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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR


These were just some of the future dreams that professors shared in the envisioning session held at the first meeting of The Department of Psychology on September 19, 2017. There was excitement over the prospect for the growth of psychology at AUC, and elation that the dream of establishing an independent department had materialized after decades of sharing a home with our dear colleagues in Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology.

It was a challenging first year. We officially launched the department on July 1, 2017 with construction and renovation projects of the new counseling psychology training clinic space and labs looming before us, a departmental suite without furniture or supplies, confusion in key university information systems, two out of four staff positions unfilled, and ambiguity over new departmental operations and procedures.

Yet, the patience and collaboration of faculty, staff, and students - and the continuous support from the offices of Provost Abdel-Rahman and HUSS Dean Switzer - allowed the pieces to eventually fall into place. In the midst of a subtle sense of restrained chaos emerged an unusually successful year, which we celebrated in our annual party in May.

It was a year in which professors dabbled in innovative teaching practices including online collaboration with a U.S. course, impressive service learning projects, and a travel course to Sinai. Committees were initiated to develop interdisciplinary curricula and projects with architecture, biology, business, education, and refugee studies. The counseling psychology training clinic shaped itself into a state-of-the-art center for psychological services and professional training.

We also maintained our longstanding dedication to community outreach and impact. We established a long-term agreement with Wataneya Society and partnered with 40 entities for student internships and course projects. The department cultivated a reputation for designing capacity-building programs to train professionals in psychotherapy, mental health leadership, social work competencies, educational psychology, and research methods; many of these courses were funded by prestigious entities such as UNICEF and World Health Organization. Professors continued their tradition of directing high-impact applied research.

This double issue of our first newsletter features some of the highlights of the past year. Whether the dreams that we began the academic year with will materialize is yet to be seen, but if the successes of this year are an indicator, we are well on our way.

Mona M. Amer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology
INAUGURATION!

HONORING THE PAST, CELEBRATING THE PRESENT, EMBRACING THE FUTURE

March 7, 2018 will remain ingrained in the memories of the AUC psychology community. This was the date that witnessed the formal inauguration of the Department of Psychology after being housed with Sociology and Anthropology since the early 1960's and being part of the Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, and Egyptology (SAPE) Department since 1999. The inauguration was a remarkable and uplifting event that was attended by about 250 AUC psychology alumni, students, professors, and staff; AUC administrators and friends from other departments; psychologists from other universities; local mental health practitioners; and leaders of community organizations.

Mona Amer, chair of the psychology department, emceed the evening and presented a speech that outlined the department strengths and vision for the future. AUC President Francis Ricciardone presented a brief speech in which he confessed that he was an undergraduate psychology major, which had a great effect on his career. The “Transforming Communities, Empowering Lives” video was shown. It examined the various stages and achievements that the psychology program passed through in its path of progress. At start and end of the ceremonies music was played by the band Mad Bossa, with psychology professor Carie Forden at the drums.

The main event during the evening was a panel titled “Breaking Down Stigma Barriers,” which was moderated by Robert Switzer, interim dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUSS). Four alumni and one undergraduate student delivered brief but touching speeches about their innovative efforts to work with stigmatized communities and tackle taboo issues: Hala Abd Alhak (AUC affiliate MA instructor and inclusive education consultant), Najla Nagib (director of Inside-Out Counseling Center), Farah Shash (chair of HarassMap), Ya’mie El Hagry (deputy executive director of Watanye Society), and student representative Khaled Salah El Din.

The inauguration speeches, along with the video and the panel, took the audience on a journey through the growth of psychology at AUC, and its current and future role in Egyptian society. The journey started in 1921 when psychology courses were introduced at AUC. The year 1957 saw the graduation of the first two students who had majored in psychology. Yet, there was a decade during which the major “died” as Amer pointed out. However, in 1971, the coming of Nicholas Ciaccio resuscitated the psychology major. He was a child clinical psychologist who devoted his life to helping underprivileged children in Egypt. He worked hard to develop a bachelor’s degree (B.A.) in psychology and he made a significant impact on generations of students.

A major event in the history of psychology at AUC was the launch of the counseling psychology and community psychology Master’s degrees in 2009 and 2010, respectively. This achievement was realized through the contributions of faculty members, students, and supporters. Amer showed appreciation to Hani Henry, associate professor of psychology and final chair of the SAPE department, for his tangible efforts towards establishing the graduate programs. Nasser Loza, director of The Behman Hospital and former General Secretary for Mental Health at the Ministry of Health, was also thanked for collaborating with the psychology program for more than 30 years. Ricciardone thanked Suad Juffali and highlighted the considerable role that the Juffali family has played in supporting mental health wellness in the region, and in providing generously to the university which has strengthened the graduate programs through student fellowships.

The launch of the psychology department is another major milestone for the growth of psychology at AUC that builds on its historical roots. Amer was a student of Ciaccio, and was shaped by his passion for psychology and his dream to build the presence of psychology. She worked extensively to realize the dream of establishing an independent department, supported by former HUSS Dean Nathaniel Bowditch and collective efforts of the psychology faculty members, staff, and students, and AUC community at large. The independent department is expected to bring greater visibility and recognition to psychological work, and to attract qualified professors, enhance the ability to publish in more competitive journals and receive funding, and boost interdisciplinary research.

