

LEARNING & COGNITION NEWSLETTER 2018



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



MISSION STATEMENT

As a graduate-level program, Learning and Cognition's mission is to provide cutting-edge, individualized training for those who wish to earn graduate degrees focused on theory, research, and application in the areas of cognition, learning, and human development. We serve students who come from many backgrounds to apply Learning and Cognition in research, classroom, government, or organizational settings. Our program is highly flexible, allowing students to select the training that meets their needs. Through close mentorship and apprenticeship, we provide an excellent grounding in research to support evidence-based practice and contribute to the free, open-access of innovative research that informs teaching and learning wherever it happens.

Dear Learning & Cognition alumni, current students, and friends,

It has been another exciting and productive year. Our College has jumped in the US news ranking. Improving by six spots, it is now ranked at number 46 nationally.

Since our last newsletter in 2017, our new fully online master's program in Learning & Cognition (<https://distance.fsu.edu/students/learning-and-cognition-ms>) continues to expand. We have doubled our enrollment in a single year and will graduate our first online students by the end of the calendar year! Our online courses are gaining popularity with students in other majors as well, and we look forward to growing our online cohort each year.

Last year we announced a partnership between Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) and Florida State University (FSU) to implement Partners United for Research Pathways Oriented to Social Justice in Education or PURPOSE. This year the program was kicked off! Two of our own MS students are in the first cohort of fellows: Amanda Campos and James Hernandez. They will be doing research at Freedom Schools this summer. It is being funded for \$1,020,699 by the Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences: Pathways Training Program competition. PURPOSE serves junior and beginning master's students from education-related majors/minors at FAMU and FSU, providing 56 local fellows with financial support during a year-long research training and apprenticeship program, across four cohorts. Fellows participate in mentoring regarding preparing for and applying to doctoral programs related to education, with the goal of increasing the diversity of the doctorate in education. They also do volunteer work and research apprenticeship at Freedom Schools. Alysia Roehrig serves as PI with the support of Drs. Jeannine Turner and Tamara Bertrand Jones, both in the College of Education at FSU, and Dr. Peggy Auman of the FAMU College of Education, who is an FSU COE Instructional Systems alumna. Check out www.PURPOSEtraining.org.

Our students continue to shine on the FSU stage, winning all kinds of awards. Mike Mesa was awarded FSU TA of the year. Amanda Campos received a College of Education fellowship Shirley Chen received a grant to help with the costs of conducting her dissertation study.

As you know, resources for conducting research that makes a difference in the lives of all learners can be hard to come by. After we have raised \$20,000 (a goal we would hope to meet by 2020), we will convert this fund to an endowment account that will generate interest that we can use to pay for scholarships. If you are interested in giving, please let me (aroehrig@fsu.edu) or Kevin Derryberry (kderryberry@foundation.fsu.edu) know. See more details about how to give at the end of this newsletter. Every little bit helps!

Alumni, we would love your feedback on the L&C program, as you are important members of our community, too. Please email me (aroehrig@fsu.edu) if you have any comments or suggestions!

I hope you enjoy reading about what some of your colleagues—including alumni, current students and faculty—are up to in this newsletter. There are so many interesting projects and areas of study and inspirational updates!

Warm regards,

Alysia

Alysia Roehrig, PhD
L&C Graduate Program Coordinator

FACULTY UPDATES



Beth Phillips

Dr. Beth Phillips continues to work in the area of early language and literacy development in children ages 2 -9. She is exploring data from her ongoing Spencer Foundation research grant in which she is investigating variations in, and contributions to, the quality of the language development environment in preschool classrooms and related to teachers' pedagogical content knowledge for supporting vocabulary and language development in three and four-year-old children. She is co-leading a large-scale small group intervention study in preschool and kindergarten for children at high risk for reading comprehension difficulties. She recently began a new longitudinal project investigating children at high risk for reading and language disabilities funded as part of the third five-year cycle of the FSU Learning Disabilities Research Grant. This project will follow children from age 2 to 5. Dr. Phillips is also leading several professional development projects including a state-funded project developing an online course on early literacy instruction for Florida's thousands of preschool teachers and a brand new project to provide coaching for preschool teachers in Mississippi; this project is funded by the Regional Educational Lab-Southeast, led by the Florida Center for Reading Research. Dr. Phillips is proud to say that she recently graduated two doctoral students and has students achieving milestones of completing their theses, defending proposals, and starting exciting new student research projects. In other news, Dr. Phillips and her husband bought a new house last summer and she has been spending free time having fun picking out new paint colors and new furniture!



