

# NEWSLETTER



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# 2025 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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## APPOINTED POSITIONS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Legislative Relations Officer:**

Natalie Gaughf, Ph.D., ABPP

**Continuing Education Chair:**

Kathryn Waggoner, PsyD, ABPP

**Business of Practice Chair:**

Sarah Irby, Ph.D.

**Public Education Chair:**

David Gavel, Ph.D.

**Psychology and Law Task Force Chair:**

Stephanie Howard, PsyD

**Telehealth Rural Health Coordinator:**

Joshua Fulwiler, Ph.D.

**Diversity Chair:**

Ryan Liu-Pham, Ph.D.

**Historian:**

Angela Herzog, Ph.D.

**Early Career Psychologist Chair:**

Nathan Ross, Ph.D.

**Academic/Training Chair:**

Michael Nadorff, Ph.D.

**Federal Advocacy Coordinator:**

Danielle Maack, Ph.D.

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Amanda Gugliano, PsyD**

Happy New Year MPA Members!

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season and are feeling refreshed for an exciting year ahead. During the previous couple of years, we have seen an increase in membership and engagement at the annual convention. As MPA's President this year, I hope to continue to focus on growing our membership and expanding our advocacy efforts. Some of you may not know that MPA has a political action committee (MP-PAC). MP-PAC is an independent, nonpartisan organization that provides us with a way to advocate or psychology and educate legislators on issues that are important to us. Legislative sessions typically involve bills, committee hearings, and debates that are either directly or indirectly related to our health care system, including the practice of psychology. Although MP-PAC has not been active for several years, this is an opportune time for MP-PAC to be revived as change is looming for our field.

As discussed at our Annual Conference last year, APA is developing recommendations for training, licensure, and regulations for masters-degree psychology professionals. This

will have an impact on graduate training, scope of practice, and reimbursement for services within psychology. In my opinion, Mississippi psychologists need to have a voice in the rules and regulations for masters-degree psychology professionals in our state. Additionally, there has been recent listserv discussion about prescriptive privileges (RxP) or authority for psychologists in Mississippi. Another relevant issue was brought up at APA's recent Practice and SPTA Leadership Conference: equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), also known as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), policies. If we want to positively affect these issues in our state, significant advocacy efforts from MPA and MP-PAC will be needed.

In the ever-changing field of psychology, MPA is committed to being an organized voice of psychology in Mississippi. We would love to hear from you about your concerns or goals for our field. Please visit MPA's website for more information about MP-PAC and reach out with any questions about how to get involved in advocating for psychology in Mississippi!

Sincerely,  
Amanda L. Gugliano, PsyD  
MPA President

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SAVE THE DATE!

76TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

STRANGER

mINDS

Exploring the  
Uncharted Territories  
of Psychology

SEPTEMBER 24-26, 2025

BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

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# LETTER FROM THE REGION 1 REP

Hello fellow psychologists!

I am the new Region 1 Representative for MPA, taking over the position from Dr. Ty Stafford, so I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself to the organization at large as a newer face to the organization. I am a Mississippi transplant, having grown up originally in a small town in southcentral Pennsylvania. I attended West Virginia University for my undergraduate degree in psychology as a first-generation college student. After this, I moved to the Philadelphia area (PA, not MS) to attend Villanova University where I earned a master's degree in experimental psychology. Following this, I moved all the way to Oklahoma to pursue my doctorate degree in clinical psychology at Oklahoma State University. I did a hop, a skip, and a jump up to Ann Arbor, Michigan to complete my pre-doctoral internship at the Ann Arbor VA Healthcare System, before finally accepting a position at MSU here in Starkville. It has been quite the journey!