As the inauguration panel showed, graduates of the AUC psychology programs have already played a prominent role in Egyptian society and in challenging deeply entrenched stigmas. Professor Abd Alhak, a student of Ciaccio, emphasized the relentless efforts that he made in encouraging his students to take part in community development and in helping children in need. She attributed her interest in children with disabilities to Ciaccio’s endeavors. Nagib stressed how the psychology program plays an important role in helping students to be “ethical and professional.” Being a graduate of the counseling psychology Master of Arts program helped Nagib to be empathetic to people and to establish counseling services for specialized populations, such as patients from the burn hospital who are marginalized by society.

Moreover, Shash argued that her ability to direct Harass map, a nonprofit organization that seeks to combat sexual harassment in Egypt, was shaped by her community psychology studies at the AUC. She also thanked the Juffali family for supporting her endeavors.
psychology department. “The amount of support that we get from AUC will facilitate planting the seeds for communities to break the barriers themselves,” Shash stressed. El Hagry also pointed out how her experience in Volunteer in Action, a club that provides charity services to orphanages, shaped her understanding of how to better help orphanages in Egypt. Salah El Din, the undergraduate speaker and previous president of the Sociology Anthropology Psychology Association, emphasized his continuing efforts in breaking stigma about the psychology major, which is perceived as focusing mainly on people who suffer from madness.

Despite stereotypes about psychology, over the years psychology undergraduate and graduate degrees have acquired increasing popularity and competitiveness at AUC. The department is one of the few around the world to offer community psychology undergraduate and graduate tracks, and to integrate many experiential courses and internships that help students to better understand community problems and to take part in solving them. AUC is also the only university in the region that has a counseling psychology training clinic where counseling psychology graduate students can enhance their professional skills. Known as the Psychological Counseling Services and Training Center, it offers free counseling to AUC community members and their relatives, and holds workshops that raise awareness such as stress management and parenting.

Amer described three main visions that the newly established department seeks to achieve in the coming years. First, the department aims to have even greater community impact and empower people further through consultation to nonprofit organizations, applied research, and initiating “a sustainable method for developing projects that have higher impact.” The second aim is to become a center for psychological knowledge through conducting research in basic psychology and providing professional development training to a wide range of professionals. The third vision of the Psychology Department is to engage in interdisciplinary collaborations. For example, the psychology department has collaborated with the international and comparative education department to design a graduate diploma in Inclusive Education that will support diverse learners in schools, including those with special needs as well as gifted students. Psychology professors are also collaborating with professors in architecture, sociology-anthropology, biology, business, and refugee studies with plans to introduce new courses and extra-curricular projects.
We currently have 139 students declared as psychology majors, and 152 students in the psychology minor.

Acceptance rates for the psychology major were 61.76% in Fall 2017 and 66.67% in Spring 2018.

The average GPA for those accepted into the psychology major was 3.57 in Fall 2017 and 3.80 in Spring 2018.

Acceptance rates for the psychology minor were 86.21% in January 2018 and 79.73% in June 2018.

The GPA cut-off for the psychology minor declaration was 2.842 in January 2018, 3.057 in June 2018.

We offered 48 sections and 49 sections of psychology courses during Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, respectively.

The number of professors who taught over the year were 11 full-time professors and 15 adjunct professors.

You might have heard the word “HARP” over the past year. So what is it? And what does it do? Well to answer these questions, let’s first know what HARP stands for: Hub for Action and Research in Psychology. HARP is the new name of the renovated and improved psychology computer lab and research rooms, located on the second floor of the Waleed building. It’s a very useful space for the psychology community to develop knowledge through research studies, enhance psychological teaching at AUC, and disseminate psychological knowledge through public events and written communications.

The space consists of a main lab, small two-way mirror rooms, and a multipurpose research room. The main lab has 12 computers, a printer, a scanner, and a projector. There is also a library of books and materials related to research, teaching, and career development, as well as roundtables for group projects or reading. Attached to the main lab are two adjacent small rooms separated by a two-way glass. This can allow for the observation of experimental participants, for instance, without them seeing the researcher. The larger multipurpose research room is across the hall from the main lab, and can be used for data collection. It can also be reserved for workshops, exam study sessions, student meetings, and activities.

Since its official opening in December 2017, HARP has seen increasing activities. Psychology students have used the space to work on their SPSS assignments and group projects. “The psych hub was definitely a godsend during a hectic period. I discovered it at the beginning of last semester and have been using it ever since. I managed to finish all my SPSS projects on time and found it peaceful enough to study for my finals too!” said Mariam Mina, a sophomore psychology student.

Many psychology professors have used HARP for tutoring students on their research projects and research team meetings. Professors Julie Johnson-Pynn, Hala Abd Alhak, Anne-Pierre Goursaud, and Reham Al Mellawani (may she rest in peace) held some of their classes there.

“HARP provided a transformative learning environment for the statistics class that I taught during the Spring term. Students worked in competitive guilds on ‘lab quests’ that were designed to stimulate critical thinking and active learning using game elements that interfaced with SPSS statistical computations,” said Johnson-Pynn. Abd AlHak said, “HARP provided a friendly and safe environment for my students to take their pre-service and post-service questionnaires in my CBL course Psyc 3002. The new layout was more spacious which provided more privacy for the students to work on their surveys.” Goursaud’s biopsychology students worked together on their conference-like poster projects which they presented at the end of the semester.

