Faculty Thesis Areas

Courtney E. Ahrens
I am broadly interested in community psychology and the psychology of women. My research focuses on violence against women (e.g., sexual assault, domestic violence) with an emphasis on the impact social reactions have on survivors’ physical and psychological health, the role of activism and community involvement on recovery, and the development and evaluation of prevention and intervention programs by community-based crisis centers.

James H. Amirkhan
Health psychology, stress and coping, attribution theory. I am particularly interested in individual differences in the above domains -- e.g., the personality factors that lead one person to confront a stressor and another to avoid it.

Alexander L. Beckman
General area of interest: Physiological psychology
Active areas of research: Brain opioid and other neurotransmitter systems and their role in controlling behavioral and physiological responses; characteristics of brain function during natural states of depression in the hibernator model.

Dan Chiappe
Areas of interest: Higher cognition, especially metaphor comprehension. My metaphor research examines the processes of comparison and categorization used to understand figurative language. I am currently looking into working memory functions that are involved in metaphor comprehension. I am also interested in evolutionary approaches to higher cognition, particularly in the issue of modularity.

Young-Hee Cho
Empirical and theoretical studies of decision-making under risk: Testing the empirical validity of fundamental assumptions of decision theories using gambling simulations. Medical decision-making.
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Research Interests</th>
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<td>Chi-Ah Chun</td>
<td>My broad area of research interest is in minority mental health. Currently, I have two active research programs. The first one examines the role of cultural values in stress, coping, and distress. I am a member of a multi-disciplinary research team at RAND corporation that conducts a psychiatric epidemiological study on the prevalence rates of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the Long Beach Cambodian refugee population. To complement this large scale effort, I am also preparing a qualitative study on how the refugees’ Buddhist beliefs influence their coping with the horrific experiences of the Khmer Rouge regime and their flight from the regime. My other research program examines the interrelations among acculturation, ethnic/racial identity, and various cultural constructs. The project, entitled VIP for Values, Identity, and Psychological status, began in 1995 with two other investigators. Data collection is still on-going. Preliminary findings have been presented at WPA, APA, and AAPA conventions by graduate and undergraduate students.</td>
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<td>Michael E. Connor</td>
<td>Two areas -- First, parenting issues with emphasis on fathers/fathering. The second area pertains to sports and athletic activities, particularly dealing with performance enhancement.</td>
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<td>Martin S. Fiebert</td>
<td>Interracial dating; meditation; men as victims of domestic violence.</td>
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<td>Dennis G. Fisher</td>
<td>Areas of interest include the following: Drug Abuse, Substance Abuse and Infectious Disease, Reliability and Validity Studies, Cluster Analysis, Survival Analysis, Logistic Regression, and Clinical Trials. My publications have mostly been in the area of drug abuse, hepatitis and needle exchange, with a secondary interest in psychometrics. (Participation restricted to graduate students only.)</td>
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<td>Kenneth F. Green</td>
<td>Recent work has focused on the conditioned place preference paradigm in rats as a model of the learning processes that may be involved in the development of cravings, particularly in drug addicts, but also seen in people who have trouble giving up cigarettes, sweets and so on. There is a large literature on drugs that block the acquisition of cravings, but virtually no literature on drugs that block an established craving. It is the latter problem that I am addressing. Sidelights include individual differences defined according to taste preferences and other measures that may reflect differential activity in opioid and dopaminergic reward systems. I am developing an interest in examining the significance of taste reactivity in humans.</td>
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| Joellen T. Hartley            | Major area of research: Cognitive aging
Specific projects:
1. Aging and memory for prose
2. Age-change in the reading processes that support reading skill
3. EEG correlates of cognitive aging
4. How cellular telephones affect attention in older adults
5. Older race car drivers |
Scott L. Hershberger  
Multivariate Statistics; measurement; latent variable modeling; sexual orientation and behavior.

Ralph B. Hupka  
Research on human emotions with an emphasis on jealousy.

John R. Jung  
Alcohol use and abuse. Social support and health.

Robert Kapche  
Illusory correlations are false, usually immediate, memories of the strength of associations between two sets of stimuli (e.g., What percentage of the time did people from a particular group act in a certain way?). They have been shown to affect assessment of individuals and of groups. They are one cause of stereotypes. The research will investigate personality variables that may affect illusory correlations.

