

**Title: “Mental Health and Well-being”**

**Authors:** Paul J. Wellman, Department of Psychology  
Les Morey, Department of Psychology  
Heather Lench, Department of Psychology  
David Rosen, Department of Psychology  
Richard L. Street, Department of Communication  
Mark Fossett, Department of Sociology  
Richard Krieder, Department of Health and Kinesiology  
Dottie Carmichael, Public Policy Resource Institute

The Department of Psychology proposes that Texas A&M University identify “Mental Health and Well-being” as a Landmark area.

[Click here to comment on this white paper.](#)

Much is made in the media on a daily basis of the problems that beset society. We encounter stressors that render us susceptible to disease, we develop cognitive strategies that render us less productive in work and family, we attempt to diminish our problems using drugs and alcohol and we suffer from age-related memory disorders. It is our contention that Texas A&M University has a core of faculty whose research, teaching and service activities promote mental health and well-being.

The Department of Psychology:

- Clinical Program faculty issues related to positive well-being including minority health (Dr. Meagher), marital interactions (Dr. Snyder), well-being (Dr. Rosen) as well as the interaction between personality factors and mental health and disorder (Drs. Morey, Edens, Balsis, Rholes, Harmon-Jones). The Clinical Psychology program at Texas A&M University is a top 10 national program.
- Faculty in Behavioral and Cellular Neuroscience (BCN) conduct NIH-funded research on smoking cessation (Dr. Cepeda-Benito), nicotine and cocaine effects on appetite (Dr. Wellman), morphine and mood (Dr. Eitan) and the role of impulsivity in drug abuse (Dr. Setlow).
- Cognitive faculty study memory errors (Dr. Smith), memory function in human aging (Drs. Geraci and Balsis), archetypal memory (Drs. Smith and Rosen) and potential drug therapies that may diminish age-related memory impairment (Drs. Packard and Bizon, BCN).
- Social psychology faculty conduct research on the consequences of social relationships and personality factors for the experience of stress and emotion within families and in social contexts (Drs. Rholes, Schmeichel, Blanton and Lench).

College and University Departments that would also contribute to this landmark area include:

- Sociology faculty study stress, deviance, and drug abuse (Dr. Kaplan), mental health and stress related to aging (Dr. Foster), the impact of racism and discrimination on stress and minority mental health (Dr. Feagin), the sociology of

- culture and nutrition (Dr. McIntosh) and the impact of torture on mental health (Dr. Mestrovich).
- Communication faculty study public communication campaigns aimed at curbing drug abuse (Dr. Stephenson), clinician-patient communication in primary care and oncology settings (Dr. Street), emotional labor and its relation to caring and caregiving (Dr. Miller) and well-being in patients' meanings derived from their health and clinical experiences (Dr. Sharf).
  - Faculty within the Department of Health and Kinesiology provide research expertise in exercise physiology (Dr. Krieder), quality of life and mental health (Drs. Shaw and McKyer), and studies of neuromotor function and aging. Additional faculty expertise is located within the Center for the Study of Health Disparities.
  - The Public Policy Research Institute provides evaluation and research expertise to state agencies implementing policies impacting people with mental illness.

A number of indicators support our argument that mental health and well-being is a research strength in the College of Liberal Arts including: (a) a strong and consistent record of securing federal grant support, (b) our publications are highly cited and appear in high-quality journals and (c) the service of our faculty on federal grant review panels and as members of the editorial boards of leading empirical journals.

[Click here to comment on this white paper.](#)