Each of us is a creature of our intellectual upbringing. We are shaped and molded by the environment. Prominent among the environmental forces bearing down upon our development is the sequence of educational experiences to which we have been exposed. For many of us, if not all, the university or college experience has been the dominant developmental force in our lives, next perhaps to our parents; and the university may have exceeded the influence of family in some cases. A graduate program in school psychology is no exception, as it has a profound impact one’s professional development and future performance. The faculty of the School Psychology Program (SPP) at the University of Florida are well aware of the fact that we bear an enormous burden in assuring that future generations of school psychologists are prepared as completely as possible, with all the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively deliver psychological services as scientist-practitioners to promote the psychological and academic development of children and youth.
Toward this end, the faculty of the SPP are committed to the practice of self-study to continuously seek ways to improve the quality of education and training. The success of the SPP in preparing school psychologists is reflected in the fact that both the EdS and PhD programs have long been accredited by the Florida Department of Education and approved as “Nationally Recognized” programs by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) through the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The PhD program is also accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). The EdS program was first approved by NASP in 1987 and the PhD program was first accredited by APA and approved by NASP in 1997. Both programs received full re-accreditation within the past two years.

The School Psychology Times is the newsletter of the SPP at the University of Florida. The purpose of the Times is to support the mission of the SPP; to enhance communication within and beyond the SPP; to highlight the activities and accomplishments of faculty and students; to announce parties and other important events; and to enable individual members to express themselves. The Times is published electronically once a year by the School Psychology Graduate Student Association (SPGSA). As we assemble the Times each year, we are reminded that we are not only a professional training program, but also a community of like-minded individuals. In these pages you will find a great deal of information about the professional and personal activities and successes of the faculty and students in the SPP over the past year.

However, communities not only share in the good times, but also endure the difficult ones together. This past year the SPP lost one of its own. Dr. Thomas D. Oakland, former director and long-time member of the SPP faculty who retired in 2010, died tragically on March 4, 2015, at his home in Gainesville, Florida. Tom was a prolific author, editing 12 books, more than 200 chapters and articles, and 11 psychological tests. Tom received numerous awards from state, national, and international professional associations. Tom is remembered by students, colleagues, friends, and family as generous, kind, thoughtful, and insightful—an outstanding school psychologist, father, and human being who gave his time and energy selflessly to advance the field of school psychology and to promote the development of children throughout the world.
Dr. John Kranzler is the current Program Director and professor who joined UF in 1990. He received his Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of California, Berkley. His primary research interests concern the nature, growth, and assessment of human intelligence, as well as contemporary issues in psychoeducational assessment.

Recent Publications


Conference Presentations

Dr. Joyce-Beaulieu’s areas of specialization include school-based behavioral/social-emotional assessment and intervention within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model and best practices in graduate applied training to develop clinical skill competencies.

**Current Grant**

Nueronet: Multi-Year Longitudinal Study of Interactive Learning Curricula Effects on Student Engagement and Academic Outcomes

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**Dr. Diana Joyce-Beaulieu**

**Recent Publications**


Recent Presentations


Dr. Elayne Colón

Recent Publications


Recent Presentations


Colón, E. & Dana, T. (2015, October 1). Continued program approval: Meeting Standard 3 in an authentic way [Webinar]. In FLDOE Division of Educator Quality’s Community of Practice monthly meeting. (invited)
Dr. Elayne Colón

Recent Presentations Cont.

Colón, E. & Dana, T. (2015, March). Drowning in Data: Identifying Reliable Measures to Streamline Continuous Improvement. Presented at the spring meeting of the Florida Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Tallahassee, FL. (invited)

Colón, E. & Dana, T. (2015, February). Drowning in Data: Identifying Reliable Measures to Streamline Continuous Improvement. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Atlanta, GA.


Dr. Tina Smith-Bonahue is an associate professor in the School of Special Education, School Psychology and Early Childhood Studies (SESPECS). She teaches courses in direct interventions in school psychology and assessment and evaluation in the Unified ProTeach Early Childhood program. Her primary research interests include aggression and challenging behaviors in early childhood, intervention for challenging behaviors, and teacher beliefs regarding children with special needs. She is interested in improving classroom quality in pre-kindergarten and providing professional development for early childhood educators.

