OVERVIEW

The 2019-2020 year has come to a close and has been one of the most memorable years for the department to date. Our faculty, graduate students, and staff have weathered all of the challenges of a traditional academic year, adapted to a global pandemic, and have had opportunities to grow and learn through the Black Lives Matter movement.

The last year has seen an expansion in the Behavior Analysis Program (page 5) as well as the hire of two new Combined Program faculty, Tyler Lefevor and Sara Boghosian, who will join the faculty for fall 2020.

The department has seen numerous technology advancements, a website renovation, the launch of the ACT Guide (page 4), and the embrace of telehealth in practicum and clinical settings.

Our undergraduate program has received a major revision (page 3), the addition of another advisor, Ben Elwood, and the promise of a new office of student support expected to open in the 2020-2021 academic year.

- Over $6.5M in Grant Proposals
- 9,151 Undergraduates Taught
- 78 Graduate Degrees Conferred
- $26K in Scholarships Awarded
- 146 Intellectual Contributions

Through all of these changes the department submitted more than $6.5M in grant proposals, taught 9,151 undergraduate students, produced 146 intellectual contributions, and conferred 78 graduate degrees.

This spring was a successful one for department recognition, with five university awards and three college level awards. Additionally, students received more than $26k in scholarship support.

None of these amazing things would be possible without the hard work, dedication and support of the people who make us whole.
"The crucial thing is that we come together as programs, students, faculty, staff, and a department to continue the great work that brought us together in the first place.”
- Dr. Scott Bates

No summation of the 2019-20 academic year can be complete without acknowledging the twin stories of the century: the global pandemic and the murder of George Floyd that catalyzed global protests seeking racial justice. These stories are simultaneously distant and close, personal and impersonal. As a result of these stories—and how they have unfolded—we have individually and collectively made tremendous personal and professional sacrifices.

We are all waiting for answers about what things will look like in the coming days, months, and years. While we wait, we are wondering what part we can play in these historic moments. To me, the crucial thing is that we come together as programs, students, faculty, staff, and a department to continue to do the work that brought us together in the first place.
This year, we undertook the most significant revision to the undergraduate program in the past 20 years. The revision reflects an intentional, backward-designed curriculum based on the APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Major (APA, 2013), and the thoughtful and deliberate integration of High-Impact Educational Practices (Kuh, 2008). The goal of the revision was to improve our ability to graduate students with the experiences, knowledge, and (critically) skills that they need to accomplish their personal and professional goals. The curriculum now includes five categories of courses: (1) required courses; (2) CORE: Undergraduate Research courses; (3) CORE: Diversity & Inclusion courses; (4) elective courses, and; (5) a capstone course/experience. The other major initiative to come from this revision is the launch of a new center for undergraduate students.

This center, to be formally launched this year, will: (1) support the education of well-trained, skillful psychology majors who understand how they can prepare for graduate school in psychology or another career path; (2) focus on and support student diversity, supporting underrepresented students in experiences inside and outside of the department; (3) support students in developing discipline-specific skillsets (filling in the gaps around the curriculum), and; (4) be oriented to an evidence-based approach, with assessment and evaluation as a core principle and reports delivered to faculty on an annual basis. The department would like to acknowledge the effort and dedication of the team of faculty and staff that worked on this revision: Jennifer Grewe, Crissa Levin, Christian Geiser, Mona Buhusi, Greg Madden, and Tressa Haderlie.
The Department began a complete overhaul of our webpages during the summer of 2019. After meeting with program directors, the college marketing team, and the accessibility committee, a new website framework was created. The current design features a homepage with scrolling images focusing on the department’s current recruitment phrases: “transformational mentorship,” “engage your education,” and “set in motion your discovery.”

This new format combines some program-specific pages concerning funding, practicum options, and training. The addition of a research page offers space to highlight faculty and student publications as well as an updated list of faculty publications. This also offers a searchable table where students and applicants can search for specific research labs by name, faculty, or program. Through the new website, internal and external audiences can access the department’s event calendar, news stories, and newsletters.

Dr. Michael Levin and the USU ACT Research Group in conjunction with the Sorenson Legacy Foundation Center for Clinical Excellence launched the ACT Guide. This online mental health program consists of 12 self-guided sessions. The guide is available to users via computer or smartphone access.

“My goal is to provide our communities with widely accessible mental health resources that are not limited by many of the barriers people typically encounter when looking for help,” said Levin.

ACT is an evidence-based treatment that has been found to be effective for a wide range of mental health concerns in over 300 clinical trials. Each of the guide’s sessions teaches a key ACT component such as acceptance, mindfulness, or a values-based skill designed to improve mental health and wellbeing. ACT Guide is available at no cost to USU students and to the general public a 6-month subscription for $10, which directly supports the program’s hosting and development.
Dr. Katie Brown joined the Psychology Department’s Behavior Analysis Program in January 2020. Katie came to the program after receiving her doctoral degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where she provided behavior analytic services in the Severe Behavior Program and the Autism and Severe Behavior Diagnostic Clinics.

