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PSYCH MATTERS

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Professor Stollak Presents Hodge Lecture

by Dr. Robby Stewart

On Thursday, October 25, Professor Gary Stollak presented a professional seminar and public lecture entitled "An Adequate Assessment: Planning for and Evaluating Parent-Child and Family Interventions". This lecture was supported by a generous contribution from Dr. David and Michelle Hodge. The Department of Psychology is grateful to the Hodges for providing the means to bring a distinguished speaker such as Professor Stollak to our campus.

Regular readers of PsychMatters may recall that Professor Alan Kazdin of Yale University was originally scheduled to present the Hodge Lecture. Professor Kazdin asked to be replaced by a local speaker when he assessed the increased risks and uncertainty of air travel we currently know. Facing the challenge of finding another speaker on short notice, Professor Stewart recalled the words of a close colleague from Penn State who told him of her mentor, Professor Stollak, and described him as person who could always be counted on to be a friend. That comment was put to the test with obvious verification.

Professor Gary Stollak earned a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, before joining the faculty at Michigan State University in

1966. He was promoted to the rank of full professor in 1976 and has remained an active researcher, teacher and professional psychologist. Throughout his career Professor Stollak has focused on issues of child and family psychopathology, and on the role of undergraduate students and parents as play therapists and agents of change in treating this issues. His graduate and undergraduate courses focus on the importance of careful assessment in planning the treatment of such issues from a family systems perspective. He has published extensively on the need to shift from a medical to an educational model in clinical child psychopathology, on interpersonal sensitivities in communication and perceptual style, and on the role of assessment in child custody assessments.

Professor Stollak's lecture presented the thesis that individuals are best studied and treated as members of a larger system typically known as the family. His talk summarized his methods for assessing individuals directly and in the context of their interactions with other family members. Careful attention to the ways a person alters their position relative to other family members can help to reveal the dynamic influences of family members, a feature completely lacking in traditional assessments of

individuals. For example, Professor Stollak indicated that he asks each individual in a family to complete a short survey describing how the family functions and then he gives the same survey to all family members collectively to observe how they interact to complete the survey together. The latter observation often paints quite a different picture of family life than that derived from individual assessments. In terms of treatment, Professor Stollak's message was that treatment of the individual, indeed, even the perception that the individual needs treatment, takes place in the context of the family as the basic unit interpersonal interaction. Treating one part of a system implies that other parts will be effected and that other parts may actually be in need of treatment. His observations provide an interesting alternative to the psychological orientation that is occasionally viewed as overly focused on the individual. ♦

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Faculty Matters



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

What's new in Psych?

September and October have been very, very full. In addition to the obvious focus on events and conditions surrounding the September 11th terrorism, we have continued to make progress on a number of initiatives within the Department.

Virtually all of us have struggled in one way or another to make sense of the new reality before us; one way to focus on this task is to assess what you are doing, what is important to do, and why you must remain committed to the task of improving things in your own corner of the world. In that spirit, I am happy to summarize below the progress we have been making in the Department to improve the state of Psychology at OU.

1.) Obviously, the lecture by Professor Stollak was a big event for this department. Never before have we been the beneficiaries of the funds necessary to bring such a speaker to our students. Many of us in the department attended universities where such activities were routine. In my own undergraduate days at UVA and graduate days at PSU the most significant academic moments were not in lecture halls or seminar rooms listening to the faculty, but in assemblies meeting, listening to, and interacting with scholars from other institutions. The combination of instruction and support from the "regular faculty" with the catalyst provided by the visit of a scholar from another institution provided many of us with the enthusiasm to push our own educations. We hope to continue our efforts to bring this tradition of academia to the Psychology community at OU.

2.) We are ready to begin the search to add two new members to the Department. Ads have been placed in national sources announcing that we are interested in hiring a Community/Clinical Psychologist and a Life-span Developmentalist who focuses on Adulthood or Aging. Interested readers can find the ads on our web page (<http://www2.oakland.edu/psych/faculty.cfm>). We expect to invite finalists for these positions to visit campus in February or March. As has been our practice in recent years, students will be invited to meet and evaluate the candidates.

