Author Robert C. Gallagher once said “change is inevitable - except from a vending machine.”

This quote is a good summary of the past year in the Department of Behavioral Sciences. Although much has remained constant, the broader changes to MNU’s academic structure have now placed our department within the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Along with Fine Arts, Humanities, Religion and Science & Math, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences comprise the majority of the undergraduates majors at MNU. In an effort to be more efficient and collaborative the new “schools” model of academic administration has changed our name and decentralized some of the administration — moving more specific responsibilities to the various academic departments. While this may sound like a major shift, and it is, much of our department will remain the same including our majors and our faculty. We continue to strive for excellence in all our endeavors and in this month’s newsletter we talk about innovative teaching techniques, our new Psychology Scholars Program, and a report on how faculty are contributing to the professional world.

Earl Bland

Reading Room
Recommendations & Reviews by the faculty


Although Daniel Siegel’s book *The Developing Mind* has been out for 10 years it continues to be an excellent introduction to how the human brain shapes and responds to our experience. In erudite but accessible language Siegel weaves the story of how the unique mental capacities of humans are shaped by experience in the areas of mental health, interpersonal relationships, self-control, emotions, and memory. He explains these complex processes without jargon, making them readily applicable to our everyday lives. With every chapter you are that much more amazed at the way God has constructed his creation. Moreover, Dr. Oke is not giving an exam at the end!
MNU Answers Workforce Need with New Majors

“MNU will launch four new majors this fall in response to workforce need. The programs will benefit industries such as allied health, law enforcement, public service and non-profit groups. In addition, two other programs have been revamped or expanded for greater appeal.”

“The new undergraduate majors are kinesiology, forensic biology, forensic chemistry, and public administration (adult degree completion). Expanded master’s programs now include a master of arts in counseling with either a school counselor or a pastoral counseling track. Expanded to online delivery is the master of education program. “Allied health is the field where jobs are growing,” said Brad King, chair of the Division of Health and Exercise Science. “We’re trying to address the need for more workers with the addition of our kinesiology major.” King adds that MNU is working on a partnership with Olathe Medical Center, Johnson County Community College and the Olathe School district.”

“Two new forensic science majors, also beginning this fall, will prepare students for exciting careers or further study in the growing field. Both hybrids of science and criminology, forensic biology and forensic chemistry will give graduates a deep background in science with a strong element of law and criminal justice as well as a forensic internship.”

“Professors teamed up last year to begin planning the new program because of the severe backlog in the analysis of forensic evidence. According to Dan Partrich, professor of criminal justice, getting DNA analyzed quickly, such as shown in many movies and on T.V., is a myth. “The National Institute of Justice says labs are backlogged and although DNA technology advances daily, the industry is crying for people to do the work,” he said.”


Social Theory Changes to Podcast/Discussion Format

The Social Theory class has changed its format -- all of the lectures are done outside of the classroom, and the time in the classroom is reserved for discussion only. In an attempt to experiment with improved learning techniques, Professor Bo Cassell has leveraged the use of podcast technology to help the students take away more from a complex course like Social Theory. ‘It all started with daylight savings time last year,’ recalls Cassell. ‘When we moved the clocks back during the fall, I noticed my eight o’clock Social Theory class became much more lively. For that week, until the effects of the time change wore off, the students took over the class with lively discussion and application of ideas. I decided that maybe the time of day and the lecture format was keeping students from learning all they could. So this year we tried an experiment. We moved the class time from eight o’clock to nine o’clock, and since our goal was more learning through discussion, I changed the format of the class to a podcast lecture with in-class discussion.’ Podcasting has been around a few years now, and involves an audio or video recording that students can watch or listen to on their computer or mobile media player. The professor records and audio lecture outside of class, complete with a video of PowerPoint slides that advance in time with the audio lecture. These are posted to a webpage, where the students download them and listen to them on their own time.

Then the students come to class and work through an activity, or discuss areas of interest or topics they had difficulty understanding.

‘It all works a bit more like graduate school,’ said Cassell. ‘And I have been amazed at the students grasp of the material using this format. Instead of spending our class time with the students taking notes as I methodically tried to get through the PowerPoint slides, our class time now allows for reflection and integration. Also, there has been much more time to integrate the material with a Christian worldview. The other day, the students spent 30 minutes discussing which social theory best reflected the ideals of the New Testament Church in the book of Acts. At other times I’ve watched them discuss the implications of capitalism on church life. We never had time for that type of application before.”

Admittedly, the course demands a bit more of a time commitment -- or at least a more structured study regimen for the students outside of class. ‘At first I got some complaints because the students felt like there course hours had doubled -- because they were doing the lectures outside of class. But I’ve tried to make some adjustments in their assignments and attendance to balance this out. Based on what I’ve seen, the outcomes have been worth it. Social Theory is not easy content to understand-- the students this year are better able to grasp the content with these new methods.”
Academic Action  Recent Publications by MNU Faculty


New “Psychology Scholars” Program Established

The Psychology Scholars Fund was established to enhance the undergraduate training of MNU students who show strong desire and potential to excel in the professional world of psychology or related disciplines. Through enhanced study guided by faculty, the education of Psychology Scholars has three fundamental goals: undergraduate research training, integration of psychology and the Christian faith, and service to God and humanity.

With an inaugural donation of $8,000.00, the endowment goal for this new scholarship is $500,000.00 by the year 2020. We anticipate making our first scholarship award in the fall semester of 2011. Please seriously consider contributing to the future of our psychology program. More complete information will soon be available on our web page: [www.mnu.edu/academic-programs/behavioral-sciences.html](http://www.mnu.edu/academic-programs/behavioral-sciences.html)
We want to hear from you! This newsletter is designed to help facilitate ongoing relationships between the Behavioral Sciences Department and our program alumni—you! Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or questions. Here are some additional ways you can continue to make a valuable contribution to academics and your discipline:

- Recommend a potential internship site: If you or your organization are interested in providing internship placement, please email Virginia for an internship site information packet.

- Get in touch with former professors: it’s great to hear what former students are doing!

- Learn more about Behavioral Sciences initiatives and events: consider helping to plan or volunteer as an alumni in support of current students and emerging professionals in the field.

In addition, the following organizations may be of interest to you ongoing:

- MNU Alumni Association
- MNU Psi Chi Chapter
- American Psychological Associations (APA)
- Association of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS)
- Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers (ANSR)

ALUMNI OFFICE WEBSITE:
http://www.mnu.edu/alumniandfriends.html

Upcoming Events

Check the MNU website and watch your email for University and Department events!

2009 HOMECOMING
http://www.mnu.edu/homecoming.html
October 15 – 18

COMMUNIVERSITY: The End of Life
Seminar presented by Behavioral Sciences
Featured speaker: Amy (Morsch ’99) Clark, MD
October 16 from 11:00am to 1:00pm
Hager Lecture Hall, Cook Center
Contact Person: Earl Bland | eblind@mnu.edu | 913.971.3617

Psychology in the World of Business
Presentation by Dr. George Yancey from Emporia State University about Industrial-Organizational Psychology
October 26 at 10:00 am
Metz 211
Contact Person: Earl Bland | eblind@mnu.edu | 913.971.3617

Please contact the Behavioral Sciences Department for more details on upcoming events.