Jeannine Turner

My research continues to focus on issues related to students' motivation, emotions, self-regulation, and learning. Along these lines, this past year several of my students and I have continued our investigations into engineering students who are in our FAMU-FSU joint engineering programs. Although we have focused on understanding the reasons why our FAMU African American male students are not thriving in engineering, currently Michelle (Peruche), Andria (Cole), Cathryn (Lokey) and I are investigating the experiences of African American female engineering students. Meanwhile, Min (Tang), Laith (Ju'mah), and I are investigating engineering students' beliefs with respect to their self-concept for engineering, their perspectives on critical thinking, and how they analyze theoretical conflicts. We will begin interviewing mechanical undergraduate engineering students in the near future to help us understand these complex processes.

My second research-focus concerns students' motivation, self-regulation, and learning of foreign or second language skills—i.e., speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Several of my students and I are focused on different aspects of this students' motivation. Fei Xing recently defended her dissertation with respect to Chinese students' perceptions of teachers' use of scaffolding strategies for communicative English along with students' engagement in class from a Self-Determination perspective. Also using Self-Determination theory, Yanyan Chan recently defended her dissertation proposal focusing on Chinese students' reasons for majoring in English, their class engagement and self-efficacy, as well as their perceptions of support for autonomy, competence, and positive interpersonal relationships. Stephan (Cooley) used Dornei's theory to frame his prelim study on international students within centers for intensive English programs. Darcey (Fang Liang) interviewed international graduate students about their writing anxiety and ways they cope with their anxiety, and Maipeng (Wei) investigated English students' speaking efficacy, speaking anxiety, and willingness to communicate for her prelim study. Working together, the students and I developed a large dataset with Chinese students who were engaged in learning English. We have started analyzing the data and have presented some of the findings at the Eastern Education Research Association's conference. We hope to learn a great deal about Chinese students' motivation!

Personally, the last year-and-a-half brought great sorrow and great joy. My father died in California in March 2017 and his house was sold shortly thereafter. This meant I spent a good bit of time in California during the

spring 2017 semester. Losing a parent is always stressful and sad; it's especially difficult when they live on the other side of the country. On the other hand, shortly after my father's death, I was invited to China to be a featured speaker at a national conference. My former visiting scholar, Leo, then invited me to his university. I spent a lovely and amazing two weeks in China. Following that, my husband (Ralph) and I attended the conference of European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction in Finland and we spent three weeks in Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, and Finland). During the Spring 2018 semester I had a wonderful sabbatical during which Ralph and I were able spend three weeks in England and I presented research on the positive aspects of having Dyslexia (thanks to the help of Cathryn Lokey and Mike Mesa!). The last year-and-a-half have been a whirlwind of activity. I'm sure the next year will bring lots more knowledge and adventures!



Susan Losh

This past year, I have focused on my NSF-funded grant-work. I am updating/creating a large database regarding civic science literacy with data that were collected from 1979 to 2016. Once the data are organized, with the help of students, we will analyze the data. I hope to replicate my earlier findings as well as extend the findings in new areas. Along these lines, I recently published two articles about U.S. adult perceptions of the agreement among environmental scientists regarding global warming. This past year, I've also been responsible for the on-line Masters students. This program has

really started taking off! In addition to advising the students, I now teach both Theories of Social Psychology and Group Processes online as well. I've really enjoyed teaching online!



Alysia Roehrig

I am continuing in my role as North Florida Freedom Schools' Research Director. For summer 2018, we are expanding to have three locations for Freedom Schools summer camps serving K-8 children in the North Florida region: two in Leon County (at Downtown Community Church and at FAMU Developmental Research School) and one in Gadsden County (at the Shadetree Group in Gretna). This means 165 students from low-income families in North Florida will receive six weeks of reading fun and education, as well as healthy meals to nurture both mind and body, all at no cost to them. NFFS is partnering with FAMU, FSU, as well as Downtown

Community Church and others in the community, to provide quality afternoon activities.

In 2017, NFFS had many productive community partnerships that we hope to continue.

