

NCCU PSYCHOLOGY



Newsletter from the Number 1 Ranked Psychology Department Among HBCUs, Best Colleges 2024

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UNIVERSITY

College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

WELCOME BACK TO THE NEST

Edited by Desiree' Heard

NCCU Psychology Program was ranked number 1 among HBCUs in 2024. It is natural to be the best and the standard when you have a diverse, highly trained faculty dedicated to the scholarship, teaching, and research of their students. In the past 10 years, our students have won over 30 research awards at state and national conferences. During that time, over 40 students have been accepted to Ph.D. programs around the country (U-M, Illinois, Ohio State, Michigan State, Yale, UNC-Chapel Hill). NCCU Graduates are post-docs at several Ivy League schools, leaders in research, health and mental health services, K-12, and higher education, as well as community development. Our program offers relevant courses necessary for excellence in research and mental health careers. Students are in good hands, taught by professors who are clear, nurturing, and dedicated. Together, faculty and students have produced over 500 publications in psychology, psychiatry, health, and medicine.

The Psychology program offers a B.S. and an M.A. The B.S. offers a comprehensive curriculum of theories and concepts in modern psychology. It provides students with a robust introduction to psychology and a rich understanding of the field. Through internships, students are also able to have hands-on experience. Students have given back to our local community by providing assistance to a number of Durham youth and community organizations through said internships.

The Psychology Department has grown substantially over the past 20 years. We currently have over 550 undergraduate students, including 100 online. We additionally have a graduate program that offers an M.A. in General and Clinical Psychology. Students who complete the General Master's track work as researchers and health and human service coordinators throughout the state of North Carolina. Some also go on to Ph.D. programs! Students who complete the clinical track become licensed mental health professionals in the state of North Carolina and provide valuable testing and assessment to children and families in our state.

If you desire to have a deeper understanding of human behavior, health, learning, motivation, and wellness, as well as community and social change? NCCU psychology may be for you.

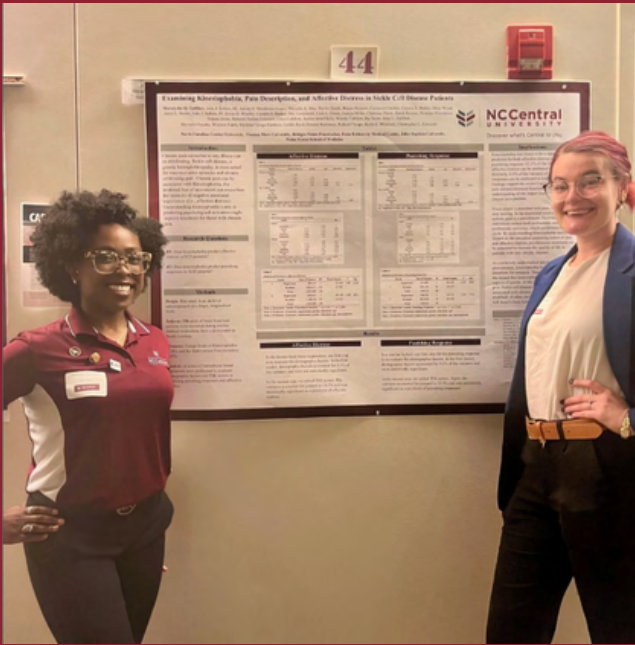
<https://www.nccu.edu/cash/psychology>

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

NCCU G.U.R.S.

Promise Providence & Meredyth Galliher

In March, Central held its very own Graduate and Undergraduate Research Symposium (GURS). At the GURS, students present research they have done throughout the year. McNair Scholar, Promise Providence, and Meredyth Galliher, a graduate student, placed first in the poster presentation. The research presentation examined kinesophobia, pain description, and affective distress in sickle cell disease patients.



Duke Psychiatry Internship

Gionna Kolb, Ifidon Ikharo, & Jasmine Johnson

NCCU has had a longstanding partnership with Duke to further enhance the scholarship and opportunities for students through the Duke-NCCU Bridge Office. This year, Gionna Kolb, Ifidon Ikharo, and Jasmine Johnson each completed internships at Duke Psychiatry as part of the Duke-NCCU collaboration. To learn more about the amazing work that our students did during their internships, click the linked article below.