William Kelemen  
I have interests in several areas of memory and cognition. Much of my research has focused on people’s ability to monitor and control their own cognitive processes (a process known as “metacognition,” which is sometimes described as “what you know about what you know”). Metacognition is important in many areas of psychology and I have worked on diverse projects recently, including (a) the effects of caffeine on cognition and metacognition, (b) drug expectancy effects (especially regarding caffeine and nicotine) and individuals’ beliefs about their memory, and (c) prospective memory (memory for future intentions).

Diane W. Lee  
Primary areas of interest: Psychology of Learning, Biological Psychology, and Cognitive Ethology. Specifically, my research efforts address the role that the birth of new neurons (neurogenesis) plays in learning and memory using birds as the primary animal model. By integrating techniques, research can range from field and laboratory investigations of learning to the neurobiology mediating learning and memory formation. The research is currently directed along three basic lines of inquiry. First, when and where in the avian brain does adult neurogenesis occur? Second, what types of learning experiences and/or fluctuations in hormone levels influence the rate at which neurogenesis occurs and the direction new neurons take? And third, how does neurogenesis influence subsequent learning and memory?

Kevin B. MacDonald  
I am interested in developmental research with children in virtually any area of social and personality development. I am also interested in personality research on adults as well as any area of research related to evolutionary perspectives on psychology.
Lisa M. Maxfield  
I am a cognitive psychologist with my primary interests in memory and language. I have conducted research investigating many aspects of human memory, including false memories (memories for events which did not occur). One current focus of my memory research is in retrieval induced inhibition (RII). RII is a phenomenon whereby some information is forgotten because we study some other related information.

Another line of my scholarship, now in development, is based upon one of my primary teaching assignments, Critical Thinking. I am working to create training materials for teachers who want to incorporate critical thinking skill development into their courses, based on identifiable critical thinking principles.

William C. Pedersen  
I have 2 general interest areas: (1) the factors that impact aggressive behavior (specifically displaced aggression), and (2) an evolutionary perspective on gender differences in mating preferences and strategies. More detailed information on each of these topics is available on my website: (http://www.csulb.edu/~wpederse).

Wendy Quinton  
My research interests center on social psychology and social issues. The research I have conducted thus far has touched on aspects of a number of topics, including the psychology of self, prejudice and discrimination, social identity and social groups, psychology and law/public policy, and personal and social predictors of mental health. Some of my more specific current interests include investigating the antecedents and consequences of attributions to discrimination and collective action as a response to discrimination.

Sara W. Smith  
Cognition and Psycholinguistics: Shared knowledge and its effects on the production and comprehension of language; the psychology of conversations.

Sherry A. Span  
My research to date has focused on the relation among the following:
1. Risk factors associated with alcohol/substance abuse
2. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
3. Clinical Neuropsychology

Thomas Z. Strybel  
Auditory/Visual Space Perception
Auditory/Visual Displays

Robert E. Thayer  
Interests: Biopsychology of mood and arousal. Particular interests include antecedents of mood such as biological cycles, exercise, sleep and nutrition. Also of interest are manifestations or consequences of mood including self-esteem and other kinds of self-perception. Self-regulation of mood through drugs, food and exercise is also of interest.
www.calmenergy.com
Kim-Phuong Vu  

**Cognition, Human Performance, Human Factors, and Human-Computer Interaction:** One area of my research focuses on the topic of action selection. Action selection refers to how a speeded decision is made regarding which action to take in response to perceptual events. One of the major factors affecting efficiency of action selection is stimulus-response compatibility (SRC), or the mapping of stimulus (or display) elements to responses (or controls). Studies of SRC effects have been a valuable tool to study automatic and intentional processes associated with the response selection that intervene between perception and action. In addition, research in the area of action selection has implications for how displays and controls should be organized and mapped in order to achieve efficient performance, with minimal errors. The other area of my research focuses on more directly on human factors (designing products for human use) and human-computer interaction. My work in this area includes use of metacognitive judgments to predict computer expertise and human factors issues in Web design, computer security, and Web privacy.

David J. Whitney  

1. Personnel selection and Employment testing  
   - Effectiveness of interview coaching  
   - Applicant perceptions of selection systems  
   - Test-taking response strategies

2. Program Evaluation  
   - Formative and summative evaluation using quantitative and qualitative approaches

3. Individual and organizational adoption of seismic hazards adjustments  
   - Investigation of factors influencing adoption of earthquake planning and preparedness