The Cognitive Program Thrives
Program Highly Productive, Taking New Students

The cognitive program continues to thrive, with faculty and students publishing in top-tier journals, obtaining grant funding, and receiving various forms of national and international recognition. Two of our current students (Hannah Hausman & Sarah DeLozier) are funded through NSF GRFP awards. We are proud of the success of our students & alums (see the Alumni Corner for featured alums), and we anticipate recruiting a large cohort of new students this year.

Elizabeth Loftus comes to CSU
Renowned memory researcher visits CSU Psychology

Renowned psychologist Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, perhaps most known for her work on memory distortion and false memories, visited the Psychology Department on Thursday, September 8, 2016, and met with Department faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. That evening, Dr. Loftus spoke to a full house at the Lory Student Center Theatre as hundreds packed the theatre, with lines from the fully-packed theatre continuing out the door during the event. In addition to the many CSU students and faculty in attendance, there were professionals and students who drove great distances from around Colorado and Wyoming to attend. After ending with, “Memory—like liberty—is a fragile thing,” Loftus left the stage to a standing ovation by the enormous crowd.

Carol Seger Heads MCIN

Carol Seger took on the role of MCIN Director this year (MCIN stands for Molecular, Cellular, and Integrative Neuroscience program at CSU). The MCIN program is interdisciplinary, crossing many colleges and disciplines on campus. The program hosts weekly seminars, bringing in well-known speakers from varied, interdisciplinary perspectives relating to neuroscience. Topics range from the molecular level of understanding to the systems and human cognitive levels. The program also brings in graduate students interested in neuroscience, some of whom can potentially be part of the cognitive program.

Have ideas for the Cognitive Program Newsletter? Email Anne Cleary at Anne.Cleary@colostate.edu
The event was sponsored by the Department of Psychology, Psi Chi, the Associated Students of Colorado State University, Women in Natural Sciences (WINS), and the College of Natural Sciences.

Carol Seger earns Prestigious Chang Jiang Scholar Chair Professor Title
Cognitive Psychology Program
South China Normal University

From her time spent working at South China Normal University (SCNU) while on sabbatical in 2013, Carol Seger established strong international collaborations that continue today, and that earned her the title Chang Jiang Scholar Chair Professor. As part of this position, she continues to travel to SCNU every winter and summer, where she has an office in the Psychology Department at SCNU. During her month-long visits to SCNU, she collects fMRI data and works on collaborations with her many colleagues at SCNU. She has also worked to establish collaborations between SCNU faculty and other CSU faculty, helping to establish the Joint International Laboratory for the Study of Mind and Brain between CSU and SCNU.

Anne Cleary gives TEDxCSU Talk on Deja vu

Anne Cleary was a TEDxCSU speaker this March, speaking on the scientific study of déjà vu.

The talk was on past research out of her lab involving former students, as well as current research involving current students. The past research used virtual reality technology to investigate particularly memory hypotheses about the basis of déjà vu. The more recent research explored the potential basis of the peculiar association between déjà vu and feelings of premonition. It turns out, there is an association between the two, but it is likely because the feeling of déjà vu leads to an illusory sense of knowing what will happen next. Watch it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFAvUkjba-Q

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In June, 6 Psychology Department faculty members (Don Rojas, Anne Cleary, Carol Seger, Mike Steger, Brad Connor & Silvia Canetto) traveled to Guangzhou, China, to meet with potential collaborators at South China Normal University and to attend and present at the International Conference on Advanced Learning Sciences (ICALS). Spearheaded by Carol Seger, CSU and SCNU now have a Joint International Laboratory for the Study of Mind and Brain, and this trip was part of that effort. Following the conference, faculty traveled by bus to Yangshuo, where they sampled local foods, visited the famous Silver Cave, and experienced bamboo rafting on the Yulong River.
CSU Cognitive Psychology PhD student Hannah Hausman chats with Division 3 Awards Chair Janine Jennings at a poster. In the background is Elizabeth Ligon-Bjork, and behind Hannah is John Wixted.

CSU Cognitive Psychology faculty member Ed DeLosh walks Bob Bjork through his poster on the testing effect.

