Psychiatry Research
Faculty Directory

2005

Contents

Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute.................................................................3
Center for Comparative Neuroimaging...........................................................................9
Center for Mental Health Services Research................................................................14
Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment .........................................30
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry..............................................................35
EK Shriver Center..........................................................................................................44
Law and Psychiatry........................................................................................................58
Other Psychiatry Faculty...............................................................................................71

This booklet was developed based on information that faculty provided about themselves, or that others gathered on their behalf, and is current as of April 29, 2005. Numerous faculty listed current research projects, as requested, but space limitations didn’t allow for inclusion in the booklet that was distributed on May 5, 2005 at Psychiatry’s Research Day. If you are not included in this booklet, or would like to make corrections or list current projects here, please send all corrections and additional information to Susan Phillips (susan.phillips@umassmed.edu).

Special thanks to Sue Phillips and Sierra Williams for the hard work they put into developing this booklet.
Akbarian Schahram, M.D., Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute

Research Interests:
1. Epigenetic Regulation of Brain Function and Behavior
2. Molecular pathology of Autism Spectrum Disorders and Schizophrenia

Research Summary:
Molecular biology of schizophrenia, psychoses, autism and addiction disorders. Transgenic mouse models and molecular analysis of human disease.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Dopaminergic Signaling Induces Chromatin-Remodeling in Neurons. Dopaminergic signaling in striatum is involved in drug abuse and psychosis. Gaining a better understanding of how dopaminergic drugs induce transcription of early and late response genes should broaden the range and efficacy of treatment strategies for major neuropsychiatric illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression and drug addiction. Our experiments are designed to examine the dopaminergic regulation of covalent histone modifications in striatum, using acute and chronic paradigms. Our central hypothesis is that histone modifications defining open and closed chromatin are differentially regulated after stimulation or blockade of dopamine receptors from the D1 and D2 class. Our experiments rely on chromatin immunoprecipitation assays, immunoblotting and laser capture-microdissection of cells labeled with anti-histone antibodies selectively recognizing site-specific modifications at the NH2-terminal tails of histones H3 and H4. It is expected that these novel approaches will provide a clear picture on the dopaminergic regulation of the “histone code” in striatal neurons and will establish the epigenetic modification of striatal chromatin as a novel mechanism of action for stimulant and antipsychotic drugs. Funding is provided by the National Institutes of Health.

2. Mecp2 Mutant Mice - Genetic Model for Rett Disorder.
Rett syndrome is an X-linked neurological disease of early childhood mainly affecting females. It is associated with deleterious mutations of the gene encoding methyl-CpG-binding protein 2 (MECP2). MECP2 is thought to regulate acetylation, methylation and other post-translational modifications of the core histones, that together with DNA wrapped around them comprise the fundamental structural unit of chromatin and thus regulate gene expression, DNA repair and chromosome segregation. Our central goals are to test the hypothesis that histone hyperacetylation contributes to the Rett syndrome phenotype. We will monitor in wildtype and genetically engineered, Mecp2-deficient mutant mice developmentally regulated changes in histone H3 and H4 covalent modifications at defined genomic regions. Furthermore, we will treat mutant and control mice with chromatin modifying drugs and monitor the resulting changes in behavior and brain pathology. Funding is provided by the National Institutes of Health.
Paul Gardner, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Program in Neuroscience, Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute

Research Interests:
1. Molecular Neurobiology

Research Summary:
I am interested in understanding the molecular mechanisms regulating gene expression in the nervous system. My research focuses upon spatially- and temporally-regulated expression of the genes encoding nicotinic acetylcholine receptors. We employ both in vitro and in vivo approaches to identify transcriptional regulatory elements and their cognate DNA-binding regulatory factors. The overall goal is to learn something about the molecular details governing neuronal differentiation. By doing so, we may be able to better understand what goes wrong in a variety of pathological conditions thus placing us in a stronger position to develop therapeutic interventions.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Regulation of Nicotinic Receptor Gene Expression by Sox10 (Phillip Morris External Research Program); $584,490 3 years The goals of this project are 1.) to identify and characterize Sox10 interacting proteins that may regulate clustered nACh receptor gene expression and 2.) to determine if mutations in Sox10 alter clustered receptor gene and/or protein expression in vivo.

2. Molecular Analysis of Neuronal ACh Receptor Gene Expression (NIH; R01 NS030243-12, $1,128,200, 5 years. The long-term objective of this project is to understand the cellular and molecular mechanisms controlling the expression of the gene encoding the B4 subunit of neuronal nicotinic Ach receptors.
Haley Melikian, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology; Neuroscience; IGP
Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute

Research Interests:
1. Monoamine Transporter Regulation
2. Membrane Trafficking
3. Addiction, Affective disorders

Research Summary:
Once released into the synapse, monoamines are rapidly recaptured by presynaptic reuptake processes mediated by plasma membrane monoamine transporters. These important proteins are the primary targets for a variety of psychoactive agents, including cocaine, amphetamines and antidepressants, which inhibit transporter function. Recent studies indicate that endogenous cellular processes also control transporter activity. Most notably, transporters cell surface densities are dynamically regulated by membrane trafficking to and from the plasma membrane. Work in our lab is focused on elucidating the molecular mechanisms underlying monoamine transporter trafficking and regulation. Studies are actively investigating intrinsic transporter properties necessary for regulation and trafficking, as well as cellular factors interacting with and governing transporter trafficking.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Trafficking and Regulation of Monamine Transporters.

2. Monoamine Transporter Phosphorylation and Trafficking
Evgeny Rogaev, Ph.D., Dr.Sci.

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Academic Role: Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Program in Neuroscience
Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute

Research Interests:
1. Identification of genes and cellular proteins that play a critical role in normal and pathological aspects of human behavior
2. The study of evolutionary aspects of human populations, genome and specific genes in order to elucidate the phenomenon of some behavioral disorders prevalent in humankind.
3. Alzheimer’s disease, schizophrenia and depression are three of the most common mental disorders and our primary interest.

Research Summary:
Our research is focused on the identification of genes and cellular proteins that play a critical role in normal and pathological aspects of human behavior. To identify such genes and proteins we first use the strategies of linkage, genetic association analysis and positional cloning to isolate the mutant or polymorphic genes underlying the human diseases. We then develop functional assays to express these genes in vitro and in vivo to study their normal and pathogenic functions.

Representative Publications:


Our laboratory’s focus is on the neurobiology of addiction. This problem represents a particularly important area of research for a number of reasons: 1) addiction greatly impacts individuals and society, leading to tremendous personal suffering, 2) addiction presents a window into brain function, allowing the study of important phenomena, such as neuronal plasticity and compulsive behavior. Continued drug exposure leads to compensatory changes in neuronal elements such as ion channels, leading to drug tolerance, that may strongly influence subsequent behavior, 3) our understanding of the mechanisms of addiction have taken a quantum leap in recent years, presenting the opportunity to develop pharmacological strategies to reduce craving and addictive behavior.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:

1. Molecular underpinnings of tolerance.

2. Occurrence and mechanisms of intraneuronal differences in drug response.

Craig Ferris, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Professor/ Director of Neuroimaging

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Neuroscience, Center for Comparative Neuroimaging

Research Interests:
1. Neurobiology of emotion and addictive behavior
2. Evaluation and treatment of ischemic stroke
3. Evaluation and treatment of generalized seizure

Research Summary:
We are interested in the plasticity of the brain and how early emotional and environmental risk factors alter social and cognitive behaviors. Risk factors include drugs of abuse like cocaine and alcohol and social subjugation in the context of dominant/subordinate relationships. The laboratory uses standard molecular and neurobiological techniques to study the brains of rodents. In addition, ultra-high field magnetic resonance imaging is used as a non-invasive tool for developmental studies in monkeys enabling us to follow changes in brain structure, chemistry and function in the same animal over the course of its life. The goal of our research is to better understand the brain mechanisms contributing to mental illness and drug addiction in the hope of improving psychosocial and psychopharmacologic intervention strategies.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Cocaine sensitization across development.
2. Developmental and neurobiological effects of exposure to Ritalin in childhood.
3. Developmental and neurobiological effects of exposure to MDMA in adolescence.
4. Neurobiology of aggression.
Josie Harder, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Research Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Comparative Neuroimaging

Research Interests:
1. Psychopharmacology of primate cognitive and emotional behavior
2. Primate models of psychiatric and neurological disorder for drug discovery
3. MR Imaging in conscious primates and rodents to investigate psychiatric and neurological disorder

Research Summary:
Imaging marmoset monkeys under novel putative antipsychotic drug treatments (in collaboration with GSK); responding to emotionally salient stimuli (i.e. predator odor); and responding to drugs of abuse (e.g. cocaine, MDMA). Additionally, I am assessing marmoset cognitive and social behavior following exposure to drugs of abuse (i.e. MDMA). Previous work has involved assessing social and cognitive behavior in marmoset models of Alzheimer’s disease and evaluating novel cognition enhancing treatments.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Imaging marmoset response to ‘fear-invoking’ scent stimuli (with Jean King, Wei Chen and Tim Garelick).

2. Imaging and assessing cognition and social behavior in marmoset monkeys treated with MDMA (with Craig Ferris and Mat Brevard).

3. Imaging conscious marmosets under treatment with typical and novel putative antipsychotic drugs (for GlaxoSmithKline, with Craig Ferris and Tara Messenger).
Jean King, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Director/Animal Imaging Director
UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Comparative Neuroimaging

Research Interests:
1. Mood disorders- using fMRI to explore brain circuitry sub-serving mood disorders
2. Role of stress in the etiology of mental health disorders
3. Genetic and environmental factors impacting emotion and cognition during vulnerable periods in development

Research Summary:
The application of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to visualize brain regions involved in emotion and cognition has considerably improved our understanding of human neurobiology and hopefully the development of mental health disorders.

