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Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

The Owens Observer

Newsletter of the
Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

March 17, 2026

This month's newsletter includes information on several professional development opportunities, including **Tea Time**, which is our new program for early career faculty. In addition, we are also hosting a session on **Russell Sage Foundation Funding** with RSF President Bruce Western, and Bruce Western is also delivering the **Owens Lecture** (both on April 3rd). The annual **Brody Symposium** is March 23, featuring Priscilla Lui. Finally, applications for the **OIBR Grant Development Program** are now open. Details about all of these activities appear below. And be sure to check out the announcement of a new tool to help you identify **priority areas for NIH funding**. Hope to see you soon at an OIBR event!

Jody Clay-Warner
Director

Upcoming Events



2026 Gene Brody Symposium



Priscilla Lui, PhD
University of Washington

Dr. Lui is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Washington. Her research focuses on how people from diverse sociocultural backgrounds make sense of the world, and how their lived experiences associated with culture, ethnicity, and race affect their psychopathology and addictive behaviors.

The Gene Brody Symposium honors retired Regents' Professor and Center for Family Research Emeritus Director Dr. Gene Brody



Center for Family Research
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

From Marginalization to Resilience: Understanding the Effects of Stress and Identifying Culturally Responsive Interventions

MARCH 23, 2026

3:00pm - 4:30pm

**Miller Learning Center
Reading Room, 3rd Floor**

This talk will integrate Dr. Lui's research expertise in measurement development and psychometrics as well as metascience (i.e., research on the research process) on her journey to the development of a strong research program that informs culture-centered interventions that can alleviate psychological distress and improve functioning among people across diverse ethnocultural backgrounds.

All UGA community members are welcome

Questions? Contact Dr. Sierra Carter at csierra@uga.edu

Tea Time:
**EARLY CAREER FACULTY
MENTORING PROGRAM**

Guidance & Support | Networking Opportunities | Career Development

We are pleased to announce **Tea Time**, a new OIBR offering for early career faculty for learning, sharing, and camaraderie. Each month, an OIBR Distinguished Scholar will present information on a professional development topic, allowing time for discussion and Q&A.

The next session will be held on Friday, **April 10** from 10:00am – 11:00am in the OIBR conference room (249A Brooks Hall). Tea, coffee, sparkling water, and cookies will be available.

Dr. **Katie Ehrlich**, Psychology, will be hosting the session, “Ten things I wish I’d known as a junior faculty member.” Early career affiliates should RSVP [here](#) to secure your spot. Each session is limited to 12 participants.

The next session will be:

May 1 with **Steve Beach**, Psychology, RSVP [here](#)

Attend one or all of these events. RSVP is required, and space is limited.



RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

Supporting innovative social science research that explores cutting-edge methods, questions, and policies for the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States.

RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

INFORMATION SESSION

Join us for an informational session with Bruce Western, president of the Russell Sage Foundation. Dr. Western will provide an overview of the Foundation's mission, research priorities, and grant funding opportunities. This session will be valuable for faculty seeking external funding in the social and behavioral sciences.



Friday, April 3
10:30 - 11:30am



Miller Learning
Center
Room 250

Hosted by



Owens Institute for Behavioral Research
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2026 Annual William A. Owens Lecture

with

Dr. Bruce Western
Russell Sage Foundation

“Poor Justice:
Case Studies in
Punishment &
Inequality”

April 3, 2026

UGA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

LECTURE 3:00 - 4:00PM
RECEPTION 4:00 - 5:00PM

Bruce Western is a leading sociologist whose research explores poverty, inequality, and the social impact of incarceration. A Principal Investigator of the Square One Project, he reimagines responses to violence amid poverty and racial inequality. Western is the award-winning author of *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison* and *Punishment and Inequality in America*, and has advised national panels on reducing racial disparities and addressing COVID-19 in U.S. prisons.