CSU Cog alum Shana Carpenter presents her poster.
Poster Reception in the BSB

A delegation of faculty from SCNU visited CSU in October. We hosted our first poster reception in the Behavioral Sciences Building lounge area of the Psychology Department during their visit. Graduate students & faculty from SCNU, from CSU Psychology, as well as from HDFS and Occupational Therapy, presented.

Now that our department owns a large number of poster display easels & foam boards, we hope to have many more poster receptions in the BSB. Hopefully, our next will be a graduate student poster session to showcase ongoing graduate student research. Once things slow down, of course.
Anthony Ryals

Anthony Ryals completed his Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology at Colorado State University under the mentorship of Dr. Anne Cleary in 2012. Subsequently, he completed a four-year T32-funded Postdoctoral Fellowship at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago under the mentorship of Dr. Joel Voss. Recently he has taken a position in the Behavioral Science Division of the Department of Psychology at the University of North Texas in the fall of 2016. Dr. Ryals heads the UNT Neurocognitive Laboratory, where he seeks to advance understanding of how explicit and implicit processes operate and interact in episodic memory. This research also involves investigating how executive functioning and subjective awareness of memory (or lack of awareness) relates to behavior, brain function, and quality of life in both healthy and cognitively impaired populations. In his work, he and his students use integrative research methods including computerized experimentation, eye tracking, electrophysiology (EEG and ERPs), neuroimaging, and neuropsychological assessments.

Dr. Ryals is seeking his first dedicated graduate students in the fall of 2017.

Nick Soderstrom

Nick received his doctorate degree in Cognitive Psychology from Colorado State University in 2012. During his time as a graduate student, he was mentored by Drs. David McCabe and Matthew Rhodes, and conducted research in the areas of human learning, memory, and metacognition. After graduate school, Nick completed a postdoctoral research fellowship with Drs. Robert and Elizabeth Bjork at UCLA, where he gained even more experience as a researcher and become deeply committed to how the science of learning can be applied to improve the educational practices of students and instructors alike. Nick is currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Dickinson College, where he teaches classes in human cognition and continues his research. In addition, he serves as an active liaison between learning scientists and the general public by giving talks on the importance of learning how to learn, and writing highly accessible articles and books on the science of learning.

Nick's New Book!

College Smart: How to Succeed in College Using the Science of Learning

Nick's New Book!

Anthony's New Lab!
Hillary Wehe graduated with a PhD from the Cognitive Program in 2016 under the mentorship of Carol Seger. She is now an Assistant Professor at Armstrong State University in Savannah, GA. Hillary opened her lab and has 6 research assistants. It’s a collaborative endeavor with another colleague and they will be working with humans and non-human animals (rats) to study primarily cognition and learning. Hillary is also continuing her line of research investigating motivational processes. Last semester, Hillary received an internal grant from the College of Science and Technology’s Active Teaching Innovation Min-grants Titled, “Bringing the laboratory into Physiological Psychology: Modeling signal transduction and neural adaption.” She also helped organize the local Brain Bee for Savannah (a local neuroscience competition where high school student competes at Armstrong State for a chance the National Brain Bee).

Kurt Braunlich spent last year working as a postdoc at Georgia Tech with Mark Wheeler. They completed two studies together. In the first, they investigated how perceptual representations evolve in the brains of younger and older adults during deliberation. In the second, they investigated how the functional relevance of perceptual information influences its neural expression. Last summer, Kurt moved to central London, where he is working with Brad Love at UCL on combining insights from classic categorization models and modern deep neural networks in order to learn about how we select and interpret relevant information from the world around us.

On February 10, cognitive alum Vanessa Loaiza (http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~vmloai/) gave a talk to our cognitive brownbag group about obtaining academic positions in Europe. Vanessa completed her PhD at CSU in 2012 and then went on to two postdoctoral positions in Switzerland. In 2015, she was hired as a Lecturer (roughly equivalent to Assistant Professor) at the University of Essex. We all learned a lot from her talk, especially about work-life balance in Europe!

And congrats to Sarah (Uma) Tauber who served as the Editor of The Oxford Handbook of Metamemory.