



Dear Students,

As I step into my second year as Chair, I feel incredibly excited about what lies ahead for us—both within and beyond the halls of the Department of Psychology. Our university is in the midst of transformative change, as we implement a bold, institution-wide [strategic plan](#). Just across from our beautiful Fernandez Center, we are witnessing the renovation of the Donnelly Science Center, which will offer incredible, state-of-the-art facilities. Within our department we are also actively engaged in strategic planning, launching initiatives across all of our programs to continue to provide you with the liberal arts education you have come to expect from us. Amidst all of this change, we are, and will continue to be, a safe harbor—a place where you can find community, be inspired, learn, and grow.

As we look ahead to the fall, I hope your summer provided you with the chance to rejuvenate and engage in activities that nurture you. I like to steep in thought over the summer. Among other activities (walking, hiking, and traveling), for me, it is a time when I catch up on the books I've been stockpiling all year. With a slower pace, I can immerse myself in reading and learning for hours at a time. I can shut the dozens of tabs that are open in my brain and just curl up with an interesting book or idea. While the books I chose this summer were varied, they ultimately shared a singular message: **be here, be present, your time is short**. In a world where we seem to be more and more disconnected and our technology tricks us into thinking we are more connected than ever, I can't think of a better mantra for us as we get ready to start a new year of personal and professional growth, together.

I know that as a student you often feel pulled in many different directions. **So, I'd like to encourage you to reflect on what being present might look like for you this year**. I hope you dive into the amazing opportunities—academic, professional, and personal—that are waiting for you. Whether it's attending a Psi Chi or Psychology Club meeting, joining a study group with members of your cohort, or starting your own thing, immerse yourself in the experiences available to you in our department. Notice, also, the small moments....like talking to a neighbor those few minutes before a class starts. For me, being present means stepping out of my office more often—having lunch in the communal kitchen, resisting the urge to check my email while I walk from one side of the building to the other, and trying not to schedule my days back-to-back so I can just *be here*, with you.

How do you plan to be present this year? E-mail me back if you have a few minutes! I'd love to hear your thoughts and ideas. Did you steep on anything over the summer? As always,

my door is open. If there's anything in this message that resonated with you or if there's anything you ever want to talk about, please feel free to stop or drop me a line. I'm here.

See you soon / Nos vemos pronto,

Marianna Carlucci

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