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FACULTY PROFILE

John Calicchia

Professor John Calicchia, the Coordinator of the Graduate Counseling Program in the Department of Secondary Education and Professional Programs is a very busy faculty member these days. As Coordinator of Counseling, he runs a program which currently has over 275 graduate students. Moreover, as the result of new state legislation, which requires licensing of master's level mental health counselors, Professor Calicchia has been involved in a major restructuring of the graduate program.

Since his arrival on campus in 1993, with a Ph.D from Northeastern University and staff psychologist experience at McLean Hospital, Professor Calicchia has been focused on insuring that the four concentrations in Counseling — School Counseling at the Elementary and Secondary Level, School Social Worker and School Adjustment Counselor, Mental Health Counseling and Higher Education/ Student Affairs Counseling — meet state standards and provide students with the necessary preparation to enter professional fields in the areas of education and mental health. Besides the high demand in the mental health counseling, Professor Calicchia is seeing a growing increase in interest in the school adjustment counseling concentration. Professionals in this area are returning to school to expand their studies as a way of improving their ability to serve the psychological and emotional needs of students. Because of this growing demand Professor Calicchia is preparing for a steady increase in students applying to the program in the coming years.

As Coordinator of the Program, Professor Calicchia has been focused on a number of administrative concerns including introducing a number of new courses, hiring faculty, conducting a close review of credit requirements and forming a close relationship with the Psychology Department to provide cross-listed courses. One of his main objectives is the proper development of field experience requirements, since mental health counselors fulfill 4,000 hours in a field experience. Professor Calicchia has also done some preliminary brainstorming on a future doctoral program in Counseling that would link Bridgewater with the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth.

While the Counseling Program occupies a great deal of Professor Calicchia's time, he remains a dedicated researcher. Professor Calicchia's recent area of interest is in what is termed "suggestibility in adolescents." In a recent article Professor Calicchia investigated how memory and attention affects child witnesses in court cases where issues of sexual abuse are alleged. As a result of his research, Professor Calicchia has been called as an expert witness and worked with legal teams involved in sexual abuse cases where ado-

lescents were called to testify. Professor Calicchia hopes to develop a handbook on "suggestibility" that will guide the prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges on an issue that has created controversy throughout this country.

Professor Calicchia is also currently involved in a study of developmental psychopathology. At Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital Professor Calicchia has participated in a long term project following 500 young men and women who are ex-patients. Professor Calicchia is reviewing the data of these men and women five to ten years after admission to better understand teen suicide, depression and aggressive disorders. This study is part of his ongoing interest in young people, especially those who are deeply troubled. Professor Calicchia also spends a few hours a week counseling children, adolescents, and families. He also performs psychological and educational assessments.

In a very short time Professor Calicchia has placed his mark on the academic life of the college. The Counseling Program is recognized in the region as a valuable resource for a range of professionals. But true to the dual mission of faculty at Bridgewater, Professor Calicchia is not only a dedicated instructor and program builder, he is a respected scholar whose work is certain to have an impact on the lives of many who come before the court system or who are in need of professional guidance. ■

