

Department of Psychological Sciences
Alumni Advisory Council Meeting
Friday, October 6, 2017
Bluemont Hall, Room 021
Minutes

Members Present: Milt Ahlerich, Gail Antenen, Mitch Brigell, Thomas Clark, Will Conaway, Richard Felton, Frank Ferraro, Janet Gee, Amy Gross, J. Andy Karafa, Sandi McCoy Kramos, Desirae McKenzie Moreno, Doug Peterson, Steve Quackenbush, Kenneth Sewell, Rick Thomas, Mike Troutman, and Kelly Watson

Others Present: Kimberly Kirkpatrick, Bethany Plakke, Lester Loschky, Jason Walls, Mike Young, Emily Mahoney, and various other members of faculty.

Call to Order: Alumni Advisory Council Chair Frank Ferraro called the meeting to order with introductory remarks welcoming everyone.

Introduction of Advisory Council members. We went around the room and each member of the Alumni Advisory Council and faculty and staff introduced themselves.

Introduction of new faculty and staff members:

Bethany Plakke (BN/AL) and Jason Walls (Academic Advisor) introduced themselves. Each made a brief introduction about their academic and educational backgrounds and areas of interest.

Biomedical Research grant update:

Kim Kirkpatrick discussed the COBRE grant update with the group. K-State, partnered with Wichita State and Kansas University Medical, received the \$10.6 million grant.

- Psychological Sciences department also partnered with the Engineering complex for data analysis and Chemistry department.
- The grant was 12 weeks old at the time of the meeting and in its early stages of roll out.
- The official website has been created and is fully functional. Sixteen research staff, a lot of them students, as well as the grant manager were hired.
- There continues to be one position to be filled at the time of the meeting (veterinary technician).
- An advisory committee consisting of top members in their respective fields of research has been recruited.
- The Psychological Sciences department has hosted two invited speakers in various fields of research as well as brown bags round tables.
- Launched a faculty hire process for Cognitive program for this year (2017) and will be hiring for Behavioral Neuroscience for 2018. Update: Dr. Matt Wisniewski will be

joining the department this fall. His research involves the neural basis of auditory learning.

- Building and renovating research spaces.
- Information tracking and research systems have been put into place. K-State webpage update.

Alumni Advisory Council Engagement and update on changes

Dr. Young discussed efforts by the department to develop a mentorship program, marketing plans, and alumni information inspired by the book *Finding Jobs with a Psychology Bachelor's Degree*. The website changes have focused more on career engagement and ease of use for potential students and their families. Jason discussed with the alumni the use of their information educational and career biographical information and its use with potential and current students. Various Alumni gave feedback with regard to viability of limiting their information to only undergraduate education and how it would relate to early career readiness in a broader perspective. Further discussion of how the department could subtly communicate the need for a broad based psychological education in the era of parental and student questions focused primarily on employment prospects and relative early career income. One suggestion was to use only information of those alumni who earned an undergraduate degree and worked for some time before entering graduate school. This would more easily illustrate a career path that does not include graduate school. Further suggestions were to use the Alumni Advisory Council as a point of contact for finding K-State graduates who did not get graduate degrees initially, the possibility of using video for people to share their stories of K-State or to create a video profile. Finally, internship or co-ops were suggested to help students to job shadow for professional development. Mike and Jason wrapped up by discussing the use of Junior Seminar to advance student professional development, the creation of LinkedIn profiles, and student research engagement. It was suggested by the council to advance STEM program awareness and utilization of a summer STEM program.

Featured Presentation by the Cognitive Program

Heather Bailey, Cognitive program coordinator, introduced herself and discussed professional development changes in the graduate programs. Her research areas are the perception and retention of everyday activities and how they change with age. Her COBRE project examines the use of experience and knowledge in an older population to increase performance in memory tasks. Professional development changes are as follows:

- Updated the preliminary program examination process due to issues in communicating expectation and guidelines. Document has been restructured with two options: Demonstrated knowledge through written examination or NSF/NIH/Post-doctoral style grant, which allows the candidate to prepare for their dissertation and program development.
- Graduate student recruitment, only 3 new Cognitive Graduate student in the last 2 years. Losing students to more prestigious programs continues to be an issue. Some relief should come from graduate student stipend increase allowing K-State to be more

competitive. The increase was from \$10,500 to \$15,000. This increase was paid for by student fees; a supplement for those with Masters degrees is funded by the GTA Supplement Fund which is supported by donations.