Studies in my laboratory use fMRI to identify and monitor neuronal activation associated with different emotional states like, depression, fearfulness and anxiety in animal models with the hope of finding clues to help us understand these conditions in humans. In addition, the influence of other factors like substance abuse (nicotine) and aging (on mood disorders) are being explored in both human and animal subjects.

The long-term goal of this research is to provide an understanding of the unique features of central mechanisms that regulate emotion and cognition in both resilient and vulnerable states.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. Imaging the Fear Response: Impact of age, genetics and gender.
2. Role of androgens in maintaining neuronal integrity.
Feng Luo, M.D., Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Comparative Neuroimaging

Research Interests:
1. Understand the Signal Sources of functional MRI/MRS and its Applications as Biomarkers for Alcoholism
2. Understand the Mechanisms of Alcohol-dependent and Alcoholism using Pharmacological MRI

Research Summary:
Using multi-modality, multi-task, and noninvasive functional MRI/MR Spectroscopy to study the pathophysiology of alcohol-dependent and alcoholism on integrative systemic level with an eye toward using imaging as a early diagnostic tool for risk factors screening and for quantitative assessment of clinical treatment.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Detection of changes in cerebral blood volume (CBV) and modulation on somatosensory function in rat following acute ethanol infusion using functional MRI.


3. Comparison CBV responses to ethanol under anesthetized and awake status in rat.
Steve Banks, Ph.D. ................................................................. 15
Kathleen Biebel, Ph.D. .......................................................... 16
Maryann Davis, Ph.D. ........................................................... 17
William Fisher, Ph.D. ........................................................... 18
Kenneth Fletcher, Ph.D. ......................................................... 19
Jeffrey Geller, M.D., M.P.H. ................................................. 20
Albert Grudzinskas, Jr., J.D. ............................................... 21
Alexis Henry, Sc.D. ............................................................. 22
Thomas Horn, M.D. ............................................................. 23
Matthew Johnsen, Ph.D. ....................................................... 24
Charles Lidz, Ph.D. ............................................................. 25
Colleen McKay, M.A., C.A.G.S. ............................................ 26
Ellen More, Ph.D. ............................................................... 27
Joanne Nicholson, Ph.D. ...................................................... 28
Jennifer Taub, Ph.D. ........................................................... 29
Valerie Williams, M.A., M.S. ............................................... 30
Steven Banks, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Has extensive experience with large state and national databases, and works with a number of states investigating the relationship between mental illness and criminal justice involvement

Research Summary:
Current research interests include a focus on the development of statistical procedures relevant to the emerging age of information abundance, especially as they relate to measures of access to care and treatment outcomes. He has worked extensively in the fields of mental health, criminal justice, and medical health.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Arrest Patterns Among Youth in the Mental Health System (PI: Davis, NIMH: 1R01MH067862-01A1 3 years). Study examines criminal activity among young persons with mental illness over 15 years using trajectory models to investigate the impact of mental health services and environmental characteristics that contribute to offending.

2. Modeling Criminal Justice Involvement Among Persons with Mental Illness (PI: Fisher, NIMH 1R01MH06515-01A2, 3 years). Study examines patterns of offenses among persons with mental illness over time; the role played by key mental health services in criminal justice involvement; and the extent to which environmental characteristics contribute to offending.

3. Worcester Homeless Families Program Evaluation (PI: Weinreb, SAMHSA #6 UDI SM53053-03-1, 3 years). The aim of this grant is to evaluate a homeless families intervention programs.
Kathleen Biebel, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Research Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Parental Mental Illness
2. Trauma and homelessness
3. Systems/organizational issues and change

Research Summary:
Intervention development and testing, development and dissemination of evidence-based practices, and provider behavior. Dr. Biebel has served as PI, Co-Investigator, and Evaluator on various SAMHSA/CMHS, NIMH and foundation-funded projects. She has worked for SAMHSA/CMHS as a Family-Centered Care Consultant, advising policy-makers and federal program officers on policy initiatives regarding families living with mental illness. Dr. Biebel co-leads the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Support Program at the CMHSR coordinating collaborations between the CMHSR and the DMH, and providing expertise and support for grant writing, data analysis, interagency workgroups, program evaluation, and policy recommendations.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Maximizing Medicaid and CHIP Options for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbance.

2. Creating Opportunities for Success: Working with Trauma Survivors in the Shelter Setting.

3. Mothers’ Experience of Trauma in Homeless Shelter Settings.
Maryann Davis, Ph.D.

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**E-mail:** Maryann.Davis@umassmed.edu  
**Academic Role:** Assistant Professor of Psychiatry  
**UMass Program/Service Affiliations:**  
Dept of Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research

**Research Interests:**
1. Understanding the development of adolescents and young adults with serious mental health conditions as they transition into adulthood, particularly those involved in public systems.
2. Understanding the influence of public child and adult systems, such as mental health and special education, on the development of adult role functioning and providing age appropriate treatment during the transition period.

**Research Summary:**
My research focuses youth and young adults with serious mental health conditions and the interplay of individuals, families, community, and public systems during the critical window of development when adolescents mature into adulthood. My goals are to 1. describe development of adult role functioning, and the impact of their disability, among those accessing typical services, 2. describe the service systems that support or hinder the development of these youths, and the policies that shape those service patterns, 3) develop models for improved service systems for those in this developmental stage.

**Representative Publications:**

**Ongoing Projects:**
1. Arrest Patterns Among Youth in Mental Health Systems (National Institute of Mental Health; R01 MH067862-01A1; $642,000; 3 years). Describes within-individual arrest patterns up to age 25 among youth involved in MA’s Department of Mental Health as adolescents to determine risk periods and risk factors separately in males and females, the impact of out of home treatments on arrest patterns, and comparisons of arrest patterns with sociodemographically matched offenders.

2. of the Federal Government’s Role in Shaping Services for Youth in Transition to Adulthood (Center for Mental Health Services; $39,520, 1 year). Analyze the impact of federal policy programs on public systems’ abilities to provide continuous and appropriate services to youths and young adults with serious mental health conditions during the transition into adulthood, and make legislative, policy, and programmatic recommendations.

3. Baseline Network Analysis of a Transition System (center for Mental Health Services; $49,520, 1 year). Describe the baseline interrelatedness of organizations and agencies that could serve youth with serious mental health conditions in a site with a grant to develop a coordinated transition system.

4. Transition Supports in State Adult Mental Health Systems (Center for Mental Health Services; $49,998, 1 year). Through interviews with each state’s lead adult mental health administrator, describe the adult state mental health systems’ efforts to support young adults develop adult role functioning including specific services offered, policies that support these efforts, coordination efforts with other agencies towards this goal, and administrators perspectives on system factors that facilitate of hinder the further development of these types of services.
William Fisher, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research, Law & Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Mental Health Policy
2. Mental Health & Criminal Justice Interactions
3. Epidemiology of Adult Mental Disorders

Research Summary:
Persons with mental illness who become involved with the criminal justice system are a ubiquitous and persistent problem. Efforts to address this issue typically are framed as a service system issue. This presentation, part of a larger study of patterns and correlates of offending among persons with mental illness, highlights the effects of social environment as a risk factor for arrest. Specifically, this crime mapping analysis shows exposure to poverty and social disorganization – long recognized risk factors for offending, exert a similar influence in persons with psychiatric disorders. Mental health systems need to pay special attention these issues in planning services for this population.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. Modeling Criminal Justice Involvement Among Persons With Mental Illness (NIMH; 1 ROI MH65611, $625,000, 3 years). This project represents a preliminary effort to discern the role of mental health services in patterns of criminal offending displayed by persons with severe mental illness. It incorporates theoretical frameworks and methods commonly used in criminology to understand patterns of offending over time, the effects of social environments, and the potentially mediating effects of mental health services with regard to patterns of offending.
2. Arrest Patterns Among Youth in Mental Health Systems (PI: Davis, NIMH; R01 MH067862-01A1; $642,000; 3 years) This project examines patterns of juvenile and adult criminal offending of youths identified as receiving services from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health’s as children/adolescents and who “aged out” of that system.
3. National Youth Screening Assistance Project. (PI: Grisso, MacArthur Foundation; $500,000, 3 years), This project examines the patterns of adoption of an evidence-base practice, a screening protocol, (The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument) by juvenile justice and child/adolescent mental health systems across the nation. There is no overlap with the current project.
4. Center for Research on Mental Health and Criminal Justice Research (Developing Center) (PI’s: Fisher, Wolff, NIMH; $117,108, 3years). This project is developing a Handbook for research involving prisoners as human subjects. (NIMH; $117,108, 3years)
Kenneth Fletcher, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor of Psychiatry and the Graduate School of Nursing, Director, UMMS Behavioral Sciences Research Core

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Childhood Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
2. Youth Violence
3. Juvenile Sexual Offending, Assessment and Treatment
4. Health Services Research and Medical Outcomes Research

Research Summary:
I am interested in research on childhood trauma, its etiology, prognosis, and prevention; youth violence, especially the treatment of juvenile sexual offenders and youths in the juvenile justice system with a trauma history; and health services research, particularly related to mental health of children. I created four of the first measures of childhood PTSD written specifically for children in language they can understand and at a third grade reading. These measures are now used by researchers and clinicians around the world. I also provide research methodology and statistical consultation, specializing in survey design, psychometrics, program evaluation, and advanced statistical modeling.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Evaluation of the Family Outreach Network (FON), a partnership of several community human service agencies that work together to provide support and intervention services to families identified by DSS or CPP to be “at risk” for child abuse/neglect and subsequently referred by an MSPCC project, the Connecting Families Project. The goal of the FON is to expedite any referrals made by the Connecting Families Project for these families and get them the full range of services that would benefit them as quickly as possible, and thus help prevent child maltreatment and the need for more extensive interventions.

2. Evaluation of the Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Campaign, a coalition of organizations in child abuse prevention and treatment, medicine, public health, law enforcement, and child care services throughout Worcester County. The Campaign is committed to reducing the incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome through parenting education, public awareness, and professional training, and by supporting family members of children who have suffered Shaken Baby Syndrome.

3. Evaluation of a special screening and case management system for depression among outpatients in community medical clinics.

4. Psychometric evaluation of a trauma reaction survey for families of children adopted from Russia and the Ukraine.
Jeffrey Geller, M.D., M.P.H.

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Academic Role: Professor of Psychiatry
Co-Director of Policy Research Core
Director of Public Sector Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research, Public Sector, Adult Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Pathological fire setting in adults
2. Involuntary outpatient treatment
3. Transinstitutionalization and the “most integrated setting”
4. History of the private psychiatric hospital

Research Summary:
Focus on translating observations from clinical work and consulting site visits/program evaluations into research questions. This approach is informed by including a historical perspective.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. What can the USA learn from foreign countries about involuntary outpatient treatment?
4. Examination of the relationship between where one lives and community integration: What’s a home?
Albert Grudzinskas Jr., J.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law & Psychiatry,
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:

1. Understanding the influence of mental illness on patterns of involvement in the criminal justice system for both adolescents and adults.
2. Understanding the environmental factors that contribute to homelessness and substance abuse among persons with mental illness and the impact of court ordered intervention in this process, including diversion and civil commitment.
3. Understanding the nature and dynamics of police intervention with persons in crisis and developing better interaction strategies to minimize risk.

Research Summary:

My research focuses on the involvement of persons with mental illness in the criminal justice and civil court systems. I would like to develop a better understanding of how and why the courts have become the access point for social services in most communities for persons living in poverty. I am also interested in the protection of human subjects in research. I am developing an agenda to address the needs of courts to understand social science testimony and its utility in addressing issues before the courts.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:

1. Massachusetts Mental Health Diversion Program, funded by a number of small private foundations. Albert J. Grudzinskas, Jr., J.D. Principal Investigator. Role: Research Director, at 30% effort; 7/1/2002 – indefinite; This program implements programmatic change directed at assisting police departments and local mental health providers in maximizing available resources to improve management of arrestees and potential arrestees with mental health needs.

2. 1 RO1 MH65611 Modeling Criminal Justice Involvement Among Persons With Mental Illness (William Fisher, Ph.D., P.I.) Funder: NIMH; Period: 8/15/03 – 8/14/06 Total Direct Costs: $625,000 Role: Co-Investigator, 30% effort. This project represents a preliminary effort to discern the role of mental health services in patterns of criminal offending displayed by persons with severe mental illness. It incorporates theoretical frameworks and methods commonly used in criminology to understand patterns of offending over time, the effects of social environments, and the potentially mediating effects of mental health services with regard to patterns of offending.

3. 1 RO1 MH067862 Arrest Patterns Among Youth in Mental Health Systems (Maryann Davis, Ph.D., P.I.) Funder: NIMH; Period: 4/1/04 – 3/31/07 Role: Co-Investigator, 5% Effort Total Direct Costs: $450,000 This project examines patterns of juvenile and adult criminal offending of youths identified as receiving services from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health’s as children/adolescents and who “aged out” of that system.
Alexis Henry, ScD

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Academic Role: Research Assistant Professor of Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
CHPR, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Person-and environment-level factors related to employment success among persons with serious mental illness
2. Rehabilitation needs of parents with mental illness
3. The role of play and leisure across the life-span
4. The use of participatory action approaches to research and service development.

Research Summary:
Not Available

Representative Publications:
Not Available
Thomas Horn, M.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Division of Public Sector Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Medical problems and health behaviors of persons with serious mental illness
2. Evidence-based practice implementation

Research Summary:
Chart reviews and subject interviews to identify medical problems and health behaviors that put people with a serious mental illness at risk for medical illnesses and premature death.

Grant proposal on implementation of evidence-based practices for persons with a serious mental illness.

Representative Publications:
1. Poster presentation: Medical Problems and Health Behaviors in Persons with a Serious Mental Illness; Horn et al; presented at the meeting of the National Association for State Mental Health Program Directors, February, 2003, Baltimore MD.

2. Poster presentation: Serious Mental Illness and Obesity: Community and State Hospital Samples; Horn; presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, May, 2004, New York NY.

Ongoing Projects:
1. Data analysis of an interview study of about 300 DMH clients, regarding medical problems and health behaviors.
Matthew Johnsen, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor of Psychiatry,
Director of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Core,
Research Director of the Clubhouse Research Program

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Examination of national demonstration programs evaluating service system integration for homeless persons with mental illness
2. Employment discrimination
3. Rural mental health
4. Developmental disabilities and jail mental health programs

Research Summary:
Dr. Johnsen is a sociologist with experience in both mental health services and disability research, he has been involved with the evaluation of several national demonstration programs evaluating service system integration for homeless persons with serious mental illness, managed behavioral health care, and the effectiveness of consumer-operated service programs. Additional interests include employment discrimination, rural mental health, developmental disabilities, and jail mental health programs.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Program for Clubhouse Research. The Program for Clubhouse Research is a joint program of the University of Massachusetts Medical School and the International Center for Clubhouse Development. The program conducts and encourages work on the clubhouse model, coordinates research efforts through its international research advisory committee and maintains an extensive library of research related to the clubhouse model. It conducts international surveys of clubhouses, assists state clubhouse coalitions to collect information about members who are employed, and has participated in a variety of efforts related improving wellness, assessing cost and cost-benefit, describing employment, and training clubhouse staff and members in a variety of different venues.

2. Articulating the Evidence Base for the Clubhouse Model. This is a review of all evidence related to the Clubhouse Model with the objective of assessing levels of existing evidence and determining gaps in evidence.
Charles Lidz, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Director of the Center for Mental Health Services Research

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research. Law & Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Violence
2. Research and Biomedical Ethics
3. Coercion and Mental Health Care

Research Summary:
Most of my on-going research is related to ethical issues in research. This includes a study of how clinical researchers manage the competing interests in providing excellent clinical care to their subjects and following protocols that often, of necessity, restrict the provision of clinical care. Related work focuses on therapeutic misconception in research subjects and a proposed study of decision making in IRBs. I am continuing analyses of previously collected data on violence and mental illness.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. Principal Investigator “Competition between Science and Care in Clinical Trials” NINDS Grant #NS049595, 2004-2007.
Colleen McKay, M.A. , C.A.G.S.

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Academic Role: Research Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Program for Clubhouse Research, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Questions that address a variety of mental health issues
2. Outcomes for vocational services for adults with mental illness
3. The Clubhouse Model of Psychosocial Rehabilitation

Research Summary:
Colleen is the Program Director of the Program for Clubhouse Research. A rehabilitation counselor with experience in mental health services and the clubhouse model, Colleen has been involved with the SAMHSA funded Employment Intervention Demonstration Program (EIDP), the Massachusetts Clubhouse Coalition’s annual Employment Survey, and an international survey of clubhouses that are affiliated with the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD). Colleen is interested in research questions that address a variety of mental health issues and international clubhouse issues.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Review the Evidence Base for the Clubhouse Model. This review examines the totality of the evidence related to the Clubhouse Model for ten outcomes or processes: (1) hospitalization/recidivism, (2) employment outcomes including Transitional Employment (TE), Supported Employment (SE), and Independent Employment (IE), (3) social relationships, (4) education, (5) housing, (6) quality of life/satisfaction, (7) substance abuse/use and (8) wellness activities. The processes examined were the impact of participation in (9) outreach, and (10) the Work-ordered Day. Initial findings from the review were presented at the 2005 NASMHPD Conference and a paper with results from the review is in the draft phase. The paper outlines an approach to thinking about the Clubhouse Model, objective assessments of the level of the evidence currently available, and point out existing evidence as well as any gaps in the evidence.

2. Logic Model/Program Theory
We are developing a logic model of the Clubhouse Model and a program theory of the clubhouse that links what happens within the model with anticipated outcomes. The documentation has been produced in collaboration with Robert King from the University of Queensland and circulated within the Research Advisory Committee for the Program for Clubhouse Research and the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD) both to provide information and to obtain advice and feedback regarding the project and the methodology.

3. Health Promotion in the ICCD Community: Needs, Barriers, and Current and Planned Activities. A survey of clubhouses clubhouse designed to obtain information concerning ways in which clubhouses are promoting practices that improves the physical health of members. By completing this survey, we hope to gain a greater understanding of health promotion activities and practices within clubhouses as well as partnerships with other community programs, institutions, and health service providers. This project is being done in collaboration with John Pelletier from Assumption College.

4. Service Utilization and Outcomes: Modeling the Effects of Clubhouse Service Use and Outcomes. Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to examine what happens (activities/services) in the “black box” (clubhouse) that affects member outcomes using data from a variety of sources in this project including service and vocational logs collected in the Worcester Employment Intervention Demonstration Project (EIDP), EIDP interview data, employment data, and clubhouse attendance data.
Ellen More, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Visiting Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. The history of the medical profession.
2. The history of American women physicians.
3. The history of sex education.
4. The patient-practitioner relationship; empathy

Research Summary:
As a historian of the medical profession I examine the changing role of medicine and health care institutions in American society.

One of my current books will explore the development of support for comprehensive sex education, and especially the role of medicine, public health, and the churches in this process, from c. 1950 to the present.

My second work in progress will be an edited volume of cutting edge research presented at a symposium at the National Library of Medicine this year on the history of women physicians in the U.S. and the western world from ancient times to the present.

Representative Publications:
2. The Empathic Practitioner: Empathy, Gender, and Medicine, c-edited with Maureen Milligen (Rutgers, 1994).

