

Faculty Award Winners

Outstanding Teaching Award

Dr. Jack Mearns, PhD in Psychology



What is it you enjoy most about your area of specialty? I coordinate the Psychology Department's M.S. program in clinical psychology; I teach two classes in the program. Teaching the grad students and mentoring them as they write their master's theses are the most rewarding aspects of my job. I like being able to teach both theoretical concepts and how to apply theories to practice. I enjoy seeing students evolve into effective scholars and clinicians.

What drives you in your research? I enjoy the collaborative process of developing a thesis topic with a student. In the last several years, I have also collaborated with scholars in foreign countries, including sponsoring visiting scholars from China and Korea.

Why did you choose to be a professor of Psychology?

Clinical psychology is a field that has career opportunities in both research and practice. At various times during my graduate training, I went back and forth between wanting to be a professor versus a clinician. However, in my final years in grad school, I decided that being a professor would be the more satisfying career for me.

Can you tell us a little about what you are working on currently?

The research I do examines people's beliefs about their ability to control the negative moods they experience. When they are in a bad mood, do they believe they can do something to make themselves feel better, or do they feel powerless to alter their mood? While I was in graduate school, a fellow student and I created a questionnaire to measure these beliefs. In recent years, we have worked with CSUF students and other researchers to translate the scale into foreign languages. Many translations of questionnaires into foreign languages are merely literal translations of the English scale. However, for the Chinese, Japanese and Korean translations of our measure, we added new items that assess aspects of mood regulation that are unique to those cultures. Making these translations has been like making brand new scales—a fun process.

And what other projects are you interested in working on down the road?

I want to continue my work with mood regulation in foreign countries. I am especially interested in expanding my research in Japan.