



Welcome to Psychology & Child Development

Open House 2026

PSYCD Department Website:
psycd.calpoly.edu



CAL POLY

Today's Plan

PSY/CD Department Overview

Who are the people in PSYCD?

What is Learn by Doing in PSYCD?

What types of careers do our graduates pursue?

Student Club Opportunities

Q&A

The Cal Poly Psychology and Child Development Department

Psychology

- Master of Science (M.S.) in Psychology
- Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Psychology

Child Development

- Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Child Development
- Child Development Minor

*We also offer an interdisciplinary Gerontology Minor

PSY&CD Community



Multicultural Approach

- Curriculum emphasizes cultural influences – diversity is a strength
- Students build skills that contribute to interpersonal and professional success.

Welcoming

- We welcome, include, and support students and faculty of all ages, races, cultural backgrounds, religions, physical abilities, socioeconomic status, genders, and sexual orientations

Educational Experiences

- Some courses have diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ) as a primary focus, and DEIJ is integrated throughout our curriculum
- Faculty research in DEIJ-related topics; students can join these research labs.



2025-26 Department Leadership



Carrie Langner
Department Chair

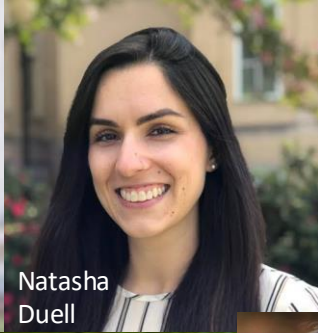


Jessica Kaczorowski
Associate Chair

Full-time Faculty



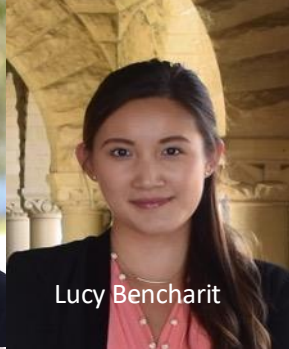
Jennifer
Beatty-Wright



Natasha
Duell



Jen Jipson



Lucy Bencharit



Julie Vaisarova



Linda Lee



Aaron Estrada



Corinna Klein



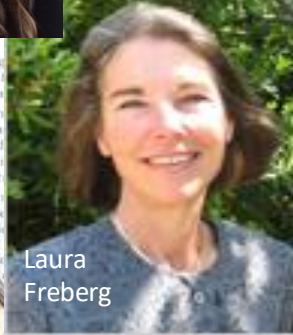
Susana
López



James Antony



Kelly
Bennion



Laura
Freberg



Tessa Sun



Daniel Ramirez Rodrig



Laura Cacciamani



Jay Bettergarcia



Ivan
Hernandez



Julie Bettergarcia



Jasna
Jovanovic

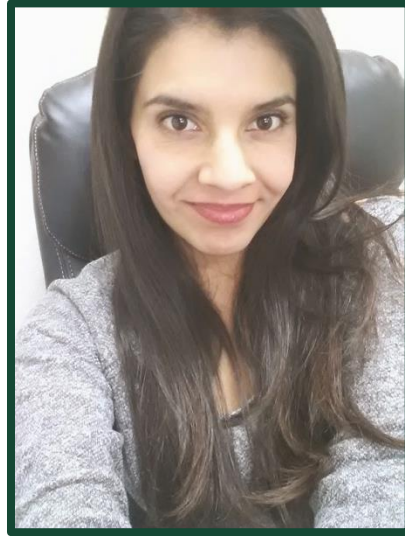


Taylor
Smith

Faces You'll See in the Department Office



Christi Brizzolara



Beatriz Peralta



Emilia Datuin

Where are (most) PSY & CD faculty offices located?



