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## Meet Your Departmental Student Advisor!

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**Hometown: Canton, MI**

**Major: Psychology**

**Minor: German**

**Study Abroad: Bonn, Germany**

**Favorite Ice Cream Flavor: Cold Stone Creamery's Cake Batter**

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**In 10 words or less, why should someone want to be a part of this department?**

This department is filled with helpful and passionate professors and students.

**When did you know you wanted to study this area? What pathway led you to this department?**

My interest in the field of psychology began in high school during my intro psychology class. This slight interest turned into a love during my first year at K. My advisor was in the psychology department and had told me about her Counseling Psychology class; it was then that I thought: *That's it! That's what I want to do.* Reading the course descriptions and talking to the professors about their classes gave me an informative glimpse into the dynamic of the psychology department and allowed me to see that it was the right department for me. I think it's important to meet the professors and the students within the department of interest. I love the people in my classes and the professors are truly inspiring and genuinely concerned and interested in you.

**What is the best way to get (and stay) connected to this department?**

I believe the best way for staying connected to anything is to become part of it. I don't think that has to mean taking on a multitude of responsibilities, however, getting to know one or more of the professors and TAs, participating in the studies and research going on within the department, and generally allowing a relationship to form between you and the amazing people in the psychology department will help you stay connected.

**What would you miss the most if you were no longer a part of this department?**

Honestly, I will miss the people most when I am no longer part of this department. Both the professors and my peers are fun and engaging people. They are concerned about your welfare and interested in your life. This department isn't just friendly though, they are also very respectful. You are treated as an equal in the department, regardless of your age or year. I have found that this is monumental to my academic growth, if I am taken seriously, then I take myself seriously.

**What are your career aspirations/next steps after K?**

Directly after K I intend to go to graduate school to study counseling psychology; more specifically couples and family counseling. My career aspiration is to be a therapist; hopefully working with family's who have adolescents who self injure. I would like to create a program of treatment that involves both the self injurer and their family.

**What has been the biggest surprise you have encountered at K?**

My biggest surprise is how quickly my time here has gone. I am now in my last year at K and it feels as if just yesterday I was walking on to my dream campus excited and terrified, ready to begin my "real" education.

**How does your department connect to your other interests and activities?**

This department is filled with opportunities to reach out to the Kalamazoo community through the programs at Woodward Elementary School and the HYPE and many other programs. The professors enjoy including students in their studies as either participants or as colleagues. The many alumni from the college are also always excited to gain an intern from K and to offer guidance. The psychology department offers many more different venues to broaden your interests and experiences.

**What has been your favorite class at K? Why?**

Within the psychology department I have two favorite classes Developmental Psychology with Dr. Tan and Interviewing and Narrative Analysis with Dr. Gregg. Both classes were intriguing in their own ways. Developmental portrayed the many different stages and continuums of human growth starting from the womb and ending in early adolescents. Dr. Tan's passion for the subject created an energetic and engaging class atmosphere. She employed many different types of teaching including at one point instructing the class to crawl in the many different ways of a toddler down the hallway, in order to understand what early motor movements were truly like. Dr. Gregg's Narrative analysis class was so different from the many other classes in psychology because it was my first entirely qualitative research methods class. This class was completely "hands on." I loved moderating Focus Groups and conducting Life History interviews. Then after the (at times tedious) transcription of the interviews, finding similarities and differences was like being a detective or an explorer. I felt a great sense of accomplishment and competency from this style of research. I loved how real the participants felt while analyzing their words. They were not just a number or a symptom, they had stories and lives, families and friends; and all of those things were important to me and my research. The class and the work within it were very gratifying and fulfilling.

**What is your SIP?**

My SIP is qualitative. I am studying the folk psychology of the self injuring community through the narrative analysis of online forums, memoirs, and case studies. This includes outlining the many form and practices that are involved in self injury; who does it and why.

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