Graduation Spotlight

This spring/summer the Graduate Psychology Department had over 50 students graduate from our 8 programs. Our annual Spring Celebration, held in the Madison Ballroom, saw over 200 students, faculty, family members, and friends gather to recognize the achievements of these graduates, along with student and faculty award winners.
Thai Q. Ong, a 3rd year student in the Assessment and Measurement Ph.D. Program, was awarded a Psychometric Fellowship at the National Board of Medical Examiners.

Last summer, Thai completed an eight-week long internship at the American Board of Surgery (ABS) in Philadelphia, PA. The ABS is a nonprofit organization that certifies physicians in general surgery along with subspecialties within surgery. During his internship, Thai worked closely with experienced psychometricians on exploring potential gender bias on the General Surgery Oral Certifying Examination. His internship research culminated in two national conference presentations and a first-author publication in the Journal of Surgical Research. This summer, Thai will return to Philadelphia to complete a six-week long internship at the ABS where he will spend the majority of his time extending the research he conducted last summer.

After completing his internship at the ABS, Thai will remain in Philadelphia to complete an eight-month long Psychometric Fellowship at the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). The NBME is a nonprofit organization that develops and administers high-quality assessments for healthcare professionals (e.g., United States Medical Licensure Examination). As a Psychometric Fellow, Thai will work collaboratively with psychometricians on research projects related to the United States Medical Licensure Examination. Additionally, Thai will have the opportunity to work alongside psychometricians on the development and scoring of different testing programs at the NBME. Congratulations, Thai!
**Assessment and Measurement**

**Assessment and Measurement Graduates**

Nicholas Anthony Curtis  
Elisabeth Marie Spratto  
Heather Dawn Harris

Beth Perkins, who completed her first year in the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. Program, was presented with the Best Presentation Award from JMU’s Graduate School during the Graduate Showcase of Scholarship and Creative Activities. Beth presented her first-year research project titled “Remain Calm, This is Only a Test: Emotional Reactions during Testing and Their Relation to Performance”. Beth’s project was an empirical longitudinal study of the change in test-taking emotions during a low-stakes test and how that change impacted test performance. Beth conducted this work under the supervision of her advisor, Dr. Sara Finney, and with first-year masters student Paulius Satkus. Beth competed with students across several graduate programs and was judged by a panel of faculty and staff from across the university. Beth plans on submitting this research for conference presentation and for peer-reviewed publication.
Along with several others from JMU, Dr. Dena Pastor traveled to Anaheim, CA to attend the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement conference. She helped facilitate a full-day workshop titled “Civic Engagement: From Mission Statements to Meanings and Measures” along with Ross Markle, alumni of the Assessment and Measurement Ph.D. Program, and Abe Goldberg, director of the James Madison Center for Civic Engagement.

Clinical and School Psychology

Combined-Integrated Doctoral Program in Clinical and School Psychology Graduates

Molly Jean Bowman   Chad Michael Doerr
Mandi Eggenberger Quay   Bridget Eileen Mahoney Smith

Chad Doerr will be completing a post-doctoral internship at UC Davis where he completed his pre-doctoral internship.

Bridget Smith completed her pre-doctoral internship at JMU’s Counseling Center and will be staying on for a post-doctoral internship.

Carly Pine and Connesia Handford, 2nd year C-I students, attended a case conference in Page County along with JMU faculty and students from both the C-I and Counseling Programs with physician Dr. David Switzer. Carly and Connesia will start a year-long practicum in Page County starting in the fall of 2018.
Second year C-I students **Jay Davis and Virginia Larsen** participated in an interprofessional learning tour of El Salvador. For nine days in March 2018, psychologists, psychology doctoral students, social work professors, immigration lawyers, and nonprofit leaders immersed themselves in El Salvador. The purpose of the trip was to have an "on the ground" understanding of the ways in mental health services, law, and educational programs impact Salvadoran individuals and communities in El Salvador and the US. By traveling together and collaborating interprofessionally, they were able to have a current and historical understanding of protective and risk factors across these domains. The trip allowed for in-depth visits and discussions across a variety of domains: (community-based mental-health agencies, church affiliated community supports, social justice agencies, ministries of justice, the penal system, national psychiatric hospital, and family-based supports). Evening inter-professional processing and dialogue also allowed for participants to understand each day's visit through a variety of perspectives.

