

➤ Psychology News

Psychology news:

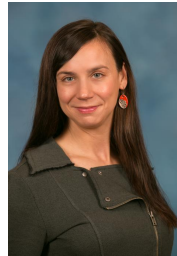


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[BACK TO TOP](#)

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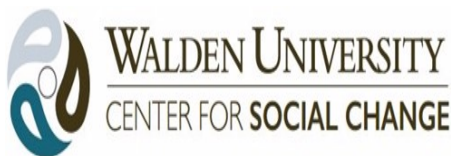
Questions? Concerns? Praises? Contact your Academic Program leader.



Patricia Costello, PhD
Program Director
[E-mail Me](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

➤ FEATURE STORIES



Practical Ways to Use Social Change

You may hear a lot about “social change” at Walden University and it may come up in your courses as well. How can you get involved? One can use it in **research** - undertake a systematic study to look at social problems and how they can best be addressed. For example, you could study the best way to influence attitudes toward reducing, reusing, and recycling. One can be an **advocate** -the “voice” for a person or group that might not otherwise have a voice. This can be accomplished through political engagement or through various organizations, which tend to be non-profits. The overall goal is to promote the health and safety of people that might not otherwise have the awareness of their situation that is needed.

One example is to become a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for abused and neglected children. This is typically a volunteer position, but some states do pay. It's also called guardian-at-litem. More information here: <http://www.casaforchildren.org/>

A third route is through **civic engagement**. This may involve reaching out and working with legislators, local agencies, institutions, professional associations, neighborhoods, and professional colleagues. More information here from the American Psychological Association:

<https://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx>. For example, you might be involved with a group that is trying to create more affordable housing options in your community, which may also involve working with the legislature to pass ordinances and laws that don't discriminate against the homeless. One example in my home state is a group of folks who have come together to ask the state legislatures to "Add the Words" so that people are not discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or identity -

https://www.addthewords.org/about_us

There are other examples of social change on Walden's Blog, which features Walden University students and faculty here: <https://www.waldenu.edu/connect/newsroom/spotlight>

Walden University recently launched the **Center for Social Change**:

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/social-change>. This will serve as the central location for all things related to social change at Walden University.

Walden's Center for Social Change recommends the following resources to get started on your own social change projects and plans:

- [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#)
- [The U.N. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform Website](#)
- [The Principles of Responsible Management Education \(PRME\) Knowledge Platform](#)

I would love to hear about your social change projects to feature in a future newsletter. Please write me at patricia.costello@mailwaldenu.edu and tell me about it. See the article in this newsletter on the featured student Aidan Hogan and her plans for bringing about social change. Callahan, D., Wilson, E., Birdsall, I., Estagrook, B., Carson, G., Ford S. Ouzts, K., and Yob, I., (2012). Expanding Our Understanding of Social Change: A Report from the Definition Task Force of the HLC Special Emphasis Project. Walden University.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Featured BS Psychology Student: Aidan Hogan

Where were you born and raised? Have you lived anywhere interesting or exciting?

I was born and raised in Huntsville, Alabama and then moved to Nashville,

Tennessee to attend Lipscomb University in the fall of 2011. I've been in Nashville ever since. Once I receive my degree from Walden, I hope to move to Washington state.

Do you have any hobbies? What do you like to do in your free time?

In what free time I have, I like to read books like "Love's Executioner," "Insane," "No One Cares About Crazy People," "Against Empathy," and anything I can get my hands on that has to do with prison reform. Naturally, I also watch shows like "Mindhunters" and "The Sinner," in addition to "Game of Thrones," among others.



However, I'm most excited about the potential opportunity to begin a secular humanist discussion group at a prison in my area. The goal of the discussion group is to provide an encouraging, safe, positive, respectful, and upbeat environment for discussion, create a sense of community and peer support, and provide an opportunity for residents to search for non-religious answers to life's questions.

Why did you return to school for your psychology degree? What was your career before returning to school?