HARP aims to be what it’s name signifies - a hub or central space to build sense of community in the department and enhance growth of psychological knowledge. The resources offered by HARP are diverse and can facilitate not only implementation of projects but also personal self-development. Everyone is welcome!
GAY IDENTITY IN EGYPT

Dr. Hani Henry’s recent research project examined the intersections of cultural and sexual identities and their influences on Egyptian gay men. It is comprised of two major studies: The first study examined the process of internalized homophobia as experienced by Egyptian gay men and the influences of societal homophobia and non-affirming religious institutes in perpetuating this negative experience. The second study examined personal narratives of Egyptian gay males who described their experiences of disclosing their sexual identity in a variety of social media outlets in the period between 2011 and 2017. Thematic analysis of these narratives suggested that personal disclosure of gay identity might not always be beneficial for members of certain ethnic groups. Alternative ways of affirming gay Egyptians were proposed. Overall, this project is part of the researcher’s lifelong interest in the influence of culture, broadly defined, in understanding a wide array of psychological process.

DETERMINANTS OF ANTENATAL HEALTH CARE UTILIZATION

Dr. Hassan Zaky collaborated with Dina Magdy from Cairo University and Mohamed Ali from South Valley University to investigate factors determining the utilization of antenatal health care services among Egyptian women. The research was based on a national representative data from Egypt Demographic and Health Surveys (EDHS) in 2000 and 2014. The project used advanced statistical models to identify the most important determinants of antenatal health care utilization. Findings indicated that the period 2000-2014 experienced a significant increase in the use of antenatal health care services. The use of the public sector antenatal care services relative to that of the private sector has been decreasing over time. Moreover, wealth index, women’s education, and quality of health services play significant roles in increasing accessibility of antenatal health care services. On the other hand, women’s empowerment showed a positive effect in 2000 only. The study highlighted that the most vulnerable groups that are less likely to have access to antenatal health care services, mainly women who are less educated, poor and living in rural areas especially Upper Egypt. This certainly requires a more targeted health strategy with an equity lens.

RESILIENCE AMONG MAASAI YOUTH IN TANZANIA

Dr. Julie Johnson-Pynn collaborated with her sister, Laura Johnson at The University of Mississippi, in a field study of Maasai youth in Northern Tanzania. The Maasai, pastoral nomads with red robes, are an iconic tribe of East Africa. Their centuries old symbiotic lifestyle of herding cattle has been threatened in the past by colonialist-imposed cultural homogeneity, and more recently, by environmental degradation. The Johnson sisters’ data show that the Maasai have a keen awareness of social and environmental challenges they face, as well as remarkable adaptation and resilience, qualities that are essential for both cultural survival and a healthy ecosystem. The research utilized innovative methods. For example, in the challenge relay race, participants form teams, with each member running one at a time to a chalkboard to write one challenge until the time runs out at 4 minutes. After the race, each team selects a leader to explain the item and context, providing background and examples to further illustrate and ground the challenge. The race concludes with a discussion of the challenges and an opportunity to reflect on strategies to mitigate them. The Johnson sisters assert the importance of using innovative mixed methods research to avoid blind application of single standardized measures in the rush to “go global” with psychology.


CONGRATULATIONS ON MASTER’S THESES DEFENDED!

Amira Omar El Zawahry: The Effect of Photovoice on Explicit & Implicit Prejudice towards Persons with Disability
Advisor: Dr. Carie Forden; Committee Members: Dr. Heba Kotb & Dr. Jillian Campana

Kamauria Acree: The Impact of an Introduction to Community Psychology Course on Refugee Sense of Empowerment
Advisor: Dr. Carie Forden; Committee Members: Dr. Kate Ellis & Dr. Joseph Jones

Khadiga Abdel Latif Alsharif: Assessing Parenting: Adaptation of the HOME Inventory for Use in Egypt
Advisor: Dr. Carie Forden; Committee Members: Dr. Heba Kotb & Dr. Javier Aguilar

Reem Mohamed Ahmed Deif: The Association between Personality, Coping and Depressive Symptoms in Adult Patients with Chronic Pain
Advisor: Dr. Kate Ellis; Committee Members: Dr. Sherine Ramzy & Dr. Suher Zada
Over the past year, 15 psychology professors and students delivered 33 presentations at professional conferences held in Australia, Canada, Egypt, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, South Africa, and United States.

In June 2017, several students and professors made a splash at the Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action (APA Division 27). The conference was held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. As part of a symposium focused on the intersections of positive psychology and community psychology, Dr. Carie Forden presented on “A Strengths-Based Approach to Capacity-Building among Child Protection Social Workers in Egypt.” The presentation was based on the project she has directed in collaboration with UNICEF and Ministry of Social Solidarity.

Dr. Carie Forden also organized a symposium focused on the impact of culture on community psychology work in Egypt. She gave a presentation that was co-authored by Dr. Yasmine Saleh on “The Challenges of Capacity-Building for Child Protection Staff in Egypt.” Community psychology graduate student Noha Hassanin reviewed results from a study tackling the question “Can Community Psychology Principles Enhance Consulting Practice in Egypt?” Her colleague Khadiga Al Sharif presented her Master's thesis results titled “Assessing Parenting: Adaptation of the HOME Inventory for Use in Egypt.”

The symposium discussant was Hana Shahin, community psychology MA alumni and adjunct professor. In another session Shahin presented an oral talk titled “From Students to Students: Using Photovoice to Assess Students' Strengths and Needs at the American University in Cairo.”

Dr. Mona Amer also attended the Biennial and delivered a talk about “Examining the Growth of Community Psychology within the Context of Egyptian Civil Society.” Together with Heather Gridley from Australia, she also co-chaired a roundtable discussion on “An International Homeplace for Community Psychology: Globalization, Colonization, Federation, Coalition or Transformation?”

