishments. The research carried out by our faculty and students is making important contributions to basic science and real world applications, and the newsletter highlights some examples of recent awards and illustrates some of the impact that the work is making in the news and larger community. In addition, the newsletter highlights the accomplishments of Cynthia Berg, who was the 2012 recipient of the Irv Altman Faculty Award for her exemplary contributions in research, teaching and mentoring, and service.

In looking to the future, we will be searching to fill two new faculty positions this fall, one in cognitive neuroscience and one in developmental neuroscience. Recruiting in both areas will bolster our ability to address biological bases of behaviors, something that is increasingly an important focus of funded research and one of the areas of our intended growth. Given the faculty searches this fall, our department colloquium series will continue in the spring, and we will let you know the details as we get closer to the spring. This Fall also starts our new undergraduate Honors Track, and we encourage students to find out more (http://psych.utah.edu/undergraduate/honors.php).

Furthermore, we will be awarding two new graduate scholarships this year, one in memory of Fred Rhodewalt and one in memory of Nancy Klekas, thanks to a very generous anonymous donation (and additional contributions from friends and family). For those of you who didn’t know them, Fred was a professor in our program and a leader in the field of personality and social psychology. He was innovative in his research, entertaining and inspiring as a teacher. Nancy served as accounting supervisor for our department. She played a central role in building a strong sense of community, always willing to go the extra mile to help others. The scholarship in honor of Fred will thus recognize innovation in research, and the scholarship in honor of Nancy will recognize integrity, a strong sense of community, and a commitment to service. We will provide more information about these awards in the coming year, and we will also be encouraging additional donations to these funds.

Finally, in addition to welcoming new members of our department, we also need to say good-bye to Vito Rontino, who will be retiring at the end of September after working in our department for over 10 years. As most of you know, Vito is a program coordinator and has been a critical resource for the often confusing process of grants submission, in addition to his other responsibilities (such as serving as editor of this newsletter). Although we are happy for him, I know he will be greatly missed. We wish him all the best!
A project proposed by Dr. Monisha Pasupathi will be funded as part of the I.T.-Dependent Research Pilot Program proposed by the U of U Cyber-infrastructure Council and funded by the Office of the Vice-President for Research.

Successful projects were chosen by the Council in response to the following questions:

- If you gained access to more/different computing hardware, software, and IT support services what new and different research projects would you undertake that you cannot undertake with your existing IT resources?
- Envisioning these new/different research projects, what additional hardware, software, and IT support services would you need to plan, implement, and complete your project?

Dr. Pasupathi’s proposed project will enable her lab to include observational coding stations. This will allow them to expand their examination of narratives to include non-verbal components (such as humor) which are often invisible in transcribed interactions.

Dr. Sheila Crowell’s Pilot Research Grant proposal “Familial Risk of Suicide and Self-Injury: Testing Theories in Multigenerational Pedigrees” has received funding from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. AFSP received 144 grants in the November 15, 2011 grant submission and Dr. Crowell’s proposal scored a 2.0 on a scale of 1 (Excellent) to 9. The reviewers expressed their appreciation of the strength of the application. “The project is an attempt to build infrastructure for future research.: its strength being the immense size and quality of this as a potential population laboratory for the study of suicide. Identifying pedigrees at very high risk for suicide could lead to clues of intermediate phenotypes for suicidal behavior and lead to preventive interventions.” [Click here to read Dr. Crowell’s abstract.]

Dr. Crowell also received an award from the university’s Funding Incentive Seed Grant Program, in the amount of $31,000.00 which will assist her in doing the participant recruitment piece of the original project.

Co-investigators, Drs. Bert Uchino and Tim Smith received subaward funding from a Northern Texas University funded grant entitled Social Vigilance and Atherosclerotic Risk by PI Dr John Ruiz.

Social vigilance reflects a sensory intake process where an environment or potential threat is continually monitored and reappraised in order to detect any change in status. Sustained vigilance or hypervigilance may have important health consequences. The proposal aims to examine social vigilance as a moderator of atherosclerotic risk in a representative community sample as well as test hypotheses regarding acute physiological reactions to vigilance in daily life as a mediator of the stress-related change in atherosclerosis. The results of this study will contribute to an understanding of the basic behavioral pathways linking social stress to CHD risk and inform targeted interventions to modify such behavior.
CURRENT RESEARCH

My research is primarily focused on suicidal behaviors and military mental health. I have a couple of treatment studies underway currently within the military testing the effectiveness of psychological treatments and interventions for reducing suicide attempts and suicidal ideation. Other studies are aimed at better determining what thought processes and emotions military personnel experience that increases their risk for attempting suicide. In particular, we are currently interested in understanding the roles that betrayal, guilt, shame, and moral injury (i.e., seeing things that violate one’s sense of right and wrong) have on suicide attempts. In other studies, we are focusing on emotional burnout and nontraumatic events that contribute to psychological problems in military populations; these areas have largely been ignored due to our emphasis on PTSD and depression.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS


WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR RESEARCH AND WHAT OUTCOMES ARE YOU HOPEING FOR?

