

**2022 – 2023**  
**University of Mississippi, Department of Psychology**  
**Psy 405/406 (Minor Research Problems) and Psy 420/421/422 (Special Topics)**

Students interested in gaining research experience beyond their laboratory class can register Psy 405 or Psy 420. These courses are not listed in the class schedule each semester. Psy 405 is taken for a Z grade, and Psy 420 is taken for a letter grade. Scheduling time for these courses is on an individual basis; it depends on the faculty members' research schedules (see below) and on the nature of the project.

**Steps Taken To Enroll In Psy 405, 406, Psy 420, Psy 421, or 422**

1. Identify a research area or faculty member you would like to work with (see descriptions below). Faculty that are NOT listed below are not actively recruiting undergraduate research assistants.
2. Determine whether or not you have met the prerequisites (see above and individual faculty descriptions).
3. Contact the specific faculty member (or follow instructions listed below) to learn more about research experience, and obtain permission to register. If you don't know their office hours, e-mail them.

---

**Course and research descriptions for individual faculty members**

**Dr. Sarah Bilsky** – Clinical Psychology ([sabilsky@olemiss.edu](mailto:sabilsky@olemiss.edu); Peabody 302D)

My research is focused on understanding familial processes that increase risk for parent and adolescent psychopathology and substance use. Specifically, my research takes a transdiagnostic approach to examine the processes contributing to the developmental psychopathology of anxiety and related disorders. My research program spans several stages of development (i.e., childhood, adolescence, and adulthood) although the primary focus of my work is the development and maintenance of these issues among adolescents and their parents. Undergraduates who participate in my lab will be expected to attend weekly lab meetings, and to contribute between 6-9 hours of time to the lab each week. Undergraduates will have the opportunity to assist with experimental protocols, participant recruitment, literature reviews, behavioral data coding, reading articles, and developing posters. For more information, please contact Dr. Bilsky.

**Dr. Laura J. Dixon** – Clinical Psychology ([ljdixon@olemiss.edu](mailto:ljdixon@olemiss.edu), Peabody 302C)

The primary focus of the HART (Health and Anxiety Research and Treatment) lab is on the etiology, maintenance, and treatment of anxiety disorders across the lifespan. The lab takes a transdiagnostic approach to examining behavioral, cognitive, emotional, and physiological processes that underlie a variety of anxiety disorders. The secondary emphasis of the lab pertains to the intersection of anxiety and health, and in particular, how anxiety pathology may contribute to engagement in maladaptive health behaviors (e.g., substance use) and exacerbate medical conditions (e.g., dermatological disorders). Students are expected to

attend weekly lab meetings and to work at 6-9 hours each week in the lab, which includes activities such as collecting data, running participants through experimental protocols, entering data, double-checking data and recordings, conducting literature searches, reading/discussing articles, and developing independent projects/poster presentations.

For more information and the lab application: <http://hartlab.olemiss.edu/>

**Dr. Andrew Hales** – Experimental Psychology ([ahales@olemiss.edu](mailto:ahales@olemiss.edu))

Research in Dr. Hales's lab focuses on social ostracism. We conduct experiments to understand how people respond to ostracism, and the factors that cause them to ostracize others. We also do experiments looking at social influence and the appeal of extreme groups and ideologies. Research assistants will gain hands-on experience in the fundamentals of experimental social psychology as they engage in 6 to 9 hours of lab activities per week. Typical activities include: running experimental sessions, developing stimulus materials for studies, conducting literature reviews, coding open-ended responses, and testing surveys.

**Dr. Laura Johnson** - Clinical Psychology ([ljohnson@olemiss.edu](mailto:ljohnson@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 301B)

*Research Areas: Cultural competence in clinical training and mental health programming, psychosocial and cultural adjustment of refugees, immigrants and international student, program evaluation and outcome research (particularly of community based preventative interventions for youth), and multicultural/cross-cultural research lab.*

Current projects are youth development in China, Jane Goodall's "Roots and Shoots" multinational survey, cultivating youth environmental leadership and civic engagement, acculturative stress in international students, barriers to American students' friendship with international students and racial identity, and acculturation and spirituality in African-American help-seeking.

**Dr. Kate Kellum** – Behavior Analysis ([kkellum@olemiss.edu](mailto:kkellum@olemiss.edu), Falkner 306)

Research areas: Complex human behavior: choice, self-knowledge, and rule governance, behavior acquisition, behavior analysis, social issues, teaching and evaluation at the university level

Expectations: Students in the lab will either work 5-7 lab hours or assist in lecture classes and work 2 lab hours. Attendance in 1 and a half hour weekly lab meetings is required. Lab work includes entering/checking data, running studies, assisting with studies, individual research, conference prep and presentations, and lab assistance.

Potential Labbies: Must have successfully completed a class with Dr. Kellum

**Dr. Aaron Lee** – Clinical Psychology ([aalee2@olemiss.edu](mailto:aalee2@olemiss.edu), Peabody 310C)

Dr. Lee's lab examines psychological and social factors that contribute to poor health behaviors among adults with chronic health conditions – particularly individuals with type 2 diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and persistent respiratory conditions (i.e., asthma and COPD). Lab members are expected to attend lab meetings and provide a minimum of 6 hours of lab related work each week

including entering data, reviewing/cleaning data, conducting literature reviews on related topics, and pursuing independent research projects. Lab members may have the opportunity to develop independent research projects and poster presentations. Interested students should email Dr. Lee for a lab application.

**Dr. Stephanie Miller** – Developmental Psychology ([semille5@olemiss.edu](mailto:semille5@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 311C)

The Cognition Underlying Behavior (CUB) Lab is a developmental research lab in the Department of Psychology at The University of Mississippi. We study social and cognitive development across the lifespan, with an emphasis on infancy and early childhood. We are interested in how children come to control their thought and behavior and what supports this development. In addition, we study how this control relates to other social and cognitive processes, like social understanding and memory.