3.) Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a feature summarizing the work of the faculty in reviewing and modifying our intro course, PSY 100: Foundations of Contemporary Psychology. A spirit of cooperation and collaboration has been growing in recent years and this spirit has fueled the process of looking at what we do and how we do it. I cannot even begin to estimate the number of hours that Professors Shantz, Eberly and Butzlaff put into reviewing and modifying how we teach PSY 100, but the more impressive point is that these faculty members and others are now pushing to extend this activity to other areas. In the near future we will apply the review process to PSY 250 and 251. We will also be holding regular discussions where faculty can "compare notes" about styles and processes of teaching. Finally, given the increased dependence on part-time instructors, we will be establishing a mentor-mentee arrangement whereby part-time instructors are paired with regular faculty members to insure that all instruction within the department is of a high caliber.

4.) Finally, I would like to take a moment

to comment on something that occurs at this point in every semester. As we approach the "Last Official Withdrawal" date I typically experience an increase in the number of students who are lodging complaints about faculty members. These complaints typically focus on issues of appropriate workload, grading structure, and the fairness of examination practices. This week alone I have heard from a few disgruntled students and have heard from the Provost Office that others had gone there to have their concerns heard. There are two points I would like to make: [a] There is a "chain of command" that we follow concerning complaints. You should first attempt to resolve the differences with the professor involved. If this is unsuccessful you should discuss the matter with me in my role as Chair. We will try to do this informally, and, if this is unsuccessful we can begin a formal process of declaring a complaint and having it reviewed within the department. If the complaint is against the Chair, the student can voice their concerns to a member of the Executive Committee of the Department (currently Professors Eberly or Sifonis). [b] Most issues are resolved either by discussing the matter with the faculty member or by asking the Chair to intervene to facilitate communication. The faculty in the department are all teachers/researchers who take their roles very seriously and want their students to be successful. The number of complaints might naturally decline if more students remembered this and chose to work with faculty to resolve issues rather than resorting to adversarial positions and demanding that Professor X be fired immediately. ♦

Advising Matters

Hello, all! I would like to remind you that once you have declared psychology as a major, Lori assigns you to a faculty advisor. Make an appointment with your faculty advisor and meet him or her. It is a wonderful connection to make and to sustain over the course of your stay at Oakland University. Speaking of your undergraduate career...

Have you thought about what you are going to do once you graduate? Or goodness, where do you go to apply to graduate? First, make sure you request a senior audit through the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office (221 VAR).

For those of you who will be graduating in Winter 2002 you must apply for graduation by **February 9, 2002**.

For those of you finishing coursework (only 8 remaining credits) in Spring 2002, your application due date is **March 1, 2002**. Both Winter and Spring finishers will walk in Commencement during the May ceremony.

As for those of you who are not ready to graduate and who are thinking of graduate school, I would like to invite you to look for the winter seminar, "Getting into Graduate School" to be held sometime in February, 2002. I cannot emphasize enough just how important it is to think about what you might need to do to plan for graduate school admittance. Those experiences necessary for graduate school admittance are equally important for getting a job.

My key piece of advice is to gain research, research and more research experience. The more involved you are in your program, the more you will learn what you would like to do (or not do) and the better we, as faculty, get to know you to write those invaluable letters of recommendation.

Have a Happy Holiday Season!
~Dr. Eberly ♦



**Fall Advising Hours
Wednesdays
2:00-6:00 p.m.
112 Pryale
370-2285
or
370-2300**

**Additional Advising
Information
can be found at the
Departmental
website
www2.oakland.edu/psych**

Psi Chi Matters

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If you have not yet become a member of Psychology Club or Psi Chi, you may pick up an application from the lower lounge in Pryale Hall. Simply come to meetings and get involved to become a member of the Psychology Club. The requirements for Psi Chi, the national honor society of psychology, include 16 credits taken at Oakland, 8 of which must be in Psychology. A 3.5 GPA in Psychology and a 3.3 GPA overall is required.

