

Welcome to our first issue of UWM PsychNews

PsychNews is the newsletter for the undergraduate program in Psychology at UWM. Through this newsletter we aim to inform you about opportunities in the program, tips on making your way through the major, and many of the exciting opportunities in the Psychology program. Welcome to our inaugural issue!

SONA – EXTRA CREDIT

If you are in a psychology course for which you can earn extra credit for research participation, don't forget that the deadline for participation is *Friday, May 10 at 5pm*. More information about [Sona](#) and research participation for extra credit can be found on the department webpage.



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Making the Most of Opportunities in Psychology

Make use of the department webpage. The undergraduate section of the Psychology Department [webpage](#) has lots of useful information, including a brief video tutorial about the requirements, a checklist detailing the requirements, career planning resources, and information on how to find research assistantships and field placements.

Be aware of the requirements. Review the [checklist](#) available on the department webpage. Be aware that Psych 101, 210, 325, and the advanced laboratory courses must be taken sequentially – meaning that will require at least four semesters.

Declare your major early. You may declare your major after you've completed Psych 101 and 210 with a GPA of 2.62 across both courses. One of the main benefits of declaring your major is that you will choose a Psychology faculty member to be your psychology advisor. See the department website for the steps to [declare your major](#) and choose an advisor. Speaking of advising...

Seek out advising. Meet with both your L&S and [Psychology faculty advisor](#) regularly! Once a year at the very least. Your L&S advisor can help you with the general degree requirements. Your Psychology faculty advisor can help you with career planning and other opportunities in the Psychology program. You don't need to wait until you declare your major to meet with a faculty member for advising.

Get out of the classroom. While your coursework is clearly the foundation of your studies in psychology, taking advantage of other opportunities, such as field placements (volunteering or working at a psychology-related site for course credit) and serving as a research assistant in a faculty member's lab are valuable learning opportunities that will allow you to apply what you've learned, network, and build your resume. See more about these opportunities on p. 2 and 3.

The Benefits of Research Experience

Research experience is essential for students wishing to pursue graduate work, especially a Ph.D. The earlier you start the better! Even if you don't need the research experience for graduate school, getting involved in a lab has a number of benefits. This experience will allow you to get to interact more closely with a faculty member, understand how the science you learn about in your classes is conducted, and learn valuable organizational, data management, and other skills. Plus, it can be a great way to meet others with similar interests and get a first-hand view of what life is like for a graduate student.

FINDING A RESEARCH LAB TO WORK IN

You will need to find a faculty member conducting research that interests you and then apply to work in their lab. Tips on how to [find research opportunities](#) can be found on the department webpage under Undergraduate Research Program.



Beyond the Classroom: Research

An interview with Dagong Ran ('12)

Interviewed by Jessica Hanson ('14)

Dagong was recently accepted into a Ph.D. program in Child Clinical Psychology at Southern Illinois University. He is interested in anxiety disorders.

During his time at UWM Dagong worked in four different psychology faculty labs, including those directed by Dr. Hanjoo Lee, Dr. Shawn Cahill, Dr. Ray Fleming, and Dr. Doug Woods. His most extensive experience has been with Dr. Lee.

When did you start in Dr. Lee's lab?

In summer of 2010.

What made you decide to seek research experience?

I was a junior, going into my fourth year, and had declared my psychology major. I realized I wanted to pursue admission to graduate school. I spoke with a couple faculty members who told me that I needed a research assistantship in a faculty lab. I looked into clinical faculty labs and applied to a couple. Dr. Lee was new when I joined. He had just accepted his first graduate student. He needed help, so I started that summer.

Were there any experiences, say specific studies, that made you want to join Dr. Lee's lab?

When I first started out I had a very broad interest in clinical psychology. Dr. Lee's lab does research on anxiety, particularly cognitive research on anxiety. I

was interested in mood and anxiety disorders and especially cognitive approaches. I knew nothing myself, so I was really interested in almost anything.

Did you do a senior thesis?

