

Psycho Philes

University of Houston Department of Psychology
A Newsletter for Faculty, Students, and Staff

Issue 97:6

June 1997

Reminders

☞ **Jun 26:** Telephone directory information due to Mani.

Jun 26: Summer II last day to drop a course or withdraw.

☞ **Jul 3:** Deadline for submissions to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects.

☞ **July 4:** Office will be closed in observance of July 4 holiday.

☞ **Jul 7:** Summer IV first day of class.

☞ **Jul 8:** Last day to register for Summer IV.

☞ **Jul 16:** Summer III last day to drop a course or withdraw.

☞ **Jul 29:** Summer IV last day to drop a course or withdraw.

☞ **Aug 5:** Thesis and dissertation proposals due in college.

☞ **Aug 7:** Last day of classes.

☞ **Aug 8-9:** Final examination period.

For Your Information

❖ Instructional Video Tape Library

For the past year, the department has been working to develop an instructional video tape library. With the help of Dr. Beth Manke, and financial assistance from the Office of the Vice Provost/Academic Affairs and the Houston Assembly of Delphian Chapters, we can now start to set-up the library. The video tape library will be housed in the Academic Office Resource Room. A combination TV/VCR will be made available for viewing the tapes. Faculty, staff, and graduate students who have purchased tapes using departmental resources are asked to return them to Heather Kinnaird for cataloging. Tapes must be cataloged, so they should be returned even if you are currently using them. They can be checked out after cataloging. Please be aware that the tapes are the property of the department, not the instructor of the course. The department has a list of all instructional tapes purchased and the persons requesting the tapes. All tapes should be returned by August 1. A check out system will be in place before the start of the academic year.

❖ Travel Updates

As usual, see Ashraf and Yolizma for details.

TRAVEL EXCEPTIONS: To obtain a travel exception to use a non-contracted agency, travelers must provide quotes from at least 2 of the 3 contracted travel agencies along with a quote from the non-contracted agency.

ACCIDENTS IN RENTAL CARS: If you have an accident in a rental car, you must notify the rental location within 24 hours. Failure to do so will invalidate the contract insurance coverage leaving the traveler responsible for all damages outside the vehicle. The insurance contract does not provide coverage for persons and property inside the vehicle.

AVOID PROMOTIONAL RENTAL CAR RATES: Do not take a promotional rate when renting from Advantage or Avis regardless of how cheap it sounds. Promotional rates include no insurance coverage. If you accept the promotional rate and add on the insurance, the total cost will usually be much higher than the contract rate and the Comptroller will not reimburse payment to a contract vendor for services that are included in the contract. If you take the promotional rate but do not take the insurance and you have an accident, you are responsible for all damages.

BUSINESS TRAVEL INSURANCE: Employees traveling in the course and scope of University business are afforded coverage under the University's blanket accident policy. Coverage is available to all active, full time (30 hrs/wk or more) employees. The amount of the principal sum of benefits is 5 times the covered person's salary subject to a maximum of \$250,000. If injury results in loss of life, the carrier will pay the principal sum. Payments vary on loss of limb, sight, speech or hearing.

☛ Dates for Membership List Submissions

The following is a list of dates for the submission of professional organizations to be included on the approved membership list. All requests must be

received by Mani by 10:00 am on the following dates:
June 20, 1997, July 11, 1997, August 1, 1997,
August 29, 1997, September 26, 1997, October 24,
1997, November 21, 1997, December 19, 1997

❖ Web Address for Currency Conversion

This address provide a simple, current means of converting foreign currency to U.S. dollars---especially helpful for documenting foreign travel expenditures. Contact the site at: <http://www.xe.net/currency/index.shtml>

❖ Fee Changes for Express, Certified, Registered, & Insured Mail

Effective, June 8, the U.S. Postal Service has changed some fees for accountable mail. A summary of the changes are:

Express Mail—Maximum indemnity has been increased from \$500 to \$5,000. Additional insurance fee above \$500. Waiver of signature cannot not be used when additional insurance above \$500 is purchased. For negotiable items, currency or bullion, mailed as Express, the maximum indemnity is \$15.

Certified Mail—Fee increased from \$1.10 to \$1.35.

Registered Mail—Option not to insure is only items valued at \$100 or below. Maximum coverage remains at \$25,000.

Insured Mail—Maximum insurance available on domestic mail has been increased from \$600 to \$5,000.

From the Academic Office

📁 Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the commencement ceremony on May 17, 1997. Graduation went very well. At last count 308 undergraduates, 28 M.A., and 18 Ph.D. Psychology graduates walked during the ceremonies.

📁 Registration: the last day to register for Summer IV is midnight July 8. If you register for summer session IV during June 18-July 8, you must pick up your fee bill July 10 at the University Center.

📁 Thesis and dissertation proposals are due in the College of Social Sciences for binding on August 5. All forms are available in the Academic Advising Office.

