

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Shannon B. Dermer

Chair of the Division of Psychology and Counseling
College of Education

Interviewed by Jessica Butler

JB: Tell us something about yourself?

SD: My specialization is marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy

JB: What were the driving factors in your decision to join the GSU faculty? Please provide an anecdotal evidence you feel contributed to this desire?

SD: I wanted to be back in Illinois at an accredited counseling program

JB: What's your teaching philosophy or your outlook on higher education?

SD: My grandfather, who was brilliant, used to say, "you are never too old or too smart to learn something new." Maintaining curiosity and understanding there is always another way to view or understand something is part of how I try to teach and maintain passion for my field of study.

JB: How do you see your role on campus, outside of teaching?

SD: Faculty are role models to students and should be active in campus and professional life. We aren't here just to teach classes--we are here to be part of a learning community.

JB: What are some of your favorite things to do when you're not teaching?

SD: I enjoy traveling, reading, seeing movies.

JB: Please list any awards or significant accomplishments that you are proud of?

SD: I am proud of my publishing record and videos that I have helped create to train counselors.

JB: What do you love most about your job, Governors State University and your department?

SD: I enjoy it when students get excited about the profession of counseling and when they contact us after they graduate and tell us how much they appreciated their training.

JB: What are your goals for Governors State University and your department? How do you plan to achieve those goals?

SD: My goal is that students have a challenging and enjoyable experience in their classes and field placements. I want them to be proud of graduating from our programs. Personally, I will continue to have high expectations of students combined with lots of support.

JB: Do you have any advice for current students?

SD: Appreciate your education and learn rather than just earning grades.



Have you developed any long lasting relationships with former students? What are some of the ways you stay in touch with them now?

SD: I have faculty who are clinicians, professors, administrators, etc. We email, sometimes work together, and I see many of them at conferences.

***JB:* If you had to sit next to someone one on a plane for the next 8 hours, who would it be and why?**

SD: Although he is now deceased. I would have wanted to sit next to Steve De Shazer. He was a theorist and clinician who brought many different fields into his writings and work. I enjoy integrating many different ideas into how I teach and he was a master at bringing things from different disciplines into his thinking and writing.