Last summer, the Institute for Research in Music and Entertainment Industry Studies (IRMEIS) at FAMU provided the necessary resources to train the SLIs on how to teach afternoon courses in the field of documentary arts, spoken word, music production, visual arts, dance and 'zines/editorial writing. The scholars learned many different skills related to digital audio and music industry studies. NFFS scholars produced a music soundtrack and documentary based on their experiences interrogating critical issues in American society. Florida State University's Center for Sport, Health, and Equitable Development (SHED) at FSU provided the necessary resources to train the SLIs on how to teach afternoon courses on the importance of nutritious diets and physical fitness. This program, supported in part by a research grant from FSU alumna Marvalene Hughes, was entitled The Healthy Habits Project. The scholars learned many different skills related to the prevention of diseases such as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, overweight/obesity, as well as risky behaviors associated with school dropout. The NFFS also partnered with Titus Sports Academy and "Get Real" Live the Life Student Programs. The aims of the Titus program were to get students moving, experience the benefits of regular exercise, and develop healthy lifestyle habits to improve the health and fitness of our community's youth. The "Get Real" program was a high-risk behavior avoidance curriculum that is geared toward 3rd-12th grade and is taught by trained coaches.

Most children (78%), who participated in the two North Florida Freedom Schools' original Gadsden and Leon County sites in 2016, maintained or gained in reading level, and on average made more gain in reading level than would be expected over 6 weeks. Surveys administered in summer 2016 also showed gains in children's beliefs that they can act in prosocial ways, which is aligned with our community building and social action focus.

If you are interested in learning more or supporting this effort, please check out NFFS.wordpress.com.

STUDENT PROFILES



James A. Hernandez

The Learning and Cognition program at FSU was the only graduate program I applied to. Since then, I've been working in both Dr. Phillips' lab (on my Master's Thesis aimed at analyzing the stability of classroom management) and with Dr. Roehrig as a Purpose Fellow investigating culturally relevant/responsive classroom management in Freedom Schools. In addition to classes, I've been working in the Regional Education Laboratory at the Florida Center for Reading Research as a graduate assistant. My research mantra is: "Teachers can't teach students they don't understand." It was inspired by a cocktail of Rita Pierson's Ted Talk in which she said, "Kids don't learn from people they don't like," mixed with my own 5th grade teaching experience. My research interests are focused on supporting teachers, currently through classroom management but I am also looking into group counseling for teachers to better cope with teacher/student relationships. As a

teacher, and now researcher, it's safe to say my passion is being able to help teachers teach their students.

Academically, I want to earn a PhD so that I can teach and continue the field of educational research at a professional level. My long-term goal and dream is to open a Lifespan Development Center for students, their families and the community. This institution will not only teach quality research-based academic concepts, but will partner with counselors, social workers, nutritionists/health care professionals and financial planners to combine community resources in one place.

Julieth Diaz Benitez

Since I graduated from the L&C Master's program last year, I have been working as a full-time research associate at the Cancer Neurocognitive Translational Research Lab at the FSU College of Medicine. My role involves coordinating multiple aspects of new and ongoing research projects, supervising research assistants and volunteers, and overseeing participant recruitment, data collection and analysis. I will be starting my new journey in the L&C PhD program this fall.



Mengmeng Yin

My name is Mengmeng Yin. I am a master's student in the Learning and Cognition Program. My research interest focuses on the relationship between parental involvement and adolescents' academic achievement in immigrant families. Also, I want to test whether immigrant adolescents' self-esteem mediates the relationship between the involvement of immigrant parents and adolescents' academic achievement. Immigrant families compose one fourth of population in the United States. Currently more than 20% of the U.S. population under age 18 is comprised of children of immigrants. The families and children of immigrants with different cultures face more challenges than native white Americans in such a pluralistic and diverse society as the United States. Children's academic achievement in school is a predictor of school drop rate, children's success in the future, and their contribution to society. Immigrant parents may have different ideas to educate their children in a new educational system. Therefore, it is critical to explore the factors, which can affect how children of immigrants succeed in education.



Michael P. Mesa

Michael P. Mesa is a doctoral student in the Educational Psychology and Learning Systems program at FSU, where he also earned his MS and a certificate in Measurement and Statistics. He earned his bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Statistics from Florida International University. His research interests include examining the role of classroom management and culturally relevant pedagogy in effective instruction. He has recently presented his research at the American Educational Research Association Conference, British Dyslexia Association Conference, Marvalene Hughes Research in Education Conference, Florida Educational Research Association Conference, and Eastern Educational Research Association Conference. Michael is also passionate about preparing and empowering future generations of educators and researchers. He has taught courses for preservice teachers in Classroom Assessment and Educational Psychology. Additionally, he mentors graduate students conducting

research in North Florida Freedom Schools, a free, culturally-relevant summer program in Leon County. Michael is a recipient of the 2017-2018 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.