My motivation for working so closely with the military is my own experience as a veteran. I was an active duty psychologist for four years and deployed to Iraq, so I have a very strong personal connection to helping other service members and veterans. In our treatment studies, we are hoping to demonstrate that certain treatments can reduce the risk of suicide attempt by approximately 50%. In our other studies, we
are hoping to uncover new clues or directions in identifying the factors that most directly contribute to mental health problems among military personnel.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?**

Working with the operational side of the military, especially when I have the opportunity to participate in their missions out in the field. Out in the field is where I’ve learned the most about what the specific needs of combatants and operators are, and how to best reach them. Some of the most important and intense clinical work I’ve done occurred in the backs of military trucks, on live fire ranges, and sitting on the ground eating MREs. Combatants are much more willing to open up and tell their stories here than in the office, and are much more likely to accept help. It’s extremely meaningful.

**WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF LIVING IN UTAH?**

Many, many things. I enjoy outdoor activities and exercise, and Utah is a fantastic location for this. We live in a great location that is within walking (and running) distance from shops, restaurants, parks, and even the university. There are many more opportunities for recreational activities here.

**WHAT READING MATERIAL IS ON YOUR BEDSIDE TABLE?**

I just finished “The Girl Who Played With Fire”, and just started reading “Soldier Dogs,” which is about military working dogs.

**CURRENT RESEARCH**

My research focuses on applications of electro- and magnetoencephalography (EEG/MEG) for studying mechanisms of neural coordination in relation to behavior and cognition. Specific areas of interest include the relation between individual differences in neural oscillatory responses and cognitive ability, and the relative contribution of evoked responses versus oscillatory activity to language processing and other cognitive functions. I am particularly interested in developing applications of these techniques for use in clinical assessment, such as investigating MEG as a tool for mapping language areas in neurosurgical candidates, and in exploring their broader utility to neuropsychological diagnosis and prognostication.

**RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR RESEARCH AND WHAT OUTCOMES ARE YOU HOPING FOR?

My research is motivated by an interest in the neural mechanisms of behavior, and particularly the ways in which temporal coordination of brain activity is important to cognition. A good deal of research in neuropsychology has historically been concerned with localizing the networks associated with various cognitive processes. However, relatively recent advances in electrophysiology now permit studies into the temporal dynamics of these networks, while simultaneously obtaining detailed spatial information. These developments have also yielded new analysis tools and hypotheses about the mechanisms of neural coordination (via time-frequency analysis of oscillatory phenomena), though there are still many outstanding questions regarding their relevance to cognition. Most broadly, the goals of my research are to contribute to our understanding of these mechanisms, such as by investigating the relation of neural oscillatory phenomena to individual differences in intellectual ability, and exploring their role in performance of language and other cognitive tasks.

As a clinical scientist, I hope to apply these interests towards answering questions that will benefit people coping with neurological and psychiatric diseases. I think one compelling area where electrophysiological and other neuroimaging tools can enhance neuropsychological research and practice is in the context of pre-surgical planning for neurosurgical candidates, such as when individuals are being considered for surgical treatment of medically-intractable epilepsy or brain tumors. Current language mapping techniques are generally invasive and are limited in their ability to predict who may experience an adverse cognitive outcome following surgery. I’m hopeful that these methods can offer a more accurate characterization of individual cerebral organization than current techniques, and might ultimately lead to safer alternatives to invasive language-mapping procedures, as well as to better outcome prediction and treatment counseling for these groups. In addition, I think research of this type is important because it can help provide proof of principal for the larger area of individual cognitive mapping, which could ultimately improve diagnosis and treatment across a diverse range of neurological conditions.

WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF LIVING IN UTAH?

