

PSYCH MATTERS

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The Quarterly Newsletter of Psychology at Oakland University

OU Students and Faculty Publish Adult Sibling Project Results by Robby Stewart



Pictured from left to right:
Renee Rumsley, Jean Goddard, Wendy Cassel, Andrea Kozak, Elissa Blake, Lynn Tingley, Andie Stewart, and Robby Stewart

In April of 1993 I attended the meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development in New Orleans. On the last morning of the conference, I awoke and realized there was still one more poster session to attend. Little did I know at the time, but that poster session would shape the next eight years of my research efforts.

The poster I wanted to see described a qualitative assessment of young sibling relationships and reported that these relationships could be categorized into three groups: Buddies, Rivals, and Casual acquaintances. An interesting aspect of the poster was in the comments it drew from the people viewing it. Some people noted that they and their sibling had always been rivals; others countered that they and their siblings had thoroughly enjoyed making life difficult for their parents, i.e., that they were "partners in crime." Still others remarked that they never knew their sibling very well and still did not interact with them. I left New Orleans with my head full of ideas to explore—that is one of the reasons faculty members go to professional conferences.

In the years since New Orleans my students and I have discovered that brothers and sisters are indeed very influential people in our lives. We have learned that only children often establish

a very close friendship with someone they describe as being "like a brother or a sister". We have also observed that adults often describe their intimate partners as being "my best friend". Of course, we eventually turned the statements around and began to ponder the following: if one's intimate partner was "a best friend," and one's best friend was "like a brother or sister," then are our patterns of interacting with a spouse, partner or lover actually based on our relationship with a sibling? John Bowlby's theory of attachment has argued that the nature of the child's relationship with his caregiver, usually the mother, shapes the working model for relationships that child carries forth for the rest of his or her life. Could the relationship with a sibling really play a critical role in influencing the nature of friendships and intimate relationships later in life?

Last month my students and I published a paper entitled Adult sibling relationships: Validation of a typology [Personal Relationships, 2001, 8, 299-324] where we presented our most recent findings in the area. When I look at this manuscript today I see two different stories that bear telling. The first is the basic tale of the findings we report, and the second is the process used to obtain these results. In many ways, I find the story of the process to be more rewarding and interesting; but first, the facts...

During the summer of 1995 Andrea Kozak, Lynn Tingley, Elissa Blake and Wendy Cassel collaborated the efforts of 15 other OU students to obtain interviews from 658 adults between the ages of 18 and 86 years. Andrea and Lynn supervised data entry, wrote the initial data analysis programs, and made certain that the data was ready for statistical analysis. One of the instruments they used in their

interviews was the Sibling Type Questionnaire that had been developed as part of the Honors Projects conducted by Morgan (Caskey) Bielfuss and Kris (Kortjohn) Verbrugge a year earlier. Morgan and Kris had interviewed 172 adults to obtain descriptions of current sibling relationships. These descriptions were used in the Sibling Type Questionnaire and revealed that five primary factors could be used to describe sibling relationships: mutuality (feeling close or accepted), criticism (feeling irritated or annoyed), apathy (not sharing common interests or concerns), competition (trying to outperform one another), and longing (worrying about the time apart from one another). Morgan, Kris and I published the results of this study in 1998 (Sibling relationships in early adulthood: A typology. Personal Relationships, 1998, 5, 59-74).

These same factors were derived with the larger sample of 658 adults (replication is a good thing), and the scores were used to reveal that five clusters of sibling types existed. The largest group (33% of the sample) were called "Supportive" and were characterized by very high levels of closeness and acceptance, and by very low levels of apathy. (Continued on page 5)

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Faculty Matters



A Letter from the Department Chair... Dr. Robby Stewart



Best wishes for a happy and productive new year. Did you make any resolutions for the new year? Are you still maintaining them? I hope so. I'd like to take a few moments here to tell you about a couple of things that are happening in the department, and perhaps offer a suggestion or two for academic resolutions you might consider.

