

# *Millersville University New Faculty – Fall 2023*

## **College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Dr. Josh Rea**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**English and World Languages**



Dr. Josh Rea is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English & World Languages at Millersville University. He obtained his Master's in English from the University of Louisville and his PhD from the University of South Florida. He teaches courses in professional and technical writing and rhetoric. He believes in open, discussion-based classrooms where students can bridge concepts and practice. His classrooms emphasize multimodality, citizenship, and situation-based experiential learning. Josh's work focuses primarily on rhetorics of space and place, with a secondary research area in digital rhetorics. He studies places to understand how they are invented by and productive of rhetoric. His research focused primarily on Youngstown, Ohio and looked for places

where underserved communities engage in rhetorical practices to rewrite the places they inhabit. This developed the theory of rhetorical dynamism. He has published in *Rhetoric Review* and in several edited collections.

## **College of Education and Human Services**

**Dr. Colleen O'Connell**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Wellness and Sport Sciences**



Dr. Colleen O'Connell (she/her) will be joining the Wellness and Sport Sciences Department as an assistant professor this fall. While earning her Ph.D. at Springfield College, she served as an instructor in the Physical Education and Health Education department, a teaching assistant within Athletic Leadership graduate program, and the recruiting coordinator/assistant coach for the Women's Basketball team.

Colleen strives to incorporate her diverse experiences within the classroom setting to foster learning that is meaningful, practical, and evidence-based. Her experiences as a teacher, sport scholar, and coach also inform her research, as Colleen leverages qualitative methodologies to investigate the experiences and behaviors of coaches and athletic administrators (especially from the lens of gender and sexual identities) to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice within sport.

**Dr. Jessica Grady**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Psychology**



Dr. Jessica Grady graduated from Lebanon Valley College with a B.S. in Psychology. She completed her M.S. and Ph.D. in Life-Span Development at West Virginia University. Her training is in a lifespan perspective, however my research centers on the earlier part of the lifespan, infancy and toddlerhood. Prior to joining Millersville, she taught as a lecturer at San Jose State University, the University of California, Davis, and, most recently, as a tenured faculty member in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Pacific, a private mid-sized university in central California. She has taught a range of courses within psychology, including courses on lifespan and child development, research methods and statistics, general psychology, and advanced laboratories specializing in research on developmental psychology. In her pedagogy, she fosters students' application of material we are considering to their current or future personal and professional lives. She enjoys supporting students' active engagement in developmental science. She has mentored more than twenty students in research activities related to social and emotional development, including student independent research projects completed as honor's theses and summer research. When she is not working, she enjoys spending time with family and being outside, walking, hiking, or running.

## **College of Science and Technology**

**Dr. Eleanor Casas**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Earth Sciences**



Dr. Eleanor (Ellie) Casas is an Assistant Professor of Meteorology in the Department of Earth Sciences at Millersville University, where she is excited to teach a broad range of courses ranging from meteorology observations, modeling, and analysis techniques to fundamental theory and how various weather phenomena evolve. Ellie earned her doctorate at Colorado State University (CSU) in 2022 where she specialized in interactions between the tropical cyclone (TC) boundary layer and TC structure and intensity. Prior to her faculty appointment, Ellie was also a postdoctoral Research Faculty Associate at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA, where her research involved combining cutting-edge Bayesian deep machine learning and remote sensing to both quantify and visualize uncertainties of cloud microphysical distributions from geostationary infrared satellite data. Ellie's broad range of research interests has allowed her to participate in multiple field campaigns, including as an FAA-licensed drone pilot, and her research background has also helped her collaborate in multiple interdisciplinary experiences with computer scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. Ellie has also been previously recognized for her teaching excellence by being personally invited to develop and teach the inaugural summer engineering math camp titled ENcourage at CSU. Outside of work, Ellie can be found enjoying the outdoors through hiking, cycling, and traveling, and she also enjoys experimenting with new recipes.