Also at the Biennial Conference, Dr. Amer mentored two poster presentations by two recent graduates of AUC who had been undergraduate research team members. Karen Fanous presented “Voluntary Civic Engagement in Egypt: A Pathway to Employability?” and Salma Fathy presented “Culturally-Influenced Motivations and Barriers to Voluntary Civic Engagement in Egypt.”

In July Dr. Fouad Bou Zeineddine participated in two events in Granada, Spain, at the General Meeting of the European Association for Social Psychology. He delivered an invited talk titled “Risks and Solutions for Social Psychologists from and in the Developing World.” He also chaired a session related to collective empowerment, in which he gave an oral paper on “Social Mutualism: An Unexamined Relational Orientation.”

Later in the summer, in August, Dr. Mona Amer presented at the 125th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C. As part of an annual symposium on minority ethics she spoke on “Developing a Methodological Framework for American Middle Eastern/ North African Ethics.” She also presented a symposium paper titled “Cross-Cultural Considerations and Limitations in Measuring Islamic Religiousness.”

The 1st Pan African Psychology Congress was held in Durban, South Africa in September 2017. Dr. Kate Ellis represented AUC at this landmark meeting by presenting “PTSD Coach Arabi -- The Journey So Far.”

Towards the end of the Fall semester, in November, Dr. Ithar Hassaballa faced bad luck in her plans to attend the First World Non-Communicable Disease Congress to give a symposium paper titled “Examining Implementation and Effects of a Comprehensive Community Intervention Addressing Type 2 Diabetes Among High-Risk Patients in North Carolina, U.S.A.” She was turned back at the Cairo airport for visa issues, then technical problems prevented a Skype presentation, and thus she sent her presentation in written text.

The First Regional Symposium in Neuroethics, organized by Dean El Fawal of the School of Sciences and Engineering, was held in November for the first time at the AUC New Cairo campus. Dr. Mona Amer presented on “Community and Contextual Considerations.”
Winter was the season of well-known conferences in Cairo organized by psychiatry professors at local universities. In December, counseling psychology graduate student Mona El Roby Saleh made an appearance at the 8th Kasr Al Ainy Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Conference to talk about “Bullying in Schools.”

In January, 2018 Dr. Jaime Mendoza presented “The Impact of Emotional Triangles a Family Systems Perspective” at the 4th Egyptian Association for Group Therapy International Conference, which also overlapped as the 3rd International Association for Group Psychotherapy and Group Processes Regional Conference in Africa.

The group therapy conference also featured poster presentations by counseling psychology graduate students Reem Deif, who presented on “The Dynamic Between Therapist-Related Factors and Difficult Group Behaviors,” and Mona El Roby Saleh, who presented on “Counseling Group to Breast Cancer Survivors in Egypt.”

A month later Dr. Jaime Mendoza delivered a workshop on “Systems Psychology and the Impact on Client Treatment.” This 3-hour workshop was held at the 11th Annual Kasr Al Ainy International Psychiatry Congress. Reem Deif was also at this conference, where she presented on “An Outpatient Counseling Group for Adults with Chronic Pain.”

February was a busy time for psychology professors. Dr. Hani Henry attended the 46th Annual Meeting of the Society for Cross-Cultural Research, Las Vegas, Nevada. He delivered a symposium paper with the title “Coming out as Gay in Egypt. A Cultural Perspective.”

Dr. Kate Ellis traveled to Afhad University in Khartoum, Sudan, for the 4th Annual Conference Integrating Mental Health into Primary Health Care: Prospects and Challenges. Her talk was titled “Leadership in Mental Health,” related to the World Health Organization-funded regional mental health leadership course that she is directing.

Around the same time in February, Dr. Julie Johnson-Pynn joined Dr. Christina DeCoursey from the Department of Rhetoric and Composition in co-presenting at the International Healthcare Communication Symposium, in Canberra, Australia. Their talk was on “Communication Challenges and Coping Strategies among Doctors and Syrian Refugee Patients.”

Dr. Mona Amer delivered the keynote speech at the 10th Annual Muslim Mental Health Conference, which was held in Washington, D.C. on March 15, 2018. The title was “Muslim American Health: State of the Field, State of the Art.”

The Middle East Medical Assembly’s 49th annual conference focused this year on mental health across the lifespan. This was an opportunity for Dr. Kate Ellis to travel to Beirut, Lebanon, to network with colleagues in the region and present on “Evaluation of the Leadership in Mental Health Course, Eastern Mediterranean Region.”

As the academic year came to a close, psychology professors continued to actively share their professional voice at conferences. In May, Dr. Kate Ellis visited Stockholm, Sweden, to talk about “Mental Health Challenges, Service Developments and Leadership Challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean Region” as part of the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership's Leadership Exchange event.

Faculty members and students continued to actively contribute to conferences in Summer 2018. Dr. Kate Ellis traveled to Dead Sea, Jordan in July to present on a panel at the Regional Symposium on Psychosocial Support in Academia. Her presentation was titled titled “Psychosocial Needs of Refugees/IDPs and Training Needs of Psychosocial Support Providers - a Topic for Academia”

Reem Deif presented at the congress of the International Association for Group Psychotherapies and Processes in Malmo, Sweden. Her talk was titled “The Four-Step Integrative Model of Group Psychotherapy.” She also presented a poster titled “From Action to Connection: Reflections from the Egyptian Association for Group Therapies and Processes EAGT 2018 Conference” and joined a symposium focused on “Juniors, Seniors and Groups in a Vibrant World: From IAGP to the Real World and Vice Versa.”

Finally, Dr. Mona Amer attended the August Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in San Francisco, California to represent the Arab/MENA American community in the annual symposium called Ethnic Minority Psychological Associations Explore Hot Topics in Ethics.

