

## PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT

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### Research

Social neuroscience is characterized by the use of physiological principles and events to inform theory and generate research on social psychological phenomena (Cacioppo & Berntson, 1992). My program of research is guided by this perspective and starts with the assumption that social processes that are conscious or verbally reportable harbor information on just one band of influences relevant to the governance of social behavior and well-being. Therefore, an examination of physiological processes may shed light onto social processes that complement traditional social psychological methods and thus foster a more integrative approach to the study of social behavior. Using this approach, my work has been aimed at elucidating the biological pathways linking social relationships and health. Since the time of my last TFR in 2017, I have continued to have an active program of research which has been supported by 2 new NIH grants (PI, co-I) and 1 new NSF grant (co-PI). I have also published 60 articles/chapters since my last TFR.

In future years, I would like to address two important issues in my research. First, what are the antecedent processes that give rise and maintain relationship ambivalence? These questions are being actively pursued in an ongoing NIH-funded project. The pandemic significantly impacted these studies but we are finishing up data collection on our final grant study that will provide a test of our theoretical model (Social Ambivalence and Disease Model) that specifies antecedent conditions (e.g., early life adversity) and mediators (e.g., interpersonal stress, Holt-Lunstad & Uchino, 2019). Second, how might we reduce relationship ambivalence to benefit health? We have pilot data suggesting that loving kindness meditation (LKM) can increase social support and decrease social negativity so might be a useful intervention tool (Uchino, Bowen, et al., 2016). I am resubmitting an NIH grant in March of 2023 to test a dyadic LKM intervention to positively impact relationship processes as indexed by cardiovascular/inflammatory processes. Besides these 2 main questions, I plan to conduct a number of meta-analyses on the larger literatures linking social support to biological function to guide next generation studies in the area. I should emphasize that the best part of this work is the outstanding colleagues I collaborate with especially my decades-long-work with Timothy Smith and more recently Brian Baucom.

### Teaching

The groundwork for my development as an educator started as an undergraduate at the University of Hawaii. At that time I was fortunate to work as an undergraduate researcher at the Center for Studies of Multicultural Higher Education. The goal of this center was to facilitate educational outcomes for students of different ethnic backgrounds. The emphasis was on educating the faculty on how culture influences “the context of learning” in ways that can facilitate or hinder learning at traditional institutions of higher education. This approach stresses flexibility and is sensitive to the skills and life circumstances of different individuals based on their cultural background. As a result, a course that uses different modes of learning in a well-planned experience will have the best chance of capitalizing on such diversity while also strengthening a student’s ability to learn through other modes. This view is also consistent with my goal to have my courses be more inclusive. Inclusive teaching practices include not only multiple modes of course instruction and evaluation but also including materials that are inclusive to underrepresented groups. In my primary teaching areas, this is especially important given long-standing health disparities.

During my recent sabbatical, I incorporated inclusive teaching methods and materials in both my undergraduate and graduate courses. However, because I was chair from 2018 to 2021 (and on sabbatical the following year) there are only two courses for evaluation in this TFR (Psychology 3460 in Fall of 2017 and Fall of 2022). Importantly, as part of curriculum development I have extensively revised my Psychology 3460 (Health Psychology) course in Fall 2022 to make it more inclusive and a better online experience for students.

One of the most important and personally satisfying aspect of my teaching involves mentoring my graduate students. During the course of graduate training, I attempt to shape their academic skills and independence by moving them to more complicated skills only after they have shown mastery of easier skills. Thus, each student progresses at their own rate. I also facilitate group involvement in other student projects and thus develop the collaborative, collegial skills I view as important to their careers. To provide my graduate students with detailed feedback, I meet with each student every week. These issues are also discussed during our laboratory meetings (bi-monthly), along with other issues surrounding their professional development (e.g., grant writing strategies, dealing with conflicts of interest etc.). Based on my approach, some students blossom early, and some during their last years of graduate training. However, all have reached a standard of excellence that made me proud to be their mentor. I also continue to mentor them into their academic / professional careers and all of them know they can contact me at any time if necessary. During the time covered by the TFR, I have mentored 3 graduate students to their masters degree and 2 graduate students to their PhD degree. I have also been on 7 additional thesis committees and 8 additional PhD committees. I have also actively involved my students in research. Of the papers during this TFR review to come out directly from our lab – all have included a graduate student as either first or co-author and 2 papers included undergraduates as first author. I was awarded both the CSBS Excellence in Mentoring Award and University Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Distinguished Distinguished Mentoring Award since my last TFR.

### Service

Besides my other departmental, college, and university service (see my Curriculum Vitae), my most significant service role since my last TFR was Department Chair (2018-2021). I resisted taking on this role (ducking and weaving) given its perceived impact on my research which is the most enjoyable part of the job to me. However, I was convinced by Dean Berg and my respected colleagues that I could make it work and that I might be a good match for this role given my collaborative/collegial style. I was also told what does not kill you will make you stronger to which I thought “what if it does kill me?” Well I am still here and while I found many aspect of being chair very challenging – I did learn new leadership and professional development skills of which I am grateful.

The part of being chair that I enjoyed the most was problem-solving and collegial discussions with my colleagues. This was especially important when the pandemic hit in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of my term which impacted every aspect of our scholarly mission. Guided by upper administration, through a series of collaborative discussion the department found a way to effectively move forward. We were able to transition classes online through remarkable faculty flexibility and effort, redirect our research efforts given constraints on in-person studies, and met regularly due to the magic of Zoom. These efforts reflected the resiliency and collaborative efforts of the entire department. We were also able to make strides in the diversity mission of the department (e.g., graduate diversity TA, undergraduate diversity research experience, Diversity Committee budget). All of these changes were facilitated by the amazing staff, faculty, and graduate students which are tremendous resources for the office of Chair.

In terms of national service since my last TFR, I was on 8 editorial boards and the scholarly lead on 2 special issues along with 10 tenure/promotion reviews. I am currently an Associate Editor for Health Psychology. I am also a mentor for 3 national programs in the field and a reviewer for position / scientific reports from the Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness as well as the Surgeon General Advisory on Social Connections as a Public Health Policy. Finally, I have been involved in media outreach including interviews with the Washington Post, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and National Public Radio.

#### Future Goals

My guess is that I have about 10 years left in my career before I can resume my career as a surfer. During this time, my research goals will be to focus on testing the theoretical model outlined by Holt-Lunstad and Uchino (2019). Preliminary data are forthcoming and future studies will be needed to flush out any complexity in the results. I would also like to test an LKM intervention aimed at reducing relationship ambivalence. My teaching goals are to continue to keep my courses current and inclusive in its focus. For service, I will continue in my new role as associate editor for Health Psychology in the upcoming years as it checks off a professional goal of mine and I've enjoyed that work so far. Locally, besides my usual service, I hope to have an informal role in helping guide the department along the lines of other past chairs who were very helpful to me during my term.