**Hilary DeShong, Ph.D.**

I am currently in my 8th year at MSU, working in the Psychology Department as an Associate Professor and serving as the Graduate Coordinator for the Clinical and Cognitive Sciences Doctoral Programs. My research focuses on personality traits and personality pathology in relation to overall well-being and general functioning. I teach classes focused on training clinical psychology doctoral students on conducting psychological assessments and providing therapeutic services, as well as providing them with direct supervision in the MSU Psychology Clinic. I also teach undergraduate courses on the theories and research underlying personality.



As I move into the “middle” phase of my career, my plan is to put focus on the service areas that I value most – fostering and improving graduate training, increasing connections between psychologists in the state, and increasing my level of advocacy broadly. As such, I am excited to be joining the MPA team as a representative, as I know this will help me in fulfilling these goals over the coming years.

I would love to connect with folks in the organization, so please feel free to reach out! I am always looking for new hiking spots, local bookstores to explore, or just a chance to share pictures of my cats.

Hilary DeShong, Ph.D.  
Region 1 Representative

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Natalie W. Gaughf, PhD, ABPP

# MPA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Mississippi Psychological Association (MPA) Legislative Committee has actively supported the filing of two bills on behalf of MPA during the 2025 Legislative Session.

## SB 2731

**Title: AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 73-31-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXTEND THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON SECTIONS 73-31-1 THROUGH 73-31-29, WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE LICENSURE OF PSYCHOLOGISTS; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 73-31-1 THROUGH 73-31-29, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.**

The Legislative Committee worked to update the repealer dates associated with the Mississippi Statutes that authorize and regulate the title and practice of psychologists in Mississippi. The bill was initially assigned to the Senate Public Health Committee, and it was passed out of the committee and onto the Senate calendar for a vote. It passed the Senate and moved to the House Public Health Committee. On behalf of the Board of Psychology, we amended the language to increase the number of Board members from 7 to 9. The bill was passed out of the House Public Health Committee with the amended two Board members and onto the House calendar for a vote. If the bill passes with the amended language, it will transfer back to the Senate for concurrence or conference. The next deadline is March 12, 2025.

## HB 253

**Title: AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 73-50-2, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXEMPT THE PRACTICES OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY AND PSYCHOLOGY FROM THE UNIVERSAL RECOGNITION OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.**

The Legislative Committee attempted to exempt psychologists from the Universal Recognition of Occupational Licenses Act. It was assigned to Judiciary A but died in the committee.

There was a record number of bills filed this year. Of the 918 general bills filed in the Senate, 539 failed by the February 4, 2025, deadline. Of the 1669 general bills filed in the House, 1101 failed by the February 4, 2025, deadline. Therefore, 63% of all bills filed died by the first deadline. We are pleased to have our repealer bill continue through the process.

If you have questions or feedback about these issues, please feel free to reach out to any Legislative Committee member: Dr. Hannah Ford, Dr. Natalie Gaughf (chair), Dr. Emily Thomas Johnson, Amara Mason, Dr. Nick McAfee, Dr. Cecile Morvan, Dr. Brittany Sapp, Jessica Utley, and Dr. Courtney Walker. Also, I encourage you to communicate with your regional representatives and all of your MPA leadership about these issues and others.

Sincere,

Natalie Gaughf, Ph.D., ABPP  
Legislative Committee Chair

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# 20 YEARS LATER



## MPA LEADERSHIP IN 2005

Dr. Ron Levant, 2005 APA President, visited the MPA and toured MSH with MPA Leaders.

Pictured on the front row, from left, Dr. Pat Alexander, Dr. Suzanne Jourdan, Dr. Levant, Dr. Angela Herzog, Dr Jim Herzog.

Pictured on the back row are four MSH administrators and staff, and Dr. Vicki Prosser, far right.



2025 MPA Leaders toured the Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) Museum when the MSH hosted the MPA Leadership Retreat on February 13, 2025.