- COBRE grant will also help recruitment with the development of the neuroplasticity center, new infrastructure, new faculty member hire, additional post-doctoral students, and a mini-conference.
- Scientific exchange program: Kansas University Medical, Wichita State, North Dakota, and other participating universities will allow student and faculty to training in EEG, mathematical modeling, and provide network and professional development.

Mike Young, Judgment and Decision Making research, primary area of interest is focused on understanding when a subject decides to wait or not when making a decision. EEG research and brain behavior within judgment. Works with three to five undergraduate students in research and one onsite graduate student.

Lester Loschky, Visual Cognition, Perception, Retention, and processing of information subjects encounter in their visual environment. Works with six graduate students, three are finishing their PhDs in May of 2018, and thirteen undergraduate research students. His lab has two state-of-the-art eye trackers.

Gray Brase, Judgement and Decision Making research, social decisions, statistical reasoning, medical test results, and errors in calculations. Social decision-making, exchanges and threats. Works with three graduate students, five to six undergraduate students in his lab.

Additional points and suggestions made through discussion with Alumni Advisory Council:

- Roughly 60% of undergraduate students who work in the Cognitive lab go to graduate school but not in cognitive
- There is a lack of general focus by the department to help find internships for students. Departmental incentives and encouragement is needed for faculty participation.
- Undergraduate and Master's level job fairs are helpful for finding internship sites.
- More engagement of local and alumni based industry collaborations for sponsorship

(General Discussion with Alumni Advisory Council) Numbers of students from labs who go onto graduate school is around 60% for each Cognitive member however most go into Therapy, School Psychology, or other areas.

Department Head's Report. A detailed outline of Mike's report was included with the agenda and is attached to these minutes (see attachment). He selectively covered many items.

Approval of Minutes of 2016 Alumni Advisory Council meeting. The minutes from 2016 meeting were approved without correction.

Frank Ferraro and Alumni Advisory Council positions for 2018:

- **Janet Gee:** Chair
- Nominations for 2019 Chair, **Desirae McKenzie Moreno**

- Setting the date for the meeting and issues/problems with the dates

Report by Emily Mahoney from the K-State foundation: Emily reviewed and discussed the K-State foundation goals.

- Meeting with people one-on-one
- Alumni engagement, board of trustees, all of the College of Arts and Sciences departments
- Help facilitate gifts, annuities, and contributions to the department and university
- K-State Foundation 2016 fund raising \$152.6 million in total
- Innovation/Inspiration campaign for 2018 was to raise \$1 billion; goal was met and passed; \$1.4 billion by 2020
- Arts and Sciences campaign \$100 million increased to \$125 million due to successful progress
- Psychological Sciences Total Gift Activity for FY2017
 - Pledge: \$450
 - Outright: \$45,476
 - Deferred/ Estate: \$500,000
- Alumni Advisory Council help fundraising:
 - Use network to help fund raise, be ambassadors, be a voice for the department,
 - For the department a travel fund gift of \$75,000 to help fund students' travel for a 4% return.

Adjournment.

Lunch. The group was joined for lunch by the faculty and undergraduate and graduate student leaders.

Research Presentation by Kenneth Sewell. “Hard-Wiring Your Career Path for Flexibility and Growth: The Secret Might be Right Here in Bluemont Hall!”

Following Ken’s discussion attendees divided into two groups and chose which discussion group to attend next:

- **Undergraduate Panel Discussion:** “Career Options With an Undergraduate Degree in Psychological Sciences: Learning From Alumni Experiences”
- **Meet and Greet with Graduate Students:**
 - Behavioral Neuroscience/Animal Learning
 - Cognitive/Human Factors
 - Industrial/Organizational
 - Social/Personality

Research Walkabout. Our graduate students invited all members of the Alumni Advisory Council to visit their research posters and presentations to discuss the students’ research findings.

Dinner: The Alumni Advisory Council was joined by the faculty, their partners, and student leaders in the Purple Pride Conference Room in the Alumni Center.