



Woodmont College

Message from the Dean

Dear Students and Alumni,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying your summer.

Firstly, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all our graduating students. Your hard work, dedication, and resilience have paid off, and we are immensely proud of your accomplishments.

To our current students, we hope you'll embrace the diverse opportunities for growth, learning, and connection that Woodmont strives to offer. Our ever growing college resources are available to help you on your academic journey.

For our valued alumni, I encourage you to stay connected and involved with our student community, as your wisdom and experience are invaluable assets to our student network.

Looking ahead, our faculty and staff are working diligently to enhance and develop our academic programs. We are constantly striving to provide a nurturing and innovative learning environment that prepares our students for success in the ever-evolving world of work. I am confident that the upcoming academic year will be filled with exciting opportunities and advancements.

Remember that our staff is here to guide you and our support services remain accessible.

Let's make your time at Woodmont one of exploration, innovation, and shared accomplishments. We're here to support you every step of the way.

Wishing you all a productive and enjoyable rest of the summer!

Chana Prero, Dean



Faculty Spotlight

Woodmont College Interviews

Professor Michael Hamlin

Dr. Hamlin received his doctorate in Educational Psychology from the University of Washington and has worked and taught psychology and education classes to hundreds of students at several top universities including the University of Washington, Drexel University, Thomas Jefferson University, Pepperdine University, Loyola Marymount University and Touro University as well as the Microsoft Corporation. Starting with his graduate school research which focused on the integration of the learning sciences and educational technology, he has gone on to direct professional education and training programs both in traditional settings and in virtual environments for medicine, dentistry, business and allied health.

Tell us a little bit about your background and your life.

I was born in Southern California and was involved in music activities growing up. I worked with different community youth musical groups for several years in California, Oregon and Washington states. Eventually, I decided to go to college where I majored in psychology and biology. As the psychology jobs one can find with a bachelor's degree are limited I decided to go to graduate school. After graduate school I held a number of different jobs including: educational director at a medical school library, faculty development director at two other schools, psychology professor and head of psychology, academic director and Dean at Touro in Los Angeles and Israel and finally instructional designer and course facilitator at Woodmont.

Although I didn't grow up religious, when I returned to Los Angeles I connected with some Jewish outreach groups and became a ba'al teshuvah. Quickly after that I got married and we were blessed with a baby boy. We had a good life in Los Angeles but felt something was missing and we weren't so thrilled with the way things were going in California and how

they might affect our son, so in 2016 we made aliyah. We found a wonderful kehilla led by Rav Shalom Rosner and our son participated in Bnei Akiva. He entered into his IDF service this last month so we are both proud and anxious.

What led you to choose a career in Educational Psychology?

Originally, when I was working with youth musical groups, I thought I could improve my teaching by learning more about educational psychology. But when I decided to go to graduate school my advisor there steered me into research and so I changed direction. In graduate school I became interested in the growing field of computer-based education. I pursued that field in graduate school and into my career in academia where I worked with faculty to help them integrate technology into their teaching. I always combined my knowledge of learning and thinking from educational psychology to my work in computer-based teaching and instructional design. Although I have spent much of my career in educational administration, I eventually came back to teaching both in class and online. Obviously, knowing educational psychology has been very helpful to both my in-person and online teaching and course design.

What do you see as the main challenges facing the field of Educational Psychology today?

One of the main challenges facing is one facing all of education today which is the over-emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). The push from teachers unions and other groups to focus on DEI has created a hyper-focus on these topics at the expense of basic educational issues. So, DEI creeps into even the research realm, taking energy from research efforts that might produce better ways to learn and teach. And programs that have been created such as enrichment courses for gifted students, are canceled in the name of equity seeking. The whole movement is undermining the clear-eyed growth of sound educational practices.

How has the advent of technology affected education and do the positive advantages outweigh the repercussions?

Technology has entered the educational field with everything from computer labs in schools to students' personal use of iPads, laptops and cell phones. Online learning is steadily increasing from flipped classrooms to full degrees offered online.