**Dr. Kristen Baker**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Chemistry**



Dr. Kristen Baker is a new faculty member in the Department of Chemistry. She obtained her B.S. in chemistry from Gettysburg College and then her Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Delaware. She then moved to Providence, RI for a postdoctoral teaching and research fellowship at Providence College. During her postdoc, she had the privilege of working with talented undergraduates in the Mulcahy research group and taught both general chemistry and organic chemistry to non-chemistry majors. Dr. Baker enjoys teaching undergraduate students both in the classroom and in the research laboratory. Her research focuses on developing new methodologies in organic chemistry with the end goal of these new reactions being utilized by the pharmaceutical industry. She is

excited to work with the undergraduate students and faculty at Millersville University and to be moving back to her home state of PA!

**Dr. Richard Mikula**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Mathematics**



Dr. Richard Mikula earned his PhD in Mathematics from Rutgers University in 2006. He specializes in elliptic and parabolic partial differential equations. Before joining Millersville University he taught in tenure and tenure-track positions at William Paterson University (2006-07) and Lock Haven University (2007-23). Dr. Mikula's research areas include geometric analysis, actuarial science and applied statistics. Dr. Mikula is a native of Philadelphia and has lived in central Pennsylvania since 2007.

**Dr. Timothy W. Sevison**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Earth Sciences**



Dr. Timothy W. Sevison has an extensive background in emergency and disaster preparedness and response and is currently an Assistant Professor of Emergency Management. He most recently served as the Deputy Director for Operations for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA). Prior to joining PEMA in 2019, Dr. Sevison was a military planner with the Pennsylvania National Guard focusing on homeland response and domestic operations, Deputy Director with PEMA from 2007-2011, and the Senior Deputy Fire Chief and Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Sevison has been involved with emergency and disaster activities at the local, state, and federal level for over 40 years, including response to numerous states and federally declared disasters, most recently as the Incident Manager of the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center for the

COVID-19 response as well as responses to the civil unrest incidents in Pennsylvania following the killing of George Floyd. He was active with the DHS/FEMA National Urban Search and Rescue Response System since its inception, serving as a Task Force Leader for Pennsylvania, responding to major disasters including 9/11 in New York City, and Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana. His military service spanned over 40 years in the active and reserve components of the United States Air Force, the past 32 years with the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, with primary responsibilities in Fire and Emergency Services and Domestic Operations.

Dr. Sevison earned a Doctor of Science (D.Sc) in emergency management from Jacksonville State University, a Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S) in homeland security/public health preparedness from Pennsylvania State University, and a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) from Eastern University.

## **Counseling and Human Development**

### **Dr. Lesley Huff Counseling and Human Development**



Dr. Lesley Huff is a licensed psychologist joining the Department of Counseling and Human Development. She received her Psy.D. from Chestnut Hill College, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Prior to joining the Millersville University faculty, Dr. Huff worked at The Samaritan Center, in Lancaster, where she provided therapy for individuals, couples, and families, and conducted psychological and neuropsychological assessments.

Dr. Huff's scholarship has recently focused on Mindful Self-Compassion. As a Certified Teacher in Mindful Self-Compassion and Trained Teacher in Mindful Self-Compassion for Teens, Dr. Huff led the Change Through Compassion program at Samaritan. She has collaborated with Dr. Kristin Neff, the co-founder of the Mindful Self-Compassion program, and has

served as a consultation group leader for two cohorts of international students for the Self-Compassion in Psychotherapy program. She has presented on the practices of mindfulness and compassion to businesses, religious organizations, and other establishments, and looks forward to bringing these practices to the Millersville community.

Dr. Huff completed her Internship and Post-Doctoral training with Behavioral Healthcare Consultants, in Lancaster, a psychological and neuropsychological assessment and treatment center. She also completed her therapy practicum with Temple University's Tuttleman Counseling Services. Her dissertation, "Daughters in The Family Business: How the Family Relationship and the Owning Parent's Gender Predict the Experience of Working in the Family Business" involved a quantitative study exploring the impact of the family relationship on work/family conflict, job satisfaction, commitment, and role ambiguity.

Dr. Huff holds a Master of Business Administration from Temple University, in Philadelphia, and worked in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, developing internal systems and processes within global technology organizations. She has worked as an Adjunct Professor at Chestnut Hill College, Montgomery County Community College, and Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, teaching courses such as Introduction to Psychology, Human Development, Abnormal Psychology, Systemic Treatment of Addictions, and Industrial and Organizational Psychology.