Pictured left to right, Dr. Natalie Gaughf, APA Council Representative and Legislative Chair; Dr. Tanja Seifen, LDA Fellow; Dr. Kristy McRaney, Region 3 Representative; Dr. Liz Woodruff, Region 2 Representative; Dr. Ryan Liu-Pham, Diversity Chair; Dr. Amanda Gugliano, President; Dr. Lisa Yazdani, Membership Officer; Dr. Shannon Moore, LDA Fellow; Dr. Josh Fulwiler, Communications Officer; Dr. Sarah Irby, Business of Practice Network; Dr. David Gavel, Past President; Dr. Angela Herzog, Historian; Dr. Michael Nadorff, Financial Officer; Dr. Cecile Morvan, LDA Fellow.

TWENTY YEARS LATER, the leadership of MPA is grateful to the Mississippi State Hospital for hosting our association for meetings and tours of your impressive museum detailing the history of treatment of those with serious mental illnesses.

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# LETTER FROM THE FINANCIAL OFFICER

I know I may be a new face for many of you, so I wanted to introduce myself to you as I move into the Financial Officer role. My name is Michael Nadorff, I am a professor at Mississippi State University where I previously directed the Clinical Psychology PhD program for a decade. I have long been involved in national service to the field, being the Immediate Past President of the Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine and the current Treasurer of the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology, but I have yet to be active in the state, so with stepping away from directing the PhD program I was thrilled to be elected into this position to become more active within the state of Mississippi.

I am also very fortunate to be stepping into this role during a time where MPA is in exceptionally strong financial position. Dr. Jeff Parker has done a tremendous job over the last three years shepherding our finances, and I am especially grateful to him as well as to LaDarion and the team at Ten One for guiding us to such a good place.

Being on firm footing allows us to look at how we can grow and do even more. I look forward to continuing to work on Dr. Parker's past goal of increasing membership to further enhance our budget and help support MPA to do even more to serve all of the psychologists and students in the state of Mississippi

Michael R. Nadorff, Ph.D.  
MPA Financial Officer



**Michael Nadorff, Ph.D.**

## ATTENTION PSYCHOLOGISTS

### PLEASE SEARCH YOUR PAPER FILES

#### **The MPA History & Archives Committee seeks copies of past years' MPA CONVENTION PROGRAMS and MPA NEWSLETTERS**

**While electronic files are also welcomed, we seek to reconstruct the history of the field of psychology in Mississippi, much which may not have been digitally recorded at the time.**

**ALL MATERIALS YOU LOCATE WILL BE UTILIZED AND IMMENSELY APPRECIATED.**

**Please contact Angela Herzog at [aoherzog56@gmail.com](mailto:aoherzog56@gmail.com) or 601-942-2865 so that I can arrange to pick up or pay for shipping.**

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# MEET YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP OFFICER



**Lisa Yazdani, Ph.D.**

Having been a member of MPA since 1989 when I joined as a student, I am honored to now be serving as the Membership Officer. When I think back to the reason I initially joined MPA, if I'm completely honest it was because the chair of my graduate program said it was expected. He said it was our responsibility as professionals to be involved in our guild organization. At that time, I thought MPA was about an annual conference with opportunities to present research projects at the poster session. Over the years, however, MPA has come to mean much more than that. On a personal level, I have met psychologists who have become life-long friends. Professionally, we are all aware that MPA offers continuing education programs, networking opportunities, and legislative advocacy, but in reality, that's just the beginning of what MPA offers.

MPA is the hub of organized psychology in the state. Our membership represents a group of the most highly educated and experienced professionals in the field. As we witness other professions encroaching on psychological practices and become aware of proposed legislative changes that impact our practice, MPA is the organized voice that responds. All you have to do is attend any MPA event- the annual conference, executive council meetings, committee meetings, continuing

education workshops- or just read the newsletter to see everything MPA is doing for psychologists in the state. Without the advocacy efforts of MPA, our licensing law, for example, may fail to exist. Think about what that would mean for you as a professional and for our training programs if we no longer had licensure legislation. Yet, of the MS licensed psychologists who have a Mississippi address, only about one third are members of MPA.

