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**Psychology Professor V. Mark Durand  
invited to autism conference in Saudi Arabia**

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*Psychology Professor V. Mark Durand, PhD.*

USF St. Petersburg [Psychology](#) Professor V. Mark Durand, Ph.D., has been invited to participate in an international conference on autism in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Durand, a leading expert on autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is one of only four people from the United States invited to participate in the three-day conference in early February organized by a daughter of King Saud bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud.

“I am honored to be invited to participate in this conference, which will help further the understanding of this complex disorder and its treatment in the Middle East,” said Durand, a member of the Professional Advisory Board for the [Autism Society of America](#).

Dr. Norine Noonan, Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, said Durand’s invitation to the conference underscores the quality of research at USFSP. “Our students benefit from being able to learn from such internationally recognized faculty members as Dr. Durand,” she said.

Durand is co-editor of the [Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions](#) and author of 100 research publications and 10 books, including abnormal psychology textbooks used at more than 1,000 universities worldwide. Major themes of his research are the assessment and treatment of severe behavior problems for children and adults with ASD and other severe disabilities, parent training and the development of treatments for child sleep problems.

His most recent book is the award-winning *Optimistic Parenting: Hope and Help for You and Your Challenging Child*, a guide for parents and caregivers of children with ASD.