

# 2019/20 ANNUAL REPORT



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Psychology

Photo: UBC Brand and Marketing



Photo: Dr. Geoffrey Hall

# Welcome

## Message from the Head

As I reflect on the past year, the upheaval we have faced in the recent months weighs heavily. The 2019-2020 academic year will always be remembered as an extraordinary time and I'm proud of the resiliency our faculty, students, and staff have shown.

Despite these circumstances, the psychology department has enjoyed another outstanding year, marked by our successes in teaching and learning, our research excellence, and our collaborations and community connections.

We continue to be recognized as a world-leading psychology department and this is a testament to the commitment and hard work that goes into our research, teaching, and service. We attract the best and brightest. This year we welcomed three new tenure-track Assistant Professors, Dr. Samantha Dawson, Dr. Eric Kim, and Dr. Noah Silverberg. Their strong research programs add to our exceptional level of expertise.

This report highlights just some of our accomplishments in teaching, research, and community engagement. I would like to once again thank our dedicated faculty, students, and staff for their continued support.

**Dr. D. Geoffrey Hall**

Head, UBC Department of Psychology





Photo: Dr. Kiley Hamlin (L) at the Centre for Infant Cognition  
Photo credit: Della Rollins

## Research and Innovation

### 2019-2020 Highlights

**\$7,810,116** in research grants awarded

\$4,645,029 Tri-council

\$1,085,974 Other government

\$1,262,446 Industry & non-profit

\$816,667 Canada Research Chairs

**229** peer-reviewed articles published

### Research Excellence

**Dr. Frances Chen** and **Dr. Kristin Laurin** each earned a 2019 UBC Killam Research Prize.

**Dr. Kenneth Craig** was named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

**Dr. Stan Floresco** was awarded the 2019 Daniel H. Efron Research Award by the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology.

**Dr. Liisa Galea** received the Convening and Collaborating Award from the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research.

**Dr. Kiley Hamlin's** developmental research is featured in *Babies*, a new Netflix docuseries.

**Dr. Alan Kingstone** received the 2020 Donald O. Hebb Distinguished Contribution Award from the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour and Cognitive Science.

**Dr. Eric Kim** and **Dr. Darko Odic** were named 2019 Rising Stars by the Association for Psychological Science.

**Dr. Toni Schmader** received the Theory-Innovation Award from the European Association of Social Psychology.





Photo: UBC Psi Chi Chapter Officer Team

## Teaching and Learning

### 2019-2020 Highlights

- 18,474** seats filled by undergraduate students
- 8,445** undergraduate students
- 2,683** BA psychology majors
- 235** BSc behavioural neuroscience majors
- 152** honours & directed studies students
- 30** co-op students
- \$4,200** in psychology undergraduate awards

### Student Awards and News

The officer team of the **UBC Chapter of Psi Chi** received the 2020 Kay Wilson Officer Team Leadership Award.

**Maggie Coval** and **Ava Ivkov** were finalists at UBC's Undergraduate 3-Minute Thesis Competition.

### Teaching Excellence

**Dr. Andrew Baron** and **Dr. David King** each earned a 2019 Robert E. Knox Teaching Award. These awards recognize and celebrate psychology faculty whose teaching practice is both exemplary and inspiring.

**Dr. Stan Floresco** received the 2019-2020 Killam Teaching Prize, a top teaching prize at UBC. This award reflects excellence in distinguished teaching at all levels of instruction.





Photo: Ellen Jopling

## Graduate and Post-doctoral Training

### 2019-2020 Highlights

- 338** graduate student applications
- 116** graduate students
  - 29 MA students
  - 87 PhD students
- 31** post-doctoral fellows
- \$33,320** median support provided to graduate students
- 86%** of graduate students held fellowships
- \$1,053,598** in new graduate student fellowships
- 15** MA degrees awarded
- 9** PhD degrees awarded

### Scholarly Excellence

- Neuroscience PhD student **Jill Dosso** received the 2019-20 UBC Killam Graduate Teaching Assistant Award for her teaching and learning in the psychology department.
- Psychology PhD student **Ellen Jopling** was awarded the prestigious 2020 Governor General's Academic Gold Medal for her graduate studies and research accomplishments.
- Neuroscience PhD student **Alex Yu** received the 2019 Demetri Papageorgis Teaching Assistant Award for his contributions to student education in the psychology department.