**Please check the Psi Chi/Psych Club
website for updates!**
www2.oakland.edu/psych/psi-chi

**Upcoming Psych Club
meetings are Tuesdays from
12-1 pm in Lake Superior A
in the lower level of the OC.**

Nov. 6

New Officer Elections
Dr. Dean Purcell of the
Psychology Department will be
speaking about his research on
"Facial Affect"

Nov. 20

"A Career in I/O Psychology"
Two Industrial/Organizational
Psychologists will be speaking to
the club

Dec. 4

-New Officer Induction
-Dr. Mary Eberly of the
Psychology Department will tell
the club about her research on
"Late Adolescent Development"

Dec. 11

A representative from Kaplan
will be speaking about the GRE
and other information concern-
ing graduate school.

President's Corner

In October we had our annual "Careers in Psychology Workshop," with speakers Vicki McNiff and Mary Eberly, Ph.D. One topic covered was how to narrow down your possible career interests. Vicki suggested many useful strategies to aid you in this process. For those still undecided on their career plans, I strongly recommend making an appointment with Vicki in the Career Resource Center. Her email is mcniff@oakland.edu.

Different career options for graduates with a B.A. in Psychology were discussed, as well as the significance of various graduate degrees. Information on these areas may be found in the "Careers in Psychology" packets we are selling for \$4.00. The packets also contain much

more information, including explanations of different areas in psychology and the job outlook for the future. If you are interested in purchasing a packet please email me at castayer@hotmail.com ♦

Psi Chi/ Psychology Club is in need of more Class Liaisons. Liaisons spread news to psychology classes about upcoming events of the club. This is done by making announcements, passing out flyers to classes, and/or writing info on the board, all with the instructor's approval of course! If you are interested in becoming a class liaison, please email Kate for more info at katerdr@hotmail.com ♦

Attention!

Current members of Psi-Chi/Psych Club are encouraged to find at least two people who have never attended a club meeting and bring them with you. Introduce them to Amanda Henderson or Cheryl Stayer; we will keep a tally of how many "newbies" each member brings and award a prize to the person who scrounges up the most!

Department Matters

Department Takes Steps to Improve Core Courses

Imagine that you are driving down the interstate in an area you have never visited. It is time for lunch and your choices are "Joe's Diner" or one of the fast food places such as McDonald's, Wendy's or BK. Which do you choose? For most people the choice is a simple one: choose the tried and true, pick McDonald's, Wendy's or BK over the unknown Joe's and you will know what you are getting. The reliability and product standardization at these fast food places has helped them to grow into a major industry that has forced places such as Joe's to lock their doors.

Yes, reliability and standardization are important when seeking a lunch. They are also important when taking core required courses within a major. In Psychology the three core courses (PSY 100, Foundations; PSY 250, Research Methods; PSY 251, Statistics) are the foundations that all other psychology courses are built upon. Professors who teach 300 and 400-level courses expect that a standard background has been provided and learned in these core classes and they design their courses accordingly. So, what happens if the standard background is not present? The professor teaching the upper-level class either has to take the time to cover the foundation material (thus annoying some students who have already learned this) or push ahead with the new material (thus annoying the students who now know that they have been ill-prepared).

During the Winter 2000 semester Professor Stewart reviewed some data that suggested that all PSY 100 sections were not doing the same thing. Because this course quite literally is the "Foundation" for the entire major, this observation compelled Professor Stewart to form a committee of PSY 100 instructors to look into the matter. Professors Shantz, Eberly and Butzlaff accepted the challenge and were charged to conduct a thorough review of the PSY 100 sections taught in the past 5 years, to find evidence of similarity or differences between sections, and to make

suggestions of means to increase the commonality across the sections if they felt this was advisable.

This committee began its fact finding and deliberations in the Winter 2000 semester, met throughout the Spring and Summer sessions, and then pilot tested their suggestions of course revisions during the Fall 2000 and Winter 2001 semesters. They presented their findings to the entire department last month and the department has unanimously accepted their recommendations for course modifications. The recommendations include the following:

1.) Although they did not intend to select a single textbook for all sections, the wisdom of doing so soon became apparent. By having one text, interaction and sharing of information between professors could be enhanced to improve the overall quality of the course. Moreover, supplemental materials typically provided with textbooks could be more adequately utilized as professors could share in the "start up costs" of organizing and implementing the use of these materials. Finally, by selecting a single textbook the Department was able to negotiate with the publisher and bookstore to reduce the cost of the book to the students. The 40% discount on the cost of the textbook is a major savings to students.