Learn more about the CUB lab and find the application at [www.cublab.olemiss.edu](http://www.cublab.olemiss.edu).

**Dr. Marilyn Mendolia** - Social Psychology ([pymm@olemiss.edu](mailto:pymm@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 302A)

Dr. Mendolia accepts 5–7 students each fall and spring semester to work on special research projects. Each student works approximately 9 hours per week in the laboratory. Dr. Mendolia's research is in the area of emotion, specifically facial and verbal expression of emotion and the influence of personality and situational factors on self-regulation of emotion. Students attend weekly laboratory meetings and contribute to a specific research project. Laboratory responsibilities may include coding participants' videotaped facial activity for the presence of emotional facial expressions, conducting group and/or individual experimental sessions, developing and/or editing facial expressions for stimulus presentation, data entry, minor statistical analyses, and discussion of various research articles.

**Dr. Nick Prins** - Cognitive Psychology ([nprins@olemiss.edu](mailto:nprins@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 301A)

Dr. Prins studies visual perception. Most of your time in Psy 405 will be spent acting as a participant in research on low-level visual processes. Testing is self-paced and typically not very demanding. Scheduling hours (about 4 hours per week) is very flexible as you will learn how to get the experiment up and running yourself after which you can test without supervision. During meetings, the background, purpose, and results of the research will be discussed. Requirements are that you are reliable (i.e. show up for the times you have signed up for) and take the testing seriously.

**Dr. Grace N. Rivera** - Dr. Rivera is a social and personality psychologist whose research covers topics related to existential, cultural, and moral psychology. Her research is guided by an interest in how lay-theories (i.e., beliefs people hold about the way the world works) influence the way we approach life and the people

around us. Specifically, she examines lay beliefs concerning true selves, American meritocracy, and about the heritability of human characteristics. Lay beliefs are not necessarily rooted in fact and are largely shaped by our cultural context and social identities, yet can have profound impacts on various individual and interpersonal outcomes (e.g., psychological well-being, racial biases, parenting practices, social perceptions, and relationship satisfaction). Our research generally falls under these broad domains, though individual members may have additional research interests. Working in the Lay Beliefs and Culture lab with Dr. Rivera involves attendance at weekly lab meetings, helping with lab data collection efforts such as assisting in study programming, test-running surveys, running studies, helping with literature searches, and coding data. Students will have opportunities to assist in all aspects of the research process, from idea generation to data analysis and presentation. Students are expected to work 6/9 hours per week depending on the number of credits. Please email Dr. Rivera at [gnrivera@olemiss.edu](mailto:gnrivera@olemiss.edu) for an application, or see her lab webpage.

**Dr. Matt Reysen** - Cognitive Psychology ([reysen@olemiss.edu](mailto:reysen@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 301C)  
Students interested in working on research projects involving false memory, social influences on memory performance, and other basic memory phenomena are invited to inquire about the availability of opportunities to work on these and other related projects.

**Dr. Stefan E. Schulenberg** - Clinical Psychology; University of Mississippi Clinical-Disaster Research Center (UM-CDRC) ([sschulen@olemiss.edu](mailto:sschulen@olemiss.edu), Kinard 203)

#### **Research Program**

The UM-CDRC is an integrated research, teaching, and training center with emphases in disaster mental health and meaning and purpose in life. The UM-CDRC has participated in a number of studies relating to better understanding the mental health effects of such disasters as Hurricane Katrina, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and the recent flooding in Colorado, Louisiana, and Texas.

The UM-CDRC conducts research and provides education in the areas of disaster preparedness, psychological first aid, disaster mental health response and recovery, meaning and purpose in life, resilience, and posttraumatic growth.

The UM-CDRC also oversees the interdisciplinary minor in Disaster Sciences (<https://catalog.olemiss.edu/liberal-arts/ba-distr-sci>), a joint effort involving many different constituents on the UM campus.

#### **Expectations**

Students work for the UM-CDRC approximately 7 hours per week (e.g., team meetings, collecting data and resources, data entry and analysis, staffing the center, assisting with administrative tasks). Given the nature of what the center does in terms of research, teaching, training, and administration, students must be responsible, organized, respectful of others, helpful, and thorough.

#### **Prerequisites**

*Required:* An overall GPA of 3.0 or higher, along with consent of the instructor;

### CITI Training

*Recommended:* PSY 417 (Disasters and Mental Health) and/or PSY 430 (Positive Psychology)

Students interested in registering for Dr. Schulenberg's section of PSY 420 or PSY 405 are encouraged to visit <https://cdrc.olemiss.edu/join-the-cdrc-team/>, and/or email **sschulen@olemiss.edu**, for further information.

### **Dr. Carrie Veronica Smith** – Social and Personality Psychology ([csmith4@olemiss.edu](mailto:csmith4@olemiss.edu))

Dr. Smith is interested in studying how people go about their daily lives, with a focus on their social interactions. Who are we friends with? Do our romantic and sexual relationships have implications for ourselves and our lives more generally? Are we thriving or just surviving? In addition, to what extent and in what ways do individual differences between people – their motivations, their personality, their previous experiences, their beliefs about people, their gender – shape their daily lives and well-being.

Undergraduate students who work as research assistants (RAs) in the ISHTAR Lab with Dr. Smith will be exposed to all aspects of the research process, including idea generation, measure/manipulation creation and selection, data collection, data analysis, and presentation. RAs are expected to attend weekly lab meetings, regularly read journal articles pertaining to on-going projects, and be available to conduct studies in the lab (which may include some evenings and weekends). Interested students must have successfully completed Psy 201 and Psