The Psychology Department at UIS prides itself in the attention that we give undergraduates. The faculty in Psychology have chosen UIS because it has just the right balance between teaching and research. We are here because we believe in putting students first.

In response to the feedback that you have given us through exit surveys in Senior Seminar, we have begun several new initiatives to help you as you prepare for life after UIS. In PSY 302: Research Methods in Psychology you have been asked (or will be asked) to make a connection to the Career Center here on campus. This is also a part of PSY 471: Senior Seminar. We also have panel discussions in which employees and supervisors from local mental health agencies come to campus to speak. Faculty from graduate programs here on campus also participate. Lastly, we put on a workshop titled “Getting into Graduate School.”

The best way to meet challenges is to tackle them head on. Through these initiatives, it is our hope that we are helping you meet the challenges that you will face after earning your degree from UIS. Best of luck to you all. We all hope that you have a great experience at UIS.
Dr. Karen Reinke-Pressley

Dr. Karen Reinke-Pressley is working on a project studying the neural mechanisms of attention to faces as measured with Electroencephalography (EEG). Andrew Hathaway is assisting Dr. Reinke-Pressley on this project in the EEG lab. In Spring 2012, Dr. Reinke-Pressley and Andrew applied for and received the CLAS Student-Faculty Creative Activities Award to support the research as well as Andrew’s travel to a conference. They are currently half way through the data collection, and will continue in the Spring. They have submitted an abstract to Cognitive Neuroscience Society annual meeting, and should hear back in January about its acceptance.

Dr. Sheryl Reminger

On October 25th, Dr. Sheryl Reminger gave a presentation at the bi-annual Pecha Kucha night in Springfield. The Pecha Kucha event gives professionals in Springfield community an opportunity to showcase their work to members of the public (http://www.pecha-kucha.org/night/springfield-il/). Dr. Reminger’s presentation was titled “Psychology for a New Century” and highlighted the changes that the field of psychology has undergone over the past 100 years. Dr. Reminger also spoke about her own research at the event.

Under the supervision of Dr. Reminger, Robert Torrence has proposed two research studies that he plans to conduct this fall and spring (see page 6 for more information). The first study will explore the impact of diet on cognitive function. Specifically, Robert plans to examine if people who consume vegetarian diets versus omnivorous diets may show differences in executive function skills (i.e., skills that include planning, organizing, and strategizing). The second study will explore if diet can have a differential impact on memory function in mice. Robert plans to compare a group of mice that consumes a high-fat, animal-based diet to a group of mice that consumes a low-fat, plant-based diet. He hypothesizes that the mice that consume the high-fat diet will show poorer memory performance on a maze task, but that after reverting the mice to the low-fat plant-based diet, the animals will show improved memory performance. Robert has applied for funding through the Undergraduate Research Support Program to conduct his research.

Also under Dr. Reminger’s supervision, Cassandra David is currently designing a research study to examine the coping strategies of commuting versus non-commuting student-athletes. Cassandra has hypothesized that student athletes who commute to school experience higher stress than those who do not commute, but that athletic involvement also has a mediating effect on stress and can help students better adjust to academic life. Cassandra plans to conduct her research study in the spring semester.
Dr. Frances Shen

Dr. Frances Shen is currently finalizing two research projects. The first examines the impact of parental pressure and support, educational channeling, and internalized stereotyping on the career development of Asian American college students. Lucy Parker, Stacey Windisch, Andrew Hathaway, and Robert Torrence have assisted with data collection since Fall 2011. This research project was funded by the UIS CLAS Faculty Enhancement Scholarship Grant, and the preliminary findings were presented at the 2012 UIS StARS Symposium and 2012 APA Convention. The second is a qualitative study that examines the impact of stereotyping and discrimination experiences among Asian American students, and its impact on their identity development. Drs. Shen, Shuang-Yueh Pui, and Juanita Ortiz (Criminal Justice Department) analyzed the data for this study, and will be presenting its findings at the 2012 Midwestern Psychological Association annual meeting.