I used to coach competitive gymnastics before deciding I needed to change industries to something that could support myself and my now wife. Currently I review accounts that insurance has denied or underpaid, and I also just started work as a Program Support Specialist at the Dismas reentry program for which I was initially volunteering teaching computer proficiency. As a Program Support Specialist, I help manage volunteers, respond to calls and emails, help the process flow for applications and correspondence, and more.

A lot of things came together to bring me back to school for psychology. First, I've always wanted to change the world. In the third grade I had my parents help me write a letter to the President about saving endangered species and created an unofficial "Animal Caring Club" at school where we would research endangered species so one day we could help save them. In the fifth grade I decided I wanted to be a missionary to India and immediately started teaching myself Hindi and reading up on the culture. My interests turned to law in the eighth grade and finally to psychology in the last couple of years. The next factor was taking social psychology while I was in school for prelaw. I loved studying how environmental factors could influence our behaviors and cognitive processes. It was during this class that I became a determinist and my thoughts on offenders started to change to having a heart to help them. I also happened to be friends with someone in school with a focus on criminal profiling, which only increased my interest in psychology.

Finally, one day I was working with billing insurance and I realized that I would be embarrassed to tell my former classmates that was what I was doing with my life. Could the little girl write the president or learning Hindi only bill insurance for the rest of her life? I felt like I would be letting her down and resolved to find a way to make a difference. Forensic Psychology seemed like the perfect cross between my pre-law background and my psychology interests. So here I am with only 10 classes left!

What has been your favorite class at Walden and why?

Honestly, my favorite class so far has been Introduction to Basic Statistics (PSYC 3002) because it was challenging, had high but clear expectations, and showed real world applications for

understanding and conducting research. I was especially interested by one-way ANOVAs, which allowed us to see which treatment method in the hypothetical example on the assignment was the most effective. I believe this class significantly improved my ability to learn from research I read and therefore most improved the academic foundation for my future.

I recently finished Methods in Psychological Inquiry (PSYC 3003) and really enjoyed the critical thinking challenge.

What are your future plans, both for your degree and in general?

My goals include remaining on the honor roll, achieving the executive certification in the National Society of Leadership and Success, qualifying for Psi Chi, and taking as many AIM courses as possible. I also want to obtain 100 volunteer hours before I graduate and read at least 10 books on prison policy and reform. Once I graduate with my bachelor's degree, I will look for an entry level job in corrections or reentry and then pursue my Master's in Forensic Psychology. After that, a PhD in Justice Administration. All of this is with the ultimate goal of helping affect prison reform.

The United States has the highest prison rate in the world (BBC News, n.d.) and is also among the highest in recidivism, with a rate of 76.6% rearrested within 5 years (National Institute of Justice, 2014). This is especially astonishing when compared to Norway's recidivism rate of just 20% (Sterbenz, 2014), though it should be noted that the article doesn't specify over what length of time they're measuring Norway's recidivism rate. I believe that the difference between the two recidivism rates can be largely explained by the fact Norway focuses on rehabilitative rather than punitive measures. Ultimately, I want to have a hand in helping revolutionize the US prison system and shape it into a force for rehabilitation, hopefully therefore lowering recidivism and aiding these individuals in successful reentry into society.

What advice would you give to other B.S. Psychology students?

My advice to other B.S. Psychology students is to completely surround yourself with motivation. While it's important to be internally motivated to be successful, I've found it's also helpful to have external motivational reminders to help get back on track when you're feeling drained. These reminders help me refocus on my internal motivation. Make a playlist of songs like "Get Up," by All Good Things, "Find a Way to Fight," by Manafest, and "Face Everything and Rise," by Papa Roach that make you feel like you can conquer the world. Write down motivational quotes like, "This is how legends are made," "You're studying to change the world," and "Water cuts through rock not because of its power but because of its persistence," and put it up on your wall where you study. Make a motivation board on Pinterest. Pick out prizes for yourself for when you complete a course with the desired grade. Then every time you don't feel like doing homework, psych yourself up with the quotes, playlists, pins, and prizes until you find a second wind. After all, "You did not wake up today to be mediocre."

