

Distinguished Professor Roy Smith Retires After 40 Years at UMW

By Kendall Cloeter and Akhil Rachamadugu, Psychology Student Representatives

As this spring semester draws to a close, the psychology department will bid farewell not only to its graduating seniors but also to Distinguished Professor Roy Smith. Dr. Smith will enter retirement this May. Since joining the faculty in 1970, Dr. Smith has taught a variety of courses in the area of biological psychology, including Biocognition, Behavior Genetics, Psychopharmacology, and Physiological Psychology, as well as a Freshmen Seminar titled, *A Question of Mind*.



**Distinguished Professor
Roy Smith**

To simply say Dr. Smith taught biological psychology courses is somewhat misleading; the reality is that he introduced many of these courses to the psychology curriculum. For many years, Dr. Smith was the heart and soul of biological psychology at UMW. In addition, Dr. Smith has taught courses beyond those of a biological orientation, for example, Statistics and Research Methods. Furthermore, to say

that Dr. Smith was a teacher of psychology only is somewhat misleading. During his tenure at UMW, Dr. Smith has taught courses in the English and Music departments.

Before he began teaching at UMW, Dr. Smith completed his graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania. From that institution, he received his doctoral degree in psychology with a focus on behavior genetics. Prior to pursuing his graduate studies, Dr. Smith received a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Tennessee. Throughout his career, his research interests have been in the area of cognitive neuroscience. Specifically, he has studied alcohol use and abuse, alcohol and drug education, and animal and

human communication. Furthermore, Dr. Smith has been interested in teaching development and evaluation.

In keeping with his research interests, a few of Dr. Smith's major accomplishments include publication of a book titled, *Cognitive Neuroscience: A Functionalist Perspective*; another book titled, *A Curriculum for Alcohol Education*; publication of a chapter in a book about language titled, *Signals, Signs, and Words: From Animal Communication to Language*; and the recent publication of a chapter in a book about undergraduate research in psychology, titled, *Successful Department Models of Undergraduate Research: Mary Washington*.

According to Dr. Smith, his passion is teaching in the classroom as well as using research experience as a tool for teaching. Nevertheless, Dr. Smith's accomplishments at UMW are not teaching related only, although they are typically teaching inspired.

Dr. Smith initiated and, for the better part of the last 30 years, maintained the Teaching Innovation Program at UMW. The mission of this program is to help both new and experienced faculty improve their teaching by sharing ideas with fellow faculty and becoming informed about developments in the practice of teaching. Many moments inspired Dr. Smith to initiate the Teaching Innovation Program; however, one was quite memorable to him.

Early in his teaching of Psychopharmacology, Dr. Smith found that most students had little to no experience in biology; therefore, students had trouble understanding concepts such as chemoreceptors and neural interactions. During a class, a student raised her hand and said, "Dr. Smith, I just don't get it." At that moment, Dr. Smith realized that rather than repeating himself over and over, it would be more effective to reword the concepts and give different examples. Dr. Smith said, "I can remember that after about the third example, I saw her eyes light up. She started to nod and said, 'Oh, I get it!'" From then on, I changed my teaching style."

Roy Smith

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Dr. Smith realized that by teaching the same concept in multiple ways, he was able to not only get students to learn the concepts, but also to make them internalize the material by leading them to see the relevance of the concept to their own lives. By starting the Teaching Innovation Program,

Dr. Smith hoped that he would be able to share revelations like these with other faculty, thereby saving them some of the “start up costs” involved in teaching by providing a formal opportunity for sharing and discussion.

In addition to starting the Teaching Innovation Program, Dr. Smith has probably served on every campus and departmental committee in existence! Nevertheless, he has made notable contributions to the university as an active member of Phi Beta Kappa and the Campus Academic Resources Committee. In the psychology department, he has worn many hats, including serving as department chair, a research advisor, an internship advisor, community service learning coordinator, and organizer of the graduate in residence program. It would probably be an easier task to list the roles in which Dr. Smith has not served, but that would make for a very brief tribute!

Dr. Smith has a number of hobbies that he hopes to continue during retirement. He is an accomplished singer and exercises his vocal skills as a member of the Chamber Chorale of Fredericksburg. His musical talent is further evidenced by his ability to play the piano and cello. In fact, he has played with the UMW-Community Symphony Orchestra. Furthermore, Dr. Smith is an active member of Best Buddies and an expert gardener.

