Changing Names and Changing Leaders

Starting in 2017, the department voted to update the official name to:

The Department of Psychological Science

Our goal/mission is to work to advance the science of psychology through high quality research, teaching, and service. We felt the name change would help reinforce across the campus community that psychology is a science.

This year, we also said goodbye to our department chair, Dr. Fary Cachelin. She accepted a position as the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Community and Civic Engagement and Dean of the College of Applied Health and Communities at the University of East London, London, UK. We are sad to see her leave, but we wish her all the best in her new position (and country).

The role of Department Chair was graciously filled by Dr. Eric Heggestad. Read more on the next page.

The Department of Psychological Science is on the web: https://psych.uncc.edu/
Introducing: 
Dr. Eric Heggestad

Education: Industrial/ Organizational Psychology and Personality Research

Research area: Personality Psychometric

Why do you think Psychology is important? It is involved in everything we do in life and how we are related to our environments. That is why it is such a broad topic.

How long have you been teaching? Colorado State University since 2000 and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte since 2005

Why did you want to be the chair of the department? I am not sure that I did! When Dr. Cachelin left there was a need, and I was recommended by other professors and friends (faculty members). I was willing and honored to serve my department.

What is your message to the department members? I want us to celebrate the success of each other and our students. I want to reward each other because, many times when we do good thing or have success, we don’t get a reward or take the time to acknowledge each other.

What changes are you willing to make to enhance the department? To implement the Undergraduate engagement program. The goal of the program is to better engage our undergrad students in the science of Psychology, to understand data, to think like a scientist, and to realize the accomplishments of our students.

What is your message to new students? They are very welcome in our department. And they should get excited because they are about to work with faculty who really care about their development. Our faculty are really good teachers, researchers, and mentors.

Do you have any other suggestions for students? Think! Take the knowledge you get in class and think about it to understand it. Learning takes thinking- do not just “do”. THINK.
Thank you for everything, Dr. Goolkasian!

After 42 amazing years of dedicated service to our Department, Dr. Paula Goolkasian said goodbye. While she was here, she was the Director of Cognitive Science as well as a member of the Health Psychology Ph.D. Program. While we hope that she relaxes and has some fun, we are so very sad to be losing such an amazing leader. Dr. Goolkasian helped pave the way for women in science and has been an inspiration for countless graduate and undergraduate students.

We will miss you!

The Psychological Science Department Wins Major Teaching Award

The Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the recipient of the Provost’s Award for Excellence in Teaching for 2015-2016.

Congratulations to our outstanding faculty.

Individual Faculty Members Earn Teaching Awards

Dr. Ryan Kilmer was the winner of the Provost's Faculty Award for Community Engagement.

Dr. Stan Wisdom was selected as the recipient of the 2016-2017 Office of Disability Services Accessibility Excellence Award for Outstanding Faculty.

We are so proud of you, Drs. Kilmer and Wisdom!
Q: New grants & projects?
A: Dr. Lorenz was awarded a five-year grant for a collaborative project at 3 different sites which are Baylor, Michigan and UNC Charlotte. The project focuses on the physical effects that menopause has on women’s physical stress response, and how to treat hot flashes with psychological interventions such as hypnosis.

Q: What are some of your recent projects and what are they about?
A: The WISH Lab at UNC Charlotte and Dr. Lorenz have a number of different studies on women’s health. These different studies include female sexual health but also mental/physical health conditions such as how antidepressants effect sexual responses in adults and adolescents, stress and its effect on sexual health, and how sexual activity changes women’s immune function. Across all studies, we focus on the health of women and gender/sex effects on physical and psychological health.

Q: Why is sexual health the focal point of your research studies?
A: Overtime, I have become interested in how the mind and body interact. Also, it is important to understand social and gender variables. I believe that sexuality and women’s health is a great way to study that.

Q: What are the goals for your research?
A: I have multiple goals! To increase what is known about women’s health. To increase the normality of considering sex as a part of health. To make people aware of the interactions between sexuality and health. Also, to teach women how to manage reproductive health issues such as menopause, hot flashes, low libido, pelvic pain, and so on.

Q: Do you have any suggestions for students choosing to enter this field of study?
A: It is a difficult field to get into because sexuality is not mainstream. Read up on facts of sexual health. Figure out what interests you about the field. Lastly, the best way to get a general idea of this field is to volunteer and gain experience dealing with this particular field of study.
Alumni Spotlight:

Hank McGovern

Graduating year: 1977

1. How would you describe your experience at UNC Charlotte?

I really enjoyed it. I made new friends right away, and I took some psychology courses with some great professors. My advisor and professor, Dr. Lawrence Callahan knew of my interest in Behaviorism, and I think that was one of the biggest things that came out of that year. I was very much into B.F. Skinner, and I liked to argue the points that Skinner made. At that time behaviorism was at odds with humanism. Dr. Callahan said we could do a research study, which we did, called “Perceptions of behavior and humanistic therapy” and we got it published on April of 1980 in the *Journal of Community Psychology* and that was a big deal to me. Professor Callahan and Professor Fernald were the two most influential professors to me while I was here at UNC Charlotte.

