

 **University of New Brunswick**  
**The Department of Psychology**

is pleased to present,



**Kathleen Hughes, Ph.D**

Department of Psychology, University of New Brunswick

*You can do it! Helping anxious students to perform and excel in differing classroom settings: Discussions of perseverance, teacher support, and socio-emotional learning."*

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, at 3:30 pm  
Snodgrass Lounge, Keirstead Hall Room 105

Learning environments place many demands on anxious students, both academic and social. Anxious students tend to become overwhelmed in the classroom environment and withdraw or disengage, which in turn may foster low achievement. Protective factors such as a positive classroom environment or supportive relationships with teachers may particularly benefit anxious students.

In addition, some highly anxious students may be particularly resilient. Two studies in will be discussed. The first study investigated the characteristics of highly anxious and highly achieving students drawing on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012 Canadian sample. Structural equation modeling was utilized to find support for the Self-System Model, indicating that among highly anxious students, more positive classroom environments predicted more positive attitudes and values towards math, which lead to more perseverance, and more math achievement.

The second and subsequent study examined social and emotional learning, anxiety, and engagement among undergraduate students in Fredericton. After student anxiety was statistically controlled, components of social and emotional learning (regulation, social competence, responsible decision making) were found to be unique predictors of student engagement. This indicates that fostering social and emotional strengths in students may be a possible strategy for improving engagement and achievement among highly anxious students.

**All are welcome and encouraged to attend!**