Dr. Shen is currently working on two research projects. The first study examines the impact of discrimination, social support, adherence to traditional Asian values, and perceived parental attitudes towards homosexuality on the development of internalized homonegativity and poor psychological well-being among Asian American lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons. This study was funded by the CLAS Student-Faculty Creative Activities Fund. Rebecca Goldsborough, Brittany Sievers, and Brianna Werner are working on data collection. The preliminary findings were presented at the 2012 UIS StARS Symposium and 2012 Asian American Psychological Association Convention. A second project was started this semester in collaboration with Dr. Kelly Liao (faculty at UMSL) that examines body image issues experienced by Asian American women and men. Rebecca, Brittany, and Brianna are also assisting with this study. The data gathered from the focus groups will be used to develop a measure that examines the culturally-relevant body image issues experienced by these populations. Focus groups are currently being conducted, and preliminary findings have been submitted to the 2013 APA convention.

Dr. Carrie Switzer

Dr. Carrie Switzer is in the final phase of data collection for the Educational Aspirations study. This study examines the differences between traditional and nontraditional aged college students in their motivation to go to college, the perceived barriers to attending college, their academic self-efficacy in college, and vocational outcome expectations. Rachel Tohme, Lucy Parker, and Stacey Windisch, graduate students in the Human Development Counseling program, are currently working on an additional phase of the study with Drs. Switzer and Shen that is focused on collecting information on the same variables from students in underrepresented groups.

Wesley Hill and Rachel Tohme are working on an independent research project that is sponsored by Drs. Switzer and Yoder titled, Urban Legends and Emotional Selection. Wes and Rachel are interested in whether urban legends elicit specific emotional responses that lead people to pass them on to others. They will be investigating relationships between emotions and the spreading of memes (i.e., cultural ideas, behaviors, or symbols that are transmitted from person to person) in the context of individual differences among rationality of belief, optimistic/pessimistic viewpoints, external/internal attributions, and attributional complexity. Wes and Rachel plan to present their findings at the 2013 StARS Symposium and 2013 MPA Convention.
Faculty & Student Research

Dr. Marcel Yoder

Dr. Marcel Yoder is currently analyzing data to investigate the effect of interaction on person perception. The purpose of his study is to determine what similarities and differences there are between our impressions depending on whether we interact with another, see a short video of that person, versus merely a photo. Results demonstrate that when judging others' facial attractiveness, these judges are related but different. Attractive persons are seen as attractive regardless of how other interact with them, but at the same time, persons are seen as more attractive when viewed face to face than when viewed on video or photo. Kayla Weitekamp and Kady Havemeyer are assisting Dr. Yoder on this study. Their study findings will be presented at the 2013 Midwestern Psychological Association annual meeting.

Dr. Yoder has started a new research project in collaboration with Mary-Sheila Tracy and Dr. Keith Miller in Computer Science. The study will focus on participants’ perceptions of images of robot faces, and will examine the following research questions: (1) Do the facial characteristics that make human faces attractive (e.g., large eyes and larger lips for women and heavier brow and stronger jaw for men) influence the way participants perceive robot face? (2) To what extent do robot faces need to be altered from their original gender neutral state in order to appear masculine or feminine? (3) Are robot faces that appear more masculine or feminine judged as having the same characteristics as human males human males (e.g., autocratic or coarse) and females (e.g., affectionate or weak)? (4) Does the gender of a participant judging a robot face influence the likelihood that a robot face is judged as masculine or feminine? and (5) Does familiarity with robots moderate any of the above questions?. Kayla and Kady are also assisting with this study.

Psychology Internship Opportunities

By Dr. Sheryl Reminger

There are great opportunities at UIS for students who are interested in participating in psychology-related internships. Internships give students hands-on experience working in real-life settings. Students can develop skills that will benefit them either in their graduate school applications, or in their applications for jobs after they graduate. When students complete an internship, their participation also counts as course credit under the category of ECCE Engagement Experience. In the past, UIS students have completed internships in a variety of settings including community mental health centers, government organizations, social service organizations, correctional facilities, hospitals, schools, day care centers, and museums.

