David Pittman, mentor by example

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Molly McGinnis ’09 and Lindsey Richardson ’09 and Dave Pittman ’94 learned a lot about Dr. David Pittman ’94 by working with him as Community of Scholars fellows during the summer. As they examined the effect of benzodiazepines (anti-anxiety drugs) on the consumption patterns of a variety of taste solutions by rats, they also watched Pittman conduct his own summer research. McGinnis and Richardson studied Pittman’s work habits, organizational skills, commitment to the research and enthusiasm.

“Dr. Pittman has taught me valuable research skills that will help me in graduate school and beyond,” says Richardson. “His precise and organized methods of conducting research are qualities I will remember even after I leave Wofford. He has been a great mentor and wonderful professor.”

Because of their summer research experience, both Richardson and McGinnis asked Pittman, associate professor of psychology, to supervise their senior thesis research, a continuation of the Community of Scholars project.

“They took what they learned this summer and built on it during the fall,” says Pittman. “The goal is for their work to culminate in an article published in a scholarly journal with McGinnis and Richardson as co-authors.”

In addition to his teaching and research load, Pittman writes grants to organizations such as the National Science Foundation to gain funds to help his students continue their research.

“Dr. Pittman definitely goes the extra mile to help his research assistants,” says McGinnis. “He is very student-oriented and genuinely wants us to do well in school. He is helpful in answering any questions about graduate school or after graduation experiences. He is an invaluable asset to Wofford in regards to his ongoing research and his willingness to help students.”