First, we noticed last semester that a couple faculty members modified their syllabi in an effort to increase class attendance. One built in a class attendance policy where people were required to write an additional paper if they missed an excessive number of classes. The other faculty member gave points for attendance that counted toward the final course grade. These represent two of the four types of consequences within the operant conditioning framework. Both approaches resulted in increased attendance, and both sections had overall averages that were higher than these professors had seen in the past. Gee, I guess the moral of that story is that coming to class is actually associated with getting higher grades...imagine that. Of course, the drawback is that this supports the position that extrinsic motivations play a larger role than intrinsic interest in the subject matter, but we can't have everything I guess.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION #1: Go to class.

Second, we are receiving applications for two new faculty positions and will soon begin the process of identifying our top candidates. The first position we are attempting to fill is in Community or Clinical Psychology. By listing Community first we are indicating that this

is our preference, though we expect that many people who apply may be coming from Clinical programs. Community psychology is the branch of psychology concerned with person-environment interactions and the ways society impacts upon individual and community functioning. Community psychology focuses on social issues, social institutions, and other settings that influence individuals, groups, and organizations. Community Psychology is about understanding people within their social worlds and using this understanding to improve people's well-being. Researchers systematically examine the ways individuals interact with other individuals, social groups, clubs, churches, schools, families, neighborhoods, and the larger culture and environment. It is an applied discipline where researchers examine various social issues including poverty, substance abuse, school failure, community development, risk and protective factors, empowerment, diversity, prevention, intervention, delinquency, high risk behaviors, aggression, violence, and many other topics. Obviously, a person trained in Clinical Psychology may adopt a community psychology orientation, hence our decision to add this group to the search.

The second position we are attempting to fill is in Life-span Developmental Psychologist with a clear emphasis in adulthood and aging. The graying of America is a real phenomenon as the baby-boomers move into middle and early-late adulthood. Many of us in the department expect that the number and variety of careers associated with this part of the population will continue to grow in the future. The Life-span group at

Oakland has not included a true adulthood person since Professor Zepelin retired six years ago.

From time to time students ask why they do not have a say in the hiring of faculty members. For years now we have invited students to meet with the candidates and provide feedback to the chair. To be honest with you, we have not seen a large number of students take advantage of this opportunity. In the next few weeks the department will identify the candidates who will be invited to campus for an interview. A time will be set aside for the candidate to sit and talk with students, and the candidates will have questions for you as they need to decide whether they want to move to Michigan and accept our offer. I encourage those of you who are interested in Community or Clinical issues to meet these candidates when they come to campus; those of you who are interested in life-span issues or working with the elderly should make a point of meeting these candidates during their visits.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION #2:

Get involved with your major, with your department, with the process of preparing for your own careers.

Yeah, only two suggestions for resolutions. Lose weight on your own time. Stop smoking when you decide to. Drink less if that is what you need to do. But as students it can be as simple as the two things listed here...go to class, and be actively involved with your own education. Enough said.

~Robby. ♦

Advising Matters

Mary B. Eberly, Ph.D.



Hello Everyone! I trust you all have begun 2002 with zest and determination! For this piece, I thought I might assist in creating a few Advising New Years Resolutions for Psychology Majors.

First Year Students

- Be sure to complete a Declaration of Major or Change of Major form. If you are fairly certain about being a psychology major, be sure to complete the form to ensure that are. In advising, if you have not done so, then your advisor will not have access to your records.
- Meet your advisor. Each faculty member of the psychology department has several advisees. Although, you might be working on University Requirements (e.g. Gen Ed, Rhetoric, etc.), meeting and talking with your advisor is very useful in terms of beginning to think about your plan for the future.
- Explore the Field of Psychology. Psychology, as a field of study, has so many avenues for interests. One can go into business or mental health services or social work or . . . or . . . well, you the get the picture. Exploring your options will help you to determine you plan of action over the next few years.

Sophomores

- Complete PSY 250 and PSY 251. PSY 250 and PSY 251 are core courses that

are necessary for the major, but, more importantly, they are fundamental to the field. They are pre-requisites for the upper division courses (i.e., 300+ level).

- Identify research opportunities or internships. Whether you are planning on getting a job or going on to graduate school, applied experience is helpful in determining your interest areas. By the end of your sophomore year, try and identify an extra-curricular experience.
- Get involved in Psy Chi/Psychology Club. The Psychology Club provides an excellent opportunity to meet other students and learn about the field. They offer seminars, workshops, and fun. Get INVOLVED!!