Over the past 40 years, Dr. Smith has seen significant changes to the university. He states, “This isn’t the same school I came to...we have male students now! In addition, UMW has doubled in size and has a lot more diversity” not only in terms of gender, but also in terms of a greater number of non-local and non-traditional students.

Dr. Smith says that what he will miss most is teaching.



Dr. Smith and his wife, Stephanie, in Alaska

He feels that most of the things that make a professor’s job challenging are temporary; however, one of the major things that makes the job enjoyable and is constant are “bright students that still think you know more than they do!” Dr. Smith will also miss his colleagues in the psychology department whom he feels are like a second family to

him. When asked for parting words to the faculty, Dr. Smith replied lightheartedly, “You won’t have me to kick around anymore. But, don’t worry, Dr. MacEwen is still here.”

Despite retirement, Dr. Smith hopes to stay active in the department. “I don’t know what the needs of the department may be in the future, whether its adjunct teaching or otherwise, but if they want me, I’ll be around,” he said. This news is refreshing to the faculty who remain. According to Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor, “Dr. Smith is an invaluable resource at many levels. No faculty member I have met knows the movements of the field of biopsychology and UMW over time like Dr. Smith. I will miss the availability of that resource as well as delicious vegetables from his garden he was always kind enough to share during the harvesting season!”

Dr. Smith also has some advice for graduating students and alumni. “I don’t have to tell you much. You’ll figure it out within two years of graduation...you’ll realize that what you got from UMW is unlike what others got from their institutions. Once you realize this, you should let your faculty know. It’s good reinforcement to let them know they’re appreciated,” he said.

Well, Dr. Smith, here is some reinforcement for you: thank you for always putting students first, for feeling your fellow faculty were family, and for being a giving person. You said, “UMW and I were a good fit for each other.” We concur; therefore, your absence will leave a space in the department and at the university. Nevertheless, we wish you and your wife, Stephanie, a comfortable and enjoyable retirement.

Career Column: Zookeeper

By Dr. Steve Hampton, Associate Professor and Career Advisor

The majority of our graduates do not head off to graduate school, instead preferring to take their degrees and hit their career paths running. Career Column will highlight some of the interesting directions our students have taken since their graduations.



Carly Barron '09 with Daisy, a Southern White Rhinoceros

Carly Barron '09 spends part of every working day with Daisy and Stubby. Daisy and Stubby are not co-workers in a dreary office cubicle; they are Southern White Rhinoceroses in the African Journey Watering Hole

exhibit at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. Carly is a full time keeper at the Watering Hole and cares for Daisy and Stubby along with four Plains Zebras named Tyler, Ayanna, Trixie, and Blue.

“Like most zoo professionals, I’ve been an animal lover since I was a kid, but I never expected I would become a zookeeper! It was almost like I fell into it when I became a counselor at zoo camp, and my psychology degree helped push me in this direction.” At UMW, Carly completed an internship at the National Aquarium with dolphins in the Marine Mammal department. Carly participated in dolphin training and in some of the public dolphin shows. The summer after she graduated,

Carly interned with the Animal Behavior and Training Coordinator at the Maryland Zoo, where she was involved in enrichment and training programs with the animals. The internship led to her current position with the zoo.

Aside from diet management and cleaning stalls, pens, dens, and yards, Carly is involved in training and enrichment. Carly’s rhinoceroses respond to verbal commands such as “back,” “open” (mouth), “up” (head), and “steady.” The training allows for safe and effective treatments by staff and veterinarians. Recently, Carly had to get Daisy to walk up a board and stand quietly on a scale while she was weighed. “It’s so fun,” Carly says, “and it has been a great opportunity to apply my psychology background.” When asked to compare the intelligence of Daisy and Stubby to professors MacEwen and Hampton, Carly said, “You guys are smarter, but I bet Daisy and Stubby would win in a fight.” Obviously, Carly has never seen Dr. MacEwen in a bad mood!

Carly is currently learning to work with the other three species in her exhibit area: leopards, ostrich, and sitatunga (swamp antelope). When the zoo opens again in March, she will be giving Keeper Chats to teach visitors about the five species with which she works. So, where is the future going to lead Carly? “Working at the zoo has made me much more interested in species conservation. I would love to do field research or work for a nonprofit agency. But for now, I can’t imagine not being able to pet a rhino every day!”