Campus Conference Contributions

Psychology undergraduate students had a visible presence at the Tenth AUC Conference for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, Entrepreneurship and Creative Achievement (EURECA). The conference was held at the AUC New Cairo campus on April 22, 2018.

- Dana Lasheen. “A Comparative Study: Opposites vs. Personality Attractions”.
- Ola Elwakeel. “Sociocultural-Induced Depression: The Role of Societal Structures in Egyptian Women's Experiences”
- Salma Elnagar. “Source Memory and Seeing Things That are Not Real”
- Salma Seyam, Mariam Arafa & Hana Khader. “A Comparative Study: Female Employment and Marriage Satisfaction in Egypt”

During the same time period the AUC 23rd Annual Research Conference was attended by counseling psychology graduate student Reem Deif, who presented on “Females' Attitudes towards Domestic Violence; The Role of Women's Agency and Empowerment.”
One of the beliefs of the Department of Psychology is that students should apply hands-on experience before being granted their degree. This is why undergraduate students are required to complete a community-based learning course before graduation and graduate students are involved in intensive experiential training and internships. Toward this goal, the Department is collaborating with several community organizations, hospitals, clinics, and schools for course projects, internships, and other activities. Such reciprocal exchanges are unique opportunities for students to apply and practice their academic skills in real-life settings. Further, community partners can benefit from the students’ knowledge and skills to start, develop, or improve specific projects.

A milestone happened this year when multiple professors in the department negotiated a long-term agreement with Wataneya Society for the Development of Orphanages. This community organization has the vision of creating a future of equal opportunities for children and youth without parental care, such as orphans and institutionalized children. Their mission is to accomplish this goal through the unification of the standards pertaining to institutional homes, and by facilitating the application of all aspects of care and services within these established unified standards.

The agreement made between the psychology department and Wataneya Society paves the way to a new model for sustainable university-community partnership at AUC because it pairs the organization with multiple AUC courses and professors in a comprehensive and long-term commitment aiming for higher impact. The agreement includes community-based learning projects across diverse course topics; internship opportunities for both counseling and community psychology graduate students; faculty consultation for research, policy work, and organizational capacity building; and collaborating on a conference.

The new agreement builds on previously-shared successful activities. In the past undergraduate psychology students have been trained by Wataneya to offer services at orphanages, and graduate students have designed community and counseling interventions to support orphan youth’s adjustment and alleviate stress among staff. Additionally, faculty members have consulted on multiple programs and systems and offered staff trainings. Two psychology professors - Hala Abd Alhak and Carie Forden - have previously received the AUC annual Faculty-NGO Partnership Award for course collaborations with Wataneya, and Heba Kotb has conducted trainings and curriculum development for Wataneya since 2012.

On April 23, 2018 professor Carie Forden received an honor on behalf of the AUC psychology department at Wataneya Society’s annual graduation ceremony of Amaan Learning and Development. The plaque was in acknowledgment of how the AUC-Wataneya partnership has had a positive impact on beneficiaries and enhanced the organization with tools and research to better serve children without parental care.
Case Studies for Community Organizations

Carie Forden's PSYC 5010 Community Psychology and Systems Theory class conducted helpful case studies for organizations, incorporating the theories and concepts learned in the course. Students partnered with nonprofit organizations, where they conducted interviews, focus groups, and surveys, and met with the staff. Students also examined organizational documents to understand how each organization specifically applied community psychology principles, such as empowerment, community participation, collaboration, and strength-based approaches, to their work with communities. The results of their case studies were shared with the class and with the organizations.

Youth Having Fun for Personal Growth

Hala Abd Alhak's PSYC 3002 Personal Growth and Adjustment class collaborated with Wataneya Society to perform extracurricular activities for orphan children and young adults such as art and other cultural activities; sports and games; and science experiments. The aims were for the youth to enjoy activities they usually have no opportunity for due to school requirements as well as limited funds of NGOs, and also to learn important skills related to teamwork, cooperation and respecting others. The youth also felt appreciated and respected by AUC students who provided them with this quality time. AUC students learned about marginalized communities first hand, and through reflection, perceived the importance of civic engagement and how it can impact their personal growth.

Creating Ripples of AUC Community Change

Farah El-Shiaty's PSYC 3003 Community Psychology class project was to design, implement, and evaluate an intervention to address an issue facing the AUC community. Students focused on changing attitudes to promote a healthier community at AUC. One group implemented an activity to increase sense of community among AUChians. Another team designed an intervention to reduce negative stereotyping among AUChians. A third group designed an intervention to decrease littering. The fourth group also focused on sustainable environment behaviors by raising awareness to increase positive attitudes towards recycling among AUChians.

Diverse Consultation to Local NGOs

Naela Refaat's 5253 Consultation to Nonprofit Organizations class continued an annual tradition of student teams offering 15 hours of consultation to local organizations. The organizations were Kayan Association for children with disabilities, Syria al Gad Relief Foundation for refugees, Wadi Environmental Science Center (WESC), Wa Lessa art group, Wataneya Society, and World Bank gender unit. The consultation used appreciative inquiry and participatory approaches, with the students collaborating with the entities to resolve a concern or improve a system. Some of the consultation projects included training impact evaluation, needs assessment for a knowledge management system, and support with strategic planning and grant proposal writing and donor relations and retention.

