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This past January, 20 UST students (including some students from Macalester and Elmhurst College) had the opportunity to travel throughout Germany while earning psychology credits. The 27-day course, taught by Dr. Elise Amel (UST) and Dr. Christie Manning (Macalester), was Conservation Psychology in Germany. Conservation psychology is the scientific study of the reciprocal relationship between human behavior and the natural environment.

The students were able to gain a thorough understanding of the various psychological principles associated with conservation behavior while traveling through Cologne, Bochum, Hamburg, Goehrde, and Berlin (with a side trip to Strasbourg, France). Germany has recently emerged as a

world leader in sustainability, one of the main topics in conservation psychology. Traveling to Germany allowed students to learn about this topic through first-hand experience in a culture that is many steps ahead of the U.S. The value of such a cultural experience was noted by marketing and business communications major Nick Ostersaas, who said, "I thought

it was a great experience, seeing first hand how people in Germany practiced conservation and sustainability instead of just reading about it in books here at St. Thomas." Senior psychology major Scott Dillon said, "by actually living in Germany for a month, you really see how more sustainable behaviors like a well run public transportation system not only aren't a burden, but are better and more convenient when it comes to daily life as well."

Spending an average of two hours per day in the classroom, plus frequent university visits, guest lectures, and city tours, students were still left with ample time to explore Germany and experience the culture first hand. Other extracurricular activities included exploration of the destination cities, as well as trips to surrounding cities. Main attractions included the Berlin Wall, the Brandenburg Gate, an optional trip to a concentration camp, as well as many other places.

The course comes strongly recommended by all students



who participated. "It was a life-changing experience," said biology major/psychology minor Rae Lyons, "the course material was extremely interesting and extremely applicable. Whether you are a psychology student or a business student, you will enjoy the class." Another student pointed out that the trip is a great way to earn psychology credits while studying abroad.

The Psychology of Sustainability in Germany will also be offered as a class during J-term 2010. The priority deadline for the 2010 course is Thursday April 9, 2009, though applications will be taken after this date. Any questions concerning the course and its contents should be directed to Dr. Elise Amel: elamel@stthomas.edu

A look at some of
the student
research that is
currently being
done in the UST
Psychology
Department



Amy Westmoreland presenting her research at the McNair Poster Symposium.

Psychology Student Research

McNair Poster Symposium

Psychology students Amy Wetmoreland and Aubrey Strenger presented their research at the McNair Poster Symposium.

Amy Westmoreland has been conducting research with Dr. Buffy Smith in the department of sociology. The study, *A Qualitative Analysis of Asian American Attitudes Towards Interracial Romantic Relationships*, utilizes the Gordon Allport's Contact

Hypothesis (1954), that interaction between members of different racial groups can lead to positive racial attitudes. Therefore she hypothesized that Asian-

American respondents who engage in interracial friendships develop more positive

racial attitudes towards interracial romantic relationships than respondents who primarily engage in interracial friendships.

Data has been collected by measuring the respondents' current and past history of interracial friendships, racial diversity of respondents' schools from elementary to college and the racial diversity of the neighborhood in which they grew up. At this point Amy is still at the stage of collecting and transcribing data she hopes to submit for publication by next fall.

Aubrey Strenger presented her research entitled *Mother-son and Romantic Relationships Study*. This study is an investigation of the correlation between mother-son attachment and the level of interpersonal trust that son's female roman-



Aubrey Strenger discussing her research at the McNair Symposium

tic partner has for him in young adulthood. In addition, she is also trying to establish the quality of the young adult couple's relationship as a moderating variable between mother-son attachment and interpersonal trust experienced by the female partner in the romantic relationship with that son in adulthood.

New Faculty Update

A new faculty member has been hired to join the psychology department in the fall of 2009.

Dr. Uta Wolfe has been back and forth between Minnesota and New York. She received her B.A. in Psychology as well as her subsequent PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She stayed in Minnesota as an Assistant Professor at University of St. Mary's in Minneapolis, then moved to New York University to do postdoctoral research in psychology. She then came back

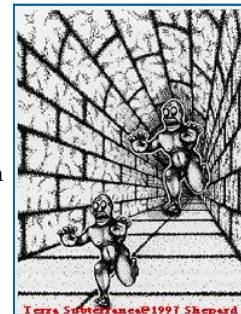
to Minnesota to be an Assistant Professor in psychology at St. Olaf. After a few years she returned to New York to teach at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva.