2. What are you up to now?

I am doing a number of things. I have been working with individuals with developmental disabilities by helping them to create effective behavioral plans. I have also been promoting my book.

3. Tell us a little bit about your book.

It is a memoir that I started during a difficult period in my life when I was very depressed and started having suicidal thoughts and I was able to refer back to my education and training to bring myself out of this low point in my life and writing the book was therapeutic. The process was really transformative. The main point of the book that I make is that suicidal thoughts are not necessarily a bad thing, it is a warning sign that something in that person’s life needs to die not the person but something, it is important to pay attention and analyze what needs changing. I am hoping to reduce suicides using my book and educating people in this new and unique way to look at suicidal thoughts.

4. What advice would you give to current UNC Charlotte students?

If you hear me giving you advice, stop me! Seriously, I would say focus on what you really feel passionate about and go after it and don’t let anything stand in your way. If you are not sure, there is no rush. Take your time to explore and experiment.

Do you want to be featured in our Alumni Spotlight?

- If so, please send an email to Dr. Kat West (kpotte10@uncc.edu)
- Know someone you would like to see featured? Send the name to us.
UNC Charlotte Psychology Students Are Making an Impact Worldwide

This past year, study abroad programs were led by our faculty to Ecuador, Germany, and the United Kingdom!
Want to help the department reach our goals?

Our current goals:

1.) Continuing undergraduate scholarships such as the I/O Founders Scholarship in the names of Dave Gilmore, Bill Siegfried, Kim Buch, and Joann Lee.

2.) Aid in helping students pay for study abroad opportunities and to travel to professional conferences.

3.) To give back to the community by allowing our department to have the funds to partner with local organizations. Our goal is to be a major factor in improving the well-being of children, youth, and families in our area.

Please consider giving to the Psychology Student Faculty Success Fund.

Thank you, and Go Niners.

Student Winners of the UNC Charlotte I/O Founders Scholarships

We want to congratulate Sydnie Davis, Caroline Nowell, Yaric Jimenez, and Clara Johnson for being the winners of the inaugural UNC Charlotte I/O Scholarships. They were each given $500 and were recognized for their outstanding academic, activity, and work experiences in I/O Psychology and Service to the larger community.

Congratulations to all!
Dr. Jeannine Skinner  
(1982-2017)

Dr. Jeannine Skinner was a valued member of both the Department of Psychological Science and Gerontology Program. She was an amazing teacher, scientist, mentor and friend who gave generously to UNC Charlotte and the surrounding community. Her research was groundbreaking as she sought to help older adults in the Charlotte area (especially low-income and minority citizens). At the start of the Fall 2017 semester, Dr. Skinner’s life was cut short as the result of intimate partner violence. Faculty and students send our condolences to her family as we all mourn this tragic loss.

A memorial scholarship has been set up to honor Dr. Skinner. Please consider donating to this fund: crowdfund.uncc.edu/SkinnerMemorial

More details will be published on the Psychology Website: Psych.uncc.edu.

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Stardust

As with all else, we are but stardust—put together into human form
With a charge to laugh, love, breathe, and inspire
But to say you were simply celestial dust is only half true
For you were kinder
Smarter
Softer
More generous than others
You weren’t just made up of the dust
You were made from the star light itself
And even still, you were more than a star
To many down here you were an angel… a blessing… a gift
You never stopped fighting for those that needed just a little more light in their lives
And while we are heartbroken to have lost you to the Heavens…
We know that the stars are rejoicing at such an unexpected gift

~KAW
The UNC Charlotte Alumni Association is excited to announce its 3rd Annual Alumniner Weekend this **April 20-21**. Open to all UNC Charlotte alumni and friends, this single weekend boasts a lineup of outstanding events (see below for a full schedule of events). There is something for everybody.

Whether it has been five or fifty years since you have last stepped foot on campus, you will not want to miss this fun and exciting weekend. Our department looks forward to seeing you there.

For more details, check out the [UNC Charlotte Alumni website](https://www.uncc.edu/alumni).

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**Niner Connection**

The UNC Charlotte Alumni Association invites you to stay connected with Niner Connection. You can create an online profile which will allow you to network with other alumni and keep up with events and news. It will also allow you to find out more information about the Alumni Perks program.

For more details, check out the [UNC Charlotte Alumni website](https://www.uncc.edu/alumni).