**Current Grant**

Project Faculty, Florida Master Teachers Initiative. I-3 Grant from the US Department of Education.

$5,000,000 over 5 years, in Year 4 School Psychology Program

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**Recent Publications**


**Recent Conference Presentations**


Dr. Joni Williams Splett

Recent Appointment


Recent Publications


**Dr. Joni Williams Splett**

**Recent Presentations**


**Recent Grants**

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice’s Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (2016-19). Interconnecting PBIS and School Mental Health to Improve School Safety: A Randomized Trial. (Co-PI with PI Dr. Mark Weist).

Bullying, fighting, and other forms of interpersonal violence occur frequently in elementary schools, and are associated with student distress, poor school functioning, and increases in aggression, delinquency, and other behavior problems. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and School Mental Health (SMH) systems show promise but operate separately limiting impacts of both initiatives. To address these limitations, the Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) provides specific guidance on PBIS-SMH interconnection through effective teams, data-based decision making, implementation support for evidence-based practices and ongoing quality improvement to assure responsiveness to school and student needs. We will assess impacts of ISF compared to two other conditions on school climate and safety; student exposure to violence, problem behavior, and discipline problems; and student access to and quality of a full range of mental health services.


Dr. Nancy Waldron serves as the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Graduate Education in the College of Education.

Dr. Nancy Waldron’s research interests include the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education, contextual factors effecting implementation of multi-tiered systems of support, school improvement and systems change, and school psychology accreditation and credentialing.

Recent Publications


Recent Presentations


THE FIRST YEAR COHORT

Top Row (left to right): Angela Nertney, Brette Therriault, James Barringer, Elaina Schnyderite, Marlene Garzona, Alix Binney, Greg Muller.

Bottom Row (left to right): Christina Monachino, Alexa Dixon, Kacey Gilbert, Stevie DeFelice, Catherine Rama.
Meet the First Year Cohort

Greg Muller is a 1st Year student on the PhD track. He received his Bachelors of Science in Psychology from the University of Florida in 2014 and is happy to pursue his graduate education in the Sunshine State. While largely exploratory, his major areas of scholarly interest involve multi-tiered intervention strategies, behavioral assessment and interventions, and the role of technology in improving intervention efficacy and classroom instruction.

Hey there! My name is Brette Therriault. I am from a relatively small town in Connecticut and am new to Gainesville this year. I received my undergraduate degree from Southern Connecticut State University in psychology with a concentration in mental health. I played softball for 12 years of my life so if anyone wants to join a co-ed softball league I'm always in! I really enjoy watching movies (specifically Harry Potter), any sort of outdoor activities, and I have an unreal obsession with dogs!

My name is Stevie DeFelice and I am originally from Atlantic City, New Jersey, and completed my undergraduate work in Psychology at Florida Gulf Coast University. I've lived in Florida since my junior year of high school but I can't wait to get back to colder weather! I currently live with my boyfriend, our two cats, leopard gecko, bearded dragon, hognose snake, and various fish. I enjoy reading and watching movies in my spare time, but I also love to explore the outside world and go swimming, kayaking, fishing, etc. And my favorite food of all time are French fries (of any variety)!

My name is Alix Binney. I grew up in northern New Jersey, but have traveled around a bit. After I graduated from Marist College in 2008, I moved to Hawaii to teach. I spent seven years working in schools in various places including Honolulu, New Jersey, and China. I love traveling and being outside in my free time. I'm happy to be in Gainesville and to be a Gator!

My name is Nikki Gibson. I am from Rochester, NY. I did my undergrad at Syracuse University where I received my B.S. in Psychology. I LOVE dogs (more than Brette). I have a 3 year old pitbull named Samson. He is my big baby. Moving from New York to Florida has been awesome. I absolute love the warm weather and not having to look forward to cold, long winters filled with snow!
My name is Andrew Rodriguez. I'm from Palm Harbor, FL. I went to the University of Central Florida for undergraduate and graduated with a B.S. in psychology and a minor in cognitive sciences. I also received my Ed.S from UCF in school psychology and have my NCSP credential. I recently finished an internship with Polk County Public Schools. When I have free time I like to exercise, watch movies, spend time with friends and family, and bother my pets. I have two cats and a chinchilla.

