

THE NEWS

# DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

SPRING  
2019



## Learning How (and How Not) To Learn: New Book Outlines Science-Backed Strategies Story by Anne Manning

It's sad but true: most of us never learned how to learn, even though we're expected to do it all the time. This is especially true for college students, who fall prey to ineffective study habits, like reading their notes over and over, or worse, cramming for an exam the night before.

A dedicated team of Colorado State University psychology researchers is on a mission to break the cycle, and to teach all of us better strategies for long-term learning. They've written a book outlining a science-backed approach to learning, complete with practical tips on how to study effectively – and the reasons why they work.

*A Guide to Effective Studying and Learning*, published by Oxford University Press and [available at the CSU Bookstore](#), is co-authored by Professor Matthew Rhodes, Professor Anne Cleary, and Associate Professor Edward DeLosh, all faculty members in the [CSU Department of Psychology](#). Their experience as learning and memory scientists, as well as decades of established research, form the backbone of the book's major themes.

Chief among those themes, said Cleary, is that learning is not intuitive. That people think it might be why they're bad at it (and why they should read the book).

"If you look at the research, learning can actually be counterintuitive," said Cleary, whose expertise is in human memory processing and its involvement in learning. "And people's subjective impressions of how well they are learning, while they are in the process of doing so, is often at odds with what they are actually learning."

*A Guide to Effective Studying and Learning* is the primary text for [Psychology 152](#), or The Science of Learning, offered as an All-University Core Curriculum course since 2015.

Beyond the course and the new book, the Science of Learning faculty are also conducting research to prove out the best learning strategies and continue refining them. Cleary has a [grant from the Center for the Analytics of Learning and Teaching](#), piloting the use of smart watches as supplemental study aids.

[Read more on Source.](#)



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DISCOVERY BEGINS HERE

# Message from the Chair



As we look forward to summer, it is time again to reflect on the year's accomplishments.

This year saw the hiring of two new faculty along with conducting searches for three new potential faculty hires for Fall of 2019 (I will update you on that effort in the Fall newsletter).

This spring, we are looking forward to graduating our first class of students in the Master's in Addictions Counseling program. We currently have 1,110 declared psychology majors, plus 122 additional psychology majors in our online degree program. We generated a total of 12,615 student credit hours of undergraduate instruction in our residential instruction programs in fall. Based on prior years and current enrollments, we expect that we will nearly double that number when the Spring 2019 semester tallies are completed.

In the research arena, our faculty submitted \$15 million in new grant proposals, of which nearly \$1 million in new awards have already been funded. We now are looking forward to a summer filled with new academic adventures and hopefully, some time away from work to recharge with family and friends.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Rojas'.

Don Rojas  
Professor and Chair

## Department Highlights

### Professor Matt Rhodes Presented Best Teacher Award



This spring, Professor Matt Rhodes was the recipient of a Best Teacher Award. Professor Rhodes joined CSU's Department of Psychology in 2006. Rhodes' research focuses on memory, metacognition and evidence-based approaches to learning and training, all of which he attempts to translate into the classroom. He has published numerous scholarly articles and serves on the editorial board of four major journals in his field, including as associate editor at Memory and Cognition. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science.

[Read more on Source.](#)

### Popular Psychology in the World of Harry Potter Course to be Offered Again This Summer



In the ever-popular course taught by graduate student Jaime Ascencio, students complete traditional coursework such as reading essays that integrate psychological concepts with the series, participating in discussions, and composing papers. However, that's only the beginning! Students can also look forward to being sorted into their houses, dressing in house colors, trivia games, and even a House Cup and Triwizard Tournament. Some psychological concepts that are discussed in the course include educational practices, personality, career counseling, mental illness, resilience, evil, social groups, therapy, and the societal impact of the Harry Potter books.

[Read more on Source.](#)

## Summertime Standout: Meghan Casey



Meghan Casey hopes to make her future career in medicine a laughing matter. She is dedicated to helping children through health care as well as through educational entertainment.