After serving as VAPT's (Virginia Association for Play Therapy) president for over 20 years, **Dr. Anne Stewart** is stepping into a new role, as Past-President. Anne will also serve a second 3-year term on the Association for Play Therapy Board of Directors. Anne was honored with the inaugural **Anne Stewart Play Therapy Award**, which was named after her in recognition of her hard work and dedication to play therapy in Virginia.
On April 12-13, Dr. Gregg Henriques chaired the first Theory of Knowledge Society conference, Toward a Big Theory of Knowledge, held here at JMU. A number of scholars from various universities and disciplines, including students and faculty from JMU, came to Harrisonburg and shared their visions and values for moving toward a more coherent vision of knowledge and wisdom. A series of ten talks were offered on a wide range of topics from physics to philosophy. On Friday afternoon, small groups discussed the implications of a big Theory of Knowledge has for society, along with related issues, such as values, mental health, and education. About 50 people participated and the feedback was very positive. Plans are in the works to have a second conference in 2020.

Dr. Henriques was also featured in the May edition of the Psychology Today Magazine in which he authored an article on how anxiety and depression stem from negative loops that involve negative reactions to negative feelings. The article explains that if you adopt a psychologically mindful stance of being curious, accepting, loving, and motivated (CALM) toward valued states, one can learn how to untangle these loops and engage in healthier processing of negative emotions.

Mariafé Panizo and Julia Dobner-Pereira presented posters on June 1st at the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration conference in New York City. Both posters reflected ongoing projects with Dr. Ken Critchfield. Mariafé’s poster outlined a group therapy curriculum she created this year at Western State Hospital. The curriculum consisted of 20 sessions designed to introduce participants to the Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB) and Interpersonal Reconstructive Therapy (IRT) in order to empower themselves to learn about their maladaptive interpersonal patterns and explore the possibilities of engaging in new, more adaptive patterns. Julia’s poster presented preliminary results from a study...
testing a new instrument called the Relational Cognitions and Affects Questionnaire (RCA-Q: Critchfield & Benjamin, 2016). RCA-Q items were chosen to conform to a circumplex structure first articulated by Lorna Smith Benjamin (1986) that applied the dimensions of affiliation (love vs hate), interdependence (enmeshed vs differentiated), and attentional focus (other/transitive vs. self/intransitive) to the domains of affect and cognition. Ultimately, the RCA-Q will be a clinical tool for evaluating intrapsychic aspects of relational patterns with adult clients and will serve as a research tool to identify and measure key constructs in interpersonal theory.

Dr. Henriques also attended the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration (SEPI) where he presented two symposia on his Unified Theory Unified Approach (UTUA) Framework. While at SEPI, he and Dr. Ken Critchfield met for a half-day conference with the leaders of the unified psychotherapy group.

Congratulations to Mariafé Panizo for being selected by the Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy and the Student Development Committee as the winner of APA Division 29 Student Excellence in Practice Award. Mariafé will receive a $500 award which will be presented during a ceremony being held at the national APA convention in August.

C-I students will conduct comprehensive evaluations at Sentara Rockingham Memorial Hospital Behavioral Health starting this summer. Connessia Handford, Ariel Marrero, Liz Holthaus, Sarah Anolik, Paulihna Sorbi, and Christian Haase along with C-I faculty Anne Stewart met with Drs. Luanne Bender Long (Clinical Manager, Outpatient Behavioral Health) and Brad Gerber (Behavioral Health Clinical Psychologist) to plan this specialized practicum experience.
Counseling Programs

Counseling and Supervision Graduates
Michael Lynn Horst    Anne Loyer Metz.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Graduates
Brittany Danielle Dioszeghy    Jean Fabrice Ndzana
Meagan Paige Dye    Angela Mary Pezzella
Kim Elise Hall    John Davis Rogers
Caroline Clare Hamby    Amelia Uffelman Walton
Samuel Taylor Hogan

School Counseling Graduates
Lindsey Renee Croft    Danielle Marie Savastano
Kelsey Lauren Douglass    Katharine Rose Smorodin
Hannah Kathryn Everton    Mikaela Colleen Stinson
Dwayne Lamark Peyton, Jr.    Sarah Nicole Sweatman

Many from the 2018 Counseling Programs graduating class have found post-graduation positions including:

Kelsey Douglass - school counselor at Ashby Lee Elementary School in Shenandoah County;

Lindsey Croft - school counselor at Riverheads Elementary School in Augusta County;

Dwayne Peyton - moving to Virginia Beach to be a school counselor at Princess Anne High School.