Katie’s research focuses on the assessment and treatment of severe problem behavior. Her current areas of interest include examining variables that may impact treatment adherence and integrity of implementation, examining the generality of treatment effects to clinically relevant settings, and assessing the longevity and maintenance of treatment across time and settings.

Katie’s research lab and clinical services are based out of the Sorenson Legacy Foundation Center for Clinical Excellence.
THE PEOPLE

36.5 FACULTY

7 STAFF

226 GRADUATE STUDENTS

790 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Awards

- Greg Madden - D. Wynne Thorne Career Research Award
- Melanie Domenech Rodríguez - Utah State Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award & Utah State President's Faculty Diversity Award
- Amy Odum - CEHS Undergraduate Research Advisor of the Year Award

Promotion and Recognition

- Christian Geiser - Promotion to Full Professor
- Rick Cruz - Promotion to Associate Professor
- Tyler Renshaw - Promotion to Associate Professor
- Michael Levin appointed as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science*
- Jenn Grewe appointed as director of Connections

Growth

- Tyler Lefevor - Combined Clinical/Counseling Program Assistant Professor
- Sara Boghosian - Combined Clinical/Counseling Program Clinical Assistant Professor
GRADUATE STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Awards

- Jennifer Krafft - Robins Doctoral Researcher of the Year
- Jay Hinnenkamp - CEHS Graduate Student Instructor of the Year
- Erica Ficklin - APA Minority Fellowship Recipient

Headlines

- Students and Faculty Attend National Conference for School Psychologists
- Psychology Doctoral Students Match with Internship Sites
- Students and Faculty Attend Conference on Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies

41 ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

11 FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

4 VETERAN STUDENTS

78 GRADUATE DEGREES CONFERRED
Awards

- Haylee Downey - CEHS Undergraduate Student Researcher of the Year
- Riley Plott - Valedictorian
- Romney Harker - Outstanding Student
- Mason Cundick - Outstanding Distance Education Student
- Amelia Ashby - Applied Psychological Service Award
- Alexa Black - Instructor Apprentice
- Jennifer Ha - Undergraduate S.T.A.R.

9,151 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TAUGHT

193 GRADUATES

18 ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

17 FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS
Awards
- Krista Terrell - CEHS Outstanding Employee of the Year
- Krista Terrell - Utah State Employee of the Month (January 2020)

Special Recognition
Camille Odell is recognized for her dedication as the director of the Professional School Counseling Program. She has been with the department since 1998 and her hardwork and commitment to her students is unmatched.
RESEARCH & FUNDING

146 INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

$6.8 MILLION GRANT PROPOSALS

$3.8 MILLION AWARDED GRANTS & CONTRACTS
FEATURED FACULTY

PUBLICATIONS


Amanda Blume | Renee Galliher
Examining the Effects of Aspects of Resiliency and Vulnerability on the Relationship Between Experiencing Microaggressions and Mental Health Among Persons of Color

Kaitlyn Browning | Timothy Shahan
A Translational Evaluation of Alternative-Response Discrimination Training and Resurgence

Samantha Corralejo | Melanie Domenech Rodríguez
Technology in Parenting Programs: A Systematic Review and Pilot Study of an App-Based Intervention for Latinx Families

Paul Cunningham | Timothy Shahan
A Temporal Information-Theoretic Model of Suboptimal Choice

Casey Frye | Amy Odum
Nicotine and Alcohol Interactions

Annie Galizio | Amy Odum
A Translational Investigation of Reinforced Behavioral Variability: Implications for Promoting Behavioral Variability in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Alex Matthews | Catalin Buhusi
Effects of Appetitive, Pre-Exposed, and Novel Distracters on Interval Timing Behavior: Role of Nomifensine within the Prelimbic Cortex

Molly Mechammil | Rick Cruz
Cultural and Contextual Influences on Mental Health, Stigma, and Substance Use Among MENA U.S. College Students

Clarissa Ong | Michael Twohig
Treatment of Clinical Perfectionism Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
DISSERTATIONS DEFENDED

Ben Pierce | Michael Levin
Tacting of Function in College Student Mental Health: An Online and App-Based Approach to Psychological Flexibility

Alejandro Vazquez | Melanie Domenech Rodríguez
Substance Use Initiation among Mexican Children: An Examination of Individual and Ecological Factors

THESES DEFENDED

Kandice Benallie | Gretchen Peacock
Parent Knowledge of Autism Spectrum Knowledge

Desiree Clark | Gretchen Peacock
Comparison of Public Mental Health Stigma in Youth

Erica Ficklin | Melissa Tehee
Perceptions of Disabilities Among Native Americans in the State of Utah

Amy Halling | Gretchen Peacock
Psychosocial Effects of Shared Book Reading

Tish Hicks | Melanie Domenech Rodríguez
A Brief Online Acceptance and Commitment Training for Enhancing Outcomes of a Cultural Competence Intervention

Devon Isaacs | Melissa Tehee
The Influence of Rumination on Quality of Life Among Northern Plains Indians

