



Touro College Department of Psychology

Contact:
Gabe Kahn
212-463-0400, ext.5404
gabriel.kahn@touro.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Touro Awarded \$587,000 Grant from National Science Foundation for Computerized Experimental Psychology Laboratories

NEW YORK, N.Y., December 16, 2011 – Dr. Allan Geliebter and Dr. Barbara Romain, faculty members of the Psychology Department at Touro College, have received a three-year, \$587,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The grant will support them in the development of Process-Oriented Guided-Inquiry Learning (POGIL) computer-based Experimental Psychology laboratories, a state-of-the-art approach to enhance student’s abilities to think critically and reason analytically.

This is the second grant awarded to Drs. Geliebter and Romain from the NSF. In the first grant, they were awarded \$100,000 to establish the POGIL approach, the primary focus of which is to teach the *process* of learning, rather than specific content areas. Students are guided by the instructor to discover the answers to critical thinking questions that help them develop reasoning skills as researchers, in addition to learning the specific content of a traditional experimental psychology curriculum. This approach has been used successfully for other “hard” sciences such as chemistry and physics.

“This a major Type 2 grant from the NSF which will allow us, over the next three years, to implement and expand the computerized experimental laboratories to other divisions of Touro,” according to Dr. Geliebter, the Principal Investigator. Dr. Geliebter added that student instructors will be hired to maintain the labs and to assist professors with the technology.

An important component of POGIL is collaborative learning. Students work in learning teams so that they can be active in the learning process and assist each other in reasoning through the answers to critical thinking questions posed to them. In this way, they learn from each other and through the process of thinking through the material together, the material becomes more meaningful to them, according to Dr. Romain.

“With this grant we shall continue development of POGIL-based Experimental Psychology computer laboratories which we started with the funding from our first NSF grant several years ago,” Dr. Romain said. “In addition, we will be holding seminars on POGIL and making these materials available to other universities so that they have access to them, as well,”

Dr. Geliebter (Principal Investigator) has an M.A. in biology and a Ph.D. in psychology from Columbia University. He was chair of Touro’s Psychology Department for over 20 years. Dr. Geliebter is recognized internationally for his research studies in the field of obesity and eating

disorders, which have been supported by numerous National Institute of Health and industry grants.

Dr. Romain (Co-Principal Investigator) received her B.A. from Barnard College, Columbia University, where she majored in mathematics. She has a Ph.D. in psychology from New York University. Dr. Romain has authored numerous publications in the field of cognitive development.

Touro is a system of Jewish-sponsored non-profit institutions of higher and professional education. Touro College was established in 1971 primarily to enrich the Jewish heritage, and to serve the larger American community. More than 18,000 students are currently enrolled in its various schools and divisions. Touro College has branch campuses, locations and instructional sites in the New York area, as well as branch campuses and programs in Berlin, Jerusalem, Moscow, Paris, and Florida. Touro University California and its Nevada branch campus, as well as Touro College Los Angeles, are separately accredited institutions governed in common by the same Board of Trustees as Touro College. For further information on Touro College, please go to: <http://www.touro.edu/media/>.

###