Hello, my name is Angela Nertney and I am originally from Tampa, Florida. I studied psychology at UF as an undergraduate, with minors in dance and theater. I've been dancing my whole life and love all styles of dance. I also enjoy traveling, learning how to speak Spanish, and being a part of the Gator Nation!

Hi all! My name is Elaina Schnyderite and I was born in Staten Island, New York, but have spent most of my life in Spring Hill, Florida. I earned my undergraduate degree from UCF in psychology with a minor in education. I have played just about every sport and mastered none of them. I like beach volleyball the best. I like food. Scratch that. I LOVE food, so if you have any and it’s not seafood, send it my way.

Hi! My name is Marlene Garzona. I'm originally from New Jersey where I did my undergrad at Rutgers University. There, I got a B.A. in Communication/Psychology with a Spanish minor. In my spare time I enjoy creative writing, working out, and going on adventures. I've been trying to focus on self-improvement since I moved here in June! Otherwise I have the biggest sweet tooth and travel bug.

Hi everyone! My name is Alexa Dixon and I am a first year Ph.D. student from the small town of Dillsburg, Pennsylvania. I completed my B.A. in Psychology at Elon University in North Carolina. A few things I love: being with family and friends, baking, tie dying, reading, and everything Disney!

My name is James Barringer, and I am from The Shark Bite Capital of The World, also known as New Smyrna Beach, FL. I received my undergraduate degree from the University of Florida and couldn’t be happier to be a double Gator. I am a lifeguard on the beach over the summer and I enjoy running, swimming, Gator football, and spending time with family and friends.

Hi everyone! My name is Christina Monachino and I am originally from upstate New York. I did my undergraduate work at SUNY Geneseo and then completed my MS in Mental Health Counseling from the University at Albany. I enjoy baking, cooking, running, spending times with friends and family, and also spoiling my cat!
Hi everyone! My name is Catherine Rama and I am a first year Ph.D. student. I completed my undergraduate coursework here at the University of Florida and received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Family, Youth, & Community Sciences. Being originally from Orlando, FL, I am a huge Disney fan—I have had an annual pass since I was 2 years old! Additionally, I am interested in personal fitness and working out is my go-to stress relief when courses get hectic! My research currently focuses on play during early childhood working under Dr. Smith-Bonahue. I am excited to begin my new journey here at UF and look forward to many adventures.

My name is Kacey Gilbert and I am a first year Ph.D. student. I am from Reno, Nevada the “Biggest Little City.” I have my B.S. in Elementary Education and my M.Ed. in Educational Psychology from the University of Nevada, Reno. After being a teacher for 12 years I am coming back to pursue my dreams. I miss the mountains, but I am thrilled to be part of UF. Go Gators!
Conference Presentations


School Psychology Graduate Student Association

*School Psychology Graduate Student Association (SPGSA)*

SPGSA is a student-led organization designed to represent and serve the interests of students in our program. We organize and host events, represent the students during school psychology faculty meetings, and work to raise awareness of the UF School Psychology Program and the field more generally.

We have had a busy fall semester so far! We started in August by having a back-to-school and welcome social. This event was one of the most well attended in SPGSA event history, with students in their first year through students in their fourth year attending. It was a great opportunity for current students to welcome the incoming class as well as reconnect with one another. In September we had a social at Lake Wauberg, the university’s lake that is open to students, faculty, and staff. It was a beautiful day at the lake. Many students kayaked out on the lake and the SPGSA officers grilled hamburgers and hot dogs (as well as veggie burgers) for everyone who attended. In October we had a Halloween-themed social event and everyone who attended dressed up. Finally, in November we will be having a breakfast-themed tailgate before the UF vs FAU football game and in December SPGSA will be providing coffee, tea, and cookies to all students, faculty, and staff in the test library on one of the last days of classes for the semester.

