Faculty Spotlight: Andy Sarkin

By Mike Kirkpatrick

Dr. Andrew Sarkin, more commonly known as “Andy”, is the latest addition to the Psychology department at SDSU. Currently, he is an adjunct professor and instructor for Seminar in Program Evaluation (PSY 630). Interestingly, Andy is a fellow SDSU alumni. Andy is originally from a small town in upstate New York called Ogdensburg. He was accepted into the SDSU’s pre-clinical psychology master’s program after earning a degree in psychology at Cornell University. Dr. Al Hillix was Andy’s mentor for his MA degree here at SDSU and Andy credits Dr. Hillix as a major influence in his educational and professional career. Dr. Hillix encouraged Andy to focus on whatever research he was most interested in and did not pressure Andy to follow in his footsteps. Such extended degrees of freedom taught Andy how to turn his ideas into solid research projects. Another person who influenced Andy during his time in graduate school at SDSU was Dr. Terry Cronan. Andy worked with her on a large-scale project that enabled him to get many publications by serving as the main data analyst. He described his experience in SDSU’s master’s program as having “both sides of the coin,” in that he was able to manage his own research project while simultaneously working on a large-scale project, an experience he could not get elsewhere. Andy eventually entered the SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctoral Program and worked with Dr. Eric Granholm.

(Continued on page 2)

A Reflection on their Time:
Second Year Experiences

By Bryan Aasen

What has been your favorite part of this program?
Renee: Stats class during the first year—learning with all of the first years across all of the disciplines and working together to get good grades on the homework and tests really bonded all of us together.
Seamus: The breadth of readings, the applied projects, and the seminar-style class discussions.
Berry: Getting the opportunity to learn about and engage in research, but also complete internships and take an elective that can be outside of the department.
Ashlee: Becoming somewhat of an expert in which people go to for advice with certain topics. I’ve grown a lot as a person, and I now feel ready for the real world.
Mary: Meeting so many people involved in the field and having the opportunity to work with organizations for class projects.
Lauren: I have enjoyed the class projects which allow us to apply classroom lessons to helping develop organizations.

What do you know now that you wish you would have known when you first started the program?
Renee: Every step of the thesis process involves a lot of time and energy. Do not expect it to be an easy process. It will chew you up and spit you out at some points, but keep the long-term goal of getting your master’s degree in the back of your mind at all times!

(Continued on page 2)
Faculty Spotlight (continued from p. 1)

Currently, Andy is the Director of Evaluation Research at the Health Services Research Center at UCSD. He evaluates various preventative mental health programs and enjoys his job very much because it directly affects the local community in a positive way. Also, he likes his job because of the great variety of different programs that he gets to evaluate. Andy very much enjoys working at both UCSD and SDSU. He describes SDSU as, “a very welcoming and inclusive environment” and really enjoys staying in contact with SDSU faculty and students. Furthermore, he wholeheartedly believes that “SDSU is a great place to teach because of the emphasis on, and support for, teaching. This is something that is unique to this university.” Even though he only teaches one class at SDSU, he feels as connected with SDSU as UCSD. He has taught a number of undergraduate and graduate classes at SDSU before, but his current assignment of teaching Program Evaluation is by far his favorite. He believes that program evaluation is important for all students. Particularly, he believes it is important for I/O students because it is a critical part of any changes or improvements made in organizations. Also, for MA students, it adds a new perspective to any sort of research. He is happy to be back teaching at SDSU and hopes to work with as many of the students and faculty as possible.

Second Year Experiences (continued from p. 1)

Seamus: That you can't write your thesis in two weeks.
Berry: Do not underestimate how long it will take you to do each item on your to-do list!
Ashlee: To not be intimidated by others. There will always be someone smarter and better out there. Once I focused on myself and no one else, I started to succeed.
Mary: Value every opportunity to learn. Even the tough experiences will lend themselves to growth.
Lauren: It will go by quickly! Keep focused and try not to get overwhelmed. The more work you put into the program, the more you get out of it.