Ongoing Projects:
1. A book, under contract to Beacon Press, on the proponents of sex education in the US, since c. 1950;
3. Study of current practices of sex education for medical students and residents.
Dr. Nicholson has established an active, consumer-informed program of research on parents with mental illness and their children. Recent funded projects include the development and testing of an integrated intervention for homeless mothers and children in primary care, the impact of histories of violence on women with co-occurring disorders, the analysis of family risk factors for children with SED receiving systems of care services, and the exploration of mothers’ and children’s experiences of trauma in homeless shelter settings.

**Representative Publications:**


**Ongoing Projects:**

1. Preventing Homelessness in the Doubled-Up Population. (PIs: Nicholson, Weinreb, Boston Foundation; Tufts Health Plan; $180,000, 3 years). Expand the nationally-recognized Worcester Homeless Families Program (WHFP) of the Family Health Center, Inc. (FHC), in Worcester, MA, an effective program of health and mental health-related services for homeless families, to prevent homelessness in at-risk women and children who are doubled-up.
Jennifer Taub, Ph.D.

Phone: (508) 856-3522
E-mail: Jennifer.Taub@umassmed.edu

Academic Role: Research Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Children’s mental health services
2. Evidence based treatments in real world settings
3. The role of alliance in treatment engagement
4. Primary prevention and violence prevention

Research Summary:
Dr. Taub’s research interests focus on children’s mental health service systems, evaluation of human services and mental health programs serving children and families, and implementation of evidenced-based practices into real world settings. Her primary project is the evaluation of the Coordinated Family Focused Care program, which is a 5 site pilot wraparound services program for children with severe emotional disturbance.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Evaluation Of Coordinated Family Focused Care (CFFC) Five site longitudinal evaluation of a strengths-focused wraparound services program for children at risk for out-of-home placement. The CFFC initiative is sponsored by the Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services and five human services agencies. The goal of the evaluation is to assess whether the program reduces out-of-home placement, costs, and clinical symptoms and improves child functioning, child strengths, family involvement, parent involvement and competency. (Center for Health Care Strategies, $937,500, 3 years).
Valerie Williams, M.S.

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Academic Role: Research Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Methods Core; Child and Family Core; Law & Psychiatry Program, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Design, implementation, and analytic phases of evaluative research
2. Homelessness and housing
3. Mental health needs of youth in the juvenile justice system

Research Summary:
My research spans the domains of mental health and substance abuse within both the adult and child systems with specific focus on homelessness and housing, service system integration, and the mental health needs of youth in the juvenile justice system

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Evaluation of the CMHS/CSAT Homeless Families Program--Outcomes for mothers and children in homeless families receiving services at the Family Health Center will be compared with those of a group of homeless mothers and children recruited in shelters and not receiving Family Health Center (FHC)/Homeless Families Program (HFP) services.

2. Uses and Consequences of the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2)--The goals of this multi-site project include describing the process leading to the adoption of the MAYSI-2; developing a detailed profile of how the instrument is administered; and assessing the impact of the MAYSI-2 on juvenile justice system responses to youths with mental disorders.
Jayendra Patel, Ph.D.

Phone: (508) 856-5928
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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment

Research Interests:
1. Schizophrenia—treatment outcomes, biological mechanisms underlying clinical manifestations and treatment response
2. First Episode Psychosis—treatment outcomes, early intervention and biological mechanisms underlying clinical manifestation.
3. Novel treatments to improve negative and cognitive symptoms
4. Bipolar Disorder—Pharmacology and treatment outcomes, Genetics

Research Summary:
The Schizophrenia Research and Bipolar Disorder program is part of the Center for Psychopharmacological Research and Treatment. The program is involved in 2 NIMH sponsored studies (CATIE – I and II studies STEP-BD). These studies recruit “real world” individuals to provide meaningful data about effectiveness of various treatments currently available. We also conduct Phase II and III studies involving promising novel compounds with effects on psychosis, mood and cognition. Other studies evaluate the metabolic and other effects of antipsychotic medications. The program offers opportunities to interested and motivated residents and trainees to learn more about management of these illnesses and possibly join our group to pursue a career in clinical research.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. A Multicenter, Randomized, Double-Blind Study on the Effects of Aripiprazole on Overweight Patients treated with Olanzapine for Schizophrenia or Schizoaffective Disorder (Site PI: Patel JK; Sponsor: Bristol Myers Squibb).
3. Genetic Determinants of Bipolar Disorder (Site PI- Patel, JK; PI: Smoller J, RO1 MH063445; NIMH ).
Anthony Rothschild, M.D.

Phone: (508) 856-1027
E-mail: RothschA@ummhc.org

Academic Role: Irving and Betty Brudnick Professor of Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment

Research Interests:
1. Diagnosis, Biology, and Treatment of Psychotic Depression
2. Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal Axis Dysfunction in Psychiatric Patients
3. The Long-Term Effects of Hypercortisolemia on Cognition and Social/Occupational Functioning in Depressed Patients
4. Novel Psychopharmacologic Agents in the Treatment of Mood, Anxiety, and Psychotic Disorders

Research Summary:
The mission of the Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment is to provide state-of-the-art care for patients suffering from Mood and Anxiety Disorders and Schizophrenia, conduct research on new and more effective treatments for these disorders, and teach current and future practitioners. The Center is currently conducting a number of research projects for patients who suffer from a variety of conditions. The Center is committed to making new state-of-the-art treatments available to patients who may not have derived benefit from currently available treatments. The Center has a strong commitment to the teaching of clinicians currently in practice, fellows, resident, and medical students.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. NIMH Study of the Pharmacotherapy of Psychotic Depression (STOP-PD). This study uses a two-armed randomized double-blind parallel group design to compare the efficacy and tolerability of combining sertraline and olanzapine to olanzapine alone for the acute treatment of psychotic depression. By blocking recruitment of subjects at age >60 or < 60 on a 1:1 basis the study will determine the relationship between older age and remission, time to remission and tolerability. A twelve-week acute phase efficacy study is followed by a twenty-week continuation trial during which subjects who achieved partial remission enter a placebo-controlled augmentation trial that is based on their initial assignment.

2. Aripiprazole for the Treatment of Major Depression with Psychotic Features--Bristol Myers--The major goals of this pilot study are to investigate the efficacy and safety of aripiprazole monotherapy and the combination of apripiprazole and an antidepressant (sertraline) in patients with major depression with psychotic features.

3. ‘A 10-Week, Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Parallel-Group Study to Evaluate the efficacy and safety of GABITRIL(r) at 4, 8, and 12 mg/day in the Treatment of Adults With Generalized Anxiety Disorder --Cephalon--This is a Phase III study evaluating the efficacy of tiagabine at fixed doses of 4, 8, or 12 mg/day in the treatment of adults with generalized anxiety disorder. The study will also assess safety at those doses, looking especially at sleep disturbances and sexual functioning.

4. An Acute and Continuation Phase Study of the Comparative Efficacy of Venlafaxine ER (Effexor XR) and Fluoxetine (Prozac) in Achieving and Sustaining Remission (Wellness) in Patients with Recurrent Unipolar Major Depression; Followed by a Long-Term Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Maintenance Treatment Study in Patients Treated Initially with Effexor XR. Wyeth-Ayerst.

This is an acute and continuation phase study of the efficacy of venlafaxine ER as compared to fluoxetine, in achieving and sustaining remission in patients with recurrent unipolar major depression. This will be followed by a long-term randomized, placebo-controlled maintenance treatment study of patients initially treated with venlafaxine ER. Secondary measures will examine antidepressant tachyphylaxis, quality of life, and the re-emergence of depressive symptoms and recurrence rate of depression during maintenance treatment (12-24 months).
Eric Smith, M.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment

Research Interests:
1. Psychotic and Treatment-Resistant Depression
2. Risk factors for suicidal behavior (evident in large databases)
3. Drug Safety
4. Evidence-Based Medicine

Research Summary:
Not Available.

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. NIMH STOP-PD Collaborative Study of Severe (Psychotic) Depression.
2. Grants submitted for funding on suicide risk factors and augmentation strategies for antidepressants.
Meenashki Vemuri, M.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Center for Psychopharmacologic Research and Treatment

Research Interests:
1. Mood Disorders in adults, children and adolescents
2. First episode psychosis

Research Summary:
Have worked on projects with Dr. Rothschild, Dr. Zarate and Dr. Patel. Co- PI on First episode study. Co investigator on several other studies during the fellowship in Psychopharm, including the NIMH sponsored STEP-BD, Catie and Psychotic Depression study.

Representative Publications:
1. Atypical antipsychotics in non-psychotic disorders.

Ongoing Projects:
1. Lamictal in treatment-resistant Bipolar disorder in adolescents.
Daniel Connor, M.D.

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**Academic Role:** Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics
Director, Pediatric Psychopharmacology, Director, Ambulatory Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Co-Director of Research in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

**UMass Program/Service Affiliations:**
Pediatric Psychopharmacology, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

**Research Interests:**
1. Pediatric Psychopharmacology
2. Service Delivery Systems Research in Psychiatry
3. Maladaptive Aggression and Conduct Problems in Referred Children and Adolescents

**Research Summary:**
My research interests are clinical and center on pediatric psychopharmacology and excessive, impulsive aggression in psychiatrically referred children and adolescents. I collaborate with colleagues at Northeastern University on preclinical animal models of aggression and the effects of atypical antipsychotics on the neurobiology of aggression. I am engaged in multi-site clinical research evaluating new formulations of stimulants for adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Also currently investigating atypical antipsychotics for aggression in adolescents with conduct disorder. My services research focuses on the evaluation of a new model of collaborative care in the identification and treatment of pediatric mental health disorders identified in pediatric primary care.

**Representative Publications:**

**Ongoing Projects:**
1. Quetiapine for Adolescent Aggression and Conduct Problems.
2. A Multi-Center, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Trial of SPD 465 in Adults With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
Leonard Doerfler, Ph.D.
Phone: (508) 767-7549
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Academic Role: Adjunct Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Schizophrenia—treatment outcomes, biological adjustment to cardiac disease, particularly depression and posttraumatic stress disorder.
2. Internalizing disorders in children and adolescents, particularly anxiety and depression.