📁 Summer Graduation: You must file for graduation by June 19.

📁 Instructors: Students who are not on your class roll send the to E-Cullen before the last day of class. The student must clear all financial and/or registration problems before the last day, so that they will show up on the final grade sheet.

📁 Tricia and Tran will be attending the NACADA Summer Advising Institute in Madison, WI, June 22-27.

Scholarships and Fellowships

J. Wattamull Scholarships

Approximately four individual scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 each will be available for academic year 1998. Qualified candidates will be from the East Indian region of the world, regardless of race or ethnicity. Both graduates and undergraduates are eligible and past recipients may re-apply. The application deadline is August 5. Applications are available in room 104 Heyne.

Shell Scholarship

The department is currently accepting nominations of graduate students for Shell Scholarships. These are \$1,000 awards, payable in \$500 increments each of the long semesters. This is a competitive award. There are several scholarships available. Nominations should be directed to Dr. Mariotto.

All scholarship/fellowship nominations or applications must be turned in to Dr. Mariotto. They will then be forwarded to the appropriate offices for processing. Program Directors who wish to know the available fund balances in department scholarship accounts should contact Mani.

Faculty Promotions & New Hires

The final tenure-track faculty vacancy has been filled by **Dr. Ana F. Abraido-Lanza**. Dr. Abraido-Lanza will join the department as an assistant professor in social psychology. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. from The Graduate School, City University of New York (CUNY) and is currently on a postdoctoral research fellowship at Columbia University, School of Public Health. Dr. Abraido-Lanza will begin her position with us in September.

We welcome visiting professor and scholar, **Dr. Marise Born** to the department for the next eight months. Dr. Born comes to us from Vrije University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and is engaging in a research and teaching collaboration with the industrial/organizational program. Her fields of interest include meta-analysis, assessment centers, psychology of entrepreneurial and personality characteristics of entrepreneurs, personnel selection, gender issues, and development of psychological inventories for individual differences. In addition to her research activities, Dr. Born will teach a graduate seminar this fall (title forthcoming). Her office is located in 129D, telephone 3-8525. Please stop in and introduce yourself.

What's New In Research

PUBLICATIONS

Johnson, D., 1997. "Overview of serious mental illness," *Clinical Psychology Review*.

NEW RESEARCH AWARDS

Dr. Melanie Duckworth, Sponsor: University of Houston Program to Enhance External Research. Project Title: Cardiovascular Reactivity in Violence-Exposed Youths.

Dr. Beth Manke, Sponsor: University of Houston Program to Enhance External Research. Project Title: Genetic and Environmental Contributions to Humor: Development of a Houston Twin Registry.

Dr. Gordon L. Paul, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor of Psychology, presented workshops on "Best Treatment Programs for Public Psychiatric Facilities" and Best Information to Support Clinical and Management Decisions" at Connecticut Valley Hospital, Middletown, CT, on May 20 and 21, 1997. The presentation was selected for joint sponsorship by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and by the Clinical Employee's Union (1199) from 40 competitive proposals submitted by union employees statewide.]

Dr. Dale Johnson recently returned from Driebergen, the Netherlands, where he presented a workshop on helping mental health professionals organize groups for relatives of people with serious mental illness. Dr. Johnson also has a new book out entitled, "Mental illnesses: New ways of thinking about families." It was published in English and Russian by the Geneva Initiative Press.

Dr. Richard I. Evans, Distinguished University Professor of Psychology, and Director of the Social Psychology Program and Director of the Social Psychology/Behavioral Medicine Research Group, is Co-Editor of a major report being published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The report is entitled "Cost Benefit/Cost Effectiveness Research of Drug Abuse Prevention: Implications for Programming and Policy. Dr. Evans' Co-Editor is **Dr. William J. Bukoski**, Associate Director for Prevention Research, Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research at NIDA. Dr. Evans' lead article in this publication is entitled " A Historical Perspective on Effective Prevention". Other contributors include the nation's leading researchers in prevention research.

Update: TiMESS Project

Have you ever wondered why children from the same family are often so different from one another? A new research project headed by **Dr. Beth Manke** is interested in learning more about just how different Houston brothers and sisters really are. This project, the Texas Multi-Ethnic Sibling Study (TiMESS), addresses several areas concerning sibling and

family relationships such as sibling conflict, parental differential treatment, and interpersonal humor. In total, the project hopes to conduct in-home interviews with 250 families from multiple ethnic backgrounds, including Caucasian, Hispanic, African-American, and Asian families. The study is targeting families that have at least two children between the ages of 8 and 14 years.