Danielle Savastano - heading to Loudon County where she will follow 6th graders as they move through 8th grade at Blue Ridge Middle School.
Dr. Lennie Echterling was the invited speaker at this year’s Graduate Commencement ceremony. His talk focused on resiliency.

In May, Dr. Cara Meixner attended APA’s Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology conference, held at Duquesne University—one of the birthplaces of hermeneutic phenomenology. She had the honor of attending a pre-conference institute on interpretative phenomenology, led by Dr. Frederick Wertz, and looks forward to sharing what she learned with colleagues and graduate students.

For the 4th year, Dr. Debbie Sturm spent the start of the summer session in Malta with 13 undergraduate students as part of her summer abroad program - Environment Advocacy and the Psychology of Change.

Congratulations to Kristy Koser, LPC, doctoral candidate from the Counseling & Supervision Program for her recent collaboration with the Reproductive Medicine and Surgery Center of Virginia. She is now the fertility counselor and psychological evaluator for the clinic and for any patients using third party reproduction in Virginia. Kristy’s training and dissertation research is also in the field of reproductive counseling and psychology.

Congratulations to Mollie Blaffer for winning the GSA 2018 Impact Award. GSA Impact Awards are given to both graduate students and faculty who had outstanding contributions to the graduate community. Winners are honored for their exceptional dedication and service to the community, highlighted by their unique contributions.
Psychological Sciences

Psychological Sciences Program Graduates

Chi-Hang Bryan Au        Kathleen Ryan Owens
Melissa Rose Grant      Dylan Mark Rutter
Nikole Lynn Gregg       Cierra LaTrice Williams
Christopher Shane Kerr   Matthew Ross Wolf
Emily Frances Matusz

The Applied Behavior Analysis concentration was ranked as the #1 program in the country by Applied Behavior Analysis Programs Guide. The concentration is run by Drs. Trevor Stokes and Dan Holt of the Graduate Psychology and Psychology Departments, respectively, and Dr. Keri Bethune of the Exceptional Education Department.

Melissa Grant, Alexa Ina, and Allison Brandmark, along with two incoming Psychological Sciences students (and current Dukes) Emory Bruno and Emily Knox, presented Melissa’s thesis: Applied Behavior Analysis Function-Based Procedures Contribute to Parent-Child Interaction Therapy Child Outcomes at the ABAI (Association for Behavior Analysis International) in San Diego, CA.

Dylan Rutter also attended and presented ABAI and the Society for the Quantitative Analyses of Behavior conference. Both conferences were held in San Diego, CA.
Dr. Bernice Marcopulos presented a workshop for the Institute of Law Psychiatry and Public policy in Charlottesville, VA. Her presentation was titled “Cognitive and Neuropsychological Assessment after Atkins v. Virginia.”

Dr. Marcopulos was also the keynote speaker on April 17 for the JMU T/TAC conference held at the Festival Center. The conference was titled, “The Resilient Mind: The Science of Brain and Behavior” and Dr. Marcopulos’ keynote was titled “Neurocognitive and Psychosocial Issues.”

Psychological Sciences student Madison Miles attended the Sports Neuropsychology Society’s 6th annual conference in Washington, D.C. from May 3rd to May 5th. Many of the talks and research were centered around concussion recovery and the latest suggested protocols for traumatic brain injury rehabilitation.

Dr. Marcopulos was a visiting professor at the University of Warsaw International Studies Program in Poland (April 20-27). While there, she taught Forensic Neuropsychology to graduate students from Iran, Germany, Turkey, Sweden, and Poland.

School Psychology

Congratulations!

School Psychology Graduates

Kaitlynn Michelle Carter
Katelyn Rae Hughes
Rachel Kuepper Larkin
Shana Marie Little

Ebony Nicole Mason
Jessica Ashley Meeks
Alexis Diane Morse
Arsenio Odell Moss

Recent graduate Jessica Meeks will start her career as a school psychologist in Chesterfield County, VA. Jessica will split her time between two schools, Reams Road Elementary School and Cosby High School.
The School Psychology Program brought in Dr. Sam Ortiz for a 2-day workshop “Nondiscriminatory Assessments of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.” Students, faculty, and members of the community participated in this workshop.

School Psychology faculty took students in PSYC 678 to the While Oak Lavender farm. The day focused on professional self-care.