I’m really looking forward to living in Utah. Since I grew up in New Mexico, I feel especially at home in the west. I appreciate the beauty of the landscapes and always being in close proximity to opportunities for outdoor recreation and contemplation. The last two years my wife and I have missed out on skiing opportunities and winter sunshine living in Wisconsin, so moving back to the west is a very welcome bonus. Also, I think folks tend to have a slightly more relaxed approach to life in this region compared to other areas of the country. I look forward to getting settled in Salt Lake and learning about everything the city and state have to offer.
WHAT READING MATERIAL IS ON YOUR BEDSIDE TABLE?


IF YOU COULD MEET ANY NOTABLE PERSON, WHO WOULD IT BE?

I have to resist my first impulse to say somebody like Obama, the Dalai Lama, Newton, Galileo, etc…. After thinking about it, I think I would have most liked to have met the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. He's one of my favorite philosophers and a very interesting character. His writing often strikes me as unifying diverse and profound topics in a concise and forceful way, while somehow simultaneously being quite cryptic and difficult. I've always suspected that I actually understand about 10% of what I think I get about it. Since his views changed dramatically over the course of his career, and an important part of his work was published posthumously, it would be neat to ask him to elaborate on some of the more puzzling topics he covered.

BRIAN BAUCOM, PhD

Assistant Professor
Clinical Psychology

CURRENT RESEARCH

My research has both substantive and methodological pieces. Substantively, my work focuses on emotional and behavioral processes in couples and families that are related to the well-being of individual family members and to the health of the family system as a whole. Much of this work is done by bringing family members into a laboratory setting and observing their interactions. One of the things that I currently am most excited about is using emergent mobile technologies to extend the scope of this research to incorporate naturalistic behavioral and emotional data from families' everyday lives. This kind of data has the potential to open up new avenues of exploration but also poses significant analytic challenges. My methodological work focuses on two of these issues: 1) developing signal processing methods to make sense of such a large amount of behavioral data, and 2) developing statistical models to characterize intra- and interpersonal processes over varying time scales.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS


**WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR RESEARCH AND WHAT OUTCOMES ARE YOU HOPING FOR?**

My research is motivated by an understanding of family conflict as being normative, inevitable, and even necessary. Although conflict is often assumed to be problematic, conflict can facilitate adaptation and is one of the primary mechanisms by which change and reorganization take place. Conversely, dysfunctional conflict processes are linked to a host of negative individual and relational outcomes. One of the most interesting aspects of dysfunctional processes is that they often emerge for ironic reasons. For example, characteristics that were attractive at the outset of a relationship frequently become sources of conflict over time and efforts intended to decrease momentary distress often exacerbate dysfunctional forms of relating over the long term. Unfortunately, ironic processes are amongst the most common and difficult presenting problems in couple therapy. One hope that I have for my research is that it can help improve our understanding of individual and dyadic risk factors for dysfunctional processes with the ultimate goal of improving the efficacy of therapies that target these processes.

**WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF LIVING IN UTAH?**

The mountains, hands down. Katie and I love to explore the outdoors and play in the mountains in particular. I’ve been hoping for a way back to the mountains ever since I moved away from Colorado to go to graduate school.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?**

One of the things that I like most about my job is the opportunity for collaboration. Pursuing my methodological interests has meant spending a lot of time with engineers and computer scientists over the past few years. It has been a really interesting and growth producing experience to work towards integrating wildly different approaches to studying the same phenomenon. I really enjoy learning about other perspectives and ways of thinking.

**WILL A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION REMAIN RELEVANT TO STUDENTS IN OUR INCREASINGLY TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY?**

I think so, but I also think that some education in the hard sciences will become an increasingly important adjunct to a liberal arts education. My sense of the technological shift is that it is primarily a change in how people do what they do rather than a change in what people are doing. A lot of the technologies that are having a major impact right now (like the iPhone) are designed to be very intuitive. I suspect that those technologies came out of conversations between people with specialty training in one area who could talk to people with specialty training in another area. My hunch is that some exposure to the hard sciences will make it easier to talk about liberal arts ideas with hard science experts and vice versa.
I am joining the department as an Assistant Professor (Clinical). I will be coordinating clinical training opportunities and teaching/supervising graduate students in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). In addition to traditional behavioral and cognitive-behavioral therapies, my clinical interests also include “third wave” CBTs, which incorporate a focus on mindfulness and acceptance of what cannot typically be changed (e.g., differences between you and your partner, your emotional experience). I have expertise in three empirically-supported third-wave interventions: Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Dialectical Behavior Therapy.

In addition to my teaching role in the department, I plan to continue an active program of research. My research focuses on the study of intimate relationships. Specifically, my work investigates couple communication and the impact of stressors across multiple domains on individual and relational distress. I am interested in basic research that contributes to our understanding of dyadic processes as well as translational applications of basic findings in treatment outcome research.

