

DEPARTMENTAL COLLOQUIUM

**CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN MOTIVATIONAL
PROCESSES
AND OPTIMAL FUNCTIONING**

*Wednesday November 21st 2018, 12:30 - 2:00 pm
Pavillon Adrien-Pinard, SU-1550
100 Sherbrooke West, Montreal (Quebec), H2X 3P2
A wine and cheese will follow, SU-R310*

**THE BENEFITS OF VIEWING INTERESTS AS
DEVELOPED, NOT FIXED**

Paul A. O’Keefe, Ph.D.

Professor, Yale-NUS College
Singapore

Paul A. O’Keefe, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Yale-NUS College and Director of the Mindsets & Motivation Lab. His research focuses on goal pursuit with particular attention to motivational factors, such as implicit self-theories, interest, and self-regulation. His research has been published in leading psychology journals and featured in numerous media outlets including The New York Times, Washington Post, The Atlantic, and Forbes. He co-edited the book *The Science of Interest*, and has been supported by various funding agencies including the National Institutes of Health (USA) and the Ministry of Education (Singapore).

People hold different beliefs about the nature of interest. Some lean toward the view that interests are inherent and relatively unchangeable (a fixed theory of interest). Others see interests as more developed (a growth theory of interest). In laboratory studies, we found that a growth (vs. fixed) theory leads those with strong interests in one academic area to express greater interest in a new or different area, and to maintain a new-found interest when pursuing it became difficult. Similarly, a 2-year randomized controlled field study showed that incoming liberal arts undergraduates who learned about a growth theory (vs. control) developed more interest in their math course—the area outside of their pre-existing interests—which, in turn, predicted a higher math grade, a stronger intention to minor in math, and a greater likelihood of selecting and completing math electives in their sophomore year. This openness and pursuit of new interests suggests that a growth theory might predispose people to see connections among disciplines. Indeed, additional lab experiments showed that a growth (vs. fixed) theory led to a stronger tendency to effectively integrate the arts and sciences. As the world continues to globalize, we will need interdisciplinary approaches to solve new and old problems. Cultivating a growth theory of interest might spark that process.

In collaboration with the Research Laboratory on Social Behavior, directed by Robert J. Vallerand, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of psychology, Université du Québec à Montréal
<http://www.lrcs.uqam.ca/en/home/>



2018-2019 Lectures Series

January 23rd, 2019

Carsten Wrosch, Ph.D.

Concordia University

“Goal Adjustment Capacities, Subjective Well-being, and Physical Health”

April 17th, 2019

Emily Balcetis Ph.D.

New York University

“Focused and Fired up: Motivated Visual Perception and The Self-Regulation of Exercise Behavior”

September 19th, 2018

Lawrence R. Brawley, Ph.D.

University of Saskatchewan

“Self-Regulation Links Social, Health and Exercise Psychology: Application Among Asymptomatic and Symptomatic Populations”