Building 47
Department Office is 47-24

PSYCD Peer Guides

- Advising Model
 - First year students: Mustang Success Center
 - 2nd year and up:
 - General Education: college advisors
 - Major: PSYCD advising
 1. See Peer Guide
 2. Referred to next steps (e.g., appointment with department chair, web form, college advisors, etc)
- Peer Guide Internship
 - Just one of the many internship possibilities...



Victor Cordero

3rd Year Transfer Student Psychology Major

CONTACT: VICORDER@CALPOLY.EDU

"Outside of school, I enjoy making music, scriptwriting, traveling the world, and, as of recently, dancing! Having attended multiple schools across many different places, I've got a strong passion for supporting students through their college journey—academic or extracurricular. I'm always happy to get to know and help others."



Hannah Ignacio

4th Year Psychology Major and Child Development Minor

CONTACT: HIGNACIO@CALPOLY.EDU

"Hi! I'm Hannah, a 4th year Psychology major with a minor in Child Development. Outside of school, I enjoy spending time outdoors, hiking, working out, and creating art. I love staying active and being around animals. I'm planning to pursue a Master's in Counseling and College Student Personnel, and I'm passionate about supporting students and helping them navigate their college experience."



Alyssa Fortes

5th Year Premed Psychology Major and Music Minor

CONTACT: ADFORTES@CALPOLY.EDU

"I am a 5th year premed psychology major and music minor. I am a member of the Cal Poly Choirs and Opera program, and I love reading and watching vintage movies. I'm excited to help provide support to students, and guide them to the resources they need."



Mark Ybarra

4th Year Psychology Major and Sports/Exercise Science Minor

CONTACT: MTYBARRA@CALPOLY.EDU

"I enjoy spending time outside, trying to find new music, and spending time with friends/family. I'm passionate about giving back to my community and the PSY/CD department has given a lot to me, so I would like to give back to the department and the students within it."

More advising & professional development

Faculty Advising

- We consider “office hours” to be “**student hours**”
- Academic mentoring

Career Center:

- Career mentoring

Orientation Class

- 2 unit required class
- Fridays 10—12, online
- Introduction to the major
- Peer mentoring
- Career investigations/panels
- University and community resources

Tuesday Newsday

- Weekly digital newsletter with announcements about department news and events, job opportunities, and more!



Courses that every major takes

Introductory

- Orientation to the major
- PSY 201 (General/Intro Psych)

Senior Year

- Internship
- Senior project

Support Courses

- Advanced science/genetics
- Cultural diversity
- Statistics

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CP Motto: “Learn by Doing”

- **Integrated throughout the curriculum**
 - Lab/Activity courses
 - Projects/research in all courses
- **Key elements of major**
 - Internships
 - Senior projects
 - Preschool Learning Lab (for CD majors)
- **Funding from parents, alumni, and grants support Learn by Doing opportunities**



Learn By Doing



Fieldwork Internships

- 12 hours a week supervised experience at a fieldwork site.
- Additional supervision by faculty to build connections to research and theory in the field.
- Sample Placements: elementary school classrooms, social services, marketing, mental health, governmental agencies, human resources

Shadowing/observing

Program administration

Research

Program evaluation

Data entry & analysis

Outreach

Event planning

Marketing

Client communication

Crisis triage

Program development

Presentation



Learn By Doing



Research Internships

- 12 hours a week working with a faculty member in their research lab.
- Students often present at conferences and become co-authors on empirical articles

Research Track

- Advanced research training for students who intend to pursue a PhD in Psychology or related fields.
- Students apply in the fall of their Junior year.
- See website for list of faculty research interests

Learn by Doing

Senior Project



- Completed in two semesters, typically senior year.
 - **First semester:** Senior Project Seminar (PSY 461 or CD 461): Assigned team based on topic area interests, conduct background research, draft literature review, and create plan for project.
 - **Second semester:** Each team matched with a faculty advisor to assist in the completion of the project in the second quarter (PSY 462 or CD 462).



Service Projects

Examples...

