

the Standard Deviation

Official Newsletter of the Manhattan College Department of Psychology

September 2020

Chair's Welcome



The Department of Psychology officially welcomes you to the 2020-2021 school year... especially our new freshmen and transfers! Our monthly newsletter, *the Standard Deviation*, gives psychology majors and minors an inside scoop on what's going on in the Department; features interesting topics; and highlights a different course, faculty member, and alum each month!

Have a fantastic (albeit weird!) Fall semester, everyone!

--Dr. Moore

Course Spotlight:



Forensic Psychology (PSYC 257)

Taught by Dr. Arno Kolz, winner of the Costello Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2014, *Forensic Psychology* is an exciting course that provides an analysis of psychological causes of criminal behavior. Topics include antisocial personality, neuropsychological components of criminality, and the interface between psychology and law in areas such as jury selection, sentencing, the insanity plea, eyewitness testimony, and psychiatric evaluation of defendants.



Dr. Kim Fairchild
Associate Professor

Faculty Focus



***What is the focus of your research?**

My primary research interest is women's experiences of street harassment. I've studied how women feel about and respond to experiences of catcalling. I'm working on developing new studies with students to approach the topic from different perspectives.

***What do you do when you're not teaching or doing research?**

I spend a lot of time with my family and chasing around my 7-year-old and 2-year-old daughters. Since March, I've gotten back into running. I try to run 5-6 miles 4-5 times a week. It really helps my mental health. I am hopeful that when the pandemic ends I'll be ready for another shot at a marathon!

***Fun questions! What book are you reading right now? What is your can't-miss TV show? Have you seen any recent movies?**

I've been listening to audiobooks and podcasts lot. They are easier to consume while chasing the kids! "Why We Sleep" by Matthew Walker was amazing. It dives deep into the science and psychology of sleep. I love the podcast "Levar Burton Reads". In each episode, Levar reads a different short story. Most of the TV shows and movies I watch tend to be kid friendly. I'm open to suggestions for good non-kid shows and movies to check out!

***Where did you earn your graduate degree?**

I graduated from Rutgers University with my PhD in social psychology.

***What psychology courses do you teach?**

I've taught many psychology courses, but the ones in my main rotation are Social Psychology, Roots Psych – First Year Seminar, Psychology of Women, and Advanced Research Methods.

***Can you tell us more about Advanced Research Methods (ARM)?**

Advanced Research Methods (ARM) is our senior capstone course in which senior psychology majors practice what they've learned over the years in Statistics and Research Methods I & II. In this course, students design their own research project, collect and analyze data, and report their findings. At the end of each Spring term, the department holds its annual poster session for all ARM students who took the course in that academic year. Students display posters detailing their research. It's a really fun event!



**Let's Get
Involved!**

There are two great ways to get involved this semester, right in our own department!

Psychology Club, led by faculty advisor Dr. Kelly Marin, is back and better than ever this semester! There are new student-officers in leadership positions who are going to help make the club and events this year exciting and engaging. We all know that these next few semesters, especially the current term, are going to be like no other. Making new friends, being involved on campus, and sparking new interests may be difficult due to all of the restrictions we have to adhere to. But, we can overcome everything that's limiting us! Psychology Club is excited to welcome new members with open arms (well six feet apart, but that is okay). Anyone interested in joining can reach out to the student-officers, listed below. The officers would love to hear what you have to say, and can't wait for you to be involved!

Florentina Onolfo: President

Luis Vargas: Vice President

Julia Ettore: Secretary

Amber Figueroa: Events coordinator

Sharron Fernandez: Treasurer

Psychology Club's email address: psychclub@manhattan.edu

Psi Chi is the international honor society for psychology, and our beloved chapter is led by Dr. Mendez-Baldwin. Keep an eye out in early October for info on applying for Psi Chi during the 2020-2021 academic year. Applications will be due later in October. For more info on joining our prestigious honor society, contact Dr. Mendez-Baldwin at:

martha.mendez-baldwin@manhattan.edu.