Juniors

- Do Research. This is the year to really build up your resume or vitae. Working with a professor one-on-one or in a small group allows the faculty member to get to know you and your potential as a future graduate student or employee. Moreover, it provides you with the opportunity to know what being a research psychologist is all about.
- Prepare for the GRE. Whether you read classics and review mathematics or you take a preparation course, the GRE should be taken near the end of your junior year or by the beginning of your senior year. There also are CDs and books that can help you prepare.
- Identify potential graduate schools or internships. The summer of your junior year is important for identifying graduate schools and beginning the application process. Be aware that each application can take anywhere from 2 to 8 hours to complete. The more you have prepared, the more smooth will be the application process. Also, if you are thinking of employment, an internship can help in

finding a future job.

Seniors

- Ask for a Senior Audit through the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office (Room 221 VAR). Even though your Psychology Major Faculty Advisor is knowledgeable about University and College requirements, his/her jurisdiction only concerns your major. Be sure to ask for an audit to KNOW that you are on track for graduation.
- Identify Faculty/Mentors to write letters of recommendation. Ask faculty at least one month in advance of due dates for letters. The end of the semester can get hairy for most faculty.
- Apply to Graduate School or Find a Job. Most PhD programs require that applications be submitted by December or January. MA/MS programs tend to require applications by March or April. Finding employment can take anywhere from a day to several months. The sooner you start to apply, the sooner you will be earning a paycheck. ♦

Advising Hours
Wednesdays
11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
and
4:30 p.m.-5:30 pm
112 Pryale
(248) 370-2285
eberly@oakland.edu

Additional Advising
Information
may be found at the
Departmental
Website
www2.oakland.edu/psych

Psi Chi Matters

Congratulations to the new Psi Chi/ Psych Club Officers and Chairs!

Shawn Delasko - Vice President
shawnski@hotmail.com

Karen Hill - Secretary
Kmhj2@aol.com

Kim Lewis - Class Liaison Program Chair
kelewis@oakland.edu

(Please contact Kim if you are interested in being a class liaison for your psychology classes. All liaisons will receive a gift from the club at the end of the semester!)

Psych Club Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 12

General Meeting and lecture with Dr. Simmons on School Psychology
Lake Superior A in the OC at 12pm

Saturday, February 16

Seminar: "Getting into Grad School" with speaker Dr. Eberly
10:00am-1:00pm in 156 NFH

Tuesday, March 12

General Meeting with 2002-2003 Officer Election
Lake Superior A in the OC at 12pm

Friday, March 15

Psi Chi Induction Ceremony

Oakland Room in the OC
from 7-9:30pm

Tuesday, March 19

**Psychology Faculty and Staff
Appreciation Luncheon**

Pryale Hall Conference Room
from 12-12:45pm.

Tuesday, March 26

Panel Discussion: "What's the difference? Masters in Counseling, Psychology, or Social Work"

Lake Superior A in the OC at 12pm

Tuesday, April 9

General Meeting

Lake Superior A in the OC at 12pm

President's Corner

Taking Advantage: How to Make the Most Out of Your College Education By Cheryl Stayer

Do you think the education you're getting at Oakland University is worth the dollars you are investing? You are missing out on quite a lot if you simply go to class and then return home. The key to a successful college experience is to take advantage of the plentiful resources the university provides. As a senior applying to Ph.D. programs in clinical psychology, I believe I got all I paid for at Oakland and more.

As a freshman, I was undecided about my career goals. To help alleviate my anxieties, I spent some time at the Career Resource Center in North Foundation Hall. I took many diagnostic tests to help point me in the right direction. The tools did not always tell me the career I wanted to hear, but by realizing I had a persistent desire for the results to tell me: Psychologist, I decided it was really something I should pursue further.

I spent my sophomore year being a research assistant, which I found to be the most valuable experience at Oakland. The out-of-the-classroom activity allowed me to apply the material I learned from my courses to an actual study. In addition to presenting findings at many psychology conferences in Michigan, the research team also traveled to a conference in Memphis, fully funded. As a research assistant, I also met my upperclassman mentor, who was also on the team. She showed me the ropes

around campus, and I owe much of my success to her. Equally important was the relationship I built with the professor in charge of the project, which later led to obtaining a letter of recommendation for graduate school.