[Click Here! - Internship Article Link](#)



Psychology Students Traveling Abroad

Allayne Grant, Quincie McKnight, & Sophia Loren Williams

Three psychology students, Allayne Grant, Quincie McKnight, and Sophia Loren Williams studied abroad this past summer. As part of the Topics in African Diaspora History: Garifuna People of Belize class, they traveled to Belize for two weeks to learn about the Garifuna community in Belize. During their time, they learned directly from prominent Garifuna leaders. This fall semester, each of them will give a presentation on their research, so stay tuned!



NIXON THORPE PSYCHOLOGY CLUB

The Psychology Department at NCCU sponsors the Nixon Thorpe Psychology Club (NTPC), where community service meets higher learning. The NTPC provides resources to students to prepare them for life and their careers after college.



COMMUNITY SERVICE



The NTPC is dedicated to serving its community in several ways. The community events serve both NCCU students and the surrounding areas in Durham. The NTPC also partners with other organizations such as the Purpose Learning Lab, BLOOM, Empower Minds, GRACED Inc., and the NCCU Counseling Center. As pictured to the left, when partnering with the Purpose Learning Lab during Black History Month, NTPC members supported young students with their homework and had them participate in an inspiring 'I Have a Dream' activity in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.

HIGHER LEARNING

Fostering collective higher learning is another important aspect of the NTPC. Members host several events and workshops throughout the school year. At NTPC's Career Mixer, students engaged with experts in psychology, explored various careers, and learned about preparation for entering the field of psychology.



On April 12, 2025, the NTPC held a ceremony to induct over 30 students for the 2024-25 school year. Congratulations to all of the inductees!



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Sherry C. Eaton

Dr. Eaton has served as a professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology at NCCU from 2013 until 2023. She is a licensed psychologist, and her educational background is as follows. She has an Elementary Education degree from Howard University and a Doctorate in School Psychology from UNC-Chapel Hill. She is originally from New Jersey!

Dr. Eaton first served NCCU as the Director of the University Testing Center for 10 years. Later, became a full Professor in 2018. She specializes in working with adults, families, and adolescents. Dr. Eaton mainly researches African-American and Latinx communities' mental health outcomes.

Dr. Eaton has accomplished and contributed greatly as a key contributor to the first fully online B.S. degree program in Psychology in the UNC system here at NCCU. Dr. Eaton grew the number of students admitted to the graduate program. She has published many peer-reviewed articles and presented them at national conferences. Dr. Eaton has also written grants, which have funded student research and training, aiding in providing the state of North Carolina with many competent and qualified mental health professionals!

Dr. Eaton believes in the importance of HBCUs. She also believes family is needed for a healthy life. She is the mother of three boys and two grandchildren. She continues to work with youth and families in the Triangle area. Over the past four decades, Dr. Eaton has motivated and educated students, enabling them to spread their wings and fulfill the eagle promise!



When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid. - Audre Lorde

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Walter Charles

Dr. Walter Charles has been a faculty member since 2005. He is from Grenada, a Caribbean island near Trinidad and Tobago. Dr. Charles got his bachelor's degree in general psychology from Long Island University in Brooklyn, New York. He then received both his master's and doctoral degrees in cognitive psychology from Princeton University in New Jersey. Dr. Charles came to North Carolina Central University because he saw this as a "good professional opportunity." His primary research interest is information processing research, which encompasses "how the mind processes symbols, whether it's language or objects." Dr. Charles has received several research grants during his time at NCCU. He received grants from the National Institutes of Health and several internal grants from NCCU's College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities. One such project includes processing the language of diseases and their linguistic context. This project is a collaboration with Dr. Christopher L. Edwards, also of psychology, to "assess how people conceptualize [most] of the information" within the language and the linguistic context of diseases. They hope to understand "the implicit structures [that] are within those types of materials and what...they tell us about the actual way people react to and experience...diseases."



When asked what his greatest accomplishment was, Dr. Charles did not hesitate to say it was raising his family, which has mostly occurred throughout his career at NCCU. He expressed that his greatest professional/teaching accomplishment is the opportunity "to interact and impact young minds and put them on a right direction." When asked where he would like to see the department of psychology in five years, Dr. Charles wished for the department to become "more involved in training doctoral students." He also would like "to build the strength and reputation of the department so that we can attract...master's degree students." Furthermore, he would like to see NCCU's psychology department be able to "offer the highest terminal degree...[a] PhD, and...strengthen our research credentials and...attract new faculty and new students who will add value to what we do." Lastly, when asked about what makes the psychology program invaluable, Dr. Charles thinks they "give students [an] opportunity to improve themselves intellectually by the training we give them here, and certainly economically [by] giving them tools that they can use to gain meaningful employment in the workplace."



