

# Eight USU College of Education and Human Services Scholars Ranked in the Top Two Percent of Global Researchers

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Elsevier Research, a research and global technology company, works with universities around the world to gather and share important research discoveries. Based on [Elsevier's analysis](#), in 2024, eight faculty members from the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services were among the top two percent of researchers in their fields.

The 2024 scholars were ranked among the top 100,000 researchers in the world, or within the top two percent of their sub-field. The list is based on publicly available data that tracks how often researchers' work is used and cited by other scholars worldwide. Researchers are grouped by field, which allows comparisons to be fair, and multiple measures are combined to reflect both individual contributions and collaborative work. Elsevier recognizes scholars whose research ranks among the most influential globally or within their specific area of study.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the eight CEHS faculty members who have been recognized among the top two percent of scholars worldwide in 2024," said Shawn Whiteman, interim dean of the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services. "Their scientific contributions across education and learning sciences, human development and family studies, health and kinesiology, psychology, and speech and hearing sciences are truly inspiring and reflect the strength of the research culture within the college. I congratulate them on this well-deserved recognition and thank them for elevating our entire academic community."



**David F. Feldon, Professor, Department of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences**

David Feldon, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences and the vice provost for graduate studies at Utah State University. His scholarship identifies mechanisms of learning in postsecondary education that facilitate the equitable development of expertise, specifically in STEM disciplines. As a mixed methodologist, his work integrates quantitative measurement and advanced modeling strategies with various qualitative methods, including grounded theory and phenomenography. This work was recently published as a book by Routledge titled *Mixed Methods for Psychological Measurement*. Feldon received the Researcher of the Year award from the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services in 2024 and the Award for Significant Contributions to Educational Measurement and Research Methodology from Division D of the American Educational Research Association in 2019.

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**Aryn M. Dotterer, Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies**

Aryn Dotterer, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Utah State University. Dotterer is also the executive director of GEAR UP programs at Utah State University and the principal investigator of the USU STARS! GEAR UP Partnership grant, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. These programs aim to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Her research examines the role of parental involvement and parent-child relationships in shaping racial/ethnic minority adolescents' school engagement and academic achievement, with a particular focus on identifying protective factors that promote positive development despite discrimination. Dotterer's work has been supported by the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education and appears in outlets such as *Educational Psychologist*, *Developmental Psychology*, *Family Relations*, and *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*.

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**Alan L. Smith, Emma Eccles Jones Endowed Dean and Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health Science**

Alan L. Smith, Ph.D., is the Emma Eccles Jones Endowed Dean of the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services at Utah State University and a professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Science. He is a past president of the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity and the American Kinesiology Association and a Fellow of the National Academy of Kinesiology. Smith's research encompasses the link of sport and physical activity involvement with young people's psychological and social functioning. He is best known for his research on peer relationships in physical activity settings (e.g., sport, physical education) and the motivational implications of these relationships for children and adolescents. His work has included the examination of sport parenting, athlete burnout, and the promise of physical activity for ameliorating symptoms and impairments of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in young children and has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and the U.S. Department of Education as well as other agencies such as the International Olympic Committee.

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**Amy L. Odum, Professor, Department of Psychology**

Amy Odum, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University. Her research interests are in basic behavioral phenomena, such as sensitivity to delayed outcomes, response persistence, conditional discrimination, and environmental influences on drug effects. Odum's work has been funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute of Mental Health. Odum has served as president of the Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior and Division 25 of the American Psychological Association, and she is president-elect of the Society for the Quantitative Analysis of Behavior. She is a fellow of the Association for Behavior Analysis International and was the first woman to serve as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior*. In 2024, Odum received a lifetime achievement award from the American Psychological Association.

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**Karl R. White, Professor, Department of Psychology**

Karl White, Ph.D., is the Emma Eccles Jones Endowed Chair in Early Childhood Education, a professor in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University, and the founding director of the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management. White's work focuses on developing more effective hearing identification and intervention programs for infants and young children through research, improving public health information systems, training and technical assistance, and information dissemination. His accomplishments have been recognized with awards from many organizations, including the Deafness Research Foundation, the American Association for Speech Language and Hearing, the Swedish Society of Medicine, the American Cochlear Implant Alliance Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Callier Prize in Communication Disorders. He has also served on many national and international advisory groups for organizations such as the United States Department of Health and Human Services; the World Health Organization; the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine; the American College of Medical Genetics; the Coalition for Global Hearing Health; and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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**Michael E. Levin, Professor, Department of Psychology**

Michael Levin, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University and co-director of the USU Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) Research Group with Michael Twohig, Ph.D. Levin's research focuses on the development, evaluation, and implementation of digital ACT interventions to address mental health concerns for a range of populations. He has conducted over 50 clinical trials evaluating ACT in areas including college mental health, anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive-related disorders, and chronic health conditions. This research has been supported by 15 years of ongoing funding from National Institutes of Health and foundation grants.

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**Michael P. Twohig, Professor, Department of Psychology**

Michael Twohig, Ph.D., is a psychologist and professor of psychology in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University where he co-runs the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Research Group with Michael Levin, Ph.D. He is a past president of the Association of Contextual Behavioral Science and winner of the 2025 D. Wynne Thorne Career Research award from USU. Twohig's research focuses on the use of ACT across a variety of clinical presentations with an emphasis on obsessive compulsive and related disorders. He has published over 250 peer-reviewed papers, many book chapters, and 13 books, with the most recent being *the Anxious Perfectionist* (with Ong) and *Trichotillomania: An ACT-Enhanced Behavior Therapy Approach* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.; with Woods). His research has been funded through multiple sources, including the National Institute of Mental Health, IOCDF, and the Misophonia Research Fund. In 2022, 2024, and 2025 he was rated as the most productive author on ACT in the world.

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**Tyler L. Renshaw, Professor, Department of Psychology**

Tyler Renshaw, Ph.D., is a professor in the Psychology Department at Utah State University. Renshaw primarily works in the School Psychology program for which he teaches graduate courses, conducts clinical supervision of mental health services in schools, and serves as the director of training for the Ph.D. specialty. His research program focuses broadly on advancing mental health services in K-12 schools and more particularly on improving the quality and accessibility of mental health assessment for youth in schools. Renshaw is the new editor-in-chief for *School Psychology Review*, which is one of the leading peer-reviewed journals in his field.

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