In 1995 Southern was authorized to offer master’s degrees. George Babcock, dean of the School of Education and Psychology at the time, asked me to suggest an education degree that I would like to see developed in the new graduate school program. I had just finished my doctoral degree in science and environmental education, and this was the start of my first full year in higher education. Immediately I replied that we should have a degree to assist teachers in using the outdoors as a learning laboratory. He thought that sounded interesting but said nothing more. The following week, Dean Babcock called me to his office and asked me if I had a proposal for a degree in outdoor education ready to present at Administrative Council; I had not realized until then that he took my suggestion seriously!

My background had been teaching science and math for 18 years in grades 7-12. During that time, I worked with students and teachers in outdoor school programs in nine states. I was a naturalist at two summer camps with environmental education programming offered to K-12 students during the academic school year. (Continued on page 3)
Located on the second floor of Summerour Hall, the Psychology Lab, fondly referred to as the Psych Lab, functions in a variety of ways to serve students pursuing a degree in psychology. Due to the nature of psychology as a scientific discipline, evidence-yielding practices are necessary.

"Evidence is found through research, including experimentation as well as scholarly and empirical inquiry. The Psych Lab is a location that symbolizes this aspect of psychology," says Professor Ruth Williams, PhD, professor and director of the psychology program.

The Psych Lab also houses lab equipment and supplies used for testing, experimentation, and observation. These include the Morris water maze, rodent mazes, essential oils, placebos, rodent housing equipment, a human fetal exhibition, animal brains, biomedical equipment (blood pressure monitors and stopwatches, for example), and a Skinner Box, all of which aid in students’ experimental experiences.

In addition to lab equipment, the Psych Lab also functions as a resource room. Tutors use the lab as a space where they can provide help to students taking Research Design and Statistics I and II, courses required of all psychology majors. Experimental Psychology, a course that is offered every other year, also meets in the Psych Lab. Counseling students in the graduate program often utilize the psychological tests to fulfill Assessment and Appraisal class assignments and familiarize themselves with materials they may encounter as future counselors. Sample literature reviews, research projects, and posters are also available for viewing.

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Lastly, the Psych Lab is used as a classroom for other psychology courses and also provides a safe haven where students can relax between classes. Students and faculty are thankful for this meaningful space in Summerour Hall. The School of Education and Psychology continues to add equipment to this well-utilized space. Visit us at the Psych Lab next time you come to campus!
OUTDOOR EDUCATION (Continued from page 1)

I was also a state facilitator in several outdoor/environmental education programs. That year I was voted Project WILD Facilitator of the Year for the state of Tennessee. Teaching students in nature became my focus and my passion, so to be given an opportunity to develop a graduate program for outdoor teacher education was an exciting proposition. I was ready for the challenge.

In order to get the help I needed, I contacted Nelson Bennett, a local educator who had just retired from the Hamilton County school system. I had worked with him briefly on some outdoor school programming while he taught biology and science and supervised social studies. Most importantly, he had been employed in several outdoor learning-related programs.

He was a national facilitator for Project Adventure (an innovative teaching organization) and a respected leader in adventure-based programming. He also had experience as a camp director at two summer camps and as a wilderness backcountry trip leader in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for more than 30 years. I knew he would be excited about planning a new program for teacher education. After a phone call, Bennet joined me for lunch in the university cafeteria. At that meeting, we outlined the proposal for an MSEd in Outdoor Education on a paper napkin!

We designed a four-to-six-week program for teachers, during which they would attend classes at the university for three summers. After each summer session, they would return to their schools to practice the skills they learned in their courses. The program had 12 hours of coursework each summer based on three themes: Principles and Concepts of Outdoor Learning, Developing Outdoor Teaching Sites, and Leadership in Outdoor Learning. The proposal was approved, and we started classes in the summer of 1996.

The first summer session drew 10 classroom teachers. The course instruction was enhanced by professionals from government agencies representing wildlife, forestry, soil, and water conservation. Additional experts came from local nature centers, parks, and environmental education programs. Other teachers at Southern were involved in the program, too. David Ekkens from the Biology Department helped with the Nature Study class. Robert Egbert from the Counseling and Psychology Department helped with Learning Theory and Adventure Counseling. Over the next two summers, the combined experience of these additional professionals made the program much richer and gave the students a broader understanding of outdoor learning. Learning sites included Project Adventure, the National Park Service, Tennessee Aquarium, Georgia Aquarium, Rock Eagle 4H Center, Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont, and many others.