2.) The committee found that the topics covered in PSY 100 sections varied tremendously. In the future all sections will cover a set of 10 core topics (intro, life-span, research methods and statistics, social psychology, biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, psychopathology, learning, memory, and motivation and emotion). Individual professors are free to cover additional topics if they wish, but these are the mutually agreed upon basis for all courses.

3.) The committee found that some sections covered all 17 or 18 chapters in a text while others would cover only 9 or 10. It was agreed that the all sections would cover 14 to 16 of the chapters in the text book, thus indicating that each professor was expected to add their personal touch

to the 10 topics listed in #2 above.

4.) The committee found that multiple choice exams were common to all sections, a finding that was not surprising given the large enrollments in these sections. What was surprising was the amount of time various professors provided for each item on a multiple choice test, the number of items that would be included from each chapter, and the number of chapters that would be assigned per test. Suggestions were made to reduce the variability on each of these factors.

5.) The committee was strongly impressed with the range and power of the pedagogical tools provided by publishers. The days of simple lectures are drawing to a close as multimedia is being brought to the classroom and web-based resources are being used to supplement in-class material. All PSY 100 sections will now have web sites where students can use these tools to enhance their learning. All PSY 100 instructors will have lap top computers to enhance their ability to bring these new products to the classroom. The strength of standardization is that the professors will be able to work together to accomplish this goal rather than each doing it themselves with their own version of the course. The committee obtained empirical data indicating that students who utilized the web-based components improved their grades significantly over students in previous sections who did not utilize the products.

"We have a better PSY 100 today than we did two years ago," said Professor Stewart. "The cooperation and collaboration of the faculty in bringing these improvements forward were wonderful to witness. In the very near future we will initiate a similar process to review what we do in PSY 250 and PSY 251, and after that I hope we still have the energy and drive to look at some of the other courses as well." ♦

Academic Matters

Student Guide to Placement and Career Services

The Placement and Career Services office offers a centralized department, staffed by professional advisers, designed to assist students, alumni, and employers with career and employment needs.

The Placement and Career Services office is located in 275 West Vandenberg Hall. Their office hours are 8:00 am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday (until 6:30 pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays during fall and winter semesters). They may be reached by phone: (248) 370-3250, or by e-mail: placement@oakland.edu. This is a free service and may be utilized by all students! ♦

OU Students Walk for AIDS by Melissa Prante

Sunday, September 16, 2001 marked the 11th Annual AIDS Walk Detroit in downtown Royal Oak. This year I was able to recruit a team of eight individuals to represent OU in the fight against AIDS. Among the students were Psi Chi/Psychology Club's own Stacey Delikta, Rene Valliere, Malissa Woodruff and myself along with Freshman Ellie Darling, Philosophy Major Andy Cartwright, Jean Ann Miller from OU's Center for Student Activities and OU Graduate Matthew Paukovits. Together with friends and family, the students and faculty

of Oakland University helped to raise close to \$800.

The event kicked off at 8am with the laying of the AIDS Quilt. Various sections of the quilt were displayed on Lafayette Street in downtown Royal Oak. Walkers were encouraged to view the beautifully arranged panels made by friends and families who have lost loved ones to AIDS. The actual walk was a scenic 5-km route through the downtown area. Pre-opening ceremonies were hosted by radio personalities from 93.1 WDRQ and news anchor, Diana Lewis from WXYZ Channel 7 News.

Volunteers provided unlimited support by cheering on the walkers with kazoos, bubbles, radios and bottled water, keeping our pace and spirits high.

Through the contributions of the OU team, we were able to continue the fight against HIV and AIDS. The money raised goes to providing support services to people living with HIV/AIDS, prevention and education, as well as awareness programs and research. Since 1991, AIDS Walk Detroit has raised close to one million dollars.

I hope that next year the OU team will become a greater force in the fight against HIV and AIDS. We were able to double the number of team members this year; perhaps next year we could make even greater efforts to recruit an even

more impressive team to represent Oakland University at the 2002 Walk.

We must not confuse hope with victory. ♦

Looking to make a difference? Interested in volunteering?