Career Spotlight: Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Occupational Therapy is an exciting field that is increasingly pursued by MC psychology graduates. Here are some of the key aspects of the field:

- ✓ OT helps people across the lifespan engage in life's demands in a more functional manner by developing needed skills that help them perform and live their best lives. OT helps people of all ages learn to *adapt*, especially when they are limited due to pain, injury, disability, or illness. And, job outlook is excellent!
- ✓ There are so many specialty areas, such as working with:
 - Children with learning disabilities and developmental disorders
 - People with sensory processing and coordination issues
 - Premature infants
 - Stroke and dementia clients
 - Victims of accidents (and many more!)
- ✓ Service they often provide include:
 - Evaluations of the client's needs (e.g., at school, work, home).
 - Tailored interventions to increase performance/functional abilities, making things easier to do or less painful.
- ✓ Occupational Therapists often work in schools, hospitals, private practices, doctors' offices, community centers, and in the home.
- ✓ Requirements = First, the bachelor's degree can be in several fields, but students should take specific prerequisites to get into a graduate program. A Master's degree in Occupational Therapy is then required, which usually takes about 2-3 years.
- ✓ For more info, check out the **American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)** at <https://www.aota.org>

Student Announcements!



Congratulations to our students on their recent achievements!

Amber Figueroa, Naomi Uy, Eva Bartsch, and Naouras Mousa Almatar were recently accepted to clinical psychology, PA, and MBA graduate programs!

Hey freshmen, we think you are **CHAMPIONS** for staying strong as high-school Seniors this year, and for beginning your college experience during these challenging times. We're thrilled to have you here!

Penelope Combs, Melissa Samanoglu, Lasma Padedze, Naomi Uy, Preston Martin, Mackenzie Kvapil, Eva Bartsch, and Naouras Mousa Almatar presented at the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA) conference this summer!

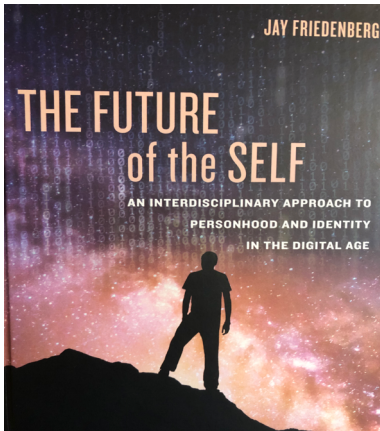
Melissa Samanoglu just took a research assistant job!

Faculty Announcements



Dr. Jay Friedenber

Dr. Friedenber just published an exciting new text entitled, “*The Future of the Self: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Personhood and Identity in the Digital Age*.” He also recently finished his 25th year of shaping minds at Manhattan College. Way to go!



Dr. Kelly Marin

Dr. Marin was recently promoted to Full Professor. What a fantastic achievement!

Dr. Zella Moore

Dr. Moore recently published an article on mindfulness in the *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*. Yay!

Dr. Martha Mendez-Baldwin

Dr. Mendez-Baldwin just published an article on what parents know about bullying in the *Journal of Bullying and Social Aggression*. Well done!

Dr. Maria Maust-Mohl

Dr. Maust-Mohl just published an article on manatee vocalization in the *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*. Excellent work!

Dr. Nuwan Jayawickreme

Dr. Nuwan was a visiting scholar at the College of New Jersey in Spring 2020.

Also, he recently published 2 articles on trauma-related issues, one in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, and one in the journal *Conflict & Health*. Super!

Dr. Danielle Young

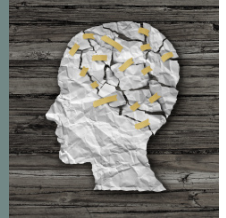
Dr. Young recently published 2 articles on gender identity and race, one in the journal *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, and one in the journal *Self and Identity*. Fantastic!