Families have been recruited through recently established collaborations with Houston area nonprofit organizations such as the YMCA, Big Brothers / Big Sisters, and the Jewish Community Center. In return, staff from the project have donated their time to provide nonprofit organizations with services such as free parenting seminars and program evaluation. In addition to the support of nonprofit organizations, many businesses have donated supplies and prizes to be given to children as part of monthly project drawings. Sporting equipment such as bicycles and roller blades, free passes to local attractions, gift certificates and many other prizes have all been donated by such businesses as Transco Oil, SplashTown, Celebration Station, Black-eyed Pea, and PETSMART. In addition to the opportunity to "win" prizes, all children participating in the study receive a free project T-shirt.

Although the project is new, it has already been highlighted in recent articles in the *Houston Chronicle* newspaper and *Working Mother Magazine*. Because the project will run for the next 18 months, Dr. Manke and her students will continue to look for families to participate. If you would like more information about the project or would like to volunteer your family, please call 743-8575.

Spotlight On . . . The Academic Office

The PAAO strives to provide the finest, most comprehensive advising services to a diverse student population. The office provides individualized advising that is personal and confidential where the advisor and student work together to ensure that student needs and goals are met. To get a sense of how big the psychology department really is, you need only to look to our Psychology Academic Advising Office (PAAO). Each semester hundred's of students are seen by our advisors, **Tricia Spinks, Tran Le, and Heather Kinnaird**. During the spring 1997 semester: 928 undergraduate students were seen by appointments; 148 graduate students were assisted; 141 undergraduate degree plan audits were filed; 192 students changed to psychology as a major; 224 students filed for a psychology minor.

To aid students who cannot get an appointment when the advisors are booked, the

PAAO developed a student inquiry form that allows students to ask questions on the form. Advisors will then respond to the questions within a 24 hours and leave their responses for the student to pick up at their convenience. Requests range from concerns about degree plans, registration, graduation, academic status, and filing. A total of 204 students were assisted using the student inquiry form.

PAAO also provides group advising. Students with similar concerns are brought together in a group session. The sessions allow students to have added support from their peers, faculty, the department, upper-class students, and advisors. Another activity offered by PAAO are group sessions for registration check (undergraduate and graduate students), how to get into graduate school for undergraduate students, and an orientation for both graduate and undergraduate students. In recent months, a total of 102 students were seen in group sessions.

The PAAO processes and coordinates graduate admissions for the department. Last year 1700 graduate admission inquires (mail and phone) were processed; 629 applications were mailed; 317 applications filed for fall 1997 admission, and 60 applicants were offered admission.

The PAAO is continually devising new and improved methods of helping our students. Your comments and suggestions are encouraged. Please stop by the suite in 122 Heyne to look over the resources available in the office.



Adam Tran has been accepted for fall admission into Law School at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. Adam will continue to work for **Dr. David Francis** data laboratory for the remainder of the summer.

Advisor **Tran Le** has been accepted into the Health Administration Program at Texas Women's University Medical Center. Don't worry, Tran isn't leaving us, she will pursue her studies in after work hours.

The Academic Office has a new smiling face. We welcome to **Mary Nguyen** as an office assistant. Mary is a Psychology undergraduate and will be helping out in the office this summer.

On The Lighter Side

HOW TO KEEP A HEALTHY LEVEL OF INSANITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- Page yourself over the intercom. (Don't disguise your voice.)
- Find out where your boss shops and buy exactly the same outfits. Always wear them one day after your boss does. (This is especially effective if your boss is a different gender than you are.)

- Send email to the rest of the company telling them what you're doing. For example "If anyone needs me, I'll be in the bathroom."
- "Hi-lite" your shoes. Tell people that you haven't lost your shoes since you did this.
- While sitting at your desk, soak your fingers in "Palmolive."
- Put up mosquito netting around your cubicle.
- Put a chair facing a printer, sit there all day and tell people you're waiting for your document.
- Arrive at a meeting late, say you're sorry, but you didn't have time for lunch, and you're going to be nibbling during the meeting. During the meeting eat 5 entire raw potatoes.
- Insist that your e-mail address be "zena_goddess_of_fire@companyname.com"
- Every time someone asks you to do something, ask them if they want fries with that.
- Send email to yourself engaging yourself in an intelligent debate about the direction of one of your department's services. Forward the mail to a co-worker and ask her to settle the disagreement.
- Encourage your colleagues to join you in a little synchronized chair dancing.
- Put your garbage can on your desk. Label it "IN."
- Determine how many cups of coffee is "too many."
- Develop an unnatural fear of staplers.
- Send e-mail messages saying free pizza, free donuts etc... in the lunchroom, when people complain that there was none... Just lean back, pat your stomach, and say, "Oh you've got to be faster than that."
- Put decaf in the coffeemaker for 3 weeks. Once everyone has gotten over their caffeine addictions, switch to espresso.

Courtesy of The Organization Development Network and the Meta Network. (Ed's note: Thanks for the "Funnies" folks, keep 'em coming.)