Letter from the Chair

It’s hard for me to believe that I’ve entered my 10th year as department chair. I have to say, it’s a pretty awesome job. I work with colleagues who are exceptionally strong, both in intellect and in spirit, and we have the privilege of mentoring students who are willing to stand up, speak out, step outside of their comfort zones, and take risks. I’m proud of our students, and they are a constant reminder of why Drury is such a special place.

As you’ll see in this issue, our department is particularly energized right now; and our students and faculty are doing phenomenal things. I’m also happy to announce that Dr. Patricia McEachern, the Dorothy Jo Barker Endowed Professor for the Study of Animal Rights, who also serves as the Director of Drury University’s Forum on Animal Rights as well as the Director of the Animal Studies program, is now a member of our department. Given that the animal rights movement is arguably one of the most important social movements of our time, I am thrilled that Dr. McEachern (see photo-right) accepted the invitation to join us!

Please take a moment to read about the exciting developments that are unfolding in the Department of Behavioral Sciences. As always, if you’d like to drop me a note or give me a call, I’d love to hear from you!

Dr. Vickie Luttrell, ’86

“Peter and the Wolf” and Humane Education

For close to 50 years, students and faculty in Theatre and Music at Drury University have collaborated to perform Prokofiev’s “Peter and the Wolf” for Springfield third graders. As a result of a generous gift from the Bob Barker Endowment Fund for the Study of Animal Rights, the performance has been completely re-envisioned through the exquisite direction of Bob Westenberg to be consistent with a message of humane education. In Westenberg’s whimsical and enchanting version, the Wolf will be ceremoniously and respectfully returned to his native habitat instead of being sent to a zoo.

Madison Spencer, Drury’s uniquely talented costume designer, used no animal products to bring to life her vision of the story through costume. Since most ostensibly “faux fur” is, in fact, taken from dogs and cats in China, Spencer used artfully designed strips of fabric to simulate fur. The cat’s elegant frock is inspired by the designs of Coco Chanel, and it is tastefully adorned with Chanel’s signature pearls. Spencer’s Emmy-winning friend from Hollywood, Thomas Surpremiant, created prosthetic facial make-up for the Wolf.

Westenberg’s updated version of “Peter” includes dance, choreographed by Josh Inman and Chyrel Miller, beautiful artistic backdrops by Christine Bass, and completely redesigned sets. Children will watch video footage of real wolves in their natural habitats on the Jumbotron as they wait for the performance to begin.

As many as 3000 school children will attend the performance; “Peter” is Drury’s contribution to Springfield’s Any Given Child initiative.

This magical performance of “Peter and the Wolf” will debut on Monday, February 22, 2016, at the O’Reilly Family Event Center.
Throughout my life, my family relocated several times, typically to rural areas. I observed the varying accents, behaviors, and cultures of people across the Midwestern and Southern United States, and because of my experiences and educational talks with my dad, I realized that exploring the human psyche would be my calling. In turn, I had to find a school that worked for me.

Starting with lists of colleges across the nation, I became intrigued with Drury because it seemed to fit my personality and background. Drury focuses on the individual, yet embraces diversity, change, and versatility. My peers are happy to hear about my more unique hobbies, like practicing mixed martial arts to running my own pencil sketching business and, from the start, my professors have been by my side, guiding me forward.

Inga Nordgren has been recognized as a Judge Warren L. White Scholar for 2014-15. This honor is given to students who achieved 4.0 GPAs upon completion of their first year. Fourteen students were recognized, with only two students attending Drury from out-of-state and only one student with an undeclared major. Inga fell into both categories.

Inga’s hometown is Eureka Springs, Arkansas where she has lived for five years. However, instead of attending the public school, she was accepted into one of the nation’s top STEM high schools: the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts (ASMSA).

ASMSA is a phenomenal two-year boarding school in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Inga is confident that she could not have achieved the level of academic excellence at Drury without the experience and knowledge she gained from ASMSA. “It taught me that anyone can get good grades if they simply put forth the effort. Dedication and time management are much more valuable than having a decent memory,” said Inga.

As for her major, Inga has finally taken the step towards declaring. Soon, her well-known title of “Undecided” will be “Psychology Major-Research Track, Behavioral Neuroscience Minor.” Inga commented, “The Department of Behavioral Sciences has encouraged me to accept my potential and go into a field that truly interests me. I may still be undecided about my career, but fortunately, I have found a place that continues to foster my growth and pique my curiosity about life and human nature.”