No, actually. I have been in the lab for three years and I am still part of the lab even though I graduated. I am paid to work a few hours a week as a research technician in the lab, in addition to my full-time job as a line therapist for children with autism. I actually worked in four different labs in the department. I'm not sure that would work for everybody. But between these labs, even though I don't have any publications yet, there are some papers in the works that I will be an author on.

What did working in these different labs offer toward your experience and efforts to get into graduate school?

After working in Dr. Lee's lab for a year, I joined Dr. Cahill's lab. I worked on the project of a graduate student who studied anger. I wanted to have some experience with emotion and emotion regulation. Working in these labs I got to know many of the clinical grad students in the department. Two students in Dr. Woods' lab were looking for someone to help with their work

that was in a similar area to what I was doing in Dr. Lee's lab.. Around this time I also talked with Dr. Fleming, who was doing some research on emotion and emotion regulation, and uses psychophysiology techniques. I was interested in that, so I thought why not?

What are the key recommendations you would make to a student looking to go to graduate school?

I think that if you want a Ph.D. it is necessary to be a research assistant. Actually working on research projects allows you to

"If you really like psychology, doing research is the most exciting thing in the world."

learn each step of the process, from design, to data collection and analysis, to writing up the results. But in the end, how much you get from your lab experience heavily depends on how much effort and initiative you put into

it. Graduate school, especially Ph.D. programs are hard to get into, so you really need to work hard. There are plenty of other options, like a masters degree in social work to do therapy, or business or other fields. If you really like psychology, doing research is the most exciting thing in the world. You can do science and discover and learn new things every day. The field of psychology is extremely young and there are tons of discoveries to be made.

The Benefits of Field Placement Experience

Field placements are essentially volunteering or working in a psychology-related field for course credit. Having such experience is a great resume builder. It also allows you to apply what you have learned in your courses to real-world problems. Doing field placement work has several important practical benefits as well. If you are dedicated and capable, your field placement supervisor can serve as an excellent resource for career development, help you network with other professionals in the field, and write letters of recommendation for you.

FINDING A FIELD PLACEMENT

Finding a field placement requires some initiative. While there are a number of more standard sites (see panel to right), there are hundreds more organizations in the Milwaukee area that are possible sites. For tips on finding a site check out the [Field Placements](#) page on the department website.



Beyond the Classroom: Field Placements

An interview with Ashley Emond ('13) about Milwaukee County Behavioral Health

Interviewed by Emily Jakubowski ('14)

Where are you conducting your placement?

I'm at the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division with the SAIL-AODA Department. (Service Access to Independent Living-Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse).

What do you do on a typical day at your placement?

I'm in meetings watching and observing everything they are doing. The staff discuss client screenings, level of care the patient needs, ways to best help them through their recovery, and why they think the patient deserves this. The other part of my job is filing paperwork from the agencies that refer our clients, keeping documentation on therapists and doctors, and entering data.

How did you find your placement?

My aunt is helping with the mental health re-design program for the county, so I asked her if they had internships available. She passed my name from one person, who passed to another, until I ultimately got to my current supervisor.

How many hours a week do you work? How many weeks?

About 8-9 hours per week. I will work 150 hours by the end of the semester.

What kind of population do you work with?

I've seen all ages 17 through 60, a mix of gender and race. The patients have mental health issues or issues with drugs or alcohol. Normally it's both. And they have been referred to us through hospitals, doctors, or psychiatrists. One older lady was so grateful we were finally there to help her she started crying.

What is your favorite thing about your placement?

Sitting in on the meetings with the patients. I've met a couple people with schizophrenia and other disorders. It's interesting to see the disorders in real life, rather than reading about them in a textbook. I was able to ask minor questions to a patient; he was someone that loved to draw, so I asked him what kind of drawing he did. I got a preview of what it's like being a therapist.

What is your least favorite thing about your placement?

Filing, a lot of filing (background checks, license copies, and insurance information). It wasn't fun. It has to be done in a certain and specific way to keep everything organized and the same. I ask a lot of questions.