Speaking of professors, let me say that I think the quality of Oakland's faculty and their willingness to assist students is the best thing about the university. I hear complaints from friends at other universities where the profs don't give students any attention outside of class. Take advantage of your professors' office hours to ask questions and have discussions. The result may later allow you to request a letter of recommendation.

My experiences within Kresge Library have also taught me the importance of asking questions. I have learned all I know about retrieving books and articles by asking the reference desk attendants for assistance. Also, the computer lab employees offer great help when you are having technical trouble. So, when in Kresge, don't just give up and leave frustrated, ask for help.

Another valuable resource at Oakland University is the Academic Skills Center. Rather than paying hundreds of dollars for a prep class for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), I simply received free tutoring by making appointments at the Academic Skills Center to help improve my math ability. There are always math tutors employed there, and I was lucky enough to get one who had previously taken the GRE. The one-on-one attention improved my score immensely. Later, I took advantage of the writing tutors at the Center to help with writing

essays. If nothing else, having the appointments forced me to do my work.

The Department of Placement and Career Services is a great asset at OU. Their Experiential Education program provided me an internship in the psychology field. Also, I received assistance and feedback on my resume, and for only \$25.00 it was placed on an online database. By having my resume on the database, I was offered a couple of high quality positions. I took one job offer and it has been one of the most rewarding work experiences I have ever had.

Despite my many positive experiences with the university, there was one very important lesson I had to learn the hard way. Go see your advisors! Being the anal-retentive person that I am, I thought I could correctly calculate all my credits myself. Oops! Never trust yourself with such important matters. Now I am dealing with 20 credits in my last semester at Oakland, rather than my usual 12.

Finally, attending student organization meetings, such as those of Psi Chi/ Psychology Club, can be very enriching, educational, and also a great way to meet other students. Even better, holding a position in a student organization provides unlimited opportunities and is also a nice resume booster.

I am sure there are many other resources at OU that I have forgotten to mention or have not even discovered yet. Thus, get your money's worth and remember that college can be much more than just taking classes. I hope that sharing some of my experiences gives you some assistance to a successful journey at Oakland University. Good luck! ♦

Research Matters

Adult Sibling Project Results Continued From Front Page

The largest group (33% of the sample) were called "Supportive" and were characterized by very high levels of closeness and acceptance, and by very low levels of apathy. A "Longing" group (22% of the sample) displayed high levels of longing for contact with their sibling, moderate levels of mutuality and very low criticism and competition. Another group was labeled "Competitive" (16% of sample) due to their high levels of criticism and competition; this group was not negative in nature (they were close and warm), but their relationship was clearly based on competition. Another group (11% of the sample) was labeled "Hostile" due to their extreme apathy and criticism and lack of closeness or warmth. Interestingly, the "Hostile" group also displayed very high levels of longing, perhaps revealing that they wished for some form of reconciliation. The last group was labeled "Apathetic" (17% of the sample) due to their very high apathy scores and very low mutuality scores.

Various members of the research team focused on different issues surrounding this typology. Andrea was interested in the role birth order might play on the nature of sibling relationships. Lynn focused her attention on the impact of position in the life course (comparing late adolescents with early, middle and late adults). Elissa and Wendy explored the impact of gender composition (whether the sibling dyad was two females, two males, older brother with younger sister, or older sister with younger brother). Jean played the very important role of tracking what everyone was doing; she assumed the critical task of synthesizing all the findings into something that could be comprehended.

The findings are too numerous and complex to report in detail here. Gender differences were very small; females were more supportive than males, and males were more apathetic than females. Birth order effects revealed that the lowest levels of inter-sibling conflict were found with dyads

composed of middle-born children. We found that Late Adolescence was a time when hostility and competitiveness were disproportionately high and supportiveness and longing were rather low. We also found that Late Adolescence was the time when the siblings were physically the closest since they tended to live in their parents' home. Hostility and competitiveness decreased across the life span and supportiveness and longing increased. All in all, it sounds as if sibling relationships get better with age. But the real story of this project was in its process...

