



## **Sofia University response to the changes at Sofia in the last year**

Sofia University has had a turbulent year as we have addressed senior administrative leadership changes, missed enrollment projections and the resultant budget challenges, loss of academic leadership, including our founder, Bob Frager, in particularly damaging ways based in the administrative changes, and finally, we've done it all in a very public forum. There is a lot of information about Sofia's situation available online, and we presume that most people thinking about whether to attend Sofia are finding this information while doing their "homework"; we actually appreciate and support the care taken in any discernment process regarding Sofia.

The good news is that we have moved well beyond where we were last year, the past is behind us, we have new leadership committed to the values and mission of Sofia, our founder is back, and we remain fully accredited and building for the future.

We have had some loss of faculty, but that was not due to any restructuring or layoffs; as often happens at the end of an academic year, we have had some well-earned retirements, some faculty have relocated or taken positions at other institutions, and we have had one death in our faculty family.

We also have some exciting initiatives in the works: we're introducing graduate programs in both business management and computer science with an eye to the integration of transpersonal and psychological work into the core requirements of both programs. This puts Sofia in the forefront of radical thinking about the very nature of science and business education and the necessity for transpersonal and psychological skills to both. We are part of a rapidly evolving and innovative conversation that is transforming the traditional disciplines of computer science and business management.

At Sofia University we believe wisdom lies within each individual. In fact, wisdom is a core meaning of "sofia", and our approach to education facilitates access to our own wisdom, and to our own health, joy, insight and spiritual experience. We invite you to join us.

## New Event!

### Pluralism in Transpersonal Psychology: Methodological and Metaphysical Perspectives

Speech from Dr. Les Lancaster - President of the  
Board of the International Transpersonal  
Association (ITA)

Thursday, August 7th  
Classroom 1059A  
4:00 – 6:00 PM

On what basis may we argue that transpersonal psychology constitutes a sub-discipline of psychology having an appropriate scholarly, or academic, basis? The recent publication of the Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology, and a new project by MacDonald and Almdendro to produce a book evaluating the current status of transpersonal psychology, has brought this question into focus. Moreover, the absence of a significant transpersonal focus within the upsurge of research into spirituality, meditation and mindfulness challenges us to clarify what epitomizes the approach of transpersonal psychology. Closer to home, the removal of the term 'transpersonal' from the title of what was the 'Institute of Transpersonal Psychology' might be construed as reflecting a crisis of identity amongst practitioners of transpersonal psychology.

Metaphysical and methodological issues are critical in establishing an interest or approach as a discipline. I argue that transpersonal psychology incorporates a metaphysical perspective in which transcendent realms are viewed as being irreducible to naturalistic categories when conceived in materialistic terms. In turn, this metaphysical perspective has implications for our view of methodology: 'Science' as traditionally understood is inadequate to the goals of transpersonal psychology. The real question is not whether these radical positions are acceptable or not, but rather whether they necessitate removal of the term 'psychology' from our title. In other words, is transpersonal psychology a legitimate sub-discipline of the over-arching discipline of psychology or should it be subsumed within an alternative discipline or even stand as a self-contained discipline (with or without a change of name)? In arguing that we are indeed a branch of psychology, I address the importance of bringing metaphysical pluralism into the psychological study of spiritual practices and mystical views of the mind.

To RSVP your spot for this free event visit: [bit.ly/1nzoZ8o](http://bit.ly/1nzoZ8o)

Can't join in person? Watch via livestream here:  
<http://www.livestream.com/sofiauniversity>



**B Les Lancaster** is Professor Emeritus of Transpersonal Psychology at Liverpool John Moores University, UK and an Honorary Research Fellow in the Centre for Jewish Studies at Manchester University, UK. He is Chair of the Transpersonal Psychology Section of the British Psychological Society, and President of the Board of the International Transpersonal Association. Les' research interests focus on the cognitive neuroscience of consciousness and the psychology of mysticism, with a specific focus on Kabbalistic Psychology. Over his career, Les has disseminated key aspects of consciousness studies and transpersonal psychology to a wide audience, both academic and more popular. He is committed to the value of transpersonal perspectives in a range of professional areas, including coaching, therapy and management, and is presently Academic Dean for Transpersonal Psychology at the Professional Development Foundation, UK. He is currently Director of online postgraduate programmes in Consciousness, Spirituality and Transpersonal Psychology validated by Middlesex University, UK ([www.ita-professional.org](http://www.ita-professional.org)). In addition to many journal articles, Les' published works include *Mind Brain and Human Potential*, winner of a Science and Medical Network Best Book Award, *Approaches to Consciousness: the Marriage of Science and Mysticism*, and *The Essence of Kabbalah*.



## Congratulations Christine!

Dr. Christine Brooks, Associate Dean of Faculty and chair of the Master of Arts and doctor of philosophy programs (Ph.D.) in transpersonal psychology, was featured in a blog post on GradSchools.com titled “Celebrating Women in Higher Education” which highlights inspirational females in leadership roles at Universities.

To read the post about what it is like to be a female leader in an academic institution, please visit:

<http://www.gradschools.com/blog/women-in-higher-education-2318>

## Alumni Speaker Series: “Spiritual, but Not Religious” With Davy Davidson, MASG

Thursday, August 14  
Classroom 1059 A  
6:00 – 8:00 pm

Davy will talk about what it means to her to be spiritual, but not religious and how she brings her perspective to spiritual guidance. There will be discussion among attendees about what “spiritual but not religious” may mean for them, and how the idea gets expressed in their lives.

Davy Davidson is a spiritual director working with men and women who want to live in truth with their divine essence. Your deepest wisdom wants to be known, and with practice you can learn tools to integrate spirit with body and mind. The way is never a destination, but always a becoming. Over time and with patience you can know and be nourished by the sacred source of all being as it lives through you.

Davy was a business consultant and entrepreneur before transferring to the field of spiritual development. Since 2007, she has been a student of the Diamond Approach and spent a year at the Feminine Wisdom School. Davy earned a Master of Arts degree in Spiritual Guidance from Sofia University in 2012. She is the Spiritual Guide at Sofia Community Center for Health and Wholeness and serves as a Board Member at Sofia. Her website is: [www.truenaturenow.com](http://www.truenaturenow.com)

For more information, contact [events@sofia.edu](mailto:events@sofia.edu)



## David Caul Graduate Research Grant Call for Submissions Opens August 1, 2014

The International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation ([www.isst-d.org](http://www.isst-d.org)) is pleased to provide advanced notice of the David Caul Graduate Research Grant for 2014. This grant is designed to support research that is primarily concerned with dissociation or closely related topics. Graduate students (in a Masters, PsyD, or PhD program) and undergraduate honors students are eligible to apply for grants up to \$1500. Postdocs are not eligible for the Caul award. Please note that grants for projects less than \$1500 are also encouraged.

Application materials will be available through the grant webpage from August 1 – September 15, 2014. Further information will be provided before the submission window opens. Enquiries can be directed to: Dr. Rafaële Huntjens ([R.J.C.Huntjens@rug.nl](mailto:R.J.C.Huntjens@rug.nl)) or Dr. Eric Vermetten ([e.vermetten@umcutrecht.nl](mailto:e.vermetten@umcutrecht.nl)) or Dr Martin Dorahy ([martin.dorahy@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:martin.dorahy@canterbury.ac.nz)).



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Please turn off light switches when you leave classrooms and restrooms.

## Want to Join the Sofia Team?

All open positions are available here:  
<http://www.sofia.edu/content/employment>