Photo: Dr. Peter Suedfeld with the Governor General of Canada  
Photo credit: Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2019

## Leadership and Community

### 2019-2020 Highlights

- Ranked **1st** in Canada and **10th** globally
- 281** conference presentations by faculty
- 141** invited addresses by psychology faculty
- 19** journal editorships and associate editorships held by faculty
- 1** society president

### Public Engagement

**Dr. Niall Bolger, Dr. Kathleen Gates, Dr. Carey Morewedge, Dr. Jenny Saffran, and Dr. Zachary Walsh** shared their research and ideas as part of the department's 2019-20 Colloquia Series.

**Dr. Frances Chen** and **Dr. Christiane Hoppmann's** labs hosted a health psychology booth at UBC's Homecoming event.

### Leadership

**Dr. Kalina Christoff** and the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies launched the *Ways of Knowing* podcast.

**Dr. Peter Suedfeld** was officially invested as Officer of the Order of Canada by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada.

**Dr. Janet Werker** was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences in recognition of her distinguished and continuing achievements in original research.

**Dr. Jiaying Zhao** received funding from UBC's Research Excellence Clusters program to form the Decision Insights for Business & Society (DIBS) research cluster.





Photo: Dr. Sunaina Assanand

## People in 2019-2020

### New faculty members

**Dr. Samantha Dawson**, Assistant Professor,  
Clinical Area

**Dr. Eric Kim**, Assistant Professor, Health Area

**Dr. Noah Silverberg**, Assistant Professor,  
Clinical Area

### Promotion and tenure

**Dr. Sunaina Assanand**, Professor of Teaching,  
Learning Enhancement Area

**Dr. Kiley Hamlin**, Professor, Developmental Area

**Dr. Darko Odic**, Associate Professor,  
Developmental Area

**Dr. Jason Snyder**, Associate Professor,  
Behavioural Neuroscience Area





Photo: Vancouver school before earthquake and artist rendition of Vancouver school after hypothetical earthquake.

## Media Coverage

### 2019-2020 Highlights

Our research received over **293** media mentions in local, national and international media including CBC News, The Conversation, Forbes, The Economist, The Globe and Mail, Global News, The Guardian, Time Magazine, The New York Times, NPR, and The Washington Post.

### Popular Stories in the News

A study by postdoctoral fellow **Dr. Christine Aderl** and **Dr. Frances Chen** showed women who used oral contraceptives during adolescence are more likely to develop depression as adults.

Research from PhD student **Marlise Hofer** and **Dr. Frances Chen** showed smelling your partner's worn clothing may improve your sleep and reduce stress.

**Dr. Anita DeLongis** and **Dr. Nancy Sin** launched a global study to examine how people are coping with the COVID-19 outbreak.

Research from PhD student **Iris Lok** and **Dr. Elizabeth Dunn** showed realistic images can be more effective than statistical data in persuading people to support seismic upgrades to schools in case of a major earthquake. *Photo above.*

Biological siblings of people with a gambling disorder also display markers of increased impulsivity and risk-taking, according to a study by **Dr. Eve Limbrick-Oldfield**, a postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Gambling Research at UBC.

Research by **Dr. Toni Schmader** found that hiring committees that don't believe in gender bias promote fewer women.







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INTRODUCTION

Negative Agency Bias

... have been shown to attribute agency to inanimate objects that have caused negative, but not positive, outcomes (Wolke, 2008). These tendencies have been referred to as a "negative agency bias" and suggest that when violence may be a risk to agency, perhaps we give it an edge.

How Does This Happen?

It has been shown by Harris & Levin (2009) that the negative agency bias may be part of an early developmental process. In their 2014 study, Harris & Levin (2014) found that 18-month-olds showed a bias to attribute agency to objects that had previously caused negative outcomes.



... This is consistent with the idea that agency is a fundamental concept that is developed early in life. The current study extends this idea by showing that the negative agency bias is present in 18-month-olds, suggesting that this bias is a fundamental part of early cognitive development.