Collaborating to Protect the Environment in Sinai

Dr. Kate Ellis’ PSYC 2099 Selected Topics in Psychology class traveled to Dahab, Sinai, to apply knowledge and skills gained in the course focused on Psychology of Sustainable Behavior. During the week-long stay students developed psychoeducational awareness sessions for local school children, hotel staff, and divers aimed at enhancing environmentally sustainable behaviors. They also conducted pre- and post-test behavioral surveys to assess the effectiveness of the interventions. These activities enhanced students’ communication, leadership, teamwork, and civic service skills. At the end of their time in Dahab the students engaged the larger community in a beach clean-up. News of the students’ efforts spread and inspired similar beach clean-ups in other parts of Sinai.
Enhancing Opportunities for Orphanage Caregivers

Ithar Hassaballa’s PSYC 5233 Community Assessment and Program Evaluation class collaborated with Wataneya Society to conduct an impact and process evaluation of Wataneya Society’s “Hamzet Wasl” Program. This program trains young persons to be caregivers within orphanages and build their capacity to address everyday needs of orphans. Students in the class, who were from diverse graduate majors including community psychology and sustainable development, addressed multiple evaluation questions. They conducted document review and met with stakeholders to collect information through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Recommendations were provided for many processes including recruitment, hiring, and training.

Parenting for Success in Lower-Resourced Areas

Mona Amer’s PSYC 4063 Advanced Community Psychology class partnered with Alashanek Ya Balady Association for Sustainable Development to develop a culturally-aligned strengths-based training curriculum for Egyptian parents living in lower-resourced areas. The approximately 125-page curriculum titled “القوقة الصحية، العائلة القوية” (Healthy Parenting, Strong Families) instructs NGO staff step-by-step on how to deliver and evaluate the 6-week course to enhance parents’ knowledge and skills in identifying their family strengths and values, understanding child development, being a positive role model, communicating and disciplining effectively, strengthening family bonds, and managing stress. The curriculum was developed based on interviews with experts; focus groups with mothers, fathers, and children; and analysis of existing programs; and it was modified after field testing.

Assessing the Experience of School Psychosocial Workers

Ithar Hassaballa’s PSYC 3003 Community Psychology class collaborated with the AUC Gerhart Center for Philanthropy, Civic Engagement and Responsible Business to explore the nature of psychosocial work in Al-Shuruq School District, assess challenges faced by the psychosocial workers, and provide recommendations within the framework of community psychology. After receiving training in focus group methodology, students conducted focus groups in Al-Shuruq School District to identify the roles of psychosocial workers and the challenges they face, such as lack of a capacity building program for skills development in management, leadership, and collaborative planning. The completed reports were shared with the Gerhart Center to implement some of the recommendations.

Teacher Skills and Teaching Kids Through Academics and Play

Heba Kotb’s PSYC 3011 Educational Psychology class performed several projects. Wataneya Society first provided practical training to the students and helped coordinate between AUC and other institutions. In the collaborations with Ganat Elkholoud NGO, Gabal El Mokkattam School and El Sonbola El Khadra Orphanage, AUC students tutored the children in English, sciences, and/or Arabic studies. One of the techniques used was learning through play. At Heritage Nursery and Modern English School, the students made observations of teachers’ grouping techniques and class management. They also participated in a fun family day at the Heritage Nursery.

Competition for Small-Budget Prevention with Large Impact

Carie Forden’s PSYC 5243 Prevention and Intervention in Communities class partnered with four nonprofit organizations for the course’s annual Prevention Competition. Teams of two to three students worked with Alashanek Ya Balady, Funtasia, HarassMap, and Wataneya Society to develop proposals for prevention programs. These proposals were presented in a public event in front of a panel of expert judges. The winning NGO received $500 from the AUC Academic Community Engagement program to implement the prevention program. The winning proposal was a project designed for Funtasia to use theater techniques to help children in Luxor learn how to deal with bullying.
Do you remember the beginning of the counseling psychology training clinic? Many of you who have graduated from the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology program are probably thinking yes. Some of you may be saying "I enjoyed the experience and I was exposed to a variety of clients, but there are ways it could have been improved..." Ever since the clinic was established in Spring 2011, the psychology program had a vision of developing a psychology training clinic that would provide the highest standards of training and ample experience for most if not all of the interns. The 2017-18 academic year was when that vision became a reality.

During the Fall graduate students, staff, and faculty were solicited to come up with a name of the clinic. We had over 30 entries. Over 70% of graduate students and 90% of our faculty participated in the process. We wanted a name that would accurately represent our purpose and activities, and of course limit any confusion between us and university's Student Counseling Center. After a thoughtful discussion, we selected "Psychological Counseling Services and Training Center." Yes, it is a mouthful of a name, but it does represent who we are and what we do.

On a month by month comparison, we were consistent with the 2016-2017 academic year in terms of numbers of new clients seen. There were slight differences in September, because this year we began to see clients earlier during the week of September 18th. Our numbers grew each month throughout the year. We had to stop accepting clients in early December and early April, one month before the end of the year because we had reached our case load capacity. Each semester we ended with a waiting list.

This year we added workshops and group counseling. We had a total of seven workshops that yielded a total audience of 222 across the workshops, including 108 unduplicated participants. From the workshops, several participants transitioned into weekly groups (Depression, Anxiety, Couples, and Parenting). Each group had a steady commitment from the clients. All of the 11 interns played active roles within these psychoeducational and process groups.

In the Spring we began to see a distinct shift in our clientele, who are all members of the AUC community. Our clientele in Spring 2017 was primarily undergraduate students at 79%, staff and faculty at 10% and alumni at 11%. By the Spring 2018 our clientele became 48% undergraduate students, 17% graduate students, 16% faculty and staff, 25% alumni, and 5% AUC community relatives. The shift in each category can be accounted for by our marketing strategy of greater outreach and community workshops targeting a broader audience.