As an advanced student who took most of my general education classes in high school through dual credit, I came to Drury in a unique position that allowed room for exploration. Even so, in order to graduate in three years with a double major in psychology and sociology, while also completing the honors program, I knew my schedule would be tight. Dr. Luttrell stepped in and helped me map out my entire degree plan, semester by semester, months before classes started. That’s what professors are like here. Though I am just beginning my journey into adulthood, I know that my friends and mentors will provide the foundation I need to succeed. Drury exemplifies the adage that “life is what you make of it,” and I know I have a bright future ahead of me!
Behavioral Science Students Present Research at MAUPRC

Fighting rain and construction delays, 22 behavioral science students left Drury’s campus on April 17, 2015 to present their research at the 34th annual Mid-America Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference (MAUPRC) held at Franklin College in Franklin, Indiana. Drs. Mary Utley, Professor of Psychology, and Jennifer Silva Brown, Associate Professor of Psychology, accompanied them.

Oral and poster presentations were made by Jessica Brennan, Amber Cornelison, Ashlee Ellingsworth, Mariah Gove, Allison Hebert, Jordan Henslee, Daniel Hopfinger, Kay Honeycutt, Elisabeth Horne, Emma Huggett, Shelby Hunsaker, Ashley Marmouget, Alexa Robinson, Austin Ross, Rachel Ryan, Ethan Sims, Anna Stark, Rachel Swadley, Jessica Tay, Carson Teague, Anna Wendt, and Charles Woods.

Research topics included faith and hooking up, news media credibility, self-esteem and group collaboration, achievement versus relationships, social media and sexualization, racial bias in hiring, criticism and eating choices, self-efficacy and task performance, conflict and dating violence, and connectedness with nature and the Joplin Tornado.

Psychology and Theater major Anna Wendt said about her experience, “I really liked the opportunity to showcase our work: we worked really hard on it all year, and it felt good to present it to a fresh group of people. It gave us a nice taste of the professional world, in terms of what is expected in formal presentations as well as the potential future for research psychologists. It also gave a little bit of a heads up on the competition for graduate schools, and how Drury stands on the behavioral sciences totem pole. From what I saw, we have an excellent program, and I think many of us will stand out to graduate programs.”

Dr. Jennifer Silva Brown, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Joplin Impact Project (JIP), recently published a chapter entitled “On Tornadoes: Storm Exposure, Coping Styles, and Resilience” in the book, Traumatic Stress and Long-Term Recovery: Coping with Disasters and Other Negative Life Events, published by Springer (2015). The book includes chapters written by scholars from around the globe, and their writings provide the reader with a unique glimpse into the experiences of many different populations whose lives have been altered by traumatic events.

In her chapter, Silva Brown discusses research results related to the JIP and the impact of the 2011 tornado on the psychosocial well-being of survivors. This research involved former students Alexandra Duello (’12), Bailey Greene (’12), Blake Herd (’13), Spencer Prevallet (’11), Morgan Merrell (’12), Melanie Messick (’13), and Paige Nichols (’13).

Funded by a three-year, $585,000 TKF grant, Silva Brown and a new student team are investigating how nature can be utilized to help communities and individuals recover from this tragedy. The grant was obtained in collaboration with colleagues from the Hammons School of Architecture, Cornell University, and the U.S. Forestry Service. The grant provided funds to create a memorial butterfly garden in Cunningham Park in Joplin, MO.

Dr. Silva Brown’s new data collection team included undergraduates Jordan Henslee (’15), Ashley Marmouget (’15), Rachel Ryan (’16), Rachel Swadley (’15), Carson Teague (’15), and Charles Woods (’16). These students presented their preliminary research findings at the Mid-America Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference in Franklin, IN this past March.
Drury students comprise a portion of the 80 million American “Millennials,” which now account for about one-fourth of the voting age population. Research suggests that Millennials have strong opinions on sociopolitical issues compared to other generational cohorts, including greater concern about inequality, college affordability, poverty, protecting the rights of women and minorities, marriage equality, animal rights, and climate change.

Millennials are less inclined to vote, but they are a technologically savvy cohort and rely heavily on digital media to manage their daily life activities. Not surprisingly, they are increasingly linking these skills with more traditional approaches to effect positive social change. At Drury, members of the Sociology Club “SEEDS” and the Student Activist Collective (SAC), an umbrella organization for student clubs which seek social change, have effectively employed social media for analysis, discussion, and mobilization.

The efforts of these students, both online and on the street, have led to Drury’s inclusion in a Springfield campaign for LGBT-friendly “Safe Spaces,” the approval of a “Social Justice House” for students, which will feature a safe room for violence victims, a fall voter registration drive for first-year students, and SAC sponsorship and coordination of LGBTQ+ “Safe Zone.”

SEEDS and SAC, with a mailing list of nearly 50 students, give social justice a collective voice on campus and both are growing!
The Face Behind “Save Drury as a Liberal Arts School”: Karis Agnew

Karis Agnew (’17) graduated from Kickapoo High School after relocating from Davenport, Iowa. Although she came to Drury to be a psychology major, she found the coverage of topics to be incomplete. She is now a sociology major, with minors in psychology and global and transnational studies, with a focus on power and poverty.