**RECENT PUBLICATIONS**


**WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR RESEARCH AND WHAT OUTCOMES ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?**

Findings from basic research focused on couples’ communication over a large number of investigations have led to the development and evaluation of behavioral couple therapy for distressed couples. Following a course of behavioral couple therapy, most partners interact more positively and less negatively, and are generally more satisfied in their relationships than before therapy. Unfortunately, longitudinal studies illustrate that improvements in satisfaction are short-lived for many couples; 30% - 60% of couples evidence declines in relationship satisfaction from treatment termination through subsequent follow up. This well-replicated finding challenges behavioral theory that increasing positivity and decreasing negativity sufficiently improves relationship functioning over the long haul.

One important distinction in regards to communication is the difference between form and function of behavior. Couples can communicate in ways that look nice in form, yet function to maintain relationship
distress. For example, expressing a lot of positivity to one’s partner is generally thought of as a good thing. However, such communication may be unhealthy when its function is avoidance of important issues. Analysis of complex sequences of communication, both in the therapy room and the research lab, has the potential to improve our understanding of processes linked with important individual and relationship outcomes. My hope is that such research will facilitate enduring improvements in functioning following couple-based interventions.

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY NOTABLE PERSON, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Ira Glass, the host of This American Life.

WHAT READING MATERIAL IS ON YOUR BEDSIDE TABLE?
Study guides for the psychology licensing exam. Soon I will go back to Journal of Best Practices: A Memoir of Marriage, Asperger Syndrome, and One Man’s Quest to Be a Better Husband by David Finch – a very sweet and funny read.

WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF LIVING IN UTAH?
I am very excited about all the outdoor activities! I spent a summer in Wyoming during college, but otherwise going to the mountains has been quite a trek, but one that I have made as often as I could. I’m particularly excited about cross country skiing in the winter.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

ANDY Choi, PSYCHOLOGY UNDERGRAD, RECEIVES 1ST PLACE AWARD
Andy Choi, psychology undergraduate honors thesis student, submitted his thesis, Examining off-task behaviors as regulatory mediators of long-term interest and performance online, for consideration for the national Psi Chi/Guilford Undergraduate Research Award (http://www.psichi.org/Awards). His paper was awarded 1st place. In recognition of his accomplishment, he will receive $1,000 and his accomplishment will be published in the Eye on Psi Chi. Click here to read the thesis abstract.

TEEN TEXTING SURVEY
U of U clinical psychology professor, Don Strassburg surveyed more than 600 teens in a high school in the mountain west: talking to fourteen to eighteen year olds. 20% said they texted an explicit photo, 40%, mostly boys, said they received an explicit photo. Dr. Strassberg emphasized that, “The bottom line is there are a lot of kids engaging in this behavior.” To hear the June 15th FoxNews Interview and read the accompanying news article, go to: http://fox13now.com/2012/06/14/u-of-u-study-says-high-percentage-of-teens-sharing-sexting-pics/. To review the results of the study, go to: Archives of Sexual Behavior.
The co-investigators for this subcontract will be responsible for assisting in all phases of the project. More specifically, they will be helping in the design of the main study protocol, for conducting some statistical analyses of the assessments generated, and assisting in the initiation of the manuscript concerning the primary aims of this proposal. This proposed work will be facilitated by the past collaborative history between Drs. Uchino, Smith and Ruiz.

Co-investigator, Dr. Michael Himle received subaward funding from a Psyc Tech Ltd NIH funded SBIR grant entitled “Creating a Computerized Self-Administered Version of a Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention for Tic Disorders (C-CBIT) for Children,” Primary Investigator, Dr. Suzanne Muton-Odum of PsycTech, Ltd.

Chronic tic disorders (CTD) occur in 1-3% of school-aged children and are often associated with significantly diminished quality of life and impairments in physical, social, academic, and interpersonal functioning. There is currently no cure for CTD and they are often managed with pharmacotherapies which, although moderately effective for reducing tics in some individuals, have high rates of adverse side effects which limit their use and often result in poor adherence and discontinuation. A non-pharmacological treatment known as Comprehensive Behavioral Interventions for Tics (CBIT) has shown results similar to those achieved with pharmacotherapy. However, it is not widely available to those who want it because of restricted access to care including a lack of providers and the costs associated with weekly therapy. The proposed program, C-CBIT has the potential to address known accessibility problems by offering a novel dissemination strategy that will increase accessibility (available to anyone with Internet access), reduce delivery burden, and lower the cost of treatment.