Dr. Wolfe's research interests relate to perception, visual representation in the brain and the resultant behavior, more specifically adjusting motor plan due to conditioned representation of high cost/risk representation in

the visuo-motor system. In addition, she investigates how the

brain creates visual illusions to explain differences in input between the two eyes. Some questions she is hoping to answer are which biases in the visual system could explain optical illusions and do these illusions influence one's movements?

The Psychology Department looks forward to welcoming Dr. Wolfe in the fall!



Student Research...Continued

URCS Collaborative Inquiry Grant Awards:

Kendall Beck and Amanda McClellan will be participating in research with Dr. Scott to explore the relationship between self-objectification and connectedness to nature and the implications of that relationship for women's environmental attitudes and behaviors.

Al Johnson also received a research grant this semester to work with Dr. Giebenhain, Dr. Schmalenberger from the music department and their colleagues in Duluth continuing their research on breast cancer survivors. Drs. Giebenhain and Schmalenberger have already interviewed female musicians who are breast cancer survivors concerning their well-being. They found these women shared resiliency. Al is now reviewing psychological and medical literature on resiliency in order to identify common resilience themes across participants.

Katelyn Terry was awarded a Collaborative Inquiry Grant

for a project investigating the effect of PowerPoint slides on comprehension of lecture information. Alisa Schilmoeller was awarded a Collaborative Inquiry Grant for a project investigating the relationship between visual working memory and thinking about the future. Both Katelyn and Alisa are working with Dr. Robinson-Riegler.

Minnesota Psychological Association:

Nikki Arola and Brittni Peterson are presenting research on love and relationships that they have been conducting under Dr. Buri at the 73rd annual convention of the Minnesota Psychological Association in Plymouth, MN on April 25th. The paper called *Thinking of yourself first is no sin today* investigated the extent to which Selfishness is predictive of Attitudes Toward Divorce, Ambivalence Toward Marriage, and the Likelihood of Personally Leaving a Struggling Marriage. The results of the study

are discussed in light of the recent article (Twenge, 2008) reporting that nearly 70% of college students today reveal a degree of selfishness that is greater than was the average just 30 years ago.

Midwestern Psychological Association Conference:

Amy Gosselin will be presenting a poster at the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) Conference in Chicago from April 30th - May 1st. Amy studied the extent to which the association of personality with autobiographical memory influences the encoding or retrieval processes of these memories. The results indicated that personality differences in autobiographical memory relate to encoding rather than retrieval.

Presentations:

Jake Forsman has been working with Dr. Amel on research about how common 'green' behaviors (reducing high-impact behaviors such as

flying and eating meat-heavy diets) are at work, and how they relate to traditional I/O constructs of job satisfaction and workplace commitment. They have also been presenting work on goal setting and the use of particular words when trying to empower people to do more pro-environmental behaviors. They are currently preparing to collect more data the first weekend in May at the Living Green Expo if anyone would like to plan to join them!

MUPC:

The 44th annual Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference (MUPC) will be held on April 18 at St. Ben's. Several students will be presenting at this conference. Dr. Buri will have all 37 of his Learning and Memory students presenting. Dr. Robinson-Riegler will have nine students presenting from his Research in Cognition course, and Dr. Giebenhain will have two students presenting. Congratulations to these students!

Present Your Research!

Psychology Department Conference @ UST:

On Friday, April 24, students will have the opportunity to present their research at the Psychology Department Research Conference held from 2:00-3:00 in the LL JRC hallway.