Research Summary:
Over the past few years, I have examined the frequency and nature of posttraumatic stress disorder in patients who survived a heart attack or underwent coronary artery bypass graft surgery. This research reflects a long-standing interest in psychological adjustment to chronic illness. In addition, I have an interest in depression psychiatric patients who do not have mental illnesses. Recently, I have become interested in understanding the nature of anxiety and mood disorders in children and adolescents. This work has been done in collaboration with Dan Connor and Peter Toscano, colleagues in the Psychiatry Department.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Panic disorder in children and adolescents.

2. The relationship of panic disorder and separation anxiety disorder in children and adolescents.

Mary Jeffers-Terry, MSN, APRN, BC

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Academic Role: Research Associate

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
MCPAP, Psychopharmacology, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Psychopharmacology, Child and Adult
2. TCPS/MCPAP Child Psychiatry-Pediatric Consultation Project
3. Outcome Study of TCPS

Research Summary:
Working with Dr. Daniel Connor in Child Psychiatry on two psychopharmacology research studies- An Adolescent Aggression Seroquel Study and an Adult ADHD Adderall Study.

Also have submitted to two posters about TCPS – 1) describes the TCPS model and 2) looks at first 18 months of data regarding the referrals received from pediatricians.

Current project soon to be undertaken is a retrospective chart review on additional data regarding TCPS.

Representative Publications:
1. Recent submission of TCPS model and initial chart review.

Ongoing Projects:
1. Adolescent Aggression Study.
2. Adderall Adult ADHD Study.
3. TCPS Retrospective review.
Thomas McLaughlin, M. Div., Sc.D.

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Academic Role: Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:

1. Population-based behavioral health services research, including system innovation, population-based quality indicators for mental health, access to treatment for common mental disorders in primary care populations.

2. Provider quality improvement interventions

3. Longitudinal data analysis in population studies, including hierarchical linear models, methods to address selection bias in observational studies (propensity scores) classical and hierarchical time-series models.

Research Summary:

My research interests are in system innovations for common mental disorders in primary care, especially depressive disorders in medical illness as well as adolescent depression. Presently, three projects are the focus of my attention: 1) a randomized trial funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to examine the effects of a time-limited telephone based intervention to modulate the risk of depression and anxiety in survivors of cardiac events; 2) implementation of a system of care for adolescent depression; 3) and an NIMH-funded Intervention and Practice Research Infrastructure Support Program (IP RISP) aimed at improved management of psychological distress in medical illness.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:

1. A System of Care for Depression in Medical Illness (PI, NIMH).

2. Effectiveness of Telephone Counseling in Managing Depression Associated with Chronic Medical Illness (PI, RWJ).


4. Depression and Productive Work Activity (NIMH, with Debra Lerner & David Adler, New England Medical Center).
W. Peter Metz, M.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Establishment of evidence base to support efficacy of wraparound process within a system of care

Research Summary:
Dr. Metz has headed a research effort to evaluate a strength-based and culturally competent orientation within traditional psychodynamic, cognitive behavioral, and family systems theory as well as by emphasizing the values of principles of the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP).

Analysis of outcome data, obtained from Worcester Communities of Care (WCC), over the past 5 years. (SAMSA grant, $9 million, 6 years).

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. Long term outcomes of WCC intensive wraparound process compared to a matched comparison group.

2. Cost analysis of impact of WCC on Mass Health medical behavioral health and pharmacy costs on youth with Mass Health insurance enrolled in WCC.
Fabian Saleh, M.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law & Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Juvenile and sex offender related research

Research Summary:
Dr. Saleh’s research interests involve the assessment and treatment of paraphilic and nonparaphilic sex offenders.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Effects of leuprolide acetate on deviant sexual phenomena in men with pedophilia and exhibitionism: A open-label study (principal investigator).

2. The role of testosterone in subgroups of paraphilias. (co-investigator and research supervisor to Ms. Crystal Kim – Thesis requirement of the Honors Program, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Johns Hopkins University).

3. Treatment of inappropriate sexual behaviors among demented patients.

4. Sexual Recidivism among sex offenders (co-investigator).
Peter Toscano, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor (UMass Medical), Associate Professor of Psychology (Assumption College)

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Ambulatory Psychiatry Clinic, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Childhood Psychology
2. Child and Adolescent Treatments
3. Adoption
4. Child Maltreatment

Research Summary:
My research interests fall into two broad categories. The first is clinical aspects of the presentation of mental health concerns in children and adolescents at various levels of care from outpatient to inpatient and residential settings. More specifically, I am interested in the issue of comorbidity and its implications for the assessment and treatment of this age population. A second area of investigation involves the psychological impact of adoption with an emphasis on the changes that occur as the child meets various developmental stages and challenges. I approach both areas within a developmental model and both have the ultimate goal of defining critical issues for clinical practice.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. The analysis of a data set on adopted children in an outpatient mental health clinic. This received initial funding through UMass Center for Adoption Research and Policy and involves looking at internalized/externalized symptom presentations and intervention in this population.

2. (In conjunction with Dan Connor and Len Doerfler) The analysis of data collected on children and adolescents admitted to a residential treatment center.
Melodie Wenz-Goss, M.Ed., Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Research Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Worcester Communities of Care, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Child and adolescent mental health and adjustment
2. Intervention research and evaluation
3. Child social development
4. Family and school contexts

Research Summary:
Directed a line of research, both cross-sectional and longitudinal, looking at stress, social support and adjustment in early adolescents with and without learning disabilities. This provided a basis for the development and evaluation of an intervention and curriculum to help ease the transition into middle school. Most recently involved in evaluating intervention models for children and youth with emotional/behavioral disorders and their families in community settings using a system of care model, and in preschool and daycare contexts using a mental health consultation model.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Worcester Communities of Care: Director of Evaluation. Worcester Communities of Care is a System of Care for youth with severe emotional disturbance and their families.

2. Together for Kids Project: Research Consultant: Together for Kids is an intervention utilizing a mental health consultation model for preschoolers with severe behavior problems.
Mike Carlin, Ph.D.

Phone: (781) 642-0128
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Academic Role: Assistant Professor
UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Visual Selective Attention
2. Intellectual Disabilities
3. Long-term Memory
4. Visual Search

Research Summary:
Studies of intelligence-related differences on various cognitive (e.g., visual search, match-to-sample) and perceptual (e.g., apparent motion) tasks. Particular attention is given to the effects of visual-array manipulations on performance. An important emphasis of the program is the determination of the potential modifiability of identified attentional deficits via perceptual training procedures or manipulations of task structure.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Enhancing Visual Search Efficiency in Individuals with Mental Retardation.
Ursula Dräger, M.D.

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Academic Role: Not Available

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
Not Available

Research Summary:
Dr. Dräger’s work focuses on both aspects of vitamin A: on vision, and on the way by which endogenously synthesized retinoic acid influences formation of the nervous system; this includes the mechanisms through which disturbances in retinoic-acid cause malformations of the brain.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Normal and Abnormal Visual System. Principal Investigator, Ursula Dräger. Agency: NIH. Type: R01 EY01938. Period 1999-2005. This grant addresses retinoic-acid mediated processes in the retina and cerebral cortex during postnatal development in mice. A renewal application for this is the grant is pending.

2. Retinoic Acid in the Developing Visual Pathway. Principal Investigator, Ursula Dräger. Agency: NIH. Type: R01 EY13272. Period 2002-2006. The research supported by this grant investigates retinoic-acid related mechanisms in the establishment of the projections from the retina to the primary optic targets.
William Dube, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor in Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Sensitivity to changes in reinforcement contingencies in individuals with intellectual disabilities (including autism and mental retardation)
2. Sensitivity to socially mediated reinforcement and joint attention deficits in young children with autism spectrum disorders
3. Analysis and remediation of overselective stimulus control and restricted breadth of attention in individuals with intellectual disabilities.
4. New methods for teaching individuals with developmental disabilities like mental retardation and autism

Research Summary:
One current research area is the analysis of behavioral processes involved in the allocation of behavior - choice-making - among individuals with intellectual disabilities. Through application of well-researched quantitative analyses, the research seeks to (a) advance understanding of variables that underline choices made by persons with intellectual disabilities, and (b) translate extensive basic laboratory research findings into effective, individualized motivational support for such individuals. Other research interests include: basic issues in stimulus control, discrimination learning, and attention in individuals with developmental disabilities; and the use of microcomputers as interactive teaching machines for programmed instruction with individuals with moderate to severe mental retardation.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:

2. Principal Investigator, NICHD Grant R01 HD37055 Contingency Analysis and Observing Behavior in Mental Retardation.

3. Principal Investigator, NICHD Grant 2-R01 HD33802 Behavioral Momentum and Flexibility in Mental Retardation.

4. Principal Investigator, NICHD Grant R42 HD39999 Behavioral Technology for Instructional Readiness. (STTR Phase II)
Richard Fleming, Ph.D., M.S., M.Ed.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Psychiatry, EK Shiver Center

Research Interests:
1. The application of psychological principles and procedures to problems of social importance
3. Personnel education and training in developmental disabilities
4. Distance learning systems: Instructional design

Research Summary:
Specializing in behavioral psychology, he is involved in research that addresses prevention and behavioral treatment of health-related problems through lifestyle change, and psychology-based instructional design for education and training.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Education, Research and Service. DHHS/ACF-UCEDD #90DD0564/02, Hamad (PI). Assistant Professor, Research and Development in the areas of distance learning and behavioral approaches in the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity among persons with developmental disabilities.