Soon after that first cohort of classroom teachers began the program, local summer camp staff and youth leaders recognized an opportunity to learn outdoor teaching skills that could be applied to their own work. Here the students had an opportunity to study in a wilderness setting and work with two nationally known outdoor leadership programs: YMCA Camp Widjiwagen and Outward Bound. In 2003, Mike Hills joined the program as a professor, and Jean Lomino was hired as an adjunct professor. Both individuals possessed skills and knowledge that added a valuable dynamic and new dimension to outdoor learning.

In the summer of 2006, I was asked to be dean of Graduate Studies and provide leadership to Southern’s graduate programs. For the next four years, I continued to lead and direct the outdoor education efforts until a new director could be located. Doug Tilstra took that position in 2010. With a doctoral degree in leadership and a strong interest in camping and outdoor adventure, Tilstra brought a wealth of experience to teachers and summer camps across North America.

The purpose of the outdoor education emphasis at Southern is to assist educators in using the outdoors as a learning laboratory to connect children and youth to their Creator. Outdoor learning is a method of taking children outside to enrich learning in the core curriculum. Also, it is a philosophy of using nature in the outdoor setting to teach children as the Master Teacher taught in the Eden school. Outdoors is where God chose to teach the first humans. It seems fitting that educational leaders in today’s culture would want to center student learning in that same outdoor setting.

As expected, graduates from this program are leading in outdoor learning across North America. Two students continued their graduate education, completing a doctorate in leadership. Four are physical education instructors at Adventist colleges. Others work at camps across the United States. One student, a local police captain, joined the program and used his experiences to write an $80,000 grant to assist gangs and troubled youth in Chattanooga through adventure activities. Another camp staff member wrote a $20,000 grant to build a challenge course for underprivileged kids so they could attend camp for free. One student worked in water quality education for the state of Georgia. Another became a state park naturalist. Students from Tanzania, England, and Romania have completed their degrees. All of these teachers and youth leaders continue to share their love of outdoor education and their desire to link kids with nature.

“Oh outdoor learning is the philosophy of using nature in the outdoor setting to teach children as the Master Teacher taught.”
Congratulations, Graduates!

Name: Ronald Arroyo-Watson  
Major: MEd Instructional Leadership  
Hometown: Crossville, TN  
Future Plans: Teach and have fun with science and students

Name: Sandra Candelario  
Major: BA Liberal Arts  
Hometown: Los Angeles, CA  
Future Plans: Teach children of all ages and enjoy every second of it

Name: Ana DuVall  
Major: BS Psychology  
Hometown: Itu, Brazil  
Future Plans: Start my doctoral program in January and then work for the government

Name: Rebekah Harris  
Major: MEd Instructional Leadership  
Hometown: Stone Mountain, GA  
Future Plans: Open and run my own school

Name: Kimberlyn Johnson  
Major: MS School Counseling  
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN  
Future Plans: Work in Chattanooga as a school counselor

Name: Hayley Baker  
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Hometown: Frederick, MD  
Future Plans: Get married in December and work toward licensure

Name: Daniel Collins  
Major: BA Liberal Arts  
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN

Name: Kassandra Fernandez  
Major: BA English, Teaching Licensure  
Hometown: Altamont Springs, FL  
Future Plans: Work as a teacher plus maybe own a business

Name: Melissa Harrison  
Major: BS Psychology  
Hometown: Cohutta, GA  
Future Plans: Start working and pursue a master’s degree in I/O psychology

Name: Amber Buchanan  
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Hometown: Columbia, MD  
Future Plans: Work toward licensure and get married

Name: Mariah Crews  
Major: BS Psychology  
Hometown: Kennesaw, GA  
Future Plans: Get my master’s degree and specialize in narrative therapy

Name: Andre Garcia  
Major: BS Psychology  
Hometown: Longwood, FL  
Future Plans: Look for a job and possibly pursue a master’s degree

Name: Destiney Johnson  
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN  
Future Plans: Move to Hawaii and work toward licensure

Name: Amber Buchanan  
Major: BS Psychology  
Hometown: Longwood, FL  
Future Plans: Look for a job and possibly pursue a master’s degree

Name: Chelsea McMullen  
Major: BA Liberal Arts  
Hometown: Hagerstown, MD  
Future Plans: Begin my teaching career and travel

Not pictured: Melissa Bopp, Outdoor Education; Sonya Grice, Outdoor Education
THE PROFESSOR’S VIEW

By Rob Coombs, PhD, DMin

Watching another sunrise from my office, I receive a daily reminder of how blessed I am to have the opportunity to teach in Summerour Hall. This is my 20th year at Southern, so most of the freshmen and sophomores in my classes this year had not been born the year I started.