What do you want to do when you graduate?
Renee: I would like to work in strategic human resources at a growth-oriented company in San Diego. I want to help an organization build or improve upon its HR practices to align with its long-term, broader organizational goals.
Seamus: Start my career at a growing organization.
Berry: I want to work in training & development, specifically working with diversity and inclusion initiatives.
Ashlee: Get a job of course! Hopefully this will allow me to get a nice place to live with a big yard.
Mary: Get a good job!
Lauren: I would like to work in a role that will allow me to utilize my knowledge and experience in research and practice to help organizations be more effective in leadership and organizational change.

What do you think is the biggest key to having success through this program?
Renee: Self-discipline and work-life balance. You need to have the discipline to complete assignments, readings, thesis, grading, lab duties, etc…. But it is also key to put time aside to allow yourself to relax by watching horrible reality shows and drinking margaritas.
Seamus: A real interest in topics that fall under the I/O umbrella, whether it be leadership, training, selection, or culture.
Berry: Time management skills cannot be underestimated! You need to be able to juggle several responsibilities (both short-term and long-term) at once.
Ashlee: Resiliency. No matter how many times you get knocked down, you have to get back up.
Mary: Be patient, take it one day at a time, and maintain confidence that you will get out what you put in.
Lauren: Working hard and looking for opportunities to develop rather than focusing on the negative.
One Year Down, One to Go: The First Years’ Experience

By Jonathan Hussey

As the year comes to a close, the first year students can finally breathe a sigh of relief. The long days and nights practicing statistical concepts, the hours spent reading and comprehending organizational frameworks have all culminated into a first year that is one to remember. Throughout this year, it can be agreed that the most valuable lesson learned is the prioritization of time, but always understanding that “me” time is important. Although we have all enjoyed learning and building our statistical knowledge, the personnel seminar class has proved to be everyone’s favorite. The seminars have provided us with organizational knowledge that has improved our job analysis, selection, and training skills. Throughout our projects over the year, we were able to implement our newly learned skills and apply them to practical settings through collaborations with organizations such as UPS Inc., Mitchell International, RQ Construction, and Take Lessons. Guest speakers have also provided our first years with additional insight into the field (see the descriptions of this semester’s speakers starting on page 5).

The 28th annual SIOP conference this year was held in Houston, TX. The conference provided several of our students with wonderful opportunities to present the research that they have been working on over the course of this past year. The event also provided our first years with valuable networking opportunities to talk to other researchers in the field about their current interests and projects. Next year’s SIOP conference will be held in Honolulu, HI and everyone is eagerly looking forward to making the trip to the Aloha state to present their research and enjoy the warm weather.

Most of the first years plan to complete their internships over the summer while continually working on the progression of their thesis. Students are currently examining internship opportunities in the areas of organizational development, selection, and training. We would also like to congratulate one of our fellow students, Daniel Weigert, who will be moving onto to pursue a doctorate in I/O Psychology at Wayne State University in the fall. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

As this year comes to a close and internships are on the horizon, everyone is looking forward to learning about the O-side and making considerable progress on their thesis next year. We are also very excited for the new incoming class of first years and hope to share with them the same knowledge and expertise that our second years have shared with us. It is our hope to make their first year experience just as memorable and rewarding as ours has been.

Exchange Student Introduction: Regina Kempen

What is your home institution?
I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Osnabrück, Germany.

What are your research interests?
My main research interest is cross cultural work and organizational psychology. For example, my research questions include cross cultural comparisons on different organizational variables. In addition, I am interested in organizational culture, intercultural training, and expatriates management.

What were you looking forward to the most about coming here to SDSU to study?
I was very curious about research and life at an American university. What are the main chances and challenges for researchers in the U.S.? How are students involved in research projects? How are theory and application interconnected at SDSU? And of course, I wanted to improve my English, too.

What has been surprising or most shocking to you since being here?
I was surprised to see the big infrastructure of the campus - there are not only classrooms and offices, but shops, a gym, a pool, a climbing wall, a lot of dorms, food courts etc. If you would like to, you could stay there all the time without seeing anything else in the city. But I am surprised by other things, too. For example, commercials for the Army on TV, carpool lines on the highway, low gas prices, big packages of food, the amount of Mexican restaurants and different churches and so on... I am still exploring!

What do you like the most about San Diego?
I really like the nice beaches, especially on Coronado Island.