Melanie Johnson | Gretchen Peacock
Making a Decision on Ethical Decision-Making Models
THESES DEFENDED

Sallie Mack | Melissa Tehee
Racial and Ethnic Differences in Adverse Childhood Experiences and Health Outcomes in Adulthood

Fiona Molsberry | Maryellen McClain Verdoes
Reducing Daily Hassles in the Classroom: Teaching Coping techniques to Elementary School Children

Julie Murray | Scott DeBerard
College Prescription Opioid Misuse: An Exploration of Social Learning, Social Control, and Strain Theories

Savannah Rupp | Gretchen Peacock
Gratitude in Adolescents: Examining the Role of Attachment, Parent Gratitude, and Discounting

Mahdi Shafiei | Kerry Jordan
Temporal Bisection Dynamics

Hallie Tannahil | Rebecca Blais
Biological Sex as a Moderator of the Association of Military Sexual Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Total and Symptom Cluster Severity

Sean Weeks | Tyler Renshaw
The Moderating Role of Psychological Inflexibility in the Relationship between Minority Stress, Substance Misuse
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR FY 19-20

NEW

**Mona Buhusi** | National Institutes of Health: Striatal Mechanisms of Timed Response Selection | July 2019

Melanie Domenech Rodríguez & **Alejandro Vazquez** | American Psychological Foundation: Mental Health Service Preferences Among Latinx Caregivers: A Step Towards Culturally Congruent Intervention Formats for Children and Adolescents | April 2020

Renee Galliher & **Joshua Parmenter** | Psi Chi Graduate Research Grant: Stigma and Cultural Barriers to Accessing LGBTQ+ Community Resilience among LGBTQ+ People of Color: Implications for Identity and Mental Health Disparities | July 2019

**Kerry Jordan** | Florida International University: Multisensory Development: New Measures and a Collaborative Database | June 2020

Gregory Madden **Sara Peck** | Psi Chi Graduate Research Grant: The Effects of Episodic Future Thinking on Effort Discounting: Treatment Generalization and Relation to Delay Discounting | July 2019

Maryellen McClain Verdoes & **Kandice Benallie** | Psi Chi Graduate Research Grant: Perceptions and Knowledge of Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Among Navajo Parents | July 2019

**Maryellen McClain Verdoes** | The Woodcock Institute at Texas Womans University: Convergent Validity and Performance Consistency of Standardized Measures of Reading for Children with ASD | November 2019

Maryellen McClain Verdoes & **Megan Golson** | Psi Chi Graduate Research Grant: Measurement Invariance of the Conners-3 | March 2020
Amy Odum & D Perez | Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis (SABA) The Transfer of Persistence Through Relational Framing | July 2019

Amy Odum | Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior: Increasing Diversity in the Experimental Analysis of Behavior: Education and Recruitment Video | July 2019

Amy Odum & Annie Galizio | Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior: Investigating Operant Variability in the Valproate Rat Model of Autism | September 2019

Tyler Renshaw | School Psychology Assistantship with Logan High School | August 2019

Tyler Renshaw | School Psychology Assistantship with Mount Logan Middle School | August 2019

Tyler Renshaw | School Psychology Assistantship with Bridger Elementary School | September 2019

Tyler Renshaw | Utah System of Higher Education - University of Utah: Promoting Utah Teacher Retention Through Effective Classroom Management | September 2019

Michael Twohig & Clarissa Ong | Association for Contextual Behavioral Science: A Process-based App Intervention Study for Clinical Perfectionism | March 2020

Karl White | State of Idaho Department of Health and Welfare: Care Coordination Workshop | January 2020


Karl White | Utah State University Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (Reducing Loss to Followup) | April 2020

Karl White | Oberkotter Foundation: Support for EHDI-PALS | May 2020
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR FY 19-20

ONGOING

**Combined Clinical/Counseling Program** | Neuropsychology Center of Utah Graduate Assistantship | June 2020

**Melanie Domenech Rodríguez** | Idaho State University - HRSA Primary Care Training and Enhancement Awards | September 2019

**Tyler Renshaw** | Utah System of Higher Education - University of Utah: Psychoeducational Assessment Project | July 2019

**Timothy Shahan** | National Institute of Health - Basic and Clinical Studies in Reinforcing Positive Behaviors in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities | February 2020

**Timothy Shahan** | National Institute of Health - Alcohol Seeking and Resurgence Following Escalating Negative Consequences

Michael Twohig | **Combined Clinical/Counseling Program** - Avalon Hills Graduate Assistantship | June 2020

**Karl White** | U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - National Resource Center for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs | July 2019 & March 2020

**Karl White** | Utah State Department of Health - Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program | October 2019
The USU Psychology Department hosted three colloquia during the 2019-2020 academic year:

- Dr. Roger Vilardaga - *Programmatic Development of Digital Technologies for Behavior Change*
- Dr. Kevin Grimm - *Exploration of Individual Change Processes and Their Determinants: A Novel Approach and Remaining Challenges*
- Dr. Marion Forgatch - *The Development, Testing, and Implementation of an Evidence-Based Parenting Program: Generation PMTO*