School Psychology students and faculty participated in the Harrisonburg Walk for Hope. Walk for Hope brings together members of James Madison University, Blue Ridge Community College, Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University, and members of the community to raise awareness about depression and suicide.
This year, the Virginia Academy of School Psychologists Spring Conference took place in Charlottesville on April 27. Dr. Melissa Reeves presented on two meaningful topics for school psychologists: “DSM-5: Implications for School Psychologists” and “Cognitive Behavioral Strategies for Children and Adolescents.” Six members of JMU’s School Psychology Program attended including professors Debi Kipps-Vaughn and Tiffany Hornsby, along with students Alexis Morse, Katherine Flemister, Victoria Bunting, and Sarah Lanyi. The conference provided attendees with copious amounts of practical information as well as an opportunity to share their ideas with the large group. Both students and faculty enjoyed the day spent with their school psychologist peers.

Students in the School Psychology Program were honored at the Department of Graduate Psychology’s Spring Celebration held on Thursday, May 3rd. Current second-year student Stephanie Smith was honored with the O. Ashton Trice Award for academic excellence. Maggie Dassira was honored with the first-ever Patricia Warner Scholarship. The Outstanding Graduate Service Award was presented to Taylor Carrington for her service to the community. Additionally, current second-year student Lyndsay Greene received the Tina Kauten Service Award. Current intern Arsenio “Neo” Moss was presented with the Outstanding Graduate Research Award. Finally, the Community Partnership Award was presented to Terri Sisson for her dedication and supervision of multiple graduate students over numerous years! Congratulations to all of our award winners!
On April 20th, students from the department presented their research to faculty, students, supervisors, and staff. The day began with the keynote address, "The Psychology of Sustainability: Caring for the Planet, Caring for Ourselves", by Dr. Deborah Sturm. Debbie was the recipient of Graduate Psychology's 2017-2018 Madison Scholar Award. This year we had over 25 presenters in several topic areas including diversity, methods, well-being, development, behavior/performance, and practical/clinical behaviors.
Stats Boot Camp

Statistics Refresher Boot Camp will be held on August 21, 22, and 23, 2018 for incoming PSYC 605 Intermediate Inferential Statistics students. The first two days (August 21st and 22nd) students will meet in Lakeview Hall 1104 to engage in lecture and hands-on activities. On the third day (August 23rd), students will meet in Miller G025 for either a morning or afternoon session to engage in hands-on SPSS instruction. The sessions will be led by PSYC 605 faculty and a doctoral level Assessment and Measurement student. This year, a 4-VA grant will cover printed materials, breakfast, and lunch for the first two days.

This three-day, zero-credit course is designed to offer students an introductory-level statistics refresher course. Although the course does not take place of individual preparation, the purpose of the course is to help prepare students for enrollment in PSYC 605.

Textbooks


  The first six chapters are assigned reading for the Boot Camp, and PDF’s of the assigned chapters will be freely available on Canvas. The text is also available for free through the JMU library by setting up an ebrary Academic Complete (Proquest) account (http://www.lib.jmu.edu/resources/findbooks.aspx). Instructions for setting up this account appear the first time you try to log onto the library. Once your account is set up, you can access the account from anywhere. For help, contact the JMU Library help desk at 540-568-6150.


  The first four chapters overlap with boot camp refresher material, as well as an introduction to SPSS. Students report that this text is accessible and entertaining to read. We suggest that you purchase the text and begin reading it prior to Boot Camp.

Course Goals

• Review introductory statistics concepts
• Increase statistics self-efficacy
• Develop introductory-level familiarity with SPSS skills
• Become familiar with some aspects of JMU

Course Objectives

At the end of this Stats Boot Camp, students will be able to

• demonstrate increased statistics self-efficacy (assessed pre- and post-course)
• demonstrate increased fluency in introductory statistics skills (assessed pre- and post-course), including:
- defining and identifying types of variables
- defining and identifying a variable and a constant
- identifying continuous and discrete variables
- distinguishing between IV/DV/bivariate analyses
- defining population versus sample characteristics
- appropriately using statistical notation
- interpreting frequency distributions
- describing characteristics of the normal distribution
- describing sampling distributions & p-values
- computing central tendency and variability statistics
- computing and interpreting z-scores
- computing and interpreting one-sample z- and t-tests

For more information contact: S. Jeanne Horst ~ horstsj@jmu.edu, Beth A. Perkins ~perkinba@jmu.edu, or Brian C. Leventhal ~leventbc@jmu.edu