MPA is accomplishing a lot for a small organization! Imagine what we might accomplish if every psychologist in the state was an active member! Thinking back to my graduate school chair, he was right, it is our responsibility to be involved in our professional organization. If we don't take an active role, we will find that professionals in other fields are making decisions for us. So, ask yourself this: "Who do I know that is not a member of MPA and how can I reach out to that person?" In addition, ask, "What can I do to be more involved in MPA?"

I invite you to join us at an upcoming MPA activity! Be on the lookout for regional and state-wide opportunities. In addition, if you would like to join the membership committee, please contact me. I'd love to have you on board!

Sincerely,  
Lisa Yazdani, Ph.D.  
Membership Officer



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# CAPITOL DAY RECAP



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# SATIRE MORE DAMAGING TO REPUTATIONS THAN DIRECT CRITICISM

Date created: February 10, 2025

## **Satire may dehumanize targets, make them more subject to ridicule, study finds**

Washington — In our digital times as we are inundated with YouTube videos, memes and social media, satire is everywhere, but it can be more damaging to people's reputations than direct criticism, according to research published by the American Psychological Association.

Seemingly innocuous satire may be more harmful than direct criticism because it can dehumanize people and reduce them to caricatures, the study found. The research was published online in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.

"Most people think satire is just humorous and playful, but dehumanization exists on a spectrum and can include things like forgetting that others have complex emotions and feelings," said lead researcher Hooria Jazaieri, PhD, an assistant professor of management at Santa Clara University. "We can take a small piece of humorous criticism and make generalizations about other aspects of a person, which may or may not be true."

In one experiment, 1,311 participants viewed YouTube videos that were either satirical or critical of some famous athletes, musicians, TV personalities, or business figures. For example, some videos featured former NFL quarterback Tom Brady's suspension over the "Deflategate" scandal or Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg about the Cambridge Analytica personal data sharing scandal.

Participants who viewed either the satirical or critical videos viewed them as equally critical of the targets, but the viewers of the satirical videos had more negative perceptions about the target's reputation.

A similar experiment with 373 participants using memes about Gwyneth Paltrow's skiing accident and lawsuit had similar findings.

In another experiment, 299 participants viewed a satirical meme, a critical meme, or just a photo of soccer manager Jose Mourinho, who had been fired several times from different teams. Both the satirical and critical memes were more damaging than the photo, but participants who viewed the satirical meme had the most negative perceptions of Mourinho.

While satire is often aimed at celebrities, it can be just as damaging for reputations of lesser-known or even fictitious people, according to the study. Specifically, another experiment that replaced Mourinho's name and photo with the fictitious "Steve Randall" in the same memes had similar findings, with the satirical meme wielding the most reputational damage.



# SATIRE MORE DAMAGING TO REPUTATIONS THAN DIRECT CRITICISM

A final experiment found that imagining a brief positive interaction with the targets of satire or criticism can lessen negative perceptions of their reputations by humanizing them. “Humor, laughter and even criticism have positive benefits and serve important functions in society,” Jazaieri said. “Hopefully, when someone is a target of satire, we will notice if we are engaging in some kind of dehumanization or assumptions about the person that may not be true.”

The researchers opted to focus on non-political figures to extend the field of research on satire. Previous studies about satire have primarily focused on political figures and shown mixed results, with some studies finding satire is harmless while others finding it to be harmful to politicians’ reputations.

This study focused on videos and memes so the findings may not extend to satire expressed only in text or audio, such as articles or podcasts. The findings also may not generalize to minors because only adults were included in the study.

Article: “Softening the Blow or Sharpening the Blade: Examining the Reputational Effects of Satire,” Hooria Jazaieri, PhD, Santa Clara University, and Derek D. Rucker, PhD, Northwestern University, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, published online Feb. 10, 2025.

Hooria Jazaieri, PhD, may be contacted via email.

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- ✓ Grow your professional network



Contact us with any questions!

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