Michael Himle, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Utah, will play an integral role in this project as Co-Investigator. Along with the other Co-Investigator on the project, Doug Woods, Ph.D., he will provide regular consultation to PsycTech, Ltd. during the development of the C-CBIT protocol as is outlined in the research plan. He will recruit professional and clinical participants and collect data as outlined in the research plan. Dr. Himle will provide oversight for all study-related proceedings at the U of U site.

Brian Thoma, clinical psychology graduate student, was recently funded by NIMH for his National Research Service Award (NRSA) proposal. These are very competitive awards, and difficult to get particularly on first submissions (which Brian’s was). Drs. Dave Huebner and Cindy Berg will be his mentor and co-mentor, respectively, on the project. Brian's proposed research will examine how family factors influence HIV-related sexual risk behavior among gay and bisexual adolescent boys.

HIV prevalence is alarmingly high among young men who have sex with men (YMSM) and continues to increase, but no effective interventions to reduce risk behaviors have been developed for YMSM under 23. Family factors are associated with adolescents’ sexual risk behaviors, including condom use, sex frequency, number of sex partners, and sexual debut, but it is unclear whether these findings generalize to HIV-related sexual risk behaviors of YMSM. Findings from this study will shed light on the ways that family factors influence HIV risk among YMSM and could help to incorporate parents into and improve future risk-reduction efforts with this population. Such improvements may more broadly reduce health care utilization and national costs of treating HIV positive individuals. Click here to read the full project abstract.
Irv Altman retired from the University of Utah in 2005, after a 48 year career. He served as Chair of the Department of Psychology, Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Science, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and was appointed as Distinguished Professor of Psychology in 1988. He received the University’s highest honor, the Rosenblatt Prize for Excellence. He also was awarded the Distinguished Scholarly and Creative Research Award, David P. Gardner Research Fellowship, Distinguished Service Award (Graduate School of Social Work), Presidential Teaching Scholar Award, Distinguished Honors Teaching Professor Award, University of Utah Diversity Award, Superior Research Award from the College of Social and Behavioral Science, and awards from Psi Chi (undergraduate Psychology Honor Society). He authored/edited 20 books and 130 book chapters and professional journal articles.

Throughout his tenure at the University of Utah, Irwin Altman placed a high value on scholarship, teaching/mentorship, and service to the University and the community at large.

The Irwin Altman Award has been established by his family and supported by the university to recognize a faculty member in the Department of Psychology who exemplifies the combined values of teaching/mentoring, research/scholarship and service that Irwin Altman demonstrated throughout his career. There were several strong nominations this year and from those strong nominations, this year’s award was presented to Dr. Cindy Berg. The brief review that follows of Dr. Berg’s profile will make clear why she was selected.

Cindy Berg, Ph.D.
Professor
Developmental Psychology

Cindy has been extremely strong in research, conducting interdisciplinary work with multiple collaborators within and outside the psychology department and the university. This work stands out for its recognition that what has been considered an individual’s health problem is in reality embedded in social relationships, and for looking at what this might mean at distinct points across the life span (e.g., older couples dealing with the man’s prostate cancer; adolescents and their parents dealing with the adolescent’s diabetes). This perspective has important real-life implications for health-behavior change and psychological and physical well-being.

The quality and impact of the work is reflected in Cindy’s impressive record of publications and her very successful funding history. For example, in the last 3 years (2009-the present), she has been an author on 36 new publications, and this work is being published in the best journals in developmental psychology, health psychology, and clinical psychology. In addition, she has or is serving as PI or co-PI on two recent major grants from the National Institutes of Health, and is PI on another grant currently under review. In addition to the impact this work has had in the field, it also has been important for the local community. For example, one letter writer in support of Cindy’s nomination noted that “Within the pediatric type-1 diabetes community in Salt Lake City, and greater Utah, Dr. Berg is working to develop, integrate, and maintain resources and points of access for families and children with type 1 diabetes.”

The impact of her work on the community is also relevant to the second dimension critical to this award, service. Cindy’s service contributions have been exemplary. She took on department chair just as the economy tanked. As one letter writer noted “Cindy was chair at a time in which our department was facing large budget cuts which threatened our productivity and morale. Through a number of proactive steps,
we emerged from this situation in many ways a stronger department due largely to her leadership.” Instead of focusing on the pain, Cindy focused on the opportunity to re-think who we are, and how to make a strong department even better. She helped us implement policies that made our ability to meet both research and teaching missions even stronger. During these same years she also was very active nationally (e.g., serving on the executive committee of the Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology; serving as secretary of Div. 20 of APA; chairing the BSS Fellowship Committee for the Gerontological Society of America).