As I indicated, Morgan and Kris first conducted Honors' Projects to construct survey instruments to assess the perceived nature of sibling relationships. One instrument focused on the description of the current relationship while the other addressed the issue of one's recall about that relationship during childhood. Retrospective studies can be fascinating, but they often result in data that are very difficult to corroborate. These two presented their data at a number of meetings including the 1994 Conference of Human Development (CHD) in Pittsburgh, the 1995 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) in Indianapolis, and the 1995 Meeting of Minds (MOM) held at Flint. Andrea and Lynn were part of the crew of students working with Morgan and Kris and assisted in collecting the data for the studies. They witnessed the excitement of discovery and the thrill of presenting findings and obviously wanted to be in on the action.

The second phase of the study began in the summer of 1995 (one week after the MOM posters, one month after SRCD) when Andrea and Lynn coordinated the efforts of a large crew of data collectors to obtain the large data set we needed to address the questions we wanted to answer. This crew worked all summer long and then averaged approximately 20 hours of lab time per week during the Fall 1995 semester.

The effort paid off handsomely: Andrea, Lynn, Elissa, and Wendy presented a terrific symposium at the 1996 CHD meeting held in Birmingham, Alabama. After the symposium a professor from another institution asked me when Andrea would be finished her graduate studies because he would love to have her join his department. His facial expression was priceless when I told him that she was a senior undergraduate student at OU and that she would probably be more interested in joining his department as a grad student right now.

Immediately after this symposium we were ready with new directions and suggestions to improve our study. The second phase team had realized that they needed some assistance, and they knew that Jean Goddard was just the person to provide that assistance. Jean was invited to join the team and immediately assisted in wrapping up the second phase. She then took charge of the third phase of the project when we returned to our interest in siblings, best friends and lovers. This effort resulted in a paper presentation (Goddard, Renee Rumsley, Kozak, and Tingley) comparing these relationships at the 1997 SRCD meeting held in Washington, DC.

After Washington I retreated from data analysis to complete revisions of the manuscript eventually published in 1998 with Morgan and Kris, and to continue the process of getting the manuscripts written with Andrea, Lynn, Jean, Elissa and Wendy through the most laborious review process I have ever experienced. The five years between data collection in the summer of 1995 to publication last December found this team working together not only here at OU, but also discussing results with researchers in an Irish pub in Pittsburgh, in the Kelly Ingram Park in front of the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama and on the Mall in Washington, DC. When I think of what this team accomplished I realize just how distinctive the undergraduate experience at OU can be. ♦

Academic Matters

Grad School; "To go, or not to go...do I have a choice?"

Salutations!! My name is Don Nott and I'm currently a 2nd semester senior majoring in psychology here at Oakland University. I've been asked by the editors of *PsychMatters* to share with its readers some of my thoughts on an issue pertaining to graduate school. Although the research that I have been conducting for the past year in my own interest of pursuing my graduate education in Industrial/Organizational psychology has given me enough insight to write large sedative volumes on the gauntlet of the application process, I will attempt to focus my ramblings for this particular installment towards the initial hair-graying contemplation psychology students struggle with of whether or not a graduate degree in psychology is for them.

What's my motivation Dr. Freud

Sigmund Freud, a name that some psychology students might have heard of in passing (no pun intended), was a psychologist that encouraged self-analysis and introspection to unearth revelations of the unconscious. Considering that one may be a graduate student from 2 to 6 years living below the poverty level and living off the moderately diverse selection of Ramen Noodle flavors, it may be beneficial to have considered one's motivations for pursuing a graduate degree. When you look within do you find a little voice that says, "I want to become 'Dr.' Smith so that I may sit upon my leather chair in my suburban office listening to my patients and sharing with them my wisdom that I have learned throughout my 6 years of graduate education so that I, being the omniscient psychologist I am, may solve their problems." If that little voice does tell you this, make sure you ask that little voice whether it is prepared to work twice as hard as it had to work in its undergraduate coursework to reach that goal. The little voice must also realize that this involves sacrificing some things that other twenty something's, who are not in graduate school, might otherwise have the opportunity to do.

Show me the data!!!

At this point you may think of me as somewhat of a cynic, a pessimist, Mr. Negative Ned, or perhaps some other descriptive vernacular that the editors of this publication might not appreciate to be highlighted in their newsletter. I assure you that I do not write this article in malice, neither in the desire to devalue or discourage your desire to pursue a graduate education. Being a transfer student from Oakland Community College, I had no idea of the competition or extent of prerequisites that are necessary to make one even considerable for admission into a graduate program in psychology. The top two areas of competition for acceptance into a psychology graduate program are in the areas of clinical and I/O. I cannot provide

representative data for acceptance averages for clinical programs being that the majority of the research for graduate school that I have conducted has been in the area of I/O. However, take into consideration and let it be known that acceptance into a clinical PhD program is more competitive than I/O. With that in mind I would like to share with you some of my findings and statistics that I've calculated based upon data from S.I.O.P (Society for Industrial Organizational Psychologists) and data directly from the graduate programs themselves.