Here are some helpful websites and phone numbers...

~Make a difference day

Contact Jean Ann at
(248) 370-2400

~Make an impact

Call (248) 559-4950

~The volunteer center

Call (313) 226-9430

~General Federation of Women's Clubs

Call (202) 347-3168

~Common Ground Sanctuary

Contact Liz Christopher at
(248) 456-8150

~Haven

The First Response Program

Contact Claudia Nafsu at
(248) 334-1284, ext. 341

~American Red Cross

Call (313) 833-2649

[www.support@semredcross.org](mailto:support@semredcross.org)

~Lighthouse

Call (248) 920-6000

[www.loc@lighthouseoakland.com](mailto:loc@lighthouseoakland.com)

~"Adults who care"

www.areyouintoit.com

~Volunteer Services

www.dosomething.com

...so get out there and volunteer! ♦

More Academic Matters

New course offering for Winter 2002!

Professor Yve Ruiz will potentially be teaching PSY 318 next semester if at least 15 people sign up for her class.

PSY 318, physiological psychology, is a rich meld between the worlds of biology and psychology.

During each lecture students are encouraged to bring in information on current events as they relate to the class. These are discussed by all involved, and are incorporated into lecture topics.

Research being presented at current physician conferences is

brought in, even before publishing dates, to keep the lecture information "here and now"!

So if this class sounds like it may be of interest to you, hurry up and sign a petition with intent to take this class in order for it to be available for next term! ♦

New Options for Psychology Majors:

Many students come to psychology with an interest in helping people. Often these interests are shaken when the students discover how difficult it is to obtain admission to a graduate program in clinical psychology. Now a new alternative to counseling exists on campus, and it is one that we think many psychology students will find interesting.

The School of Health Sciences has been busy creating a proposal for an undergraduate major in Wellness, Health Promotion and Injury Prevention (WHP). The faculty of the Department of Psychology collaborated with this development and assisted in selecting Professor Stafford Rorke to be the director of this program. In addition to the major in WHP it will be possible to complete either a double major in WHP and PSY or to supplement your major in PSY with a minor in WHP.

The school of health sciences is pleased to announce that the following new courses will be offered in Winter 2002, and if demand exists,

repeated in spring/summer 2002. These HS courses will count toward WHP credit for either the major or minor in the new WHP Program. The course instructor will be Dr. Stafford Rorke.

There are three courses being offered. They are each 2 credit courses with the prerequisite being HS 201.

HS 310: Accident and Injury Prevention

A life-span approach to the examination of causes and contributory factors leading to disabling or fatal injuries or accidents. Students are sensitized to issues and strategies for the prevention of injuries in the home, during activities of daily living, sport, leisure, recreational, occupational and high-risk activities.

HS 330: Disease and Foundations of Wellness

Introduction to principles underlying measurement and determinants of health and illness in humans.

Students are introduced to terminolo-

gy, epidemiological methods and techniques associated with the distribution and cause of disease. The course objective is to increase understanding of positive interventions to enhance health and wellness.

HS 340: Contemporary Issues in Personal Health

Contemporary issues in personal health are examined from biological, psychological, sociological, philosophical and ethical perspectives. Exploration of personal protection and health issues related to human sexuality, substance use and abuse, anger, violence and workplace abuse. ♦

Interested? Want to learn more?

Contact: Dr. Stafford C. Rorke

374 Hannah Hall, SHS

(248) 370-3544

Email: rorke@oakland.edu

PSYCH MATTERS

The Quarterly Newsletter of Psychology at Oakland University

Postage

The Department of Psychology
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111 Pryale Hall
Rochester, MI 48309-4489

To:

***Psi Chi/Psychology Club would like to wish everyone a
Happy Holiday Season!
Happy Birthday to all of you who will be celebrating it
in November or December!
Congratulations to all of you who will be celebrating
your anniversary in November or December!***

Humor Matters

A Stanford research group advertised for participants in a study of obsessive-compulsive disorder. They were looking for therapy clients who had been diagnosed with this disorder. The response was gratifying; they received 3,000 responses about three days after the ad came out.

All from the same person. ♦

REMINDER

The PsiChi/
Psychology Club
meets the first Tuesday
of every month 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**