MidBrains @ Macalester:

The annual MidBrains Conference provides a forum for undergraduate students in the Midwest to present research findings, to attend research lectures and special panels, and to meet other undergraduate students interested in the neurosciences. Representatives from several major research universities are also present to

discuss graduate school opportunities. MidBrains 2009 will be held May 2 at Macalester College from 8 am to 5 pm. Registration and abstract submission is now open. To register or submit an abstract visit: <http://www.macalester.edu/midbrainconference/>

Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference @ St. Bens:

On Saturday, April 18, students can present their research at the annual Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference (MUPC). Registration and abstract submission is now open until April 6. Go to: <https://www.csbsju.edu/psychology/studentresources/newsletter/.aspx>

Psychology Awards

Research Achievement Award:

This award recognizes psychology majors of any year who have displayed excellence in psychological research.

To apply submit a research report in APA format. Specify whether research projects were done as part of a class or as an independent study. Individual students and/or groups of students may apply, be sure to indicate which group members are applying for the award. Projects will be judged on several dimensions, including: theoretical complexity, quality of method and execution and overall quality of research report. See Julie Jepma in the department office for a copy of the detailed evaluation sheet.

Outstanding Student Service:

The purpose of this award is to recognize senior students with a minimum GPA in psychology coursework who have displayed excellence in service related to psychology throughout their college education.

To apply students must compose a 2-3 page statement describing services that they have participated such as, unpaid internships, creative innovations, Psychology Club, tutoring, and/or other volunteer work during their academic experience. Service for which course credit was earned does not qualify. The statement must explain how these experiences have enriched student's psychology education and personal development. An unofficial transcript/degree audit must be included with the statement.

Ward M. Winton - Outstanding UST Psychology Major Award:

This award seeks to recognize a senior who has displayed broad excellence in psychology, just as Dr. Winton did while on the faculty at UST. Dr. Winton was highly regarded in the classroom, enthusiastic and productive in research, and active in service to the psychol-

ogy department, the university, and the larger community. This award will go to a student who has established an outstanding academic (3.5 or better GPA in psychology coursework, 3.0 or better overall GPA), research, and service record, as well as demonstrating enthusiasm and dedication to psychology.

To apply submit a 2-3 page statement describing how you demonstrate the qualities exemplified by Dr. Winton (e.g., tell us about your enthusiasm for psychology, how it developed while at UST, and how you plan to use psychology to benefit the larger community), transcript/degree audit, and a vita (or summary of activities/resume that demonstrates active participation in psychology outside the classroom e.g. Psychology Club, Psi Chi, research collaborations with faculty, research presentations at conferences, psychology internships, etc.)



Congratulations to Holden Clauson, Sarah Wozniak, and Megan Ellingson for meeting the requirements to be recognized by the National Honor Society in Neuroscience (Nu Rho Psi).

The purpose of this society is to award students who have excelled in neuroscience related disciplines and to encourage professional interest in the field. As of 2007, Nu Rho Psi exists as the Beta chapter in

Nu Rho Psi

Minnesota following its establishment in 2006.

Currently at St. Thomas there are three routes to meet the criteria for Nu Rho Psi membership. The student should have a minimum overall GPA of 3.2 and a 3.5 GPA in 3 of the following courses of the specified routes.

Psychology route: PSYC 206 AND PSYCH 322 AND PSYCH 401

Biology Route: BIOL 204 AND BIOL 354 AND BIOL 330 OR BIOL 349

Neuroscience Route: PSYC 206 PSYC 401 BIOL 204 BIOL 354 BIOL 330

Prospective inductees will be inducted at the next Neuroscience Club meeting. Contact Dr. Prichard if you meet these requirements.

Faculty Highlights

Recent Publications:

Dr. Tauer and 2007 graduate John Kingsbury published a paper called, *The ESPN Effect: How Slam Dunks Affect Individualism and Optimism for Athletic Success* in the *International Journal of Sport Communication*. In the study, children watched highlights of easy or difficult basketball tasks performed by White or Black players to determine media effects on children's optimism towards their own future basketball careers. Results showed that participants were more optimistic about their own future basketball careers after watching athletes of the same race make passes than

after watching the passes by athletes of a different race. Overall, the findings suggest that the media can have an effect on children's optimism towards their own future basketball careers.

Upcoming Research Talks:

On Tuesday, March 31, Dr. Roxanne Prichard will be giving a talk on a paper entitled *Sleep patterns and predictors of disturbed sleep in a large population of college students: Why don't Tommies get good sleep?* In the study, sleep patterns of college students were characterized by several surveys and scales. The results showed over half of the population were

considered poor sleepers, which affected physical and psychological health.