As most of you know, our academic home here on campus recently underwent a major renovation that took three years to complete. I have been teaching BR (before renovation), DR (during renovation), and AR (after renovation). For decades, Summerour Hall had met the needs of thousands of students, but growing pains, changes in program offerings, and advancements in technology necessitated a change. The change that took place has far exceeded my expectations.

The four pods that house our four major programs (psychology, education, counseling, and outdoor education) are beehives of activity. Graduate assistants, academic readers, and a constant flow of students are consistent reminders of why we are here. Just entering any of our classrooms spoils us as educators. At our fingertips is the finest technology. Touch screens give us easy access to amazing teaching aids that bring the classroom to life. Resources are everywhere: a willing and knowledgeable staff in the department office, a vast Teaching Materials Center, psychology and computer labs, a kitchen that opens to a classroom where food and conversation often intertwine, boardrooms for meetings, and additional places to study and mingle.

Does the Summerour environment affect learning? The answer is an unequivocal yes. Better facilities enhance the expectations for learning. Is it any wonder that I look forward to returning tomorrow morning for another day in Summerour Hall?
NEW FACULTY: Counseling

What led you to the field of counseling education?
Teaching is my passion, and I enjoy it. I have been teaching for most of my life (from elementary to graduate levels), and I cannot think of any other activity more rewarding than aiding in the development of my students’ characters. I have been involved in multiple teaching experiences within and outside of the classroom.

Where else have you worked?
In Brazil, I taught Portuguese and English as a second language (5th-12th grades) in public and private schools, as well as at the Brazilian Adventist University. I have also been the principal/administrator of public and private schools.

In the US, I worked in nursing for a few years (as a nurse, nurse educator, and nurse administrator) in Massachusetts, Florida, and Tennessee. I also worked as an licenced professional counselor at Parkridge Valley Mental Health Hospital in Chattanooga and in Southern Adventist University’s Counseling and Testing Services.

What led you to join the faculty at Southern?
I have been teaching at Southern as an adjunct faculty member since 2003. So, the transition to full-time was based upon answering God’s call to go back to full-time teaching.

What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I enjoy the interaction with students, participating in their journey, and witnessing their growth, not only academically but also professionally.

What is your philosophy of teaching?
My teaching goals include the promotion of students’ acquisition of knowledge in the most meaningful way to the students. I strive to increase motivation, promote cultural diversity and social justice, facilitate and stimulate learning, and coach future professionals while being a positive influence on students. I choose to use my knowledge of human behavior to encourage mind development and the transformation of lives.

What do you enjoy most about working at Southern?
I value working in a Christian environment with Christian co-workers and being able to uplift my faith openly without forcing my philosophy of life.

What direction do you see for Southern’s clinical mental health program?
This program has grown tremendously since I graduated from it. I believe we can continue to grow and make it even stronger, not only academically but also spiritually, while respecting individuality and diversity.
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
JEFF WADLEY,
OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Jeff Wadley obtained his master’s degree in education with an emphasis in outdoor education from Southern in 2013. Jeff has been married to his wife, Joy Wadley, for 30 years. They have three children together (and a daughter-in-law), who reside in Indianapolis, Indiana, as well as Knoxville and Kingsport, Tennessee. Currently, he works as the executive director of Camp Bays Mountain, a camp and retreat center located near Kingsport affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Jeff feels that the outdoor education program prepared him for his current role in ministry by providing him with a theological foundation and hands-on tools that shaped him both as an individual and a leader.

Since graduating, Jeff has found that what appreciates is being a part of a legacy of leadership. “The legacy element of outdoor education and leadership is tremendously important. The instruction and learning was rigorous but at the same time was fun due to the relationships built with the faculty, staff, and fellow students,” Jeff says. Now that he has graduated, Jeff finds himself missing the purposeful academic integration, challenge of critical thinking, and interactions with his classmates.

For those considering a master’s degree in outdoor education at Southern, Jeff advises students to not rush through their semesters. Instead, he encourages taking the time to be intentional about building relationships with staff, faculty, and other students. “Contemplate together, envision together, study the Scriptures together. Do not rush,” says Jeff.

Outside of his role as a camp director, Jeff spends time adventuring outdoors backpacking, canoeing, and exploring the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota. He also enjoys building and restoring canoes and has been participating in search and rescue since 1978. Jeff considers search and rescue one of his passions, as it stimulates his brain. In 2002, he authored a search and rescue resource and is currently writing another.

Jeff’s plans for the future include furthering the establishment of Camp Bays Mountain. He is confident that God is preparing him now for whatever the future may hold after his time at camp.

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