Finally, her teaching and mentorship have been outstanding. For example, although our department has always endorsed the importance of mentoring junior faculty, Cindy was responsible for our establishing an explicit mentoring program. She also has served as a mentor personally to many junior faculty, post-docs and students. For example, one letter writer noted that “Dr. Berg devotes countless time and energy to her graduate and undergraduate students’ scholastic development. For me, Dr. Berg is an integral and influential advisor and mentor” A second letter writer noted that “Cindy has always had an open door and open ear for all my important career decisions…If I were to pick one person in the department who has been the most involved as a mentor to me, it would be Cindy.” Her exceptional mentoring was formally recognized when she received the University of Utah Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Distinguished Mentor Award in 2006, and APA Division 20’s Retirement Research Foundation Master Mentor Award in 2007.

In sum, I am extremely pleased to present Cindy with this award. Cindy has a sustained, programmatic research agenda that has resulted in an impressive number and quality of publications and extramural funding. Just as importantly for the Altman award, Cindy has been exceptional in her service and teaching and mentoring. She is an ideal candidate for the Irwin Altman award, and channels many of the qualities of Irv’s distinguished career!

— The review was given by the presenter of the award, Dr. Carol Sansone, Psychology Chair.
PSYCHOPATHS GET A BREAK FROM BIOLOGY

University of Utah social psychologist Lisa Aspinwall, philosopher James Tabery and legal scholar Teneille Brown have published a study showing that while judges are more likely to impose higher sentences on criminals who are psychopaths, they reduce the sentence somewhat when expert testimony is presented explaining the biological causes of psychopathy. [Click to read more](Science Codex article posted August 16th, 2012).

2012 ANNUAL REPORT: MESSAGE FROM DEAN RUDD/COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

“The 2011-2012 academic year has been an exciting one for the College of Social & Behavioral Science, providing a great foundation for several initiatives to be launched in 2013. Let me offer a quick thank you to our faculty and staff for their hard work, commitment and overall excellence. Their work is cutting-edge and impactful, not just at a local level, but nationally and internationally.”

[Click to read the complete message from Dean Rudd.](

A NEW STUDY EXPLORES WHY SOLDIERS COMMIT SUICIDE

On Friday, August 17th, the Pentagon reported that 38 soldiers killed themselves in July, the worst month for Army suicides since figures became public in 2009 and twice the number of troops killed in Afghanistan so far this month. Though suicide among service members is epidemic, a new study from the University of Utah, Reasons for Suicide Attempts in a Clinical Sample of Active Duty Soldiers, published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*, may be the first to explain why.

“From a treatment perspective, we don’t pay attention to the psychiatric diagnosis and treat suicide risk as a unique problem,” Craig J. Bryan, Associate Director of the University of Utah’s National Center for Veterans Studies and Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology, said in an interview. “Patients lack emotional regulation skills — they don’t know how to control suffering or manage it.”

[Click here to read more](of the August 17th Washington Post article written by Justin Moyer.)
CONTACT US: If you would like to comment on our newsletter and/or be an email newsletter subscriber, please contact us and we will include you on our email newsletter mailing list. We also would love to hear from all the alumni of the Department of Psychology. If you have any news, please write or e-mail department Program Manager:

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We need your help to maintain and improve our programs, especially during this difficult economic time.

Your contribution will be used to help undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and the full range of departmental programs.

1. Supporting graduate students. We compete nationally with other departments for the best graduate students. The largest problem that we face is a lack of competitive stipends for our graduate students and research assistantships for graduate students to focus on their research.

2. Undergraduate education. Our Psychology major is one of the more popular majors on campus and our undergraduates often have multiple competing demands for their time (school, work, family). Funds are needed to support undergraduate travel to national conferences that facilitates students in pursuing degrees beyond the undergraduate degree and scholarships that ease the economic burden.

3. Keeping our excellent faculty members. The continued success of our rising national ranking depends on attracting and retaining our excellent faculty. The national and international reputation of our existing faculty means that they are frequently recruited by other institutions.

[Click here](#) to contribute to our Friends of Psychology Fund and use your credit card on the UU secure online donation system or mail a check to

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If you have a specific idea for supporting the department that is not listed here, please contact Psychology Chair Carol Sansone at 801-581-5380 or carol.sansone@psych.utah.edu