In Spring 2018 Mendoza began a professional development series to help train mental health professionals (psychiatrists, counseling psychologists, etc.). The first of a 3-part series of workshops on Family Therapy (Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced) was presented along with Associate Professor Mona Amer. The response from the community has been very positive. We plan on providing the Intermediate and Advanced levels along with a Clinical Supervision workshop this coming year.

In Summer 2018 we worked with The Linehan Institute and The Source for Human Resource Development to bring an advanced training in Dialectical Behavior Therapy, first of its kind in the region. Professors Kate Ellis and Jaime Mendoza have been involved in the process.

Our reputation throughout the university and the community has certainly grown and we have been embraced at multiple levels. We are looking forward to doing more in the 2018-2019 academic year.

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### Number of New Clients for Individual Counseling and Groups/Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2016-17 Individual</th>
<th>2017-18 Individual</th>
<th>2017-18 Groups and workshops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50 (Depression Workshop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15 (Depression weekly group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>68 (Stress and anxiety workshops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10 (Stress and anxiety weekly group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20 (10 couples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40 (Depression workshop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35 (Stress &amp; Anxiety workshop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 (Parenting workshop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Clients</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>108 (unduplicated attendees of workshops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48 (unduplicated clients in group counseling)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction to Family Therapy Workshop

A full-day introductory training focused on family therapy theory and case conceptualization was held at the New Cairo campus. The 19 psychotherapists selected to attend from the 34 applicants were psychiatrists and psychologists including AUC counseling psychology alumni. The presenters were Jaime Mendoza and Mona Amer.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Intensive Training

A total of 75 psychotherapists attended the five-day in-person DBT training held at the AUC Tahrir campus in July 2018. Participants are divided into nine geographically-based teams that will receive mentorship over the next few months, followed by a second 5-day training in March 2019 to reflect on case practice.

Development of the New Clinic Space

Have you visited the Center in its new space at the corner of Waleed building next to Omar Mohsen gate? The Center is beautiful. Below are a few pictures when construction had just begun, around the third month of construction, and the finished community training room. We have more pictures on our website. I encourage you to take a peek when you have time.

Look at all of the teardown that needed to be done. Walls had holes on the bottom to run electricity and cable. Other walls were torn down. Each room had trash that had to be collected.

A few weeks later. There is a new floor. The walls have been painted and repaired. Sunlight peers through every room. Now with the decorations the rooms and the colors look like artistic pieces.

This last picture is an image of the community room. We use it for training staff, faculty, alumni, and groups. We use it to host our groups. On this day we are using to celebrate someone's special day.
I am Rasha Fayed, Your senator.

Questions that I get a lot are, what is the senate and what do you do? Let me answer them for you.

The student senate is a part of the student government. There are three sectors, and are commonly known around campus as the 1) Student Union 2) Court and 3) Senate. The Student Union represents the entire student body, and the senators in the student senate represent the students of each department and major on campus. Thus, when I say I am Rasha Fayed, your senator. You now have an idea of what that means.

Now, what do I do as a senator? How can I help the students of the psychology department?

As your senator, I am in close contact with our department. I delegate communication between the department and the students, and represent you guys to the department. If any of you need help with anything, whether regarding something that has to do with the department or in university in general, you can always come to me. As a senator, I can access the University administration, and thus always offering my services. Spring 19 will mark my last semester in my second term in the Student Senate. Thus, I urge you to contact me at any given time.

My Email: rashafayed1@aucegypt.edu
My Phone Number: 0114647699

The Psychology Association is geared towards various student engaging projects that will be announced throughout the semester through our social media accounts and on campus. Keep an Eye Out!

Psychology Association contacts: 
E-mail: psych.a@aucegypt.edu
https://www.facebook.com/psych.auc/
On October 18, 2017, Dr. Helena Girgis, the director of the Children’s Learning Lab in the Department of Psychology at Hartwick College, gave a talk on Children’s Developing Concepts of Food. She spoke about her research on children’s perception of food and shared findings about how children identify deceptive foods and their ability to apply the appropriate casual explanations to the origins of different food types. She discussed with the attendees the impact of culture and socioeconomic status on children’s developing concepts of food.

On December 4, 2017, Ms. Nicole Hansen-Rayes, Ph.D. candidate in community psychology at National Louis University, Chicago, gave a presentation about College and Career Academies Serving Chicago’s At-Risk Youth. Ms. Nicole spoke to undergraduates and community psychology graduate students about issues that affect some Chicago youth include poverty, violence, and “school-to-prison” pipelines. She shared with the attendees her findings on how college and career academies are designed to be a buffer against these negative factors and offer support and mentorship for students seeking vocational and/or college preparations.

On April 16, 2018, Dr. Patricia Perez, associate professor in the International Psychology program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, gave two lectures at AUC. The first lecture was open to the AUC community and was on The Field of International Psychology. She spoke about the rationale and core competencies of the field and discussed different applications in research, practice and careers. In the evening of the same day, Dr. Perez led an interactive discussion with the graduate students in the Counseling Psychology Master’s program on the application of culture in counseling practice. She discussed the challenges of applying Western-based research to the Egyptian culture and shared applications from her research and experience on being a culturally sensitive counselor.