The advantages are that students have more tools for learning and can use them at home and at school. Technology can provide these and other advantages but also has its challenges. Many teachers are provided with new technology to use but are not given training on how to use it. And, as many teachers are not adequately trained in educational psychology concepts, they may not know how to proceed in designing lessons for the new technology.

Online learning allows more people to pursue a degree because they can do classwork at a time that fits into their schedule. But it also requires more discipline as there are no assigned times for learning as in traditional classrooms and students, although an instructor is

usually available by email, students are doing most of the learning on their own. So, one of the most critical aspects of online learning is self-discipline and organization. Students have to learn to schedule “appointments with themselves” and then treat them like a doctor’s appointment which they would never break.

What advice and tips would you offer students interested in pursuing a career in educational psychology?

Educational psychology is the application of psychology research to subjects such as learning and memory to improve learning and teaching. Students should start out with a thorough grounding in psychology, especially psychology classes that focus on learning, memory, perception, motivation and cognition. If the psychology program offers educational psychology, it is all the better, but the student should also search out other education courses such as educational technology and curriculum design. There are specific jobs in educational psychology such as school psychologist, professor of educational psychology or learning assessment expert but I have found that the principles of educational psychology can be applied in many settings where learning is involved such as instructional or media design or training.

What challenges did you face when you first entered the world of academia as a student and then as a professor? What lessons have you learned?

I was one of the world’s worst students in high school. I loved playing in the band and orchestra but was totally bored with the other classes. I was not inspired by the teachers and their presentation styles except for one creative writing teacher. When I entered college, I was totally unprepared and although I had some talent for writing and had always read a lot on my own, and could make my way through the liberal arts classes, I struggled through math and science. I was also challenged financially as I did not want to take out loans and go into debt so I worked all the time through university including a stint at Microsoft which required a lot of energy and reduced the time I had to study for my courses and work on my thesis and dissertation.

I guess the main lesson I learned is that it is best to continue your post-high school education immediately after high school and to focus on your education as much as possible. If you have to work, consider online learning at least for undergraduate work. From unhappy, personal experience, I cannot recommend trying to work while in graduate school! Also, if there are courses such as math or science you might find difficult, try to find tutors to help you. The individual attention goes a long way to help you master the material.



Student & Alumni Spotlight

Woodmont College Interviews

Dvora S.- BA in Judaic Studies, Graduate

Where do you work and what do you do? What got you interested in your chosen field?

I am an ELA teacher in a girls elementary school in New York. I am a passionate person and love to give and share. Teaching fills that passion. I was also looking to further pursue my education and was considering mastering in Social Work. Completing my BA with Woodmont has helped me in the short term and also opened up the door for future career advancement.

In what way has your studies helped you and/or impacted your life?

Completing my degree has boosted my confidence in the professional environment and is opening doors for my to advance my career. Beyond the transformational information that I learned in my degree, I learned first hand from my instructors on how to be a better teacher. I've learned how to communicate more clearly, give positive feedback and establish better rapport with my students. This has been invaluable!

What strategies for getting the most out of your BA would you give over to current students at Woodmont?

My personal experience taught me that earning a degree is not just about gaining information and hard skills. It's an opportunity to develop soft skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and communication that are just as valuable in the real workplace. The teachers at Woodmont are fully dedicated to your success in gaining both hard and soft skills. Take advantage of this opportunity by developing a relationship with them and ask them for feedback. If you're investing in a degree make the decision to get the maximum out of it!

What tips can you share for how to balance a long term career plan with the practicality of life and its responsibilities?

I think whenever making a decision it's important to consider the right thing and the right time. Sometimes because of other life considerations it's

strategic to pause after getting a BA to get some work experience and stability. You can then assess when to pursue further studies with greater clarity. This is especially true if you aren't 100% certain about your next step. For others, it can make sense to do a graduate degree right away. It's important to be realistic with your expectations and advise with someone if needed, to make sure you're making the smartest decision.