Graduate in Residence Dr. Patricia Grant Discusses School Psychology

By Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor

Dr. Patricia Grant, this year’s graduate in residence, visited the department of psychology to discuss what school psychology is and what it is not. Dr. Grant is a nationally- and locally-certified school psychologist. Specifically, she has been the lead school psychologist in the York County School Division in Yorktown, Va., since 2007. Prior to obtaining her current position, Dr. Grant served as a school psychologist for the Wake County Public Schools in Raleigh, N.C., and for the Manassas City Public Schools in Manassas, Va. Also, she taught graduate courses in school psychology at George Mason University.

As with every graduate in residence, Dr. Grant’s education in psychology began at UMW. Subsequent to earning her

bachelor’s degree with honors at UMW, Dr. Grant earned a master’s degree in school psychology and a doctoral degree in applied development psychology at George Mason University. Her doctoral research investigated whether discussing moral reasoning dilemmas in small groups could help students with behavioral disorders.

With all of these experiences in tow, Dr. Grant met with students and faculty during her visit to UMW. She spent her time conceptualizing school psychology, discussing modern challenges in the discipline, and providing a realistic description of the day-to-day events in the life of a school psychologist. Dr. Grant held informal meetings with students over lunch, served as a guest speaker in a

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Patricia Grant

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couple of classes, and gave a formal talk titled, *The Scope and Challenges of School Psychology Today*.

During her talk, Dr. Grant described school psychology as “clinical psychology in a school setting.” Nevertheless, she made it clear that school psychologists do not diagnose behavioral disorders, nor do they provide therapy. What school psychologists do is help students deal with issues that impact their academic performance. For example, if a student is experiencing anxiety that is getting in the way of obtaining good grades, a school psychologist will help that student find a way to keep the anxiety from affecting his or her school work.

Dr. Grant discussed the history of school psychology during her talk. She described the field as one that used to focus on testing students with disabilities and placing those students in appropriate settings; however, the focus of school psychology has evolved. School psychologists may still test and place, but they are concerned also with prevention of behavioral disorders as well as intervening to address the effects of these disorders. Above all else, Dr. Grant views today’s school psychologists as student advocates.

Being a student advocate does not always mean working

with students directly, according to Dr. Grant. As mentioned, school psychologists often meet with students to assess their behavioral issues and work with them to address those issues; however, school psychologists often work with teachers and sometimes with parents to promote students’ academic welfare.

According to Dr. Grant, there are certain challenges that face today’s school psychologists. One challenge is keeping abreast of the large amount of literature produced by researchers who study disorders that are prevalent today, such as autism. Other disorders Dr. Grant views as challenging for today’s school psychologists to address include self mutilation, eating disorders, and sexual identity disorders.

Despite these challenges, Dr. Grant states that school psychologists “have the opportunity to make a difference in an area they are passionate about.” She encourages students interested in school psychology to try substitute teaching or completing a school-psychology-related internship. Undoubtedly, all those who met Dr. Grant during her visit witnessed the passion she has for school psychology, and she certainly was an inspiration to students interested in pursuing a career as a school psychologist.



Dr. Patricia Grant is introduced by Dr. Roy Smith

Psi Chi Inducts New Members

Professor Roy Smith, keynote speaker, welcomed a number of psychology majors into the UMW chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. The fall 2009 inductees were: **Melissa Buckley, Michael Dooley, Karen Ellrod, Leandra Frye, Rebecca Groman, Lauren Hartwell, Marley Horner, Rachel Jobe, Sarah Spangler, Sarah Speicher, Zhanna Tulchinskaya-Winchell, Caitlyn Yantis, and Megan Zuchowski.**

A Moment in the History of the Psychology Department

Historical information courtesy of Dr. Tom Moeller, Professor Emeritus

In '76-'77, students requested that the department create a catalogue, including more detailed descriptions of courses than those found in the university catalogue. A committee of faculty members, including Professor Denis Nissim-Sabat, developed the first Psychology Department Brochure and one has been published every year since. The modern brochure contains more detailed information not only about psychology courses, but also a section on opportunities for students (e.g., roles as psychology student representatives and Psi Chi members), a section on scholarships and honors available to students, a frequently asked questions section which broaches topics such as internships and research opportunities, and a section describing the courses taught by each current faculty member as well as their research interests. Other information found in the brochure includes descriptions of our Board Certified Behavior Analyst Program and our collaboration with the New England Center for Children. A copy of the brochure is given to students when they declare a major in psychology. Also, a copy can be requested from Jean Bennett, the department office manager.