2. Educating Parents: Behavioral Intervention in Autism, NIMH #1 R41 MH071130-01. Principal Investigator on a Phase I STTR to develop a set of interactive online modules for parents of young children recently diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Parents will learn the rationale and methods of a range of evidence-based behavioral methods for interacting and teaching their child. Interactive video will be used extensively to provide a feel for how behavioral intervention is done.

3. Developmental Disabilities On Line, MCHB #5T02 MC 00030-03, Hamad (PI). Director of Instructional Design for this project which is in the final stages of producing and field testing five online continuing education courses for MCH professionals. The courses include: Managing Spasticity, Managing Dysphagia, Family Centered Care, Assistive Technology and Disability Law.

4. The Community Skills Mentor Project, DOE #P116B030570, Hamad (PI), Director of Instructional Design for this project to develop a four-module online course to train supervisory mentors working with paraprofessional staff in community-based program for individuals with mental retardation.
Karen Lionello-DeNolf, Ph.D.

Phone: (508) 460-3415
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Academic Role: Assistant Professor
UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Developing a Rat Model of Transitive Behavior
2. Symbolic Processes in Presymbolic Populations
3. Behavioral Choice and Momentum in Severe Mental Retardation

Research Summary:
Species ranging from pigeons to humans with developmental disability have shown the ability to classify items into categories. Differences appear depending upon the type of classification required. Few nonhumans have demonstrated the ability to classify items on the basis of stimulus equivalence, while humans (both typically developing and those with developmental disabilities) have. Dr. Lionello-DeNolf’s main research interest is determining the necessary conditions under which categorization ability develops and whether its development is related to linguistic capacity. Her current research focuses on two populations: autistic children and rodents. Work with both populations involves innovative teaching/training strategies and equipment that are not typically utilized.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. A study of low-functioning autistic children to determine if humans who lack language ability can classify stimuli on the basis of stimulus equivalence.

2. A study of rats to determine if they can demonstrate some of the basic properties of stimulus equivalence. The long-term goal of this project is to develop a rodent model of mental retardation that can then be used to advance our understanding of these processes in children with mental retardation.
William McIlvane, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Department of Psychiatry, Program in Neuroscience

Research Interests:
1. Developmental Disabilities
2. Human and Nonhuman Neurobehavioral Analyses

Research Summary:
Dr. McIlvane directs an interdisciplinary program of research that addresses a variety of scientific problems that are relevant to understanding and/or ameliorating mental retardation and developmental disabilities. One focus of the program is an attempt to further understanding of why many individuals with intellectual disabilities show atypically slow, inflexible learning. A long-term goal is to determine the degree to which learning deficits may be correctable by improving teaching methodology. A second focus of Dr. McIlvane’s program is on the analysis of behavioral relations mapping various symbol forms (e.g., words spoken or printed) with corresponding environmental events (e.g., objects, pictures).

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Symbolic Potential in Pre-Symbolic Populations (NICHD, R01). The research will pursue two issues of scientific interest: (1) Can true symbolic relations be demonstrated in individuals who are not considered to function symbolically? (2) If so, does that potential depend on development of some degree of language? This project will focus on school-aged children with severe mental retardation and capuchin monkeys.

2. Behavioral Studies of Mental Retardation and Depression. (NICHD, R01) The focus of the proposed project is clinical depression in people with mental retardation and limited language. We propose to adapt state-of-the-art behavioral testing methods which can be used to inform us about the cognitive functioning of persons with and without a clinical dual diagnosis of mental retardation and depression.

3. Process Analysis in Behavioral Allocation and Persistence in Severe Mental Retardation. NICHD, P01. This project concerns choice processes in behavioral allocation and persistence in persons with intellectual disabilities. One focus will be on children with severe intellectual disabilities. The second focus will be on the potential impact of social variables on processes involved in behavioral allocation and persistence.

4. Typical and Atypical Brain Development NCRR R25. Shriver scientists have partnered with educators at several area public and private schools with the goal of producing an integrated, practical, responsive curriculum for science education in primary grades 3-6.
Teresa Mitchell, Ph.D.

Phone: (781) 642-0253

E-mail: Teresa.Mitchell@umassmed.edu

Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:

Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:

1. Development of visual processes in deaf populations.
2. Development of face processing.
3. Development of visual attention.

Research Summary:

I am interested in how visual processes are affected by the absence of auditory input. My colleagues and I have shown that certain visual functions (motion processing, responses to events in the periphery) are enhanced by congenital deafness but others (color processing) are not. My lab is currently studying: 1) face processing and visual attention in deaf and hearing children and adults, 2) early visual attention processes in infants (with an eye towards pre- and post-cochlear implant assessment), and 3) interactions between visual and auditory input in typical development of perception and attention.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:


4. Attention to gaze shifts in infancy.
Celia Rosenquist, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Research Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Program in Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Working memory in individuals with and without intellectual disability
2. Categorization in individuals with and without intellectual disability
3. Visual processing in individuals with and without intellectual disability

Research Summary:
Not Available.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Working Memory and Categorization in Intellectual Disability.
Richard Serna, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Not Available

Research Summary:
Dr. Serna investigates basic processes in discrimination learning with individuals who have severe intellectual disabilities and learning problems. His research also asks how such processes can be applied to individuals who fail to learn through traditional verbal and nonverbal discrimination training procedures.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. An account has emerged to explain stimulus control development and transfer. As a consequence, the many successes and too-frequent failures of transfer-based teaching programs are only poorly understood. The research program will help in developing a general theoretical account of transfer, a general theory of stimulus control acquisition, and a more effective, better understood teaching technology for people with intellectual disabilities. The empirical foundation for the project derives from a series of methodological studies that have been conducted over the past five years, as well as other basic research studies, conducted in Shriver laboratories and others. Those methodological studies sought reliable procedures for teaching individuals with mental retardation to relate physically dissimilar stimuli (e.g., a picture and a corresponding printed word). The findings have clarified the nature of the problem we face and have led us to reconsider longstanding assumptions about stimulus control development and transfer. For example, do the gradual stimulus changes in transfer programs produce gradual changes in stimulus control or does transfer occur in a different manner than previously assumed? Are failures of programmed teaching procedures due to stimulus control transfer failures or merely to the wrong type of transfer? Are the variable outcomes of transfer procedures inevitable or can we develop a principled approach to reduce that variability? We believe that the theoretical and methodological foundation now exists to begin to answer these and other longstanding questions about stimulus control transfer and stimulus control development more generally. Answering those questions will advance not only theory but also our ability to teach people with intellectual disabilities more effectively. Research-to-practice studies are included to validate key principles and procedures in applied settings.

By understanding better the determinants of transfer, we hope to help remove barriers to effective instruction for many individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities.
Ann Skoczenski, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Development of visual sensory processing and visual perception during infancy.
2. The relationship between visual processing and reading development during childhood
3. The effect of perinatal brain injury on the development of visual perception

Research Summary:
Ann Skoczenski’s laboratory studies the development of vision and visual perception, with the goal of understanding the neural processes that underlie the perception of visual patterns and objects. We are currently engaged in three programs of research. The first concerns the development of pattern vision during infancy. The second is designed to understand the development of visual processing in children with or at risk for dyslexia. In a third set of experiments, we are studying infants and young children who have cortical visual impairment, a compromise of the visual system that is usually caused by peri-natal trauma.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Neural Processes of Pattern Vision in Human Infants.

2. Processing in Children with Dyslexia and Their Siblings.

Frances Smith, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Program in Neuroscience, EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Role of carbohydrates in cerebellar development
2. Mechanisms of carbohydrate-ligand recognition
3. Role of dystroglycan in neuronal migration disorders

Research Summary:
Carbohydrates play an important role in brain development. For example, deficiencies in any one of several glycosyltransferase genes required for modification of the transmembrane glycoprotein dystroglycan lead to neuronal migration disorders resulting in severe mental retardation. We use a variety of molecular biology and cell biology techniques to determine the exact nature of the carbohydrates that are required for normal development, and to reveal the cellular mechanisms through which they act.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Smith FI, PI of Project 2: Regulation and Role of CD15 Glycoconjugates in the Developing Rodent Cerebellum. We have shown that CD15 is temporally and spatially regulated during development, and we propose that CD15 plays a key role in the cell-cell interactions required for normal cerebellar development. We plan to elucidate the molecular basis for the preferential expression of CD15 epitopes in different cerebellar cells, and then use this knowledge to manipulate the relative expression levels of CD15 and biosynthetically related epitopes in defined cell types at different times during development.

2. FI Smith, Director of Viral Vector Core: This core provides DNA analysis and viral vector production as required for Program Project members.
Robert Stromer, Ph.D.

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UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Developing computer-enhanced teaching programs, and putting them into the hands of parents, teachers, and clinicians working with students with special needs

Research Summary:
Not Available

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. A Stimulus Class Analysis of Number Skills.


3. Autism Education and Treatment with PowerPoint Software.

Tiina Urv, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor
UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
EK Shriver Center

Research Interests:
1. Maladaptive Behaviors and Alzheimer’s Disease in Adults with Down Syndrome
2. Individual Differences in Vulnerability to Alzheimer’s Disease in Adults with Down Syndrome
3. Language Changes in Older Adults with Down Syndrome

Research Summary:
Individuals with Down Syndrome are at high risk for developing Alzheimer’s Disease. Many studies have examined changes in cognitive and adaptive behavior in relation to Alzheimer’s Disease in people with Down Syndrome, but no systematic, longitudinal evaluation of maladaptive behaviors in adults with DS during the course of AD has been conducted. Knowledge of the type and frequency of behaviors, the likely period during the progression of dementia that behaviors may appear, and the duration of episodes of specific behaviors, would contribute to the precision of the diagnosis of dementia. Subtle changes in various maladaptive behaviors, especially among individuals with more severe impairments, may be among the earliest indicators caregivers have to identify individuals who may be in the beginning stages of dementia. Improvements in the understanding of the progression of dementia in individuals with DS will lead to improved treatment and in turn contribute to an improvement in the quality of life for the individual with DS and AD.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:

Paul Appelbaum, M.D.