Dr. Alexandra MacDougall

Dr. Alexandra (Alix) MacDougall is an Associate Professor of Management at Central Michigan University (CMU), where she has been a faculty member since 2015. Alix holds doctoral and master's degrees from the University of Oklahoma and a bachelor's degree from Manhattan College. At MC, Alix studied psychology under the mentorship of Dr. Arno Kolz, twice presenting research at the Eastern Psychological Association's conference and earning the Psi Chi Regional Research Award. She also competed on the track and field team in the pole vault and was the recipient of the team's 2010 Jasper Award for academic achievement.

Alumni Spotlight



In her current role, Alix teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in human resource management and organizational behavior. She has been recognized for her teaching by her College and University, receiving an Innovation and Excellence in Teaching Award in 2018 and a University-wide Excellence in Teaching Award in 2020. Alix has also received recognition for her research, which explores how leaders and human resource practices can increase employee performance and ethicality. She has published over 20 peer-reviewed articles and chapters and has presented over 25 papers at national and international conferences. Previously, Alix dedicated five years to training and development initiatives and has worked in a consulting or advising capacity for organizations including the Federal Aviation Administration, Continental Resources, and Merrill Technologies Group.

Alix enjoys gardening, cooking, making pottery, and exploring with her partner, Rob. While her thrill-seeking tendencies have brought them skydiving and mountain biking, most often Alix can be found cuddling her Shih-Tzu, Sadie, or nurturing her large collection of plants.

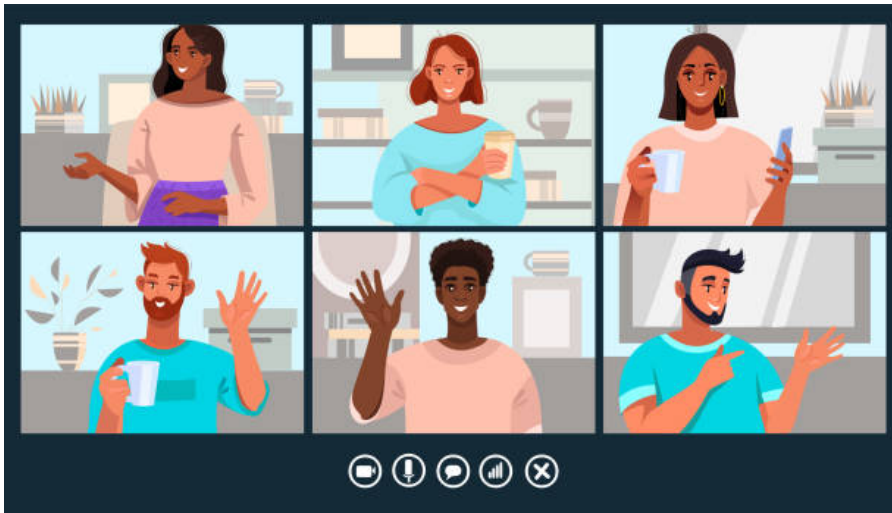


Coping During Covid:

Self-care thoughts offered by Dr. Nuwan Jayawickreme

Welcome back Jaspers!!! (Or in the case of our freshmen: Welcome new Jaspers!!!) I'm sure you won't be surprised when I say that this upcoming semester will be one like no other. We continue to live in a world severely curtailed by the coronavirus – a world that demands constant surveillance against a threat that is global, invisible, and seemingly without end. This threat has been a part of our lives now for over six months and many of us have experienced illness, loss of loved ones, loss of employment, loss of our social lives and loss of many aspects of our daily lives – e.g., going out to eat, going shopping – that many of us took as a given. Unsurprisingly, these losses and fears have taken a considerable toll of our mental health.

As we return to campus – whether remotely or in-person – we need to maintain our vigilance against the virus, adjust to new norms of social interaction, and get used to new forms of instruction. Here are a few suggestions for how you can navigate these new realities in such a way that reduces stress and worry.