Hosted by Owens Institute for Behavioral Research



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SAVE THE DATE

Join us for an informal, year-end get together

A Gathering at the Garden

APRIL 30, 2026 | 4:30 - 6PM

UGA Founders Memorial Garden
325 S. Lumpkin St., Athens

More details to follow



Research Spotlight

**The science of support: Justin Lavner's work
to improve relationships and well-being**



[Learn More](#)

Faculty News

Welcome New Affiliates!

Jianhe Bian, Assistant Pprofessor, College of Environment + Design

Sarah Bork-Young, Assistant Professor, College of Engineering

Yizhu Gao, Assistant Professor, Mathematics, Science & Social Science Education

Guher Gorgun, Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology

Sarah Haight, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology & Biostatistics

Linn Normand, Associate Professor, International Affairs

Policy Updates



NIH Highlighted Topics

NIH now offers a centralized, searchable list of *Highlighted Topics* designed to help investigators explore scientific areas of current interest across NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices. These topics aren't formal funding announcements, but they spotlight priority research areas where NIH encourages submissions under broad, investigator-initiated funding opportunities. Researchers can use this resource early in project planning to align their ideas with NIH interests, contact relevant scientific staff, and stay up to date on emerging NIH focus areas. More information can be found on their [website](#).

Opportunities

Call for GDP Class of 2027

The Owens Institute for Behavioral Research (OIBR) invites applications for the 2026–2028 Grant Development Program (GDP). This two-year program is designed to support University of Georgia faculty in the social and behavioral sciences who have not yet secured major extramural funding and have been in their current UGA position for at least one year.

Participants are selected based on their potential to develop competitive external grant proposals during the program period. The GDP provides structured guidance, peer support, and dedicated time to advance research toward successful extramural funding submissions. Program participants are expected to submit at least one external research proposal through OIBR during the two-year period.

The program includes approximately two in-person sessions per month, held on Tuesdays from 12:00–2:00 PM. Attendance at all sessions is expected.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a single PDF that includes:

- A Department Head approval form
- Curriculum vitae
- Overview of the applicant's research agenda, including:
 - Research interest keywords
 - A brief summary of research focus (1/2 page)
 - A description of the proposed research project and qualifications to conduct it (1 page)
 - Potential external funding sources (if known)

Additional program details and the Department Head approval form are available on the OIBR [website](#).

Application Deadline: May 1, 2026

Submission Instructions: Email a complete application packet (as one PDF) to oibr@uga.edu

OIBR Pivot Funds

The OIBR Pivot Fund 2026 allows researchers to continue to conduct important work, while responding to the current funding climate. Funds can be used to collect data, purchase data sets or equipment, or for other needs, as identified by the investigator, to facilitate submission of an external grant proposal. Funds cannot be used for conference travel or personnel funding (faculty or student). The budget cannot exceed \$5,000.

The application should contain: 1) one paragraph describing your current research; 2) one to two sentences explaining how you are pivoting your research; 3) one page describing the project for which you are seeking funding, your qualifications for conducting the proposed research, and intended external grant mechanism(s); 4) budget, budget justification, and timeline; and 5) a current CV.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the OIBR Leadership Team. Send applications (as a single PDF in the order listed above) to oibr@uga.edu, with the subject line “Pivot Funds.”

OIBR News



OIBR has an opening for a **Senior Accountant**. Please share this opportunity with anyone you think may be interested in joining our fantastic team! Anyone interested can apply [here](#). Any questions about the position can be sent to **Jenny Claire Carey** at jccarey@uga.edu.

Online Open Office Hours

Kim Cherewick, Assistant Director, and **Jenny Claire Carey**, Post Award Operations Manager, will be hosting weekly office hours. Drop in via [Zoom](#) from **10–11am every Monday** to ask any grant-related questions. Contact Kim at ksilvis@uga.edu with any questions.



Have news? Please send kudos, announcements or other items to Andrea Horsman at ahorsman@uga.edu. Distribution occurs monthly on the second Monday of the month. The deadline for submissions is the first Wednesday.



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