(Continued on page 4)
First year perspective: Elisa Torres
I couldn’t have been more excited about attending my first SIOP. Not only was it my first SIOP, but I also participated in the Master’s Consortium, a session specifically for master’s students to listen to practitioners’ career paths and obstacles faced in the practitioner realm. It was great to connect with peers, have the opportunity to ask questions and see the job opportunities in store for me. The next three days of the conference were amazing. I attended so many intellectually stimulating seminars, debates, and panel discussion and came back with a new outlook of the field of I/O. It was amazing getting to meet not only other like-minded individuals, but also get to meet researchers that I cite in my thesis. I am definitely glad I attended this year’s conference and I can’t wait for next years! Aloha!

Second year perspective: Berry Soltani
The SIOP Conference isn’t just a great place to learn about the newest areas of research in our field—it’s also a unique opportunity to interact with practitioners and build your network so you can (hopefully) find a great job after you graduate. Along with Elisa, I attended the Master’s Consortium, where I learned more about the different opportunities in our field, and got some great advice on how to best present myself to potential employers. I also went to every booth at the exhibit hall so I could learn more about the organizations participating in the conference (tip: make sure to carry business cards and resumes with you throughout the entire conference!). I also joined some of our alumni at various receptions and got to interact with both researchers and practitioners who were very welcoming and willing to share their opinions on how to jumpstart a career in I/O. We should not forget the research side of the conference though! I attended a lot of interesting sessions, and had the wonderful opportunity to present some of my own research.

Faculty Spotlight (continued from p. 1)

Where have you traveled to since being here?
I went on a four day canoe trip to the Colorado River and on a backpacking trip to the Channel Islands with Atzecs Adventures, to San Francisco and on a road trip on the Highway Number One along the Californian Coast. It was a great experience and I really felt in love with California and its amazing nature.

What advice would you give to people studying abroad here for the program?
I would say: Don’t compare to much between your home country and here! Instead, try to find out why there are those cultural differences between our countries. I once heard a nice metaphor: US Americans are like peaches, Germans are like coconuts. The peaches are soft and nice and friendly from the outside, but the inside is hard to open. In contrary, coconuts are hard from the outside, but once you are in, it is all soft and friendly. I think it is not about comparing different fruits, because tastes differ. It is about making a nice fruit salad! Stay curious about different fruits you can find in it!
Edie Goldberg: E.L. Goldberg & Associates

Edie Goldberg was our first guest speaker of the semester. Edie shared her inspiring academic and professional journey where she began as a student at SDSU and worked her way to become a successful and established consultant. Edie received her B.A. in Psychology and her M.S. in Applied Psychology from San Diego State University, and then earned her Ph.D. from the University of Albany, State University of New York. Edie’s rigorous academic foundation began during her years conducting research as an undergraduate and working at the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center. Throughout her career she has published numerous articles on test validation and future-oriented job analysis.

Edie began her career working with other I/O psychologists at a small consulting firm called Core Corporation where she gained experience developing selection and assessment processes. During her time at Core, Edie was involved in making the San Francisco Fire Department and the San Francisco Police Department more diverse, developing future-oriented job analyses for Safeway, and automating job processes at Gap, Inc. Within the five years at Core, Edie became an expert in selection.

With the desire to continue learning and developing her skills in other applied areas, Edie began working at Towers Perrin (formerly Towers Watson) where she gained cross-cultural experience as a global thought leader in career planning. As the Asia-Pacific Liaison, Edie helped clients develop specialized skills in places such as Korea, Japan, and Singapore. Additionally, Edie built a custom competency model for Disneyland and created career paths and competencies at Williams-Sonoma. At Star Alliance, Edie designed a compensation and performance management system, and learned how to negotiate with culturally diverse HR systems to arrive at the best solution. Throughout this time, Edie said that one of the most important lessons she learned was that a solution for one company is not necessarily the best solution for another company. In other words, Edie learned that a variety of factors must be considered when developing selection and performance management systems for different clients. Another important area of expertise that Edie has developed is succession planning, which involves conducting realistic job previews and behavior-based interviewing processes in order to increase people’s awareness of their job paths.