PhD Program (n=22)	MA Program (n=15)
Avg. # applied:	82 60
Avg. # offered:	10 17
Acceptance Rate:	12.2% 28.3%
Avg. GPA:	3.73 3.52
Avg. GRE (V+Q):	1280 1131

As you can see by the acceptance rates, average GPAs, and average verbal/quantitative GRE totals, competition is intense and is nothing to let the sails of fate carry you through. Be prepared! Furthermore, let it be known that these numerical averages, or standards if you will, are not encompassing the research experience, statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, and work experience that all contribute to the graduate applicant assessment. For further information and strategies on getting into graduate school make sure to attend the "Getting into Grad School" seminar on Saturday February 16th, from 10am-1pm in 156 North Foundation Hall at Oakland University. Psi Chi/Psychology club and Dr. Mary Eberly sponsor this seminar and it definitely is a beneficial event to attend, especially if you are considering going to graduate school.

Goals and Motivation

I honestly believe there is something to say about goals, desire, and motivation, without which, I would definitely not be here. First and foremost, you must have goals! You have to ask yourself, "What am I doing this for?" If you're attending college, it is important to know "Why am I going?" These are the types of questions that you should be asking and answering for yourself. Climb up atop the mountain, contemplate your goals, and then write them down. These are very soul-searching and difficult questions to answer and should be evaluated and reevaluated periodically. I feel many avoid these sort of goal-oriented questions because of their difficulty and end up only following the current of the typical American societal stream of life. It is a shame that people are so willing to give up their dreams and potential to become nothing more than a lemming. But I digress. My point is, the more you think about why you are working and for

what outcome, the more likely you will accomplish those outcomes or goals. These findings are documented in the literature for those who are skeptical.

Challenge yourself! "I bet you that you can't get a 3.6 this semester." That is what I said to myself my first semester here at Oakland after transferring from O.C.C. where I finished with only a 2.94. What did I do? I met the challenge and had a 3.6 for my first semester here, and my grade point average has been higher each following semester. Let your goals be challenging and push yourself! I assure you that meeting your goals is a pure satisfaction that benefits you internally and externally. The outcomes or goals that you may set are attainable. However, whether or not you succeed is dependent upon three variables. First, desire and motivation! How bad do you want it? This is the strongest variable and will most likely be the determining one. Second, taking action! You must find out how and what you need to do to get to those goals. Then, you must do them. You cannot get to the mailbox from in the house if you don't get off the couch. You may think about and want it, but if you don't take action, you will never get there. And finally the third variable, circumstance! This variable can be either negative or positive, or perhaps both. This variable is the wild card. You can change some circumstances, but others you cannot. This can be the weakest variable, or strongest variable. In the end, it is the interaction of these three variables that will determine whether or not you meet your goals.

In a much-anticipated closing, I would like to say that you are the keeper of your own destiny. I am not a believer in fatalism. I believe that people should take accountability for their actions and for their futures. You are in control. I began this article with a sarcastic and mostly dire looking prospect of graduate school intentionally. My purpose was to expose the statistics, the difficulty, and the reality of the process. However, the latter half I dedicated to developing focus, goals, and a methodology of attainment of those outcomes that you desire. I hope that I have not deterred anyone from considering graduate school. I only wish to show the adversity of acceptance, my belief in the ability of people to conquer that adversity, and the sweet satisfaction of successfully reaching your goals. I do not wish you good luck. I wish you well in figuring out your goals and focus and their ultimate accomplishment.