“The first sociology class I ever took was Social Movements with Dr. Derossett, and that's what drew me in,” said Karis.

When it came to light in late September that 12 Drury faculty members would lose their jobs, Karis and other students took action. Agnew was instrumental in launching the Facebook page “Save Drury as a Liberal Arts School,” which is a platform for students, alumni and other supporters to voice their concerns about the value of a liberal arts education and to share their concerns about the administration’s actions.

Karis reflected, “It's one thing to take a social movements class. It's an entirely different feat putting those lessons into action. In fewer than 24 hours, our Facebook group reached 1,700 members. Students, faculty, and alumni were contributing to the new dialogue surrounding the future of Drury. In our student movement, I have set to action almost every lesson of my sociology classes. Through our rallies, sit-ins, speeches, letters, and petitions, we are utilizing our liberal arts education to defend the liberal arts.”

After graduating in 2017, Karis plans to get a master’s degree in social work and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. Her desire is to reform at-risk youth programs, particularly those designed for foster, homeless, and/or LGBT youth.

Drug Court Team Awarded Grant to Help Veterans

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), recently awarded a grant to the 39th Judicial Circuit, which serves Barry, Lawrence, and Stone counties in southwest Missouri. The grant was written by Shawn Billings, an alumnus of our criminal justice graduate program, who serves as the project director. Drs. Vickie Luttrell, Professor of Psychology, and Jana Bufkin, Associate Professor of Criminology, were co-writers and will serve as project evaluators. Undergraduate Shae Dunaway (’16), who completed an internship in Stone County, will serve as the program coordinator.

Under the leadership of Judge Scott Sifferman, funding will be used to expand and enhance the Southwest Missouri Veterans Treatment Court (SWMO-VTC). The SWMO-VTC provides substance abuse and mental health-related treatment services for justice-involved veterans identified with these needs. Currently, the majority of Veterans served suffer from combat exposure, have co-occurring disorders, do not have access to health care, and live in poverty. About 50% of the Veterans served cannot access services through the Veterans Administration due to their discharge status from the Armed Forces.

The total grant award is for approximately $800,000 and will extend from 2015 to 2018. This is the third consecutive grant awarded to the 39th Judicial Circuit since 2010. Under the direction and leadership of Judge Alan Blankenship, the first two grants exceeded $1.9 million.

“The SW MO Veterans Treatment Court team is grateful to SAMSHA for the grant to expand and enhance our ongoing mission to restore healthy and productive lives to our veterans. Our team is committed to leave no veteran behind. We welcome SAMSHA as our newest partner to better serve our nation’s heroes,” said Judge Sifferman.
Board Approves A.S. in Behavioral Science for High School Students

Drury University offers dual credit courses to junior- or senior-level high school students in 69 high schools across the state of Missouri and is in compliance with Missouri Department of Higher Education standards for dual credit. Dual credit courses are college-level courses that are identified and accepted by participating high schools as meeting a high school graduation requirement. In contrast, in dual enrollment programs, high school students take postsecondary courses from a 2-year or 4-year institution.

In October 2015, the Board of Trustees approved the Associate of Science in Behavioral Science, which will become Drury’s first CCPS degree program to include a dual-enrollment option. The program is designed for students who wish to begin (and potentially complete) their associate degrees while they are still in high school. The program launches in summer/fall 2016.

In addition to its general education requirements, the A.S. in BHSC will allow students to learn about human behavior through the insights provided by psychology, sociology, and criminology. The interdisciplinary curriculum will consist of dual-credit seated and/or online courses and dual enrollment courses, all of which can be completed online.

Young adults earning two diplomas is a relatively new phenomenon, but recent reports suggest that more students are getting college degrees while they are in high school, and these types of programs are growing in number. In addition to reducing college costs for families, students who participate in dual-enrollment programs are more likely than other students to graduate from high school, enroll in four-year colleges, and persist in college.

To learn more about the A.S. in BHSC offered through Drury’s College of Continuing and Professional Studies, contact Jane Lindsey, Drury’s Dual Credit Coordinator, at (417) 830-9533 or jlindsey@drury.edu for more information.

Board Approves B.S. in Behavioral Neuroscience

In October 2015, the Board approved the Bachelor of Science in Behavioral Neuroscience. The B.S. in Behavioral Neuroscience will provide an in-depth understanding of fundamental principles of neuroscience and biological bases of behavior. Although the major will emphasize coursework in biology and psychology, it will also involve coursework in chemistry, mathematics, statistics, and research methodology.