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Tamara Baker

Dr. Tamara Baker is a proud Eagle alumnus class of 1995, who is now a full professor at UNC-Chapel Hill in the Department of Psychiatry. She primarily does research focusing on areas of pain management, and she is trained as a gerontologist and a clinical health psychologist.

Dr. Baker always knew that she wanted to work with older people. As early as 16 years of age, she volunteered at a residential home, always excited to talk with older people. While at Penn State, she solidified her interest in working with older adults through the school's Gerontology Center and by taking relevant classes. One of her goals now is to pass this passion on to current students by establishing pipeline and training programs. She states there is not enough exposure for gerontology and wants to do her part in training the future generation. So far, she has begun collaborating with colleagues at Duke to establish said pipeline programs. Additionally, with part of the Gerontology Society of America, they created the HBCU Collaborative Interest Group for undergraduates and graduates. The Gerontology Society of America is also in its second year of the HBCU Aging Conference.

Dr. Baker was a scholar at NCCU for four years. While an undergraduate, she did research in her professor's lab, presented at conferences, and participated in summer research opportunities. These experiences eventually led her to realize the importance of going to graduate school. After applying to doctoral programs, she was accepted into Penn State. She is incredibly proud of her start at Central. She believes that her foundation at NCCU led her to be where she is today, and passionately shares that going to an HBCU changed her life.

The most memorable study Dr. Baker conducted was when she and her colleague interviewed with NBC News about older black people who have reached 100 years of age. The interview discussed the lived experiences of black people, including her grandmother, who has lived through Jim Crow, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Dr. Baker loved this experience greatly because she felt that the research world and her personal life were coming and working together.

When asked about what Dr. Baker learned along the way, she simply stated, "Find something you are passionate about." She says that there are a lot of distractions and our ability to focus is not what it used to be. In closing, Dr. Baker indicated that when you find your passion in life, it does not feel like work anymore; it becomes more than that.



THE TAYLOR EDUCATION BUILDING

Edited by Desiree' Heard and
Sophia Loren Williams

Dr. James T. Taylor was a major contributor to the history of NCCU as he was an alumnus, the Dean of Men, a professor of Psychology, and the athletic director. Dr. Taylor served Central for over 30 years. Before working at NCCU, Dr. Taylor served in our military as a first lieutenant in the Army during World War 1 and was a former principal of Pine Street Elementary School.

Our Home Base

The Taylor Education Building was constructed in 1955 and originally housed the Department of Education and Geography. Now it is home to the award-winning Psychology Department. The Taylor Education Building also houses the University Testing Center, Writing and Speaking Studio, Air Force and Army ROTC, and the School of Graduate Studies.

On the first floor, you will find the University testing center and the writing and speaking studio with many pamphlets and information about the Air Force or the Army. The graduate school office is also located on the first floor.

On the second floor of the building, you will find most of the offices of faculty and staff.

The walls are adorned with research and pictures of our staff. On the third floor, there are more classrooms, and you can also find some personal information about the highlighted Faculty. The building is rich with knowledge, culture, and opportunity.





IMPORTANT DATES

CONGRATULATIONS TO 2025 GRADUATES!

Homecoming Dates
October 17-25, 2025

Homecoming Cookout
Friday, October 24, 2025

Commencement Date
Friday, December 12, 2025

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

Written by Samantha Beavers

Human beings are naturally curious “Why” is among the first questions kids learn to ask. Even as adults, we still have questions. Psychologists use empirical techniques to utilize that innate curiosity to gather and analyze data for research. In order to gain a deeper understanding of and solutions for some of the most difficult issues facing society. It is challenging, if not impossible, to imagine a situation in which psychology is not relevant.

Psychologists formulate a question, provide a theory, and then design meticulous laboratory or field experiments to test the theory. This is known as the scientific method.

