Welcome New Faculty

Dr. Yongchao Shi joined the Department of Psychology in August 2011 on a 1-year term.

Welcome New Graduate Students

Mireille Rizkalla (PhD Student) (Supervisor: Dr. William Tippett)

I received my Bachelor of Science, majoring in Psychology, from the University of Toronto in 2007. I moved from Toronto to Prince George two years ago to complete a Masters degree in psychology and I am now pursuing a PhD. I am interested in the study of brain injury and non-invasive rehabilitative methods. To date, my research has focused on the cognitive repercussions of stroke and the prospects of cognitive training as an effective intervention to improve post-stroke recovery. Information garnered from this research may be especially valuable for stroke survivors living in rural communities with limited access to post-stroke rehabilitation programs. I am pleased to be staying at UNBC and look forward to the upcoming years, as I am sure to be surrounded with friendly folks, mountain scenery and the outdoor life!

Farewell

Dr. Malinda Desjarlais accepted a position at the University of Calgary in July 2011. We wish her well in her new position!

Todd Pryor (MSc Student) (Supervisor: Dr. Sherry Beaumont)

Todd Pryor is from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory and is a first year Master’s student in the Psychology Program. He graduated from UNBC with an Honours degree in Psychology in 2010. Todd’s honours research pertained to the relationship between spirituality and identity in meditators versus non-meditators. For his Master’s thesis research Todd will be focusing around the topics of spirituality/transcendence, mindfulness, identity, and advanced ego development. Todd is also interested in researching gender identity and states of consciousness.
Erin Browne (MSc Student)  
(Supervisor: Dr. Ken Prkachin)

Erin is a first year Master’s student in the Psychology Program. She grew up in Toad River, a very remote community in northern B.C., and moved to Prince George in 2006 to attend UNBC. She graduated from UNBC with an Honours Psychology degree in 2010.

Her Honours research with Dr. Glenda Prkachin involved infant recognition of facial expressions of emotion, and her current research interests involve pain recognition and experience in relation to empathy. She is also interested in stroke recovery, speech processing and neuroplasticity, and intends to pursue a PhD after completing her MSc.

Students’ Successes


Josh Rash defended his masters thesis entitled “Respiratory Sinus Arrhythmia During Episodes of Relived Sadness: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Affect Intensity”. (Supervisor: Dr. Ken Prkachin) He has now been accepted to the University of Calgary, Psychology Clinical Program, Fall 2011.

Rebecca Bruser was awarded the 2011 CPA Student Research Award. (Supervisor: Dr. Sherry Beaumont)

Christine Kennedy was named Tournament All-Star at the 2011 BCCAA Basketball provincials. She helped the UNBC women’s team to a victory in the Bronze medal game over VIU!

Mireille Rizkalla defended her masters thesis in July, 2011, entitled “Examining Visuo-Spatial/Visuo-Motor Training Program to Induce Cognitive Change in Acute Post-Stroke Recovery”. (Supervisor: Dr. William Tippett)

Kelly Stickle defended his masters thesis on Sept. 1, 2011, entitled “People With Pets: Understanding the Influence of Human-Companion Animal Attachment on Empathy and Resilient Coping in Adulthood”. (Supervisor: Dr. Cindy Hardy)

Dr. Annabel Levesque defended her doctoral dissertation on Oct. 14, 2011, entitled “Conceptions of Health: A Cross-Cultural Comparison”. (Supervisor: Dr. Han Li)

Department & Student Association Activities

Psyc Out

Seven students presented the findings of their research projects at this year’s Psyc Out, an annual celebration of student research in Psychology, on April 6, 2011. Kelly Stickle, Ecaterina Ciugureanu, Christine Boucher, Stephen Bennett, Sheila Price, and Dana Hansen gave oral presentations of their research, while Josh Rash, together with Dr. BJ Tippett, hosted a poster session. Psyc Out was organized by Dr. Loraine Lavallee.
Convocation

In May 2011, the Department of Psychology saw 4 Masters of Science in Psychology graduands cross the convocation stage, along with 34 Bachelors of Science in Psychology, 4 of whom were Honours students, and 1 was a joint major with History.

Academic Exposure

The Department of Psychology hosted a student information table at Academic Exposure on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2011. Many new and returning students stopped by to chat with the faculty members, and to take brochures and bookmarks for more information. Senior Lab Instructor Julie Orlando organized the department’s participation materials. Thanks to Dr. BJ Tippett, Dr. Bob Tait, and Dr. Han Li for giving some of their time at this year’s event.

Psychology Orientation

The Department of Psychology held our annual Orientation session on Thursday, Sept. 22, 2011. Graduate Committee Chair, Dr. BJ Tippett, met with new and returning graduate students. Dr. Loraine Lavallee, Undergraduate Committee Chair, met with new and returning undergraduate students. Faculty members attending to introduce their areas of teaching and research were: Dr. Cindy Hardy, Dr. Loraine Lavallee, Dr. Han Li, Dr. Paul Madak, Dr. Glenda Prkachin, Dr. Paul Siakaluk, Dr. Robert Tait, and Dr. William Tippett. Our Senior Lab Instructor, Julie Orlando, also attended. Student Psychology Association Co-chairs Hugh Curtis and Emily Wright introduced the Psyc Club and welcomed returning and new members. About 30 students attended this lively meeting which was followed by a casual get-to-know-each-other with pizza. Dr. Loraine Lavallee organized this successful event, and our Administrative Assistant, Loreen Obst, greatly contributed to its success.

Student Psychology Association

The SPA hosted a number of student events throughout the year, including a series of movie nights, regular study sessions, two Honours Program Info Sessions (in conjunction with Dr. Loraine Lavallee, Undergraduate Committee Chair), and a Career Night.

Other News Bites…

- In April 2011, the department underwent an external review.
- In November 2011, Dr. BJ Tippett and Dr. Paul Siakaluk launched a Biweekly Psychology Journal Club to review, evaluate and create discussion on various topics in psychology.
- In November 2011, Dr. Paul Siakaluk gave his Psyc 101 students a fun-spirited reward for their fundraising efforts in the “Put On Your Pink Bra” campaign for breast cancer research.
Publications, Conferences, Colloquia, and more

Publications (Peer-reviewed) Note: student authors are indicated by *


Colloquia & Sponsored Talks

Winter 2011 Sponsored Talks

Dr. Stephen Heine, UBC: Psychology -- The Study of the Weirdest People in the World. Co-sponsored by the Psychology Student Association and the Department of Psychology; Host: Lauren Legere.

Dr. Sabine Pahl, University of Plymouth, UK: ‘It’ll be alright’, or ‘we’re all doomed’: How do Perceptions of Future Environmental Change Relate to Feelings, Environmental Attitudes and Intentions? Co-sponsored by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions and the Department of Psychology; Host: Dr. Loraine Lavallee.

Fall 2011 Colloquium Series

Dr. Loraine Lavallee, UNBC: Greed, Selfishness, Immorality, & Ignorance – The Four Horsemen of Environmental Apocalypse? Co-sponsored by the Natural Resources & Environmental Studies Institute and the Department of Psychology.

Dr. Glenda Prkachin, UNBC: The 5 Second Impression

Anita Shaw, UNBC: Adolescent Girls’ Experiences of Unwanted Sex and Unintentional Pregnancy: A Retrospective Study

Dr. Kristin von Ranson, U of Calgary: Understanding the Research-Practice Gap in Psychotherapy for Eating Disorders

Dr. Liz Rocha & Dr. Cindy Hardy, UNBC: Rural and Northern Psychology