For our big service event of the semester (featured in the pictures), we went to the Southwest Advocacy Group Family Resource Center (SWAG FRC) here in Gainesville to help them re-label and re-organize their children’s book library. The SWAG
FRC provides programs, services, and activities to families who live in Western Gainesville and would have otherwise been unable to access these resources. We had a great time helping start the process of organizing their children’s book library so the books will more often be utilized, and we plan to go back in the spring to continue our efforts!

We have also done a lot to spread awareness about both our program here at UF and the field of school psychology more broadly this semester. We have had officers visit introductory counseling courses, introductory education courses, and the UF undergraduate psychology club. We also represented the program at the College of Education’s ice cream social event by tabling and showing off a poster about our program and the field.

Finally to celebrate School Psychology Awareness week (November 9-13), SPGSA forged an initiative with the National Association of School Psychologist's Gratitude Works Program. Students were encouraged to fill out cards of gratitude to other students, professors, practicum supervisors, and school administrators in order to promote strengthening positive relationships and increasing positive experiences among those within or closely related to our field.

We look forward to hosting more events in the upcoming spring semester as well, including more social and service events, and we look forward to helping out with program events such as the practicum supervisors’ luncheon as well as the interview days. If you have any ideas for events, service, social, or otherwise, please contact us and let us know!

Your SPGSA 2015-2016 Officers:
Co-presidents: Elizabeth Kenney and Elizabeth Klinepeter
Secretary: Melissa Gonzalez
Treasurer: Elisavet Kampouri
Social Chair: Lia Thibodaux
Public Relations Chair: Raquel Concepcion
Professional Organization Liaison: Lisa Guerrero
First Year Liaison: Alexa Dixon
Community Involvement

Many of our students are involved in organizations around campus. There are several work opportunities for graduate students as well.

Community Involvement

- Gator Tabletop-fun way to relax with board games
- Advocacy Coordinating Team
- American Psychological Association of Graduate Students
- Gator Salsa Club
- Camp I am Special
- Florida Blue Key
- Queen of Peace church choir
- Girls’ Place Volunteer

Job Opportunities

- Strategy Tutor for the UF Athletic Association
- Strategy Tutor for the Office of Student Live
- UF Center for Precollegiate Education and Training
- Florida Autism Center
- Fundamental Therapy Solutions
Peer Mentors

Our students are matched up each year with a second year peer mentor. These peers are there for each other for advice and support throughout the program. Here are a few quotes from our current students about the relationship they have formed with their mentors.

Theresa L. is the ideal mentor: highly skilled, engaging, and possesses a great sense of humor. I look forward to working with her at PK Yonge over the next year, learning how to become a successful grad student and individual.”
~Greg

Kaitlin has been very supportive of me throughout my time in the program. ~Katie

Jihye Jung is an awesome peer mentor! We both get along great and have the same sense of humor. We both have a big sweet tooth so finding a place to get something to eat while talking about school psychology is never an issue. She has been really informative and supportive through the first month of grad school. She always answers all the millions of questions or concerns I have about the program. ~Brette

Elizabeth Klinepeter has been so easy to talk to and extremely helpful! She’s there whenever I need to talk about anything. ~Laura

My peer mentor has been a great deal of help to me. Erica is always willing to help me with assignments and adapting to grad school. I’m glad she was assigned as my mentor! ~Elaina S.

Olivia, thank you for your endless guidance, support, and friendship! I can’t imagine these past few years without you! ~Elizabeth Klinepeter.