Ten years in the making, the major’s interdisciplinary blend of courses will enable students to appreciate complex interactions between the brain, other biological processes, and behavior in ways not possible when studying the disciplines of biology and psychology alone. Also, given that Drury is recognized as a destination school for students pursuing pre-health professions, coursework allows students to examine biological contributions to psychiatric disorders, interactions between the brain, behavior, and the immune system, and biopsychosocial mediators of health and wellness.

Regarding potential for employment following graduation, neuroscience-related fields are experiencing a period of impressive growth and are attracting the brightest and most enthusiastic students across the sciences. The major will provide excellent preparation for admission to graduate and medical schools and other health-related professions.

The major will be co-administered by Dr. Vickie Luttrell, Chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences, and Dr. Kevin Jansen, Chair of the Department of Biology. For more information about the B.S. in Behavioral Neuroscience, contact Dr. Vickie Luttrell at vluttrell@drury.edu or Dr. Kevin Jansen at kjansen@drury.edu.
In October 2015, the Board approved the department’s proposal to offer a Certificate Program in Scientific Analysis. The purpose of the program is to help students better understand their role in the scientific enterprise, both as consumers of information in the public arena and as researchers who generate that knowledge.

Prior to the Board vote, the department offered a “Recognition in Scientific Analysis,” which required department majors to complete 25 credit hours of research-based coursework, but completion of the program was not noted on students’ transcripts. Designating the program as a certificate program now allows this mark of distinction to be noted explicitly on students’ transcripts when they graduate.

As before, the program requires students to complete coursework in scientific writing, research methods, basic and advanced statistics, ethics, psychological tests and measurement, and three accompanying laboratory courses, as well as a two-semester team-based research project. However, with the new designation, the program may be completed by students who are majoring in fields outside of criminology, psychology, and sociology.


Dr. Jennifer Silva Brown, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Joplin Impact Project, was appointed to serve as the Director of the department’s new Community Health Minor. The program aims to help students understand the underlying social, economic, psychological, and environmental forces that create health and social inequities in a community and become more effective health practitioners. Dr. Silva Brown is thrilled to supervise this progressive and interdisciplinary program that will prepare undergraduate students to work with diverse and underserved populations.
The following students were our outstanding graduating seniors for 2014-15. Students were selected on the basis of demonstrated academic excellence and service to the department. Summa awards are given to students whose cumulative GPAs exceed 3.95. Our award winners were as follows:

**Outstanding Student in Criminology:**

Devyn Wade
Devyn is from Kimberling City, MO and graduated from Reeds Spring High School. At Drury, she majored in criminology and minored in political science, law and society, and global studies. Devyn is currently attending University of Toledo College of Law on a full-ride scholarship. She has spent her first semester of law school covering the basics of civil law. Devyn looks forward to beginning her criminal law classes in the spring and plans to specialize in criminal law after graduation.

**Outstanding Student in Psychology:**

Rachel Leanne Swadley
Rachel is from Springfield, MO and was homeschooled. At Drury, she majored in psychology and minored in behavioral neuroscience. Rachel is currently attending Missouri State University. She is earning her master’s degree in Clinical Psychology, is a graduate assistant in the psychology department, and hopes to conduct research on domestic violence for her thesis. Rachel plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and work with survivors of human trafficking.

**Overall Behavioral Sciences & Summa Awards:**

Shelby Hatz
Shelby is from Springfield, MO and graduated from Springfield Catholic High School. At Drury, she majored in psychology and minored in behavioral neuroscience. Shelby is currently attending Washington University in St. Louis-School of Medicine Program in Occupational Therapy, where she is earning her master’s degree. Shelby’s focus during her first year of graduate study has involved learning how to utilize professionalism and evidence-based practice within the healthcare system, and she will soon begin her first fieldwork experience.

**Departmental Recognition in Scientific Analysis:**

Ashley Marmouget
Ashley is from Springfield, MO and graduated from Springfield Catholic High School. At Drury, she majored in psychology and minored in behavioral neuroscience. Ashley is currently attending Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, earning her master’s degree in Child Clinical Psychology. She received a full tuition waiver and a 20 hour assistantship at Head Start. Ashley plans to earn a Ph.D. in Child Clinical Psychology with a focus on children with externalizing behaviors like ADHD, ODD, and Conduct Disorder.

**Behavioral Sciences Summa Award:**

Bethany Mitchell
Bethany is from Springfield, MO and graduated from Central High School. At Drury, she majored in music and psychology. Bethany is currently continuing her studies on the cello and plans to earn a master’s degree in Music Psychology with an emphasis on performance. She is interning at The Equi-Librium Therapy Center and will earn her EAGALA mental health specialist certification this spring. The certification will allow Bethany to co-lead EAGALA therapy sessions with their certified equine specialist.

If you would like to make a donation to our department, please visit us on the web at:

http://alumni.drury.edu/giving/ways

Keep in touch with Behavioral Sciences at Drury.
We’d love to hear from you!