References:

BBC News. (n.d.). World prison populations. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/uk/06/prisons/html/nn2page1.stm>

National Institute of Justice. (2014, June 14). Recidivism. Retrieved from <https://www.nij.gov/topics/corrections/recidivism/Pages/welcome.aspx>

Sterbenz, C. (2014, December 11). Why Norway's prison system is so successful. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/why-norways-prison-system-is-so-successful-2014-12>

[BACK TO TOP](#)



Faculty Feature: Dr. Mary Wells

Background

Dr. Mary Wells completed her masters and doctorate degrees in Clinical Psychology at Ohio University. Prior to her career in higher education, she worked as a clinician specializing in community mental health and the treatment of persons with severe and chronic mental illnesses. Mary started working for Walden in 2009 as a contributing faculty member. She has taught several undergraduate courses for the Psychology Department including *Social Influences on Behavior*, *Psychology as a Natural Science*, *Psychology as a Social Science*, and *Psychological Disorders*. She currently teaches *Introduction to Addictions*, *Addictions Assessment, Prevention and Treatment of Addictions*, and *Case Management and Addictions*. In addition to her duties at Walden, she is also an Associate Professor and Chairperson for the Psychology Department at Sinclair College in Dayton, Ohio.

Other Related Work

Mary served as a Campus Lead for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Completion by Design Initiative and as the National Project Director for the initiative's teaching and learning project. She is currently a coach for the Ohio Student Success Leadership Institute and consults with other Ohio colleges on the development of structured academic pathways. She also served as a Faculty Fellow for Sinclair's Center for Teaching and Learning and as coordinator for Liberal Arts and Sciences Career Community.

Mary regularly presents at conferences and colleges across the country on the topic of guided pathways and faculty engagement. Her research interests include academic hope theory and the impact of teacher empathy on student success.

Advice

A piece of advice that Mary gives to other faculty is to let students see your passion for your discipline. It is contagious!

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Dear Wally

Wally is an expert on all things Walden. If you have questions about anything related to your journey as a Walden student, Wally will be able to point you in the right direction. Sometimes Wally's advice may be helpful to everyone, so here are some of those questions and answers.



Dear Wally,

I am a little overwhelmed at being in charge of my own registration. Do I just sign up for whatever sounds good?

Sincerely,

Sonot Sure

Dear Sonot,

It's true that in many settings you may be told what to take or at least must ask someone's permission to register for certain courses. I was not allowed to register for anything until I met with my adviser and got her signature! Our goal here at Walden is not to overwhelm you, but to acknowledge that you are an adult. I want to assure you that there are many people available to help you plan. Advising (academicadvising@mail.waldenu.edu) is your primary point of contact, but you can also reach out to our Program Director (Patrticia.Costello@mail.waldenu.edu) or an instructor for thoughts and suggestions. In general, your goal is to start with the 2000-level courses (which are designed for those in their first year of the program) and work your way up to the 4000-level courses, which are the most difficult and challenging. You are not required to stay in order but following the general flow of the numbers may help you avoid surprises in terms of stricter requirements or greater expectations.

Everyone should start with PSYC 2000, which is designed to introduce students to the program and Psychology as a discipline, and then it is up to you. There is one restriction: you must pass Introduction to Basic Statistics (PSYC 3002) before you can take Methods in Psychological Inquiry (PSYC 3003). Even this is not meant to "restrict" you; it is just a case where the skills you build in Statistics are crucial for success in Research Methods. So, please don't let all the requirements overwhelm you, just make your plan for success and then focus on doing your best each term.

Wally

[BACK TO TOP](#)



Accelerate into Masters

AIM option for BS Psychology students

Do you plan to enroll in a master's program after you complete your Bachelor's degree? Then you may be interested in this fantastic program (AIM- Accelerate Into Masters) that will save you time and money. Eligible students may complete select Master-level courses while in the last year or so of their academic program. Courses count as electives in your BS program as well as toward your chosen graduate degree (if a grade of B or better is earned). Criteria for eligibility are outlined in Walden Student Catalog. AIM options for you include: MS Psychology, MS in Forensic Psychology, MS in IO Psychology, and the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. There are also options outside of psychology and counseling - you do not have to take psychology or counseling courses only! More information about the various [AIM options can be found in the catalog.](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)



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