My peer mentor is Callie Gilchrest and she’s been wonderful in helping me getting transitioned both to UF as well as Gainesville. I am thankful for the support both academically and socially. I am very happy we got paired up! ~Marlene
Melissa is the BEST peer mentor! She is always there when I need her and is always willing to lend a helping hand. She provides not only a listening ear for academic concerns but also provides words of encouragement when stress sets in! Melissa had made my transition into graduate school much easier and I glad she will be here for the next three years! ~Catherine

Laura has been a wonderful support system to me. I can call, text, or email her and she is there to assist in any way possible. I appreciate her being a shoulder to lean on this semester! ~Kacey

Betty has been key to helping make my transition to graduate school a success. She is always there to offer advice and willing to sacrifice her time to help me succeed. ~James
Student Publications


Assistantships & Fellowships

*Alexa Dixon (1st year Ph.D.): UF Graduate School Fellowship
*Alix Binney (1st year Ph.D.): UF Graduate School Fellowship
*Marlene Garzona (1st year Ph.D.): UF Graduate School Fellowship
*Nikki Gibson (1st year Ph.D.): Research Assistantship with Dr. Splett working on a project titled GIRLSS.
*Kacey Gilbert (1st year Ph.D.): Grinter Fellowship, Research Assistantship as Test Librarian, and instructor for EEX 3070, Teachers and Learners in Inclusive Schools.
*Catherine Rama (1st year Ph.D.): McNair Assistantship
*Callie Gilchrest (2nd year Ph.D.): Teaching Assistantship teaching Child Development in Inclusive Education
*Lisa Guerrero (2nd year Ph.D.): Teaching EEX 3070, Teachers and Learners in Inclusive Schools
*Laura Navia (2nd year Ph.D.): I have a fellowship with Dr. Smith-Bonahue, currently I'm starting an independent project: a pilot study with children who have chronic health issues.
*Raquel Concepcion (2nd year Ph.D.): I currently have a fellowship working with Dr. Tina Smith-Bonahue on a project that consists of scripted storybook readings to be implemented in preschool classrooms, to encourage learning of emotion vocabulary.
*Kristen VanGoeye (2nd year Ed.S.): I have a graduate assistantship working with the ProTeach program at UF. Some of the things I do are administer pre/post assessments based on core curriculum and observe the interns in the county based on protocols that were created to match the Florida State Standards.
*Anna Schrack (3rd year Ph.D.): My assistantship is doing assessment with the Reitz Union Administrative Services. I primarily work with Karley Counts evaluating Reitz Union programs and training staff on assessment practices.
*Brian Zaboski (3rd year Ph.D.): I’m on a Fellowship that involves three years of research and one year of teaching.
*Katie Marsh (3rd year Ph.D.): Grinter Fellowship & Graduate Assistant in the Office of Educational Research
*Elizabeth Klinepeter (3rd year Ph.D.): I am currently on a UF Graduate School Fellowship. I work with a team conducting research on factors promoting access to the general education curriculum for students with severe/multiple disabilities and I am involved in clinical research and service through the Behavior Analysis Research Clinic in the Psychology Department here at UF.
*Elizabeth Kenney (3rd year Ph.D.): I currently have a teaching assistantship. I am the current course instructor for EEX3012 Introduction to Special Education within the Early Childhood ProTeach Program (in the fall). I also teach EME4401 Integrating Technology into the Early Childhood Curriculum (in the spring).
Practicum Placements

From the first semester our students are placed in practicum settings with knowledgable practitioners around UF and the surrounding counties.

**PK Yonge Developmental Research School:**
- Erica Mesnard
- Theresa LaPuma
- Kendra Saunders
- Laura Navia
- Andrew Rodriguez
- Kristen VanGoeye
- Alexa Dixon
- Gregory Mueller
- Christina Monachino
- James Barringer
- Nicole Gibson
- Brette Therriault
- Alexandra Binney

**Putnam County:**
- Kacey Gilbert
- Elaina Schnyderite
- Catherine Rama

**Marion County:**
- Melissa Gonzalez
- Lisa Guerrero
- Elisavet Kampouri
- Jihye Jung
- Callie Gilchrest

**Alachua County:**
- Angela Nertney
- Marlene Garzona
- Stevie DeFelice
- Lia Thibodaux

**UF Shands Dept. of Psychiatry & Pediatrics:**
- Brian Zaboski
- Anna Schrack
- Christopher Poitevien
- Olivia Soutullo

**Haile Market Therapy & Behavioral Medicine:**
- Brittany Werch

**Fundamental Therapy:**
- Raquel Concepcion

**Medicine-Pediatrics-Neurology Shands McKnight Brain Institute:**
- Elizabeth Klinepeter
- Kaitlyn Tiplady
- Cecelia Duggan