Faculty News

Dr. Mindy Erchull, Assistant Professor, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research. She published a paper titled, "Perceived susceptibility measures are not interchangeable: Absolute, direct comparative, and indirect comparative risk," in *Health Psychology*. In addition, Dr. Erchull presented a paper titled, "Depictions of women in menstrual product advertisements," and a poster with alumna **Jennifer Gorman Rose '97** titled, "Have physicians' attitudes towards menstruation changed? A comparison of physicians' current attitudes towards menstruation and PMS compared to attitudes in 1997," at the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research last June. Last, she presented a poster titled, "Barbie never bleeds: The effect of menstruation on objectification and self-objectification," at the Association for Women in Psychology meeting last February, and a poster titled, "I'll get that for you: The relationship between benevolent sexism and objectification," at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Erchull and **Dr. Miriam Liss**, Associate Professor, published a paper titled, "The feminist identity development model: Relevant for young women today?" in *Sex Roles*. They presented two posters, including "The

development and exploration of the Enjoyment of Objectification Scale" at the American Psychological Association meeting last August, and "Young adults' ideal and actual expectations for future division of household labor" at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May. Last, Drs. Erchull and Liss presented a paper titled, "Empowered ignorance: The paradox of the synthesis stage of the feminist identity development model," at the Association for Women in Psychology meeting last March.

Dr. Chris Kilmartin, Professor, published the fourth edition of his textbook, *The Masculine Self*, and gave the keynote address titled, "Guy Fi: The Fictions that Rule Men's Lives," at the American Men's Studies Conference in Atlanta last March.

Dr. Virginia Mackintosh, Assistant Professor, published a paper titled, "Use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments by parents of children with autism spectrum disorders," in the journal *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*. The paper was based on Dr. Mackintosh's dissertation research and looked at CAM usage, recommendation sources, expectations, costs, and parent-rated assessments of efficacy.

Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor, gave a presentation titled, "A tool for informing psychology majors about their program and prospects: The Psychology Department Newsletter," at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology last January.

Dr. David Rettinger, Assistant Professor, published a paper titled, "The psychology of high school and college academic dishonesty," in *Ethics and Behavior*. In addition, he presented a poster titled, "Emotional and social influences on moral decision making in an academic setting," at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Holly Schiffrin, Assistant Professor, published a paper titled, "Associations among computer-mediated communication, relationships, and well-being," in the journal *Cyberpsychology and Behavior*. She published another paper titled, "Mood over matter: Can happiness be your undoing?" in the *Journal of Positive Psychology*. Last, she gave a presentation titled, "A systematic approach to assessing outcomes in psychology," at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology last January.

Where Are They Now?

Sara Foughner '05 is working in the Child Development Clinic in Developmental Pediatrics at VCU Health Systems. She is a clinical social worker. In addition, she is plans to obtain clinical licensure this year.

Crystal Bulges '97 is a permanent law clerk for the Maine Supreme Court.

Sarah (Bickford) McGarvey '96 had a baby girl last July and named her Elisabeth Adams McGarvey. Sarah is taking a year off from her job as a teacher to be with her child.

Jenna McKee '09 is an intern for the Thrive Africa mission organization in

the Qwa Qwa area of South Africa. She is undertaking a number of activities, including teaching teens and young adults about healthy relationships, teaching Biblical lessons to orphaned children, and taking courses in culture and language.

Tara (Meuser) Rivera '05 passed the Virginia Bar Examination recently.

Ashley Tucker '07 earned an M. Ed. in school counseling from William and Mary last spring. She is a National Board Certified Counselor at Dominion High School in Loudon County. She resides in Herndon and

enjoys spending time with her boyfriend, Scott.

Megan (Ferguson) Vanderherchen '07 was married to her husband, Matt, last January at Spotswood Baptist Church in Fredericksburg. She is a teacher at Fredericksburg Christian High School.

Maggie White '09 is an assistant animal trainer and performer in the "More Pet Shenanigans" show at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg.



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