Coping During Covid

As much as possible, reduce the number of interactions you have with people you don't know very well, especially in-doors:

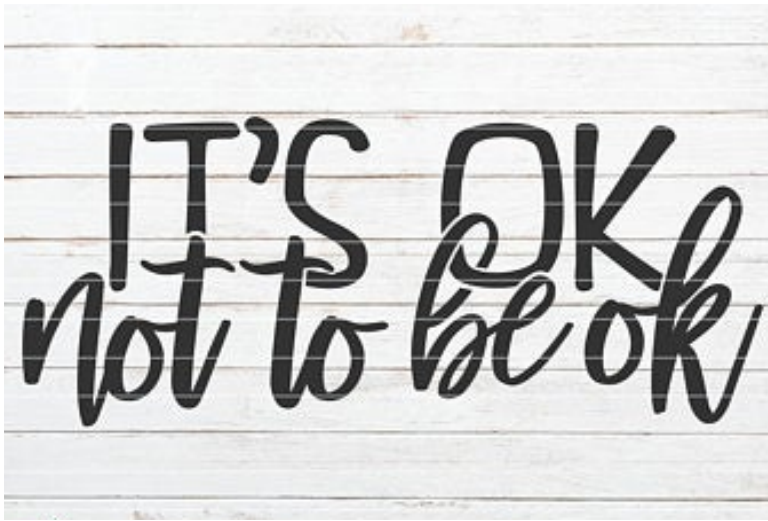
The odds of getting the coronavirus from a single activity that involves interaction with a person in-doors (e.g., ordering and waiting for a sandwich inside a shop) is very low. However, if you engage in many of these types of activities daily over a long period of time, the odds of catching the virus goes up a GREAT deal (the statistician Nate Silver has an excellent Twitter thread on this - <https://twitter.com/natesilver538/status/1299810511333339137>). So, really curtail your interactions – outside of class, keep your interactions limited to people who have been recently tested and who also only spend time with other people who have been recently tested.

Feelings of threat are useful indicators of danger... but not *always*, especially in the current moment:

The invisibility of the coronavirus makes us feel as if there is threat everywhere. Experiencing such feelings of threat can be exhausting and can eventually lead us not to take the precautions we need to ensure the safety of ourselves and our community. The goal is to take the required steps to protect yourself (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html> for a summary of these guidelines) while not exhausting yourself such excessive worry that you give up being careful due to fatigue. Whenever you feel a sense of threat, acknowledge the feeling and then deliberate whether there is actually a threat or not.

Manage your media use-- stay informed, but don't overdo it:

You need to stay informed in this current moment, so do read the news; however, paying attention to every single new story as it pops up on your phone will likely send you on an emotional roller-coaster that zips you back and forth between hope to despair. So check the news daily and leave it at that. And AVOID getting your news information on social media – social media platforms curate stories designed to keep you glued to your device, which is not recommended.



Coping During Covid

Acknowledge that it's ok to feel down at times:

Humans are social creatures and the pandemic has severely curtailed that aspect of our lives that brings us the most joy – spending time with others. It is natural to feel down at such times. Accepting these feelings and understanding why you're feeling them (i.e., because of the pandemic) may prevent you from acting on those feelings in ways you may regret (e.g., getting irritable with those around you).

Acknowledge that it's ok to feel awkward around people:

Many of us have spent six months of isolating with family and have seen few others. Now that we are interacting with more people, it may feel as though we don't know the new rules of engagement – how close to stand next to someone (tip – it's six feet), whether you can shout at a friend across the Quad or not, whether people can tell how you're feeling when your mask is on, etc. It will feel awkward as we get use to this new (for now) normal. And that's ok.