-Don Nott ♦

Other Matters

Some Observations on PSY 251

by Ann Schumacher

You only need to be able to balance a checkbook to pass my course, said Professor Robby Stewart when I called him late last summer to inquire about his PSY 251 Statistics and Research Design class. After finishing a very challenging semester learning about binomial probabilities and standard deviations, I quickly discovered that one needs to do more than to add and subtract to pass his course. Coming from an arts background with absolutely no preparation in statistics and a number of years since a BA degree, I needed a statistics course to get into a graduate program in January of 2002 at Wayne State University. The program I am in would only approve Professor Stewart's course. So, I thought I might briefly share what I learned between September and December about how to survive, and even do well, in what I consider the most difficult course I have ever had in my academic career!

1. **Never ever miss a class lecture!**

Although Professor Stewart refers to the textbook for reading and homework assignments, he provides many insights and interpretations that are not in the book but are extremely helpful in better understanding the material.

2. **Rewrite and organize notes immediately after each lecture!**

By doing this while the information is still fresh in mind, one can gradually begin to see an overall pattern or structure that serves as a foundation for succeeding lectures. Also, keep a list of specific questions to ask in the next class.

3. **Do all homework assignments!**

Although many of the assignments are long, tedious, and time consuming, it pays off at test time to have gone through the processes more than once. Nothing will be a surprise on the test if the homework assignments are done. Furthermore, Professor Stewart always goes over some of the homework in class and this is a great time to ask questions.

4. **Take advantage of office hours!**

This is probably the single most important factor that got me through his course. Armed with a list of specific questions from the previous lecture and/or homework, I would go approximately once a week to his office and ask him to clarify concepts that were difficult to grasp and use. With patience and determination, he made every effort to help me comprehend how all of this information fit together. By seeing the overall picture, it was easier to understand the individual parts.

After completing this statistics course, not only do I have confidence that I have a solid foundation for starting graduate school, I also have a greater appreciation for the high quality of teaching and dedication to students as exemplified by Professor Stewart here at Oakland University. ♦

Editorial Position Available

As you all may or may not know, I am graduating this spring. Graduation will actually be a bittersweet ending to my experience at Oakland University. As my aspirations become a reality I am filled with anticipation and excitement, but as I think about the fabulous people I have met and the opportunities I have had, I am saddened to leave them all behind. However, Kassie Green, my Associate Editor, is making my transition a little smoother! She will be assuming my position as *PsychMatters* Student Editor this spring, and she would *love it* if someone would like to be our new **Associate Student Editor** to help her with upcoming issues. Are you in need of a resumé booster? This could be your chance! From my experience, I have had the opportunity to get to know the faculty and staff personally, which is a really good idea when you're searching for those letters of recommendation! Furthermore, I have broadened my horizons and now possess a wealth of knowledge about various computer programs, the ability to work under a deadline, responsibility, tactfulness, public relations, creativity, cooperation, the list goes on and on! You don't even have to be a member of Psi Chi! Just come to a meeting or contact Kassie (ka2green@oakland.edu) or Cheryl Stayer (castayer@hotmail.com). As an editor you gain inside knowledge about the Psychology department and Psi Chi/Psychology Club, as well as news about OU. For example, Meeting of the Minds X will be here at OU on Friday, May 10, 2002. Any undergrad is eligible and each participant will receive a certification of participation. Even if you don't submit an abstract, you should still come to see others' research and take home a few MOM X mementos! I hope you'll decide to be a part of this fantastic conference, and I hope that you'll decide to become our new **Associate Student Editor**! Enjoy! ♦ Amanda F. Henderson, *PsychMatters* Student Editor

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To:

Humor Matters

A graduate student, a post doc, and a professor are walking through the park one day when they come across an antique oil lamp. They decide to rub it and a genie appears amidst a puff of smoke. The genie says, "I only grant three wishes, so I'll give you each just one."

The grad student says, "Me first, me first. I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, with a gorgeous women by my side who sunbathes topless." Poof, he's gone.

"Me next, me next" says the post doc. "I want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with a professional hula dancer on one side and a mai tai on the other." Poof, he's gone

The genie turns to the professor and says, "You're next. What would you like?"

The professor says, "I want those guys back in the lab after lunch." ♦

REMINDER

**The Psi Chi/
Psychology Club
meets every other
Tuesday from 12-1 pm
in the lower level
of the Oakland Center.
FREE lunch provided!
All students welcome!**

**Check out Psi Chi/
Psychology Club
and PsychMatters on the web:
www2.oakland.edu/psych/psi-chi
Or e-mail us at:
pmatters@oakland.edu**