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E-mail: AppelbaP@ummhcc.org

Academic Role: Arnold Frank Zeleznik Distinguished Professor and Chair
UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law & Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Impact of legal and ethical rules on psychiatric and general medical malpractice
2. Informed consent, including assessment of decision-making capacity
3. Ethics of research, including therapeutic misconception, conflict of interest, etc.

Research Summary:
I have broad interests in law and ethics as they impact medical research and practice generally, and psychiatry in particular. Recent foci (with many collaborators) have included: assessment of decisional capacity of persons with mental and physical illnesses to make decisions regarding treatment, research, advance directives, driving, and voting; explorations of the use of leverage in encouraging psychiatric outpatients to adhere to treatment; prediction and management of violence risk; consent to research and therapeutic misconception; researchers’ views of conflicts between therapeutic and research obligations to patient/subjects; integrity of voting procedures in long-term care facilities; ethical aspects of psychiatric genetics.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Capacity to Vote by Persons with Impaired Cognition (supported by the Greenwall Foundation). Development of an instrument to assess voting capacity, and characterization of decisional impairment with regard to voting by persons with dementia and mental illnesses.

2. Leverage in Community-Based Outpatient Treatment (supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation). Ongoing series of projects exploring how pressure is applied, both formally and informally, to patients to encourage treatment adherence, including use of money, housing, civil and criminal sanctions, and outpatient commitment.

3. Therapeutic Misconception in Clinical Research. Collaborative efforts to develop an instrument that can reliably measure the extent of therapeutic misconception (i.e., confusion between treatment and research goals and methods) among research subjects.

4. Conflict Between Research and Clinical Obligations Among Clinical Researchers (supported by NIH, Chuck Lidz, PhD, PI). See Dr. Lidz’s description of this study.
Kenneth Appelbaum, M.D.

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Academic Role: Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Commonwealth Medicine, Law & Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Correctional Mental Health: epidemiology; service delivery models; administrative and clinical policies; treatment of serious mental disorders

Research Summary:
Not Available

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Prevalence of mental disorders among newly incarcerated female inmates.

2. Treatment of ADHD in correctional settings.


Rasim Arikan, M.D., Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Lecturer

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Service/Center/Division: Worcester State Hospital

Research Interests:
1. Understanding the ethical issues involved in general psychiatric practice and forensic psychiatry.
2. Understanding the psychiatrists' and psychiatric residents' views on ethics education.
3. Understanding the development of mental health laws in Turkey.

Research Summary:
I am interested in the ethical conflict, which arises when treating psychiatrists are asked to perform forensic evaluations on their patients. I have surveyed general adult psychiatrists and forensic psychiatrists to find out whether they differed in their understanding of the clinical versus forensic nature of Social Security disability evaluations.

I am also involved in a multi-center study psychiatry resident's views on the relative merit, validity, and usefulness of various teaching methods, evaluative procedures, and curricular content relating to ethics education.

I have also been collaborating with Turkish colleagues on development of forensic psychiatric concepts and training.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Dual agency issue in the Social Security disability evaluation process.

2. Survey of professionalism and ethics in medical education.
Thomas Grisso, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Professor of Psychiatry, Director of Psychology, Coordinator of Law & Psychiatry Program

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law & Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. Mental Health Screening, assessment and services in juvenile justice
2. Forensic mental health evaluations for the courts
3. Competencies and capacities in criminal, civil, and juvenile law

Research Summary:
My research focuses on forensic mental health issues in juvenile justice. My objectives are (1) to improve the identification and provision of mental health services to youths as they enter the juvenile justice system. (2) to improve juvenile court clinicians’ evaluations of youths pertaining to protection of constitutional rights (competence to stand trial, capacity to waive Miranda rights), and (3) to create models and standards for juvenile court clinical evaluation services. In addition, I collaborate with Paul Appelbaum and Chuck Lidz in their research on informed consent to research participation, and with Gina Vincent on her studies of juvenile psychopathy.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Capacities of Youths as Trial Defendants: Juveniles’ Competence to Stand Trial (Temple University Subcontract from the MacArthur Foundation, $850,000, 6 years, PI) This project has involved (a) a review of law and policy regarding youths’ competence to stand trial (compiled in a book, Youth on Trial) (b) a national survey of juvenile court clinics’ procedures for performing competence to stand trial evaluations of juveniles, (c) a study in four U.S. sites (n=1400) of youths’ capacities, compared to those of adults, to comprehend and reason about matters that are required for competence to stand trial, (d) development of a practice guideline for performing evaluations of juveniles’ competence to stand trial, and (e) currently in progress, a national dissemination and evaluation of the practice guideline when employed in juvenile court clinical services.

2. National Norms for the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (William T. Grant Foundation $235,000, 2.5 years, PI) The study obtained MAYSI data (mental health symptoms) on 70,000 cases entering juvenile justice facilities in 18 states. These data are being analyzed to create national norms for the instrument, and to examine differences by age, gender and ethnicity that can be reliably and consistently demonstrated across juvenile justice settings.

3. National Youth Screening Assistance Project (MacArthur Foundation, $740,000, 6 years, PI). This project developed a social action and technical assistance service to promote and study the use of the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument nationwide. The instrument was subsequently adopted statewide in 35 states for mental health screening of youths entering juvenile justice facilities. Current research on this project examines the degree to which mental health screening has led to improved mental health services and other outcomes in six juvenile detention centers in three states.
Laurie Guidry, Psy.D.

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Academic Role: Instructor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Mentally Ill/Problematic Sexual Behavior Program
Law & Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Chronic mental illness and sexual offending/sexual abusive behavior
2. Co-morbidity among sexual offender
3. Risk and recidivism among mentally ill sex offenders/sexual abusers and treatment/risk management efficacy

Research Summary:
My research seeks to examine the impact on and interaction between co-morbid mental illness and the behaviors of those who sexually offend against and/or sexually abuse others. Closer scrutiny of this often complex interaction can lead to important clues regarding how better to address such behaviors. This type of data can then better inform efforts to prevent a relapse of sexually offending and/or abusive behaviors as well as support psychiatric stability.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Co-morbid mental illness among paraphilic sex offenders: A pilot study: This is a multi-site study designed to gather data on co-morbid mental conditions among paraphilic sex offenders. The goals of the study are to determine the base rate of Axis I and Axis II disorders among the sample population; identify relevant sub-groups of paraphilic offenders among the sample; determine and compare base rates of co-morbid mental illness among these sub-groups; and identify base rate levels of aggression among these sub-groups.
Denise Mumley, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law and Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Assessment of Competence to Stand Trial
2. Violence Risk Assessment

Research Summary:
To date, my scholarly activities have focused primarily on aspects of the evaluation of competence to stand trial in adult populations, including the efficacy of using forensic assessment instruments. I also have an interest in the assessment and management of violence risk.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Recently submitted the following manuscript for publication: Pinals, D. A., Tillbrook, C. E., & Mumley, D. L. Practical application of the MacArthur Competence Assessment Tool–Criminal Adjudication (MacCAT-CA) in a public sector forensic setting. This paper addresses the clinical utility of a widely-used competence assessment instrument, as examined on a public sector forensic service.

2. Currently working on a chapter (with Debra Pinals, M.D., and Chad Tillbrook, Ph.D.) about violence risk assessment for a book on the assessment and treatment of sex offenders.

3. Currently working with Paula Mitchell, Ph.D., Chad Tillbrook, Ph.D., and Thomas Grisso, Ph.D. on a review of recent research on competence to stand trial. This is the most recent in a series of such reviews published every five years in Behavioral Sciences and the Law, the first of which appeared in 1992.
Paul Noroian, M.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Dept of Psychiatry, Worcester State Hospital

Research Interests:
1. Forensic Psychiatry: Developing a better understanding of how hospitals have managed psychiatric patients who commit criminal acts while hospitalized.

Research Summary:
To obtain a better understanding of how psychiatric hospitals have managed issues related to the prosecution of patients, we designed a survey for directors of public sector psychiatric facilities in the United States. The survey included questions ascertaining a description of each hospital and the patient population served. It also assessed whether a specific hospital has a formal policy on patient prosecution, the nature of the policy, and how the policy had been used. The initial results of this study were presented in poster form at the 2003 and 2004 meetings of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law.

Representative Publications:
Not Available

Ongoing Projects:
1. Prosecution of Psychiatric Patients: An Update. Paul Noroian, MD, Debra Pinals, MD and Paul Appelbaum, MD.
Ira Packer, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law and Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Violence risk assessment
2. Prevalence of mental illness in the criminal justice system
3. Evaluation and treatment of forensic clients
4. Insanity Defense

Research Summary:
Not Available

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. The use of Psychopathy Checklist to assist in treatment planning (with Gina Vincent, Ph.D. and Debra Pinals, M.D.).

2. Race and ethnicity as factors in decision-making about need for hospitalization (with Bill Fisher, Ph.D. and Debra Pinals, M.D.).

3. Characteristics of mentally ill clients who become incarcerated in prison.
Debra Pinals, M.D.

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**Academic Role:** Associate Professor of Psychiatry  
**UMass Program/Service Affiliations:**  
Forensic Service, Worcester State Hospital, Law and Psychiatry  

**Research Interests:**
1. Informed consent to treatment, medications in forensic settings
2. Mental health training for law enforcement, interaction between law enforcement and mental health
3. Stalking and violence risk assessment
4. Competence to stand trial and criminal responsibility evaluations

**Research Summary:**
Research projects have included the interface of psychiatry and the law. Topic areas of interest have included informed consent related to treatment decisions in civil and forensic populations, the impact of modern psychopharmacology on forensic management and competence to stand trial restoration. More recent projects have examined issues of mental health and law enforcement at the crossroads, including reviewing literature on suicide by cop and providing mental health training for law enforcement professionals. Current projects involve reviewing existing research on stalking and violence risk assessment.