If a student is interested in finding out more about completing an internship at UIS, they can go to the Applied Study Term website at http://www.uis.edu/appliedstudy/students/infoforstudents.html. At the website they can find information about applying for internships and also find out what internship opportunities may currently be available. Students are also encouraged to visit the Applied Study Term office, Brookens Room 482. Students who may have specific questions about psychology-related internships are welcome to contact Dr. Sheryl Reminger in the Psychology Department at sremi2@uis.edu.
My name is Andrew Hathaway and I am a senior in the Psychology Department here at UIS. I have become a familiar face in the department because I am currently conducting an independent research project. I have been a research assistant for Dr. Shen, a counseling psychologist, and Dr. Reinke-Pressley, a cognitive neuroscientist. I would like to tell you a little bit about how I got involved in independent research, what I have learned, and how it has benefited me as a student.

As a psychology major, I understand that graduate school is an almost necessary step for the career path that I would like to take. I started researching graduate programs, and the one thing that all of them had in common was a requirement of research experience to be considered as a qualified applicant. I sought out different professors and was able to get involved in some of their research. Based on the research that Dr. Reinke-Pressley was working on, I formulated a hypothesis that would take the study to another level. Since then, I have been working many hours to get the study up and running.

The study is examining neural processing of different stimuli during an attention task. E’Prime experimental software is being used to measure reaction times. 128-channel electroencephalography (EEG) caps are being used to measure electrical activity in the brain during the attention task. I cannot tell you any more about the specifics, because I am still taking participants and I do not want to create any participant bias!

As a research assistant, I got hands on experience with different research designs, collecting data, submitting to conferences, and presenting at conferences. As an independent researcher, I have gotten hands on experience with submitting to the Institutional Review Board, seeking out funding, developing the study, and working with human participants.

There are many opportunities for funding at UIS. I received travel stipends from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) as well as Student Affairs to help present the faculty research that I was involved with. For my independent research, I applied for and received the Creative Activities Student-Faculty Award through CLAS. This money is allowing me to pay participants as well as travel to a conference. I have recently submitted an abstract to the Cognitive Neuroscience Society (CNS) Annual Convention that will take place in San Francisco.

I plan to present my findings at CNS (if accepted) as well as at the Student Arts and Research Symposium (StARS) that takes place right here on campus in April. StARS is a great place to showcase independent and faculty research as well as other projects that are happening on campus. I am looking forward to presenting my research findings to the UIS population as well as seeing what everyone else has been working on.

If anyone is interested in research involvement, my advice is to seek out your professors. They are very friendly and more than helpful. Even if they do not have a project for you to get involved with, they can lead you in the right direction. Do not be afraid to get involved. My research involvement has given me the hands on experiences that I need to be successful in a graduate program. I have learned so much from my research mentors. Our Psychology Department has been a great place for me to explore my options while receiving great knowledge and experience. I hope that some of you will find that you can have the same experiences that I have had. See you all at StARS!
Undertaking an independent research study offers me more than I expected. I originally decided to do research while I was searching for graduate schools and saw how important it is to the schools. I spoke with a few professors that I have had previous classes with and asked them if I could help them with their research. While I was helping Dr. Shen with her research, I realized that I actually found it fun and very interesting. It allowed me the opportunity to learn information that I would not otherwise learn, like information related to the study and also how to do research from data collection to analysis. This made me think of what my interests are and if there is anything that I can contribute to the psychological field.

I will admit it was difficult and time consuming to come up with a research proposal. Everything I kept thinking of was already researched or I felt out of my league as an undergraduate. After a few weeks of research and help from Dr. Reminger, I finally developed a proposal. A few weeks after developing the proposal I, with help of Dr. Reminger, developed a second study. The first study I developed will examine how diet affects memory in mice. The main purpose of the study is to attempt to reverse diet induced memory dysfunction, caused by eating a diet high in animal fat, by only changing the diet to a low fat plant-based diet. This study is currently in the process of approval. The other study I developed will determine if there is a difference in thinking skills in people based on the type of diet they eat. The types of diets range from vegan (most restrictive) to omnivorous (least restrictive). This study’s main purpose is to investigate the effects diet has on our thinking abilities. I plan on presenting this study at the Student Arts and Research Symposium and I applied to present it at the annual meeting of the Midwest Psychological Association in Chicago. My overall interest is how lifestyle habits such as diet and exercise can affect our psychological wellbeing.