Psychologists use the knowledge gained from studies to develop empirically supported solutions to problems and enhance peoples lives. As a result, psychology research reveals fresh approaches to helping individuals survive and prosper in a complicated world.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING

A Message from the Chair

Since 1960, Psychology Departments at HBCUs throughout the U.S. have grown substantially. Thousands of psychologists have graduated from HBCUs and completed their graduate programs at PWIs. Historically, African Americans and women were not allowed to obtain degrees in psychology. The few who did had to sit outside the classroom because African Americans and women were not allowed to sit in the classroom. Since then, psychology programs at HBCUS have faced significant challenges in being recognized and supported. In psychologist Herman Canady's 1965 article, *Psychology in Negro Institutions*, he suggested that there were four key issues: (1) the status of psychology in Social Science curricula at HBCUs, (2) the breadth of undergraduate courses in psychology, (3) **funding for student training and research laboratories**, and (4) **funding for more teaching personnel**. These issues are still prevalent for HBCUs' psychology programs today, as state funds have been cut and many government grants addressing health and mental health have been underfunded or cut. Psychology Departments are in a precarious situation, needing support and assistance from community partners, government and state agencies, as well as alumni.

NCCU's Psychology Department has been successful at training students to serve as clinical and research psychologists, addressing disparities in health and mental health in North Carolina. As we grow and currently serve over 450 on-campus undergraduates, over 100 online undergraduates, and more than 110 graduate students, we are asking alumni for help.

We are encouraging alumni who want to support the Psychology Department's mission to contact NCCU Foundation at (919) 530-6151

[Giving Online Link](#)

[Gift & Commitment Form Link](#)



OUR FACULTY



Kristen V. Bell Adair, PhD
Associate Professor, Clinical
Director/Coordinator & NTPC
Advisor



Lasheka Allen, PhD, QMHP
Adjunct Instructor



Dwayne T. Brandon, PhD
Professor



Tanisha I. Burford, PhD
Associate Professor & Psi Chi Advisor



Christal E. Carmichael, MA, LPC, LCAS
Adjunct Instructor



Grayson Chappell, MA, LPA
Adjunct Instructor



Walter G. Charles, PhD
Associate Professor & Graduate
Program Coordinator



George Cliette, EdD
Professor



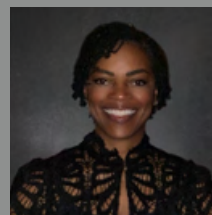
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Associate Professor



Sherry C. Eaton, PhD
Professor



Christopher L. Edwards, PhD
Adjunct Professor & Director of NCCU
Psychoneuroendocrinology & Rare
Diseases Laboratory



Erica Harrell, PhD
Adjunct Instructor



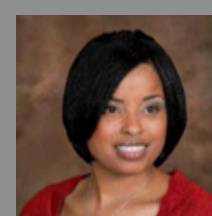
Sonya D. Harris, MPH, PhD Candidate
Clinical Instructor & Distance Ed.
Coordinator



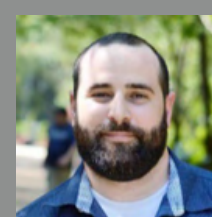
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Marquisha R. Lee, PhD, ABPP, CBSM
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Jonathan N. Livingston, PhD
Benjamin S Ruffin Distinguished
Professor of Civic Education and
Social Justice, Professor & Interim
Chair of Psychology

OUR FACULTY



Pamela P. Martin, PhD
Adjunct Instructor



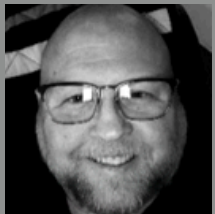
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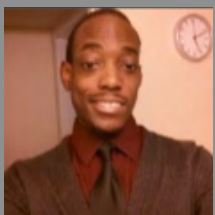
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Associate Chair/Professor & Psi Chi
Advisor



Milicia A. Tedder, PhD
Clinical Assistant Professor,
Undergraduate Coordinator & NTPC
Advisor



Jeffrey Wilkins, PhD
Adjunct Instructor

RETIRED FACULTY

LES BRINSON, PHD

EMERITUS

AGATHA CAROO, PHD

VINSTON GOLDMAN, PHD

RICHARD MIZZELLE, PHD

LINDA PRATT, PHD

ELWOOD ROBINSON, PHD

SANDRA WATERS, PHD