“While my dream is to be a pediatrician, my ultimate dream is to one day have a TV show that teaches kids about health, safety and fitness,” Casey said.

She spent last summer traveling to libraries across the U.S. performing a children’s show about teamwork – with the help of her ventriloquism puppet, a dinosaur named Aidan. After she graduates, she plans to continue performing before getting her EMT certification. She hopes to work as an EMT before going back to school to become a physician assistant.

[Read more on Source.](#)

## Alumnus Robert Stitzel Uses Psychology to Create Characters on the Big Screen



Robert Stitzel pursued a B.S. in Psychology from Colorado State University because he wanted to understand people and their character, and he had an interest in clinical psychology. But after he graduated in 1969, he decided to put that understanding to a unique, creative use – filmmaking.

“One of the biggest aspects of a college education is that it opens your mind to learn,” Stitzel said. “I enjoyed understanding people and character. My experience at CSU opened that door to me for understanding psychological conditions that could be explored and written.”

[Read more on Source.](#)

## Smart Home of the Future Software Receives Coveted R&D 100 Prize



A home energy management system that could take the term “smart home” to a new level has been named a top-100 innovation by R&D Magazine.

Colorado State University researchers played a significant role in developing the technology, called “foresee,” recently crowned a 2018 “R&D 100” award winner. The international competition recognizes the 100 “most exceptional innovations in science and technology from the past year.”

Foresee software relies on user preferences to control, integrate and coordinate the energy consumption of a home’s appliances and electronics. Essentially, it allows smart appliances to talk to each other and reach a common goal, whether that’s energy savings, comfort or convenience.

[Read more on Source.](#)

# Faculty News

## Associate Professor Gwen Fisher Investigates Long Work Hours and Health



There is a widespread belief that working long hours is bad for us. Associate Professor Gwen Fisher and others decided to investigate. In their paper “Long Working Hours and Well-being: What We Know, What We Do Not Know, and What We Need to Know,” published in the *Journal of Business and Psychology*, the group conducted a critical review of the academic and public literature on long work hours and their effects on employee well-being.

[Read more on Source.](#)

## Associate Professor Jennifer Harman Investigates Parental Alienation



According to Associate Professor Jennifer Harman, about 22 million American parents have been the victims of behaviors that lead to something called parental alienation. Having researched the phenomenon for several years, Harman is urging psychological, legal and child custodial disciplines to recognize parental alienation as a form of both child abuse and intimate partner violence. Harman has authored a review article in *Psychological Bulletin* defining the behaviors associated with parental alienation and advocating for more research into its prevalence and outcomes.

[Read more on Source.](#)

## Associate Professor Brad Conner Interviewed on Fox News Regarding Drug Addiction



As more states continue to legalize the use of marijuana, concerns are mounting regarding possible addiction to the substance. Associate Professor Brad Conner was interviewed regarding this issue for a Fox News special report entitled, "Addicted in America: CDC says one in 10 marijuana users become addicted." Conner discussed how individuals develop a tolerance to marijuana and increase their intake over time. "If an individual develops a tolerance, they need more of a substance over time to continue to get the same high," Conner said.

[Watch the video.](#)

## Professor Silvia Sara Canetto Receives Denmark-Gunvald Award for Feminist Research and Service



Professor Silvia Sara Canetto was selected as the 2019 recipient of the International Council of Psychologists (ICP) [Denmark-Gunvald Award for Feminist Research and Service](#). This award is presented to honor a member of ICP who has a history of research and service that directly benefits the health, promotion and well-being of women in the world. Canetto will present an address about the human rights of women at the [2019 ICP annual convention](#) in Cadiz, Spain.

## Support the Department

Your support of the department is incredibly valuable. Please consider making a difference to today's students, faculty, facilities, and programs at whatever level is right for you. Thank you!

For more information on giving, please contact Simone Clasen, Associate Vice President of Philanthropic Operations.

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