In 2001, Edie decided to start her own consulting business, E.L. Goldberg & Associates, where her reputation and positive relationships with her previous clients contributed to the success of her own small business. Edie is passionate about helping companies establish better selection and performance appraisal systems, and is highly involved in research surrounding the world of careers and the changing nature of performance appraisals and performance management. Edie highly encouraged students to develop broad networks and have the confidence to self-promote. Edie’s noteworthy passion and dedication to applying research to practice is both inspirational and motivational.

Jonathan Kochik: Senior Organizational Development Advisor at SDG&E

Jon Kockik obtained his bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Penn State University in 1997 and graduated from SDSU with his master’s in Applied Psychology in 2006. During his time at SDSU, Jon also had the opportunity to study abroad at the University of Mannheim. Upon graduation, Jon landed a position at AMN Healthcare as a Sales Training Developer. Project included onboarding, training design and development, performance management, process improvement, and change management. He told us that attributes that were helpful for this position are having a positive attitude and patient persistence, being able to “fill the void” and say yes to everything, knowing that “perfection is too perfect,” and being able to keep up with a fast-paced environment.

A few years later in 2009, Jon got promoted at his company to Learning and Development Manager. This position involved projects such as career pathing, competency modeling, training design and delivery, ensuring employee engagement, performance management, mentor programs, talent management, and change management. To be successful in this position, Jon said that he had to be an architect, collaborative, organized, and consultative. He emphasized that importance of always pushing yourself to “make one more call,” because you never know how important that next call is going to be.

For the past eight months, Jon has been an Organizational Development Advisor at SDG&E. His projects focus on action learning, culture change, strategic alignment, succession planning, innovation, team effectiveness, workforce management, and change management. Attributes that help him in this position are large group facilitation skills, quick responses, being ultra-organized, having time management, being organization savvy, and the ability to manage uncertainty.

When Jon concluded his time with us, he gave us some advice on which skills we should build now that could help us in the future. Technological skills are helpful from basic software, like Microsoft Word, Excel, and Powerpoint, to more complex programs (Continued on page 7)
Presentations


- Schneider, B., & Ehrhart, M. G. (2013, April). Organizational climate and culture: Manifestations, measurement, and management. Workshop conducted at the 28th annual conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Houston, TX.


Left: Abdifatah Ali, Berry Soltani, and Dr. Ehrhart present their poster at SIOP in Houston.

It is never too early to start planning for SIOP 2014!
May 15-17, 2014
Honolulu, Hawaii

Don’t forget to join the APSA Linkedin Group.
For more information, contact
Dr. Lisa Kath (lisa.kath@sdsu.edu)
such as Publisher, Access, and Sharepoint. Business skills were also mentioned, including content and site development, project management, and executive summarizing. Jon also mentioned some skills that people usually don’t consider important, but he has found them to be of value. Examples of this are event planning and acting. Thanks for the advice, Jon!

Jeremy Gintoft: Director of Organizational Effectiveness at MedImpact

Jeremy Gintoft graduated from San Diego State University with a master’s degree in Applied Psychology in 2003. Since finishing at SDSU, Jeremy has held positions at Gateway and Invitrogen, and has been in his current position as the Director of Organizational Effectiveness at MedImpact since 2005. Jeremy is also a DDI Certified Master Trainer, a Six Sigma Black Belt, a Miller Heiman strategic selling and conceptual selling certified facilitator, and is also SPHR-certified.

Jeremy discussed the difficulties one faces when applying what we learned in the university to the workplace. In this program, we learn about “how things should be done.” In reality, resources such as time and money are slim. His advice to us was to embrace the internship experience to determine how to change “how things should be done” to “what the organization approves of.” Recommendations that we make to organizations should be pragmatic, digestible, and acceptable because everyone has obligations to meet so you have to compromise.

Jeremy suggested that when I/O Psychologists go into organizations, they need to communicate that they can solve business problems and increase productivity. Relationships should be established with senior management. A key component of being able to establish these relationships is being able to “speak their language.” Students can help accomplish this by taking classes in business skills, such as event planning and acting. Thanks for the advice, Jon!

“Move quickly enough for business, but do not compromise what you know is true.”
- Jeremy Gintoft

Publications

What was the best part of your experience abroad?

Fiona: It was an extremely rewarding experience to study at one of the top-tier business schools in Europe, which was only accentuated by the fact that by the end of my four-month stay I had traveled to seven different countries, and got to explore at least twelve different cities, each with their own unique cultural challenges.