**Representative Publications:**


**Ongoing Projects:**
1. Currently examining the relationship between psychopathy and risk assessment.

2. Working on examining competence to stand trial assessment instruments and their use in clinical settings, assessing public sector forensic assessments.

3. Examining forensic psychiatry training.
Chad Tillbrook, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law and Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Criminal and civil forensic assessment, service delivery, and policy
2. Development of forensic assessment instruments
3. Malingering and violence risk assessment
4. Professionals’ fear of litigation and ethical complaints

Research Summary:
My research interests are in criminal and civil forensic mental health assessment and have included investigations of competence to stand trial, malingering, and violence risk assessment. Recently, my objectives are (1) to understand better mentally retarded defendants who enter the criminal justice system and the impact their limitations have on their ability to proceed to trial, (2) to develop a competence to proceed instrument, and related measures, sensitive to the assessment of individuals with mental retardation, and (3) to use these findings to develop specialized guidelines and training modules for authorities in the criminal justice system.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. Development of a CST Measure for those Individuals with Mental Retardation. Creating a competence to stand trial measure with assistance and resources from E.K. Shriver Center, Massachusetts’ Department of Mental Retardation, and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. Scales assessing understanding, reasoning, and decision-making are being developed, as well as acquiescence, suggestibility, malingering cognitive impairment, and developmental immaturity.

2. Approaches to the Assessment of Cognitive Dissimulation. Creating a clinical typology capturing those individuals who dissimulate cognitive impairments (e.g., malingering and defensiveness) in an effort to develop recommended approaches from “best clinical practice” and “need for research” perspectives.

3. Education and Restoration in CST Evaluations. Empirically assessing the significance of learning and education in the midst of competence to stand trial evaluations, and examining the legal and ethical concerns of professionals that do so.

4. Research Reviews. Participating in a five-year review of research literature on competence to stand trial with Paula Mitchell, PhD, Denise Mumley, PhD, and Tom Grisso, PhD; and a violence risk assessment chapter co-authored with Debra Pinals, MD and Denise Mumley, PhD in a sex offender assessment and treatment text edited by Fabian Saleh, MD.
William Warnken, Psy.D.

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Academic Role: Director

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law and Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Forensic issues
2. Domestic Violence
3. Treatment in a secure program

Research Summary:
Not available

Representative Publications:


Gina Vincent, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Law and Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research

Research Interests:
1. The development and assessment of psychopathy and mental disorder in child and adolescent offenders
2. Violence risk assessment among adult and youth psychiatric, forensic, violent offender, and sex offender populations
3. Application of Item Response Theory methods to psychological assessments

Research Summary:
I have specialized interests in both juvenile justice and adult offender populations, particularly with respect to policy research, violence risk assessment, psychopathic personality disorder, and test construction and item response theory. My main goals pertain to the fair accurate assessment of psychopathy in youth and female offenders, the early identification and prevention of psychopathic personality disorder, and the assessment and treatment of sex offenders

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. National Norms for the MAYSI-2 (co-investigator, PI: Grisso, 2.5 years), William T. Grant Foundation. A project for developing national norms for a screening device for mental health problems in juvenile delinquents.
2. Juvenile Adjudicative Competency: Phase II (Project Director, PI: Grisso, 4 years), John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. A study for the development and testing of an assessment system for evaluating juveniles’ competency to stand trial.
3. Item Response Theory and Early Psychological Symptoms (1 year) National Institute of Mental Health Behavioral Science Track Award for Rapid Transition Program (B/START) PAR-00-119, Division of Developmental Psychopathology. A secondary data analysis of the MAYSI-2 National Norm database to identify potential measurement bias on the basis of gender or race.
Other Psychiatry Faculty

Carl Fulwiler, M.D., Ph.D. ..........................................................73
Genevieve Laforet, M.D., Ph.D. ......................................................74
Jennifer Lish, Ph.D. ..................................................................75
Tatyana Shteinlukht, M.D. ..............................................................76
Jeffrey Stovall, M.D. ................................................................77
The focus of my research is investigating neurobiological substrates of impulsive-aggressive behavior. Recent work examined the relationship between impulsive-aggressive traits, serotonin function, and the effects of alcohol on aggression. Serotonin function was related to trait aggression but not to alcohol-enhanced aggression which was related to trait measures of anger and impulsivity (Fulwiler, et al 2005).

Current research is examining the relationship between impulsive-aggressive traits and the brain structures that regulate aggressive behavior using Neuroimaging and neuropsychological testing. We are using high-resolution MRI scans to measure volumes of amygdala, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex in patients with a history of violence.

Representative Publications:

2. (submitted) DA Gansler, S Tan, A Sheth, R Bhadelia, S Patz, C Fulwiler. Orbitofrontal correlates of aggression in psychiatric patients.

Ongoing Projects:
1. ‘Violence and Orbitofrontal Dysfunction: Structural and Neurocognitive Correlates

2. ‘Structural MRI of amygdala-hippocampus in psychiatric patients with a history of violence and impulsivity
Genevieve Laforet, M.D., Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Assistant Professor

Research Interests:
1. Mechanism-based therapeutic approaches to the X-linked neurodevelopmental disorder Rett syndrome (RTT).
2. Dysregulation of circadian rhythmicity in mouse models of Rett syndrome
3. Development of GABAergic cortical neurons in tissue culture models of Rett syndrome.
4. Genetic factors promoting growth retardation vs. obesity in mouse models of Rett syndrome

Research Summary:
I am interested in the epigenetic regulation of development mediated by the methyl DNA binding protein MeCP2. MeCP2 is mutated in the X-linked neurodevelopmental disorder Rett syndrome. Our group is investigating the role of MeCP2 in different aspects of brain and body development using tissue culture and animal models. In addition, we are working on mechanism-based therapeutic approaches for Rett syndrome using drugs that compensate for defective MeCP2 function. Currently our work concentrates on the effects of MeCP2 deficiency on histone modifying activity during neuronal development. We are also investigating the impact of MeCP2 dysfunction on circadian behavior and gene expression as well as growth and energy metabolism in MeCP2 mutant mice.

Representative Publications:


Ongoing Projects:
1. HDAC Activation for Rett Syndrome Therapeutics.” $50,000/yr x 2 yrs, Rett Syndrome Research Foundation. Investigates the histone deacetylase activator theophylline as a potential mechanism based therapy in mouse models of Rett syndrome.

2. Collaboration with Schahram Akbarian, MD, PhD on his project, “Chromatin Alterations in Rett Syndrome” 1R01HD048489-01, NICHD.

3. Collaboration with David Weaver, PhD analyzing circadian behavior and gene expression in MeCP2 deficient Rett syndrome mice.

4. Collaboration with Ann Rittenhouse, PhD, on electrophysiological characterization of MeCP2 deficient cortical neurons.
Jennifer Lish, Ph.D.

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Academic Role: Not Available

UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Adult Psychiatry, Ambulatory Psychiatry Service

Research Interests:
1. Bipolar Disorder and depression
2. Epidemiology of psychiatric disorders
3. Increased risk for mood disorders in women
4. Screening for psychiatric disorder

Research Summary:
I have 30+ publications, but have not been involved in research for several years. My past work has been on several topics, including bipolar disorder, depression, aggression, diagnostic screening, and the genetic epidemiology of psychiatric disorders.

Representative Publications:


Tatyana Shteinlukht, M.D.

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UMass Program/Service Affiliations:
Adult Psychiatry

Research Interests:
1. Analysis of gene transcript levels (including such molecular biology techniques such as RNA extraction and cDNA generation) in postmortem human brain tissue of patients with Alzheimer’s disease
2. Treatment of tardive dyskinesia with antioxidant Vitamin E.
3. Exploring use of community screenings for depression and cognitive decline in improving early diagnosis of depression and dementia and promoting subsequent therapeutic interventions.

Research Summary:
My research focuses on demented and depressed elderly population. My goals are 1) exploration of pathogenetic mechanisms of Alzheimer’s disease using molecular biology techniques such as RNA extraction and cDNA generation and analysis of gene transcript levels 2) discovery of effective techniques in community screening to diagnose early and appropriately refer depressed and demented geriatric patients.

I am also interested in studying use of antioxidants in treatment of tardive dyskinesia

Representative Publications:

Ongoing Projects:
1. Analysis of gene transcript levels in postmortem human brain tissue of patients with Alzheimer’s disease (Non funded). Explores use of RNA extraction and cDNA generation in preparation for analysis of gene transcript levels from LCM samples of postmortem human brain tissue of patients with Alzheimer’s disease.
2. Treatment of tardive dyskinesia with antioxidant Vitamin E. (Non funded). Analyses results of treatment of neuroleptic induced tardive dyskinesia to Vitamin E.
3. Exploring use of community screenings for depression and cognitive decline in improving early diagnosis of depression and dementia and promoting subsequent therapeutic interventions (Non funded). Analyzes effective strategies in screening elderly in the community to facilitate early diagnosis and subsequent therapeutic interventions in late life depression and dementia.
Jeffrey Stovall, M.D.

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**Academic Role:** Assistant Professor

**UMass Program/Service Affiliations:**

Adult Psychiatry

**Research Interests:**

1. Community Based Services for Individuals with Severe Mental Illness
2. Treatment of Early Episode Psychosis

**Research Summary:**

My research grows out of my clinical work in the community. In particular it is based on my work and interest with young adults early in the course of a psychiatric disorder and focuses on the problems, such as homelessness and unemployment, and interventions that may impact the course of the illness. I am also working with a project to develop training for family physicians in Vietnam.

**Representative Publications:**


**Ongoing Projects:**

1. Assertive Community Treatment for Young Adults with Severe Mental Illness.