The annual Leadership in Mental Health course was successfully delivered from August 1-10, 2017 and July 15-25, 2018. The course is sponsored by the World Health Organization and directed by assistant professor Kate Ellis. The aim is to provide mental health professionals with an introduction to leadership in mental health, including topics such as developing policy and legislation, program design and evaluation, advocacy, developing alliances, psychosocial responses to emergencies and disasters, developing community based services, promotion and prevention, and stigma. The course also provides an opportunity for sharing experiences and creating supportive networks which continue beyond the course, creating a regional network of mental health leaders that was previously missing. In 2017, 15 participants attended from 7 countries in the region. In 2018, 21 participants attended from 7 countries in the region. Over 11 distinguished speakers from around the world delivered the training modules.
In January 2018 Dr. Mona Amer was elected the first President of the American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Psychological Association. This 501(c)3 nonprofit is the 5th ethnic minority psychological association in the U.S.

Dr. Mona Amer was awarded the 2018 AUC Award for Excellence in Academic Service. This award is given annually to a professor who has demonstrated sustained service to the university.

Congratulations to our counseling psychology graduate student Deana Oriby for receiving The First Place Arabic Writing Award in the Graduate Student Association Writing Competition on her article: “Dancing: The Universe’s Language” in December, 2017

Congratulations to our students who received Humanities and Social Sciences Honors Assembly awards during Spring 2018:

**Graduate students:**
- Doaa Morsy Abdel Kader
- Noha Emam Hassanin

**Undergraduate students:**
- Khaled Mostafa Salah El Din
- Rasha Alaa Fayed
- Salma Nokrashy Mowafi
- Sandy Ashraf Foudi Willaim

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**New Undergraduate Courses Fall 2018**
- Biology Professor Dr. Ahmed Abdellatif and Psychology professor Dr. Anne-Pierre Goursaud have developed and will be co-teaching a new PSYC 4098 “Selected Topics in Neuroscience” course, with a focus on “Relationships and Attachment.”
- For the first time, PSYC 4099 Selected Topics will focus on “Family Psychology” and will be taught by Dr. Jaime Mendoza.
- The Biology and Psychology departments are collaborating to offer a new course under BIOL 1930 Selected Topics for the Core Curriculum. Professors Dr. Ahmed Abdellatif and Dr. Anne-Pierre Goursaud will be co-teaching about “The Science of Pleasure and Danger”.

**Changes to the Counseling Psychology Graduate Program**
- Starting with the Fall 2018 incoming cohort, Counseling Psychology MA students will take two new required courses, increasing the degree credits from 42 to 48 credits. The two courses are PSYC 5122 Physiological Psychology and PSYC 5271 Career Development and Counseling. This change will allow the program graduates to be more competitive in the international market and prepared to work in diverse settings.
- Starting with the Fall 2018 incoming cohort, Counseling Psychology MA part-time students will be required to complete the degree within 6 years.

**Upcoming Events**
- Department of International and Comparative Education Distinguished Visiting Researcher Dr. Eman Gaad will be presenting on Sep. 10 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. about Inclusive Education in the Middle East: the Big Picture and Sep. 12 from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m about Creating a Sustainable Society Using Community-based Projects: Lessons from the Emirates. Dr. Gaad is Professor of Inclusive and Special Education and Dean of the Faculty of Education, British University in Dubai.

**Free Services at the Psychological Counseling Services and Training Center**
- There are also weekly psycho-education groups that will follow each workshop:
  - Overcoming the Blues: Oct. 30, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
  - Turn Your Stress and Anxiety into Success: Oct. 16, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
  - Getting to Know Yourself Better: Oct. 2, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
  - Turn Your Stress and Anxiety into Success: Oct. 13, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
  - Overcoming the Blues: Nov. 6 to Dec. 4, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

**Call for Research Assistants**
- Dr. Julie Johnson-Pynn is directing a grant that will investigate attitudes and behaviors of AUC community towards achieving a “culture of environmental sustainability” on campus. Ten psychology majors will be hired as research assistants. Contact Dr. Johnson-Pynn at julie.pynn@aucegypt.edu for details.

**The Department of Psychology**

**Our mission** is to lead, promote and advance the discipline of psychology as a basic and applied science in Egypt, the wider Arab World, and beyond, and to further the understanding of human behavior, thinking, and emotion through teaching, research, and community engagement. Our undergraduate students gain a solid grounding in the theory, methodology, and core content areas of contemporary psychology and our graduate students gain essential knowledge and skills for competent professional practice.

**Our vision** is a thriving psychology with strong foundations in psychological science and evidence-based practice, enhanced by interdisciplinary and community linkages.

**Contact**
- Department: psych@aucegypt.edu
- Hub for Action and Research in Psychology (HARP): Mervat Botros, Senior Coordinator psychevents@aucegypt.edu, or Dr. Anne-Pierre, HARP Faculty Coordinator ap.goursaud@aucegypt.edu
- The Psychological Counseling Services and Training Center: Iman Shehata, Officer imansh@aucegypt.edu

**Visit**  
Website: http://schools.aucegypt.edu/huss/Psychology

**Upcoming Events**

**Psychology Major and Minor Declaration**
- Psychology major declaration announcements will take place after the Fall drop & add period. Interested students will need to apply and sign up for the personal statement administration. For more information, check out the department's website at http://schools.aucegypt.edu/huss/Psychology.
- The next cycle for psychology minor declaration will take place after the Fall semester ends, with an anticipated application deadline of January 1st.
- Announcements will be sent through the Student Portal.

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- Turn Your Stress and Anxiety into Success: Oct. 23 to Nov. 13, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
- Reconcilable Differences (Strengthening Your Marriage): Sep. 25 to Oct 16, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
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