

University of Florida Department of Psychology Advisory Board
2022 Annual Activity Report

The mission of the Advisory Board is to support and advocate on behalf of the Department of Psychology and to support the Department's achievement of its goals through Engagement, Leadership, and Philanthropy.

Board Members: Antonio E. Puente (Board Chair), Amanda Balkhi (Board Secretary), Frederick Coolidge, Stephen Kraus, Chris Pitisci, Patricia Thomas Shutt, Meredith Wikstrom, Martha Zlokovich

Engagement: *Help the department to strengthen its relationships with students and alumni as well as professional communities through communications, events, advice, and guidance.*

The Board recognizes that ongoing engagement with students is necessary to understand the changing needs of psychology students. While current faculty enjoy day-to-day opportunities to engage with students in their classes, the board offers expanded engagement opportunities across the very large group of psychology students. To this end, the board participated in a virtual mentoring activity with undergraduate students within the department in Spring 2022. The board also conducted a listening session with current graduate students within the Department in Spring 2022. While the students were generally positive regarding the overall environment of the Department, the Board learned more about ongoing challenges with graduate student funding and the student's desires for improved cohesion and opportunities between tracks. Additionally, the Board became aware of student desires for more opportunities to connect with alumni who are in a non-traditional psychology pathway.

In order to increase student mentorship opportunities and engage alumni directly with current UF students, the Board agreed to make participation in [Beyond 120's MentorConnect platform](#) a priority by registering as mentors when able and promoting mentorship among their peers. In 2022, a total of 14 psychology mentors were added to MentorConnect with 108 psychology students registered for mentorship.

Based on the feedback from these students and the needs for exposure to diverse experiences within the field of psychology, the Board created the Alumni Video Stories Work Group. This ongoing project is designed to recruit alumni to share two-minute recordings of their career journeys after their undergraduate experience. During this calendar year, the Board volunteered to record their alumni stories and worked with Department of Psychology staff to create a [YouTube channel](#) where these stories could be safely housed and shared with students. The Board intends to continue to recruit alumni to participate in this project on an ongoing basis.

In order to facilitate connection between Psychology Department alumni and the Department on an ongoing basis, the Board worked closely with Department IT to align the Department's [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#) and promote the dissemination of student and faculty achievements.

The Board also created the Alumni Outreach Work Group, spearheaded by Chris Pitisci and Steve Evans, to facilitate alumni outreach and engagement. As part of this work

group, the board agreed to have Chris Pitisci serve as a board representative for the 2023 Tampa Alumni Advancement event. This work group also facilitated the creation of alumni outreach lists for board member review.

Leadership: *Provide advice, guidance and assistance to the Department Chair in setting the vision for the department and making progress towards that vision.*

At each meeting, Dr. Julia Graber, the Department of Psychology Chair, provided the Board with updates of importance from the Department. Notable updates included the Department's successes with grant funding (second highest within the College) and the Department's place as one of the largest major areas of study (17% of all students) within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The Department also faced struggles with staffing in 2022, which, through perseverance of Dr. Graber, resulted in the successful hire of administrative and IT staff midyear. Ongoing Departmental concerns regarding faculty positions, competitive salaries for all positions, and reliable funding for graduate students were regularly discussed.

At the suggestion of the Board, demographic data for undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty were reviewed with Dr. Graber. The Department of Psychology continues to excel in the education of historically underrepresented groups and leads the College of Liberal Arts in degree completion for students from traditionally underrepresented groups. While strides have been made in the recent past to recruit and hire early career faculty that better represent the background and experiences of current students, the Board and Dr. Graber acknowledged the discrepancy between the demographics of current students and tenure track faculty. With the Board's encouragement, Dr. Graber successfully lobbied for a diversity cluster hire to bring three tenure track faculty from diverse backgrounds and research interests into the Department of Psychology.

Given the evolving social climate of Florida in 2022 and widespread concerns regarding the impact of state legislation on historical teaching practices, the Board requested meetings with college and departmental diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) representatives. The board met with Dr. Evans-Donaldson, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, to become more informed regarding the college's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The board met with representatives of the faculty DEI committee to understand current goals and initiatives regarding DEI within the department.

Following these meetings, the Board wrote a letter of support to the faculty DEI committee and offered to assist if speakership opportunities or opportunities for outreach arose. Board Chair Antonio E. Puente delivered an invited address to the students, faculty, and alumni of the Department at the invitation of the DEI committee. Additionally, in response to these meetings, the Board agreed that an ongoing commitment to representing all student and alumni backgrounds within board membership and board projects such as the Alumni Stories Video Project is of the utmost importance.

Philanthropy: *Financially support the department with an annual gift and provide advice, guidance, and assistance to the department in the areas of fundraising and alumni engagement.*

In 2022, the Board participated in a facilities tour led by Dr. Graber to better understand the current needs and philanthropic goals of the Department. In partnership with representatives from the Advancement office, the board reviewed estimated funding targets needed for facilities improvements and targeted student, staff, and faculty awards (reproduced at the end of this document).

The Board worked in concert with the Psychology Department's technology staff to improve the visual presentation of giving opportunities on the Department's webpage and began planning for the 2023 Gator Giving Day. After consultation with Advancement and Giving Day staff, the Board set a goal of 100 people engaged on Gator Giving Day.

Board Governance

In consultation with Advancement, the Board set a target for new Board membership and began to codify the process of joining the Board. Meredith Wikstrom, a 2005 undergraduate Psychology Alumna and current user experience designer, officially joined the Board in Fall 2022.

Board Membership Rolls:

Fall 2021 - Fall 2024 Term:

Antonio E. Puente, Ph.D. (Board Chair)

Chris Pitisci

Martha S. Zlokovich, Ph.D.

Stephen Kraus, Ph.D.

Patricia Thomas Shutt, Psy.D.,

Frederick Coolidge, Ph.D.

Amanda Balkhi, Ph.D. (Board Secretary)

Fall 2022 - Fall 2025 Term: Meredith Wikstrom

Department of Psychology Current Funding Needs

	Projected Total Cost	
Physical Infrastructure		
Full Renovation/New Building	\$10 Million+	
Single Floor Renovation	\$1 Million - \$3 Million	
Isolated Space Renovations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Advising Offices</i> • <i>Graduate Student Work Spaces</i> • <i>Classroom Upgrades</i> • <i>Undergraduate Labs</i> 	\$30,000 - \$200,000	
	Projected Annual Cost: Direct Donation	Projected Lifetime Cost: If Endowed
Graduate Student Support		
Graduate Student Fellowship	\$40,000	\$1 Million
Summer Award	\$3,000 - \$10,000	\$75,000 - \$250,000
Top Off Student Stipend	\$2,000 - \$5,000	\$50,000 - \$125,000
Faculty Support		
General Professorships/Chairships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>DEIA Professorship</i> • <i>Experiential Professorship</i> 	\$40,000 - \$80,000	\$1 Million - \$2 Million
Faculty Fellowship/Term Professorship	\$20,000 - \$30,000	\$500,000 - \$750,000
Summer Awards	\$5,000 - \$10,000	\$125,000 - \$250,000
Teaching/Research Awards	\$3,000 - \$5,000	\$75,000 - \$125,000
Program Support		
Requested Program Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Student Mental Health</i> • <i>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access</i> • <i>Experiential Learning</i> • <i>Staff Appreciation Awards</i> 	Varies	\$30,000+