How do you think doing the placement might help you in the future?

I shadow everyone and they explain to me what they do. I'm slowly putting all of the pieces together. I sat in on a redesign meeting a week or two ago, and someone gave me their card for another field placement. So I'm meeting people and that helps me get my foot in the door for the future.

Have you learned anything at your placement that surprised you?

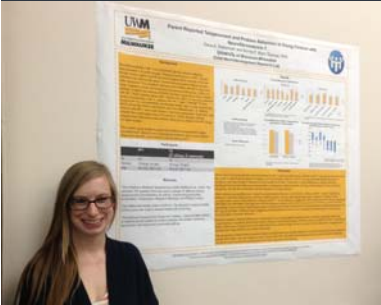
It just opened up my eyes as to what goes on and seeing it instead of reading about it. At a meeting we were introducing ourselves and I said "I'm just an intern" but everyone immediately said not *just* an intern! They treat me with respect.

Example Field Placement Sites

UWM Psychology students have done field placement work at numerous agencies in the Milwaukee area (and some outside southeast Wisconsin), including:

COPE Services Crisis Line
Easter Seals
Milwaukee County Mental Health
Milwaukee County Zoo

Running Rebels
Sojourner Truth Center
Walker's Point Youth and Family Center
Wisconsin Early Autism Project



Psi Chi

Are you a strong student? Consider applying for admission to the UWM chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. Dana Haberman (pictured above) is the current president of the UWM chapter and can tell you more about Psi Chi if you are interested.

OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Want to help put together PsychNews?

Want to be a Psychology peer mentor?

Want to have a Psychology peer mentor?

Contact Dr. Larson – laroncl@uwm.edu for more information about any of these opportunities, or simply if you have comments, suggestions, or questions regarding the Psychology program.

Tips for Timely Completion of Your Psychology Major

- **Don't wait to take Psych 210.**

Psych 210 is a prerequisite for 325, which in turn is a prerequisite for the advanced labs. If you delay 210 it will just delay the other courses too.

- **Be aware of the GPA requirement to enroll in Psych 325.**

You need an average GPA of 2.62 across Psych 101 and Psych 210 to be eligible to enroll in Psych 325. If you don't achieve this GPA you will need to retake 101 or 210.

- **You must take Psych 325 before the advanced lab courses.**

Psych 325 and the advanced labs cannot be taken simultaneously.

- **Register early for Psych 325 and the advanced labs.**

These courses fill up quickly! Remember, it never hurts to email the instructor if the class is full. Showing up on the first day of class is also wise.

Undergraduate Student Accomplishments

- **Melanie Wamboldt ('14)** was one of six UWM students selected to present a poster at the annual Posters on the Rotunda event at the state capitol building in Madison on April 17th. She presented research conducted with graduate student Danny Stout and Dr. Christine Larson.

- **Dana Haberman ('13)** (above left) won the Undergraduate Student Poster Award at the 16th annual Association of Graduate Students in Psychology Research Symposium for work she conducted with Dr. Bonnie Klein-Tasman.

- **Psychology students elected to Phi Beta Kappa in spring 2013**

Sarah Austinson	Zachary Harper	Dagong Ran
Joseph Aitken	Zachary Hosale	Mary Reamer
Francis Biebel	Christopher Jeske	Marissa Reik
Robyn Brauer	Brianne Kluge	Colby Shoemaker
David Cassini	Melanie LaChapelle	Olivia Smith
Leon Dixon	Joshua Lyrenmann	Rebecca Tremmel
Matthew Drake	Logan Marg	Samantha Tucker
Jessica Fahser	Ian Michel	Jessica Wilson
Samantha Gonnering	Claribel Morales	Alexander Wissing
Dana Haberman	Taylor Morrison	Kaylin Yohn
Luke Haroldson	Molly Priote	

- **If you know of an undergraduate accomplishment** you wish to share please email [Dr. Larson](mailto:Dr.Larson).