Why Invest in a Professional Network (Even if You're Employed)

By Tzvi Broker, Career Counselor at Woodmont College

If you're reading this, you probably fall into one of two categories - you're already working or in the job hunt. If you're a job seeker, the reason to invest in a professional network is more apparent. So we'll start with why it's essential, even for the happily employed.

Research shows that the average person switches jobs every four years, and millennials and Gen Z are switching closer to every 2-3 years. This doesn't mean you should be anxious about your future if you are working. Relax, you are doing great! There's no need to panic and start checking job boards daily. It does mean you should consider what your next strategic professional step may be. This is exactly where investing in a professional network comes into play.

Developing a professional network means building relationships with professionals in your industry. We all grew up with friends but usually friends will embark on different professional paths. While in college we meet others in our field, but once we move on, we often lose touch, because life gets busy. Marriage, kids, family responsibilities, and holding a job- who has time to socialize? So most of us connect with other professionals within our own workplaces. But that's limiting, since when the time comes to look for another job we often want to look outside of our own companies.

So, what does developing a professional network entail? Put simply, it's getting connected to others. It doesn't mean having to meet up for coffee or speaking each week. It does mean becoming part of a community of professionals in your field. It can mean attending a (live or virtual) professional meetup or conference every 3-6 months. If you are on LinkedIn, it means being part of professional groups and periodically posting an interesting article or commenting on other posts. In future

articles, I'll share tips for effective networking including how to 'break the ice' with others and position yourself as a valuable resource to others who may one day bring you on board their company. For now, here's your challenge:

Consider - who is my current professional network? Can I list 10-20 professionals (outside of my company) I could turn to if I was looking for a new opportunity tomorrow?

Tzvi Broker is a Career Coach with 10 years of experience providing career services to individuals, colleges, and organizations within the Jewish community. He runs workshops on career development and work engagement for companies, conferences, organizations, and schools worldwide. Tzvi's goal as Career Counselor for Woodmont College is to transition students from 'education' into the workforce through strategic guidance on building a resume, LinkedIn profile and the mindset needed to find their next opportunity.



News and Updates

- On May 19, 2024, students and alumni participated in an engaging online webinar with time management expert, Mr. Avi Friedman. Mr. Friedman shared valuable time management tips and strategies along with effective techniques on how students can best reach optimum productivity and success. Thank you to everyone who joined us live! Recordings are available [here](#).
 - We are excited to announce that we have revamped our internship program to bring more value to our Alumni by partnering with The Booster, a premier program that helps Jewish graduates gain entry into the software development workforce. Alumni will work as part of a team to cultivate the skills they need to stay competitive in the field and make their resumes stand out. The program is part time, remote, flexible, focuses on in-demand skills and technologies, with an option to stay longer than the initial 3 month period. For more information, you can fill out this [form](#) .
 - Woodmont warmly wishes all our recent graduates much success on their career journey. We're always available to support our alumni and rooting for you!
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Scholarships

In addition to the scholarships that Woodmont College offers, there may be external scholarship opportunities you may qualify for. Note that these scholarships are not managed by Woodmont. Please contact the specific organizations directly if you have questions.

Name	Amount	Deadline
<u>NHSS</u> Varies Sep. 2024 (Several scholarships, check site for requirements)	Up to \$1500	May 2024. (For graduate students pursuing a career in therapy)
<u>PD Soros Fellowship</u>	\$90,000	Oct. 31, 2024 (For graduate students who are foreign born or have foreign born parents, must be 30 years old or younger.)
<u>Whelan Foundation</u>	Up to \$80,000	March 31, 2025 (For graduating H.S. seniors from Long Island, majoring in special ed/therapy)
<u>NYWICI</u>	Up to \$10,000	Jan. 19, 2025 (For students majoring in communication, residents of NY, NJ, CT, PA)

We love hearing from our Students & Alumni!

We invite you to share any suggestions, updates or accomplishments. If there's a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue or if you'd like to be interviewed for our Student & Alumni Spotlight Column, please reach out to us at: alumni@woodmontcollege.edu



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