Make sure you keep in touch with close friends and family:

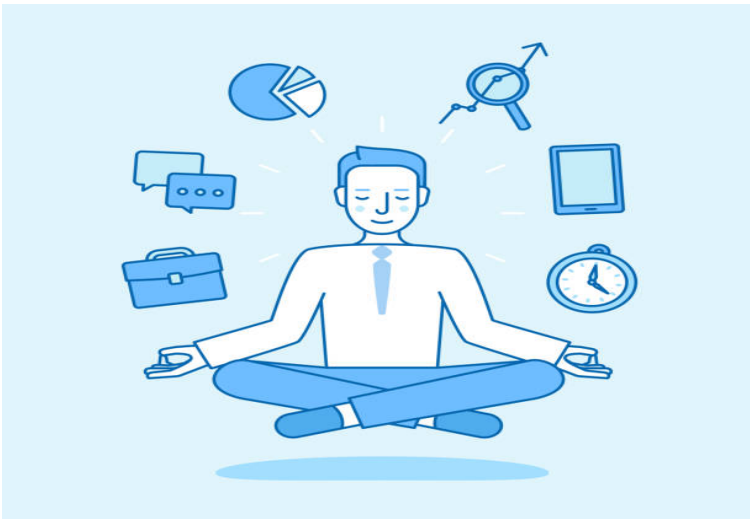
Be sure to speak regularly (remotely is great!) with close friends and family. Sharing your feelings with someone who you feel comfortable with is an especially effective way of managing stress.

Regularly schedule an activity into your schedule that makes you happy:

If you have a habit that reliably makes you happy (e.g., watching re-runs of "The Office," painting, making Tik Tok videos), add it to your schedule so that you do it regularly!

A bit of humor helps!

Laughing at a good joke can reset your mind, especially if you're feeling a little down. Make time for your favorite comedies or funny friends!



Coping During Covid

Remember that some of us will be resilient in the current moment or have mild symptoms of anxiety and depression that will fade away (especially once the pandemic goes away)... but if you're experiencing significant distress, you should see a pro:

Some of us will manage this threat with no or only mild and transient symptoms of anxiety and depression. However, some of us may experience symptoms that are severe enough that warrant seeing a professional. If you think you may need help, **DON'T HESITATE** to make an appointment with Manhattan College's Counseling Center (<https://inside.manhattan.edu/student-life/counseling-center/index.php>) or with another mental health provider.

Engage in healthy habits or routines:

Make sure you get enough sleep; exercise (even a long walk helps); eat healthy; schedule regular times to catch up with close friends and family; develop and adhere to a work schedule. Such habits and routines are healthy for you in themselves and also insert an element of predictability into your lives (which is sorely needed).

Fight the feeling of helplessness by getting involved in a meaningful cause:

In the face of an invisible threat like the coronavirus, one can feel helpless and without agency – as if one cannot do anything to change the current circumstances. Get out of this rut by getting involved in a cause that is close to your heart. Racial justice, climate change, economic justice, the 2020 election... there are many causes you can get involved in. You can also get involved in student clubs on campus, such as Psych Club and Just Peace, as well as with Campus Ministry and Social Action (<https://inside.manhattan.edu/student-life/cmsa/index.php>).

Manhattan College's Counseling Center:

<https://inside.manhattan.edu/student-life/counseling-center/index.php>

Faculty at a Glance



Full-time Faculty:

Kim Fairchild, Ph.D.

Jay Friedenberg, Ph.D.

Nuwan Jayawickreme, Ph.D.

Arno Kolz, Ph.D.

Kelly Marin, Ph.D.

Maria Maust-Mohl, Ph.D.

Martha Mendez-Baldwin, Ph.D.

Zella Moore, Psy.D.

Danielle Young, Ph.D.

Adjunct Faculty:

Faith Florer, Ph.D.

Asghar Sajadian, Ph.D.

Kristin Palmieri, M.A.

Jennifer Pisco, M.A.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ManhattanCollegePsychology>

Twitter: @MC_Psychology

Learn more about our department on our homepage:

<https://manhattan.edu/academics/schools-and-departments/school-of-liberal-arts/.psychology-dept/index.php>

Something you'd like to see in an upcoming issue of *the Standard Deviation*? Let us know!

Email: zella.moore@manhattan.edu