The final research talk will be delivered on Thursday, April 16th by Dr. Britain Scott.

Both talks are scheduled from 12:00 to 1:00 in JRC LL 01.

Love Bytes Blog:

Make sure to check out Dr. Buri's weekly blog called *Love Bytes* at <http://blogs.psychologytoday.com/blog/love-bytes>

Club Announcements

Psychology Club:

The Psychology Club is looking to replace graduating board members so if you are interested in joining council watch for more information. The club will also be participating in the Arch March on Sunday, April 5th.



Neuroscience Club:

Members of the Neuroscience Club will be participating in the Challenge Obesity 5k on Saturday, April 4th followed by a Neuroscience Day @ the Como Zoo. Members will also be supporting Multiple Sclerosis fundraising by participating in the MS walk on Sunday, May 3rd.

On Tuesday, April 21st, the Club will be hosting a speaker, Dr.

Angus McDonald

III from the University of Minnesota. Dr. McDonald is interested in the brain mechanisms underlying mental illness, especially schizophrenia and psychosis. The time and location is to be decided, so watch for more information.



Department Announcements

Annual Graduation Reception:

The annual graduation reception for graduating psychology majors will be held on Study Monday, May 18th from 3-4 pm.

Psychology Alums:

On the evening of April 24th Psychology Department will be hosting a "wine and appetizers" event in the psychology department for psychology alumni.

Educational Assistants:

This spring three of the current EA's, Sara Padley, Amy Gosselin, and Jessica Connelly, will be graduating. If you are interested in joining Jake Forsman, Nikki Arola and Brittni Peterson as an Educational Assistant next fall, look for information about the application process!

Come visit the EAs! We Have New Hours

Hours: M, T, Th: 5pm-9:30pm, W: 5pm to 8:30pm Sunday: 6pm-9pm

Location: JRC LL09 and LL54

Services: Tutoring, help with research and writing, study sessions, re-searching grad school and internship/job opportunities

Online help: Instant Messenger: AIM: ustpsychology

MSN Messenger: ustpsychology@hotmail.com

Facebook: Search "Psych EAs" and put in a friend request!

This Month in Psychology: March

March 1, 1886 — James McKeen Cattell passed his doctoral examinations at the University of Leipzig under Wilhelm Wundt.

March 3, 1907 — In Vienna, at 10 a.m. on this day, Carl Jung first met Sigmund Freud.

March 4, 1916 — Hans Eysenck was born. Eysenck's factor-analytic theory of personality had as its main components the factors of Introversion/Extraversion and Stability/Instability.

March 8, 1883 — The first formal psychology research laboratory in the United States was founded at John Hopkins University by G. Stanley Hall.

March 10, 1937 — B. F. Skinner became a member of Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology, at the University of Minnesota.

March 20, 1904 — B.F. Skinner was born. Skinner's radical behaviorism provided a systematic analysis of the effects of consequences on behavior. His principles of instrumental conditioning affected nearly every field of psychology.

March 23, 1933 — Philip G. Zimbardo was born. Zimbardo's work has centered on the psychology of social issues. He has studied deindividuation, institutionalized aggression and submission, obedience, shyness, anxiety and affiliation, and the consequences of time orientation.

March 24, 1879 — Wilhelm Wundt submitted a petition to the Royal Saxon Ministry of Education requesting funds to establish a "collection of psychophysical apparatus" at the University of Leipzig. Due to a lack of funds, Wundt established the first psychological laboratory with his personal equipment.

March 26, 1992 — The state of Wisconsin enacted legislation to allow psychologists to admit hospital patients.

March 30, 1896 — The term *psychoanalysis* was first used in a paper by Sigmund Freud, published in French.

March 31, 1596 — René Descartes was born. Descartes was the first great thinker to break with the scholasticism of the Middle Ages. He proposed that the mind and body were separate but interacting entities. Descartes attempted to define the basic qualities of mind, studied properties of the nervous system, and wrote on the optics of vision.