Laith Jumah

I am Laith Jumah, a second-year doctoral student in Dr. Turner's Lab. My current research focuses on particular aspects of Epistemic Beliefs and Emotions (beliefs and emotions about knowledge and knowing). I am interested in investigating the relationship between these beliefs/emotions on one hand and cognition processes and conceptual change on the other. Also, I want to know more about how students' epistemic beliefs and emotions influence their learning and self-regulation. To investigate that, currently, I am developing a study to investigate some of these variables as a part of my preliminary research study.

In parallel with my doctoral study, I am pursuing certification in Program Evaluation. Also, I am serving as co-chair of the graduate students' committee at the Studying and Self-Regulated Learning Special Interest Group (SSRL SIG) which is a part of AERA SIGs.

Before I started my doctoral study, I worked as a lecturer and trainer for many years. I worked at Dammam University as a lecturer in the deanship of E-Learning. Also, I worked at Change Agent for Development and Education Reform (CADER) as a trainer. I trained teachers how to

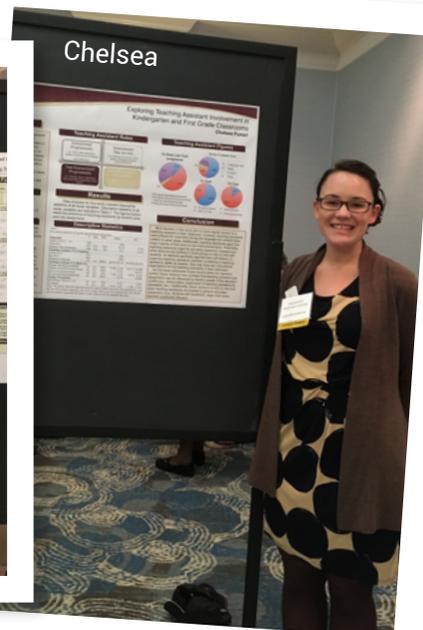
teach their students effectively, and how to improve their skills and competencies to ensure continuous improvement in the educational process.

My aim for my doctoral study is to be an expert in the field of educational psychology/learning and cognition and to take part in improving the instructional practices for students and teachers. My career goal is to be a university professor who contributes to research that will add to this area of study.