One factor to consider when doing an independent research study is funding. There is funding available through various sources. Every undergraduate at UIS can obtain up to $500 through the Undergraduate Student Research Grant Program. The Psychology Department and the Dean’s Office may also have funding available to undergraduates for research, and the Psi Chi Honors Society has funding available to its members as well. I have personally applied for funding through the USR Grant Program, Psychology Department, and the Deans Office and received funding from all of them.

My biggest advice to anyone who wants to eventually go to graduate school is to get involved in research. The first step is to ask professors if they have any research studies going on (they most likely do) and ask if you can assist them. You can e-mail, go in during their office hours, or set up an appointment. You have to take the initiative; no one is necessarily going to ask you to do research just because you received good grades or you are a good student. I used to think that. If you have research experience and you would like to do an independent study, then talk to a professor about your ideas. Remember that doing an independent research study is very time consuming and requires a great deal of effort, but it is an invaluable experience that will look great on a resume.
Welcome Our New Psychology Faculty

Hi, I'm Dr. Michele Miller, and I'm delighted to be an assistant professor in the Psychology department! I am also the new faculty advisor for Psi Chi, the international honor society in psychology, and the Psychology Club. I immensely enjoy my role as an educator and am honored to be able to play an integral part in the learning and development of others both inside and outside of the classroom setting here at UIS.

I received my Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with a focus on Human Development from the University of Wisconsin-Madison this past summer. My past and current research in child development employs multi-method assessment approaches and advanced quantitative statistical techniques to investigate the broad areas of temperament, emotion, and psychopathology risk. Additionally, I have explored these concepts in ways that control for genetic differences. I have been working with data from longitudinal studies of emotional development and child psychopathology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Currently, I am researching the association between early temperament, school readiness, and later cognitive development. I strongly believe the incorporation of temperament is essential for educational research.

In my somewhat limited spare time, I can be found surrounded by my husband, family, and friends. I enjoy live music and comedy, watching sports (yes, I am a Packers and Brewers fan), and running. Stop by my office and introduce yourself sometime!

Psi Chi & Psychology Club

Fall 2012 Events

Saturday, September 29th: Autism Awareness Walk at Washington Park; for the Central Illinois Chapter of the Autism Society of America. Renders services to families and friends of autistic individuals.

Sunday, October 14th: the Out of Darkness Walk at Washington Park; 3-5 mile walks taking place in over 250 communities across the country this year, with the proceeds benefiting the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). Proceeds go toward research and education to prevent suicide as well as to provide support for survivors of suicide loss.

Friday, October 26th: Bonfire night on campus with the commuter student organization. Fellowship and fun!

New Psi Chi Inductees

Eleven new psychology students were inducted into Psi Chi this semester on Thursday, December 6th at Mario Restaurant. The new inductees are:

- Fayne Davis
- Alyssa Heise
- Brianna Werner
- Rachel Reeves
- Wesley Hill
- Carmen Rivera
- Victoria Childers
- Michelle McCrary
- Natalie Attan
- Shannon Sweeney
- Lynette Weiss (Mellor)

Congratulations to the new Psi Chi inductees!
2013 Psychology Conferences

Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Meeting
May 2 to 4, 2013 - Chicago, IL

Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention
May 23 to 26, 2013 - Washington D.C.

American Psychological Association Annual Convention
August 2 to 5, 2013 - Honolulu, HI

StARS
Student Arts & Research Symposium

April 11 & 12, 2013

• Early Registration ends December 14, 2012.
  ○ All students who submit their poster abstracts by this deadline will have their posters paid for by StARS.

• General Registration will continue until February 15, 2013.

• Keynote Speakers
  ○ Mary Jo Bang, author of six books of poems, including The Bride of E and Elegy, which received the National Book Critics Circle Award.
  ○ Ryan Ewing, Assistant Professor of Geological Sciences at the University of Alabama. He is currently exploring the surface of Mars with the NASA Curiosity team.

For more information visit the StARS webpage at http://www.uis.edu/undergraduateresearch/stars/index.html