- Developing a manual for a community organization
- Planning a workshop
- Creating a fundraising event

Creative Projects

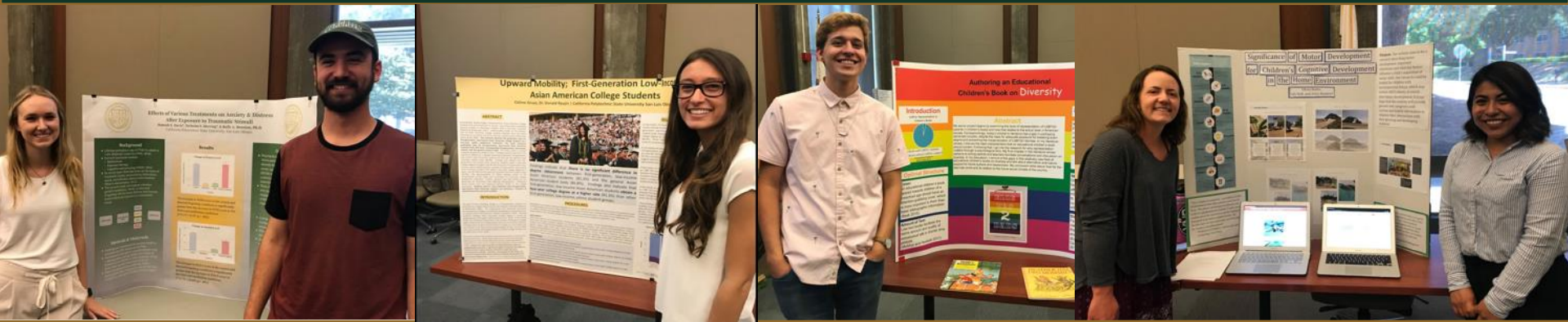
Examples...

- Creating an educational product, children's book, or multimedia project

Empirical Projects

- Collecting data to test a research hypothesis, analyzing it, and writing it up in APA style format
- **Students should apply to the research track to prepare for this type of senior project**

All involve first learning about relevant existing research in the field



Learn By Doing

Preschool Learning Lab



Teach • Research • Design

What careers do students pursue?

Counseling

Social work, Social Services

Research

Rehabilitation services

Advocacy

Program development

Community relations

People and Culture/Human
Resources

Testing/assessment

Forensics (CSI)

Medicine/psychiatry

Law

Preschool
teaching/administration

Elementary Teaching

Curriculum Development

Social Work

Speech Therapy

Occupational Therapy

Community Education

Health/nutrition

Social Policy

Child Life Specialist

Family support

Wellness Coaching

How do we prepare students for careers/graduate school?

Interesting and challenging courses



Meaningful internships



Rigorous and creative senior projects



Leadership opportunities



Robust network of alumni



Student Clubs



- Poly Child Development Club (PCDC)

<https://psycd.calpoly.edu/undergraduate/pcdc>

- Psychology Club

<https://psycd.calpoly.edu/undergraduate/psychology-club>

- Psi Chi <https://psycd.calpoly.edu/undergraduate/psi-chi>

Club events: social gatherings, career panels, grad school panels, fundraisers, course registration sessions

Q&A

Thanks for joining our info session and we wish you the best in your decision-making process!

College of Liberal Arts information on next page....

Learn more

Scan for full line-up



CLA Learn by Doing Showcase

- 1 – 3 p.m., Bldg. 52, Room E03



CLA Info Sessions with CLA Student Ambassadors

- 33-286
- Session 1: 1:30 – 2:10 PM
- Session 2: 2:20 – 3:20 PM



Drop-in Advising with CLA Advisors

- 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- Building 10, Room 227



Cal Poly Study Abroad Info Sessions

- Building 180, Room 114
 - 1:10 – 1:55 pm General Study Abroad info
 - 2:10 – 2:55 PM First Year GO Program
 - 3:10 – 3:55 pm General Study Abroad info