Jacob: The opportunity to gain experience traveling around Europe and working closely with people from a different culture on a research project.

How will this experience influence your career?

Fiona: The University of Mannheim is an incredible business school with an amazing reputation in Germany and in the international community, so it was a great opportunity to study the psychology of business at such a premium international school. The opportunity to study workplace psychology from a different, more international, perspective, and to work closely with individuals from various cultural backgrounds was unparalleled, and the whole experience has opened my eyes to the possibility of living and working abroad, which is very exciting!

Jacob: I think with globalization becoming an increasingly salient issue it is beneficial to have travel experience as well as work experience abroad. For most master’s students this is probably their last chance to do a study abroad program, and if you haven’t done something like this previously I would very strongly recommend it.

What do you wish you had known before going?

Fiona: The stereotype is true: Germany’s bureaucracy is quite the beast. The red tape and paperwork required is especially gruesome if you live off campus, so do your research and plan accordingly.

Jacob: I wish I would have known more German and maybe had a better idea of how much bureaucracy I would have to deal with at the government offices.

Anything you would have done differently?

Fiona: Everything that goes wrong—every train you miss, every foreign phrase you garble or misinterpret on the menu, every time you get completely and utterly lost—it’s all a wonderful learning experience in the end, and a great opportunity for personal growth and development. So no, I think everything happened as it should have, and I’m a better person for it.

Jacob: I don’t feel like I was ill-prepared for anything really, there were just a few “character building” experiences here and there, which are beneficial in their own way.

Advice for those who are looking to go abroad in the future?

Fiona: Do it! Studying abroad is uncomfortable, but ultimately it is the best tool in helping you to discover how strong and adaptable you can be. You will continually amaze yourself and others, and it is truly a great personal challenge to tackle.

Jacob: Do your research before you go over there. Try to find out what classes are available and who will be teaching them. The more people you can connect with before heading over there, the better. However, even if you don’t, you will find that most German students are very open to hanging out with Americans, and you should have a very enjoyable time.
Announcements

- Olivia Bustamante is now the Manager of Talent and Organizational Development at Taylor Morrison.
- Lauren Farahnak was the recipient of the Department of Psychology's Becky Award for the best thesis of the year.
- Fiona Nguyen is now a Recruiting Coordinator at MoPub.
- Melinda McCants had a baby boy, Andrew Steven McCants, on 4/4/13 weighing 8 lbs, 7 ounces.
- Keren Brooks had her second and third children, Dahlia and Isaac Barken, on 9/11/12.
- Tiffany Adams had her second son, Roman, on 8/17/12.
- Marissa Goode (Crane) married Zach Goode in June 2012 and they are expecting their first baby in September 2013.
- Winnie Tsang moved in August with her husband and two daughters to the Sacramento area and to works remotely as an analyst for the National Council on Teacher Quality in DC on a nationwide study of teacher certification programs.
- Kristin Carpenter had her second daughter, Mia Brianne Garner, on 4/8/13.
- Tomoe Kono had a baby boy, Sena Takahashi, on January 25, 2013.
- Zack Girgis was promoted from HR Business Partner to Senior HR Business Partner at Qualcomm.
- Brittany Bermingham had a baby girl, Grace Elizabeth, on February 19, 2013.

Thesis Defenses

2013 Graduation Ceremony

Top Left: M.A. and M.S. students gather before the Psychology Awards Ceremony

Top Right: Dr. Ehrhart poses with his students Lauren and Berry

Left: Second years after they were hooded by their advisors at the Psychology Awards Ceremony

Bottom Left: Ashlee, Renee, and Berry in Viejas Arena for Commencement

Bottom Right: Renee, Ashlee, and Berry show their excitement after Commencement
Students Out and About in San Diego

Left: Sam, Mary, Elisa, and Ashlee celebrate Mary’s birthday

Right: Bryan, Berry, and Elisa watch an Aztec basketball game

Right: Current students and alumni catch-up during dinner in Pacific Beach

Bottom Left: Mike’s band, the Brewhahas, play at a local bar

Bottom Right: Seamus, Daniel, Ashlee, and Lauren get together to celebrate Seamus’s birthday

APSA Spring BBQ