Dear New and Returning Psychology Majors –

As the new semester approaches, I wanted to reach out with a few news items. We continue to have transitions with our faculty. First, we welcome a new tenure-track faculty member, Dr. Lauren Kaiser, who has a specialty in School Psychology and will be teaching a couple of our Developmental of Child and Adolescent courses this fall in addition to her graduate classes. We also have several new adjunct faculty members – Dr. Kimberly Stoltzfus, Ms. Carolyn Hsiao, Ms. Megan Reynolds-Staub, and Dr. Gary Friedman. We also welcome back Ms. Peggy Forsyth and Drs. Bonnie Snyder and Bruce Mortenson who rejoin our adjunct ranks after brief separations.

The new and returning faces result from the transitioning out of a couple of regular faculty. Joining Dr. Kelly, who retired last December, in retirement is Dr. Ruth Benns-Suter. We also lost Dr. Eugene Botanov who resigned to take a position at PSU-York. Most recently, we were saddened to learn that Dr. Rita Smith Wade-El would need to take a medical leave this semester as her health continues to decline. And while both Dr. Tuleya-Payne and I have returned from our spring 2018 sabbatical leaves, Dr. Amelia Lopez begins her year-long sabbatical leave this fall.

Despite being stretched a little thin this year (hopefully successful searches will bring some new regular faculty in fall 2019), we are excited about the upcoming year and some new things it holds. First, we are expanding and deepening our new peer mentoring program aimed at the new first-year students in our UNIV 103 seminars. The mentoring joins with other peer support programs and our in-house tutoring as part of our efforts to support student success in our major and at this University. Second, we continue to add new courses to the curriculum on either an experimental or permanent basis. For example, Dr. Cook will be offering a Popular Misconceptions in Psychology course in Winter 2019 and Dr. Sorhagen will offer a seminar in developmental research (Capstone) in Spring 2019. We also continue to work on a new certificate program in applied behavior analysis for bachelor’s level students. Also going through the approval process this fall is a new multidisciplinary studies major in Animal Behavior, a joint program with the Biology Department.

Lastly, students beginning or re-entering the Psychology major in Fall 2017 or more recently have to meet our new curriculum requirements which include completion of a Capstone experience and fulfilling new academic standards in their required courses (C- or better in PSYC 100, 211, 212, Advanced Lab, and Capstone). Options that satisfy the new three-credit Capstone requirement include Directed Projects or Coop (our internship program), an Honors thesis, PSYC 454 (History & Systems), and PSYC 455 seminars with rotating topics. An appropriate Independent Study (PSYC 498) may also qualify. These Capstone options must be taken after 75 credits are earned and one’s Advanced Lab is completed (or the Advanced Lab can be done concurrently). We feel these changes continue to strengthen our major so that students completing the program will have the best chance of success in the workplace, in life, and in graduate school if that’s where they end up.

Let me end by welcoming you (or welcoming you back). We hope you will take advantage of the opportunities before you, both academic and co-curricular like Psychology Club, and ask for the help and support you need to make the semester ahead and your years at Millersville the best they can be.

On behalf of your Psych Department faculty and staff, Dr. Foster-Clark