END-OF-YEAR SOCIAL



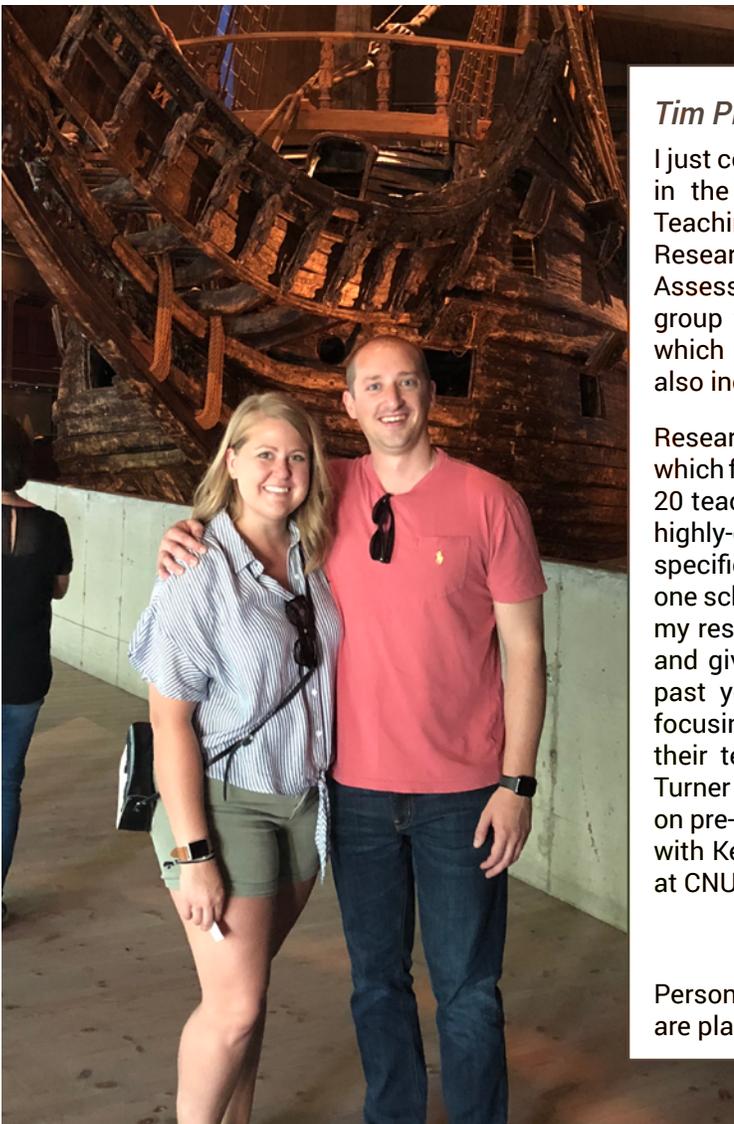
EERA CONFERENCE



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

Smriti Ingrole

Smriti Ingrole graduated with her Ph.D. in the Learning & Cognition program (EPLS) in August 2017. Since then, she has been working as a Student Success Analyst in FSU's Institutional Research Office. In addition, she taught the graduate level EDF 5481- Methods in Educational Research Course as an adjunct in Spring 2018.



Tim Pressley

I just completed my third year at Christopher Newport University in the Psychology Department and the Masters of Arts in Teaching program. At CNU, I teach Educational Psychology, Research Methods and Lab, Exceptional learner, and Classroom Assessment courses. This past May I co-led a study abroad group to Finland where we studied their educational system, which is known for being one of the best in the world. The trip also included trips to Sweden and Estonia.

Research-wise I am currently working on a couple of projects, which focus on teacher development. This past year I interviewed 20 teachers focusing on how highly-effective teachers become highly-effective and will continue this focus in the upcoming year specifically looking at first-year teachers' development in title one schools. I have also mentored 12 undergraduate students in my research lab, getting them involved in the research process and giving them experiences to present at conferences. This past year I had two publications, one from my dissertation focusing Teacher perspectives on the value-added model and their teaching evaluations with Alysia Roehrig and Jeannine Turner in *The Teacher Educator* and a second article focusing on pre-service teacher efficacy in a reading development course with Kelly Cartwright and Earl Riggins, who are colleagues here at CNU, in *Literacy Practice and Research*.

Personally, I just got engaged to Stephanie Richardson and we are planning to get married in March 2019.

OTHER EXCITING NEWS



Hello everyone,
I just wanted to share that on Tuesday, June 26 in Orlando, FL, I will be presented with the National Dropout Prevention Specialist Certificate from the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC)! Check out the link on the NDPC's website where I am listed among all the other specialists. The link includes my bio and other information.

NDPC's link: <http://dropoutprevention.org/people/certification-specialist/>

Thanks for your continuous support!

Lynn B. Turner, Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems
Florida State University - College of Education



Hi everyone, I have received in April the news that I'm a recipient of the Fulbright Award for the next academic year. This is a one year project, from 10/1/18 - 6/30/19. Also, I've got funds for an NIH grant (5-yrs) in January, so this year was a good one, I'd say!

Wish you all the best! Many thanks again!

Margareta M. Thomson, PhD,
L&C Alumna '08
Associate Professor

Educational Psychology Program Coordinator

College of Education, NC State University

PS. This is a bit more info on the Fulbright project (from the college newspaper):

<https://ced.ncsu.edu/news/2018/04/16/associate-professor-margareta-thomson-receives-2018-2019-fulbright-scholar-award/>

PLEASE SHARE PHOTOS, PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL UPDATES, AND MORE!

Please consider sharing your own update for the next newsletter. By sharing and making connections through information submitted by members of our community, we will be able to help graduates identify career tracks, job openings, research collaborators, and even funding.

Alumni: title/current position, major/degree, major professor/year of graduation, contact info, any particular research or professional interests you would like to share/get assistance with, any personal news, any opportunities or requests for current students or faculty in terms of collaboration, etc.

Current students: major/degree, major professor, ongoing or future research projects, assistance needed, etc. Send your information to *Dr. Alysia Roehrig* at aroehrig@fsu.edu.

GIVE BACK TO L&C

We are working very hard to build an endowment that can be self-sustaining. With your help, we will be able to accomplish this goal and make it possible to more significantly support an increased number of deserving students. Please consider making a donation to support current and future Learning & Cognition graduate students' research and conference travel!

You can make secure donations online at <http://fla.st/2ssRD2l>. Checks may be mailed to the College of Education (1114 West Call St.; Tallahassee, FL 32306-4450) or the University Foundation Office (2010 Levy Ave # 300, Tallahassee, FL 32310). You can pay online or by check, just be sure to specify "Learning & Cognition Student Support Fund" or "Fund # F08101" in the memo/tribute line. You can also contact our foundation officer, Kevin Derryberry, at (850) 228-5021 or kderryberry@foundation.fsu.edu.