

Students

Life-Span Developmental Psychology

Current Students

There are currently 13 student members of the graduate program in life-span developmental psychology. We value a wide range of ages and cultural backgrounds among our students. Typically, the number of students admitted each year ranges from three to five. All students receive four years of financial support via assistantships (three years if entering with a Master's degree), plus a tuition waiver. Each graduate student has an office and a computer with internet access and the latest software (e.g., SPSS, Word).



Developmental Students 2007

Back (L-R): [Sarah Stahl](#), [Emily Keener](#), [Mike Verzino](#), [Joe McFall](#), [Jessica Stoltzfus](#), [Marion Young](#), [Megan Clegg-Kraynok](#), [Eric Goedereis](#), [Leo Schlosnagle](#), [Sam Insana](#).

Front (L-R): [Lori Jones](#), [Clare Mehta](#), [Danielle Tomczewski](#).

Alumni of the Life-Span Developmental Program

Every four years or so, four or five developmental alums are invited to return to campus to participate in the Department of Psychology's "Karl Lashley Distinguished Alumni Colloquium Series". The Lashley Distinguished Alumni Series is held in conjunction with the Department's annual "Chili Party" each February. Each year, alumni from one of the four training areas (Life-span Developmental; Behavior Analysis; Clinical Child; Clinical) in the Department return to campus to deliver a colloquium on their current activities. Developmental alumni participated in the series in 2005. The Colloquium Series provides current students with the opportunity to meet alumni and learn how training at WVU prepared them for their selected careers.

Recent graduates of the Life-span Developmental Program are listed below by year in alphabetical order. The year the student entered the program and their faculty mentor is listed in parentheses. Employment information reflects the position obtained upon graduation.

2007 Graduates

Brian Ayotte (entered 2003, worked primarily with Jennifer Margrett). Post-doctoral Fellow, Health Services Research & Development, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC
Dissertation: *Social Cognitive Theory and Physical Activity in Middle-aged and Older Married Couples: A Dyadic Perspective*.

Nichole Elliott (entered 2002, worked primarily with [Katherine Karraker](#)). Parent Educator. Focus on Fathers Program. Philadelphia Health Management Corporation: Resources for Children's Health. Dissertation: *First-Time Mothers' Parenting Knowledge during their Infant's First Year: Relations with Information Sources, Social Support Networks, Maternal Self-Efficacy, and Infant Development*.

Jennifer A. Flinn (entered 2003, worked primarily with [JoNell Strough](#)). Assistant Professor Department of Psychology, Frostburg State University, Frostburg: MD. Dissertation: *Age and Sex Difference in Problem-Solving Goals and Strategies for Job Relocation and Caregiving Vignettes*.

2006 Graduates

Kristopher J. Kimbler (entered 2001, worked primarily with Jennifer Margrett). Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Troy University, Montgomery, AL. Dissertation: *The effect of experimentally-provided supportive messages on middle-aged and older adults' performance on everyday problems*.

Tara L. Neely (entered 2002, worked primarily with Jennifer Margrett). Assistant Professor, Psychology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA. Dissertation: *The effects of age, instructions, and problem content on everyday problem-solving outcome*.

Rebecca G. Ryan (entered 2002, worked primarily with Matthew Scullin). Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA. Dissertation: *Suggestibility in an adolescent and young adult sample: Age and individual differences*.

Kelly L. Schuller (entered 2001, worked primarily with [JoNell Strough](#)). Research Associate, Biostatistics, Bioinformatics, and Epidemiology Department, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC. Dissertation: *The framing of breast cancer treatment options: How do individual characteristics affect treatment choice?*

S. Melinda Spencer (entered 2001, worked primarily with [Julie Patrick](#)). Kellogg Health Disparities Scholar, Center for Minority Health, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA. Dissertation: *Effects of social support and heterosexism on the psychological well-being of diverse younger and middle-aged adults*.

2005 Graduates

Karri S. Bonner (entered 2000, worked primarily with Matthew Scullin). Assistant Professor, Mansfield University, Department of Psychology, Mansfield, PA. Dissertation: *An assessment of eyewitness accuracy: The integration of suggestibility and identification*.

2004 Graduates

Jenessa C. Johnson (now Jenessa C. Steele; entered 2000, worked primarily with [Julie Patrick](#)). Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Radford University, Radford, VA. Dissertation: *Intraindividual variability and relations between positive affect and physical activity in the daily lives of community-dwelling older women*.

Cheryl L. Wiedman (now Cheryl W. DeLeon; entered 2000, worked primarily with [Katherine Karraker](#)). Assistant Professor of Psychology, Social Sciences Department, Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN. Dissertation: *Correlates of 9-month-old infants' night awakening*.

2003 Graduates

Kristi A. Barnes (entered 1998, worked primarily with [Julie Patrick](#)). Assistant Professor of Psychology, Ohio University Southern, Ironton, OH. Dissertation: *Examining predictors of marital satisfaction among age similar and age dissimilar older couples.*

Rebecca A. Owens (now Rebecca A. Fahy, entered 1999, worked primarily with [JoNell Strough](#)). Assistant Professor, Psychology Department, Nazareth College, Rochester, NY. Dissertation: *Friendship features associated with college students' friendship maintenance and dissolution.*

Jennifer K. Pickard (now Jennifer P. Leszczynski, entered 1999, worked primarily with [JoNell Strough](#)). Assistant Professor, Psychology Department, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, CT. Dissertation: *Contextual variability in early adolescents' state masculinity, femininity, and peer interaction goals.*

Lisa M. Swenson (entered 1998, worked primarily with [JoNell Strough](#)). Assistant Professor of Psychology, Pennsylvania State University at Hazleton, Hazleton, PA. Dissertation: *Adolescent relationship quality and delinquency: Associations with social and cognitive problem-solving performance.*

2002 Graduates

Melissa S. Atkins (entered 1998, worked primarily with [Katherine Karraker](#)). Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Marshall University, Huntington, WV. Dissertation: *The effect of training infant joint visual attention on novel word learning.*

Brady A. Reynolds (entered 1997, worked primarily with [Katherine Karraker](#)). Assistant Professor, Columbus Children's Research Institute, Department of Pediatrics, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. Dissertation: *Impulsivity and friends who smoke as predictors of adolescent smoking.*

2001 Graduates

Leslie A. Cottrell (entered 1998, worked primarily with [Katherine Karraker](#)). Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV. Dissertation: *An expanded model of adolescent caregiving: Its efficacy and relation to adolescent problem behavior.*