**Department Clinical & Health Psychology:**
- Elizabeth Kenney
- Katie Marsh
Internship Placements

“I am administering psychological assessments, providing academic and behavioral consultation, assisting in behavioral interventions, conducting individual and group counseling sessions.”
~Alyssa

Alyssa Scafidi-Alachua County in Gainesville, FL

Pamela Mendoza-Duval County Schools in Jacksonville, FL

Brittany Ubaldini-Mort Elementary School in Tampa, FL

Jana S. Wallace-Clayton County Public Schools in Jonesboro, GA

Natasha Parekh-Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology: Boys Town in Boys Town, NE

“‘I am in the Neurodevelopmental track, and spend approximately 50% of my time providing services (assessment, therapy, and home-based consultation) for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. I spend the other half of my time providing assessment and therapy in a more generalist outpatient psychology clinic.’”
~Colleen

Colleen Butcher-University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center in Albuquerque, NM

Kelly Carrasco-Applied Psychology Group of Texoma in Sherman, TX
UF SPP Love

There are many reasons we all love this program. These are quotes from current students on what they love most about the UF School Psychology Program!

School Psychology Love

UF’s SPP is the ideal graduate program: personable and hardworking faculty/students who are committed to the ideals of higher education and social advocacy. You will be challenged and encouraged to stretch yourself, but the growth that comes in response will be invaluable. I am truly grateful to share this profession with such admirable professionals.” ~Greg M

The program is very comprehensive and gives you plenty of opportunities to experience the different roles with the field of School Psychology. ~Katie M.

I love the UF school psychology program because the cohorts are so small that we all instantly became really close. This was especially important for me because I was coming from Connecticut and would be a thousand miles from home with no family or friends close by. Another huge factor why I love the UF school psych program is that the practicum started the first week of school. This is huge because it gives you hands on experience basically day 1 instead of having to wait until the second or third semester to get that experience. Also, what is great about this program is that all of the professors are always very helpful and willing to answer any questions! ~Brette T.

I loved about this programs was that practicum experiences begin first year, I think that gives our students a huge advantage. ~Laura N.

The UF SPP is a great program because of the knowledgeable faculty, wide array of resources, and the embracing community! ~Alix B.

I love how much time we are given in practicum. Compared to other schools I applied to, this program allows for a lot of time in the schools actually being involved in what we are training to be. This program also has a great deal of support and the small cohort size has made it easy for all of us to get to know each other and help each other out. ~Elaina S.

I love the UF school psychology program because the faculty is very open to us pursuing our exact areas of interest, even if it is not necessarily one of their interests. They will help match us to individuals who are interested in those areas or will allow us to find our own resources under their supervision. I love how well this program prepares us for both internship and our
future careers. I also, of course, love my fellow students in this program. They have not only enhanced my learning while in this program, but they have also helped make my time in graduate school fun. ~Elizabeth Kenney

I have loved my time in the UF SPP and can’t imagine a better place to grow and learn! The program has provided me wonderful support to pursue a wide array of opportunities and develop my knowledge and skills as a science-practitioner, all while being surrounded by lifelong colleagues and friends! ~Elizabeth Klinepeter

I love the diversity of the program. ~Marlene G.

“I love UF’s School Psychology because of the welcoming environment. As soon as I walked through the doors of UF’s School Psychology department office, I immediately knew I belonged here!” ~Catherine R.

I love the commitment and premier leadership provided by the UF SPP faculty and staff. ~James B.

UF SPP has been a great program because not only are the professors knowledgeable about their subject/ research areas but they are also passionate about the success of their students and provide you with the respect as an intelligent individual, while still pushing you to be better. ~Raquel C.

Because of the support system we have and the faculty. It’s been a great experience so far. ~Lisa G.

The reason I chose UF SPP is because the program is rigorous and flexible. It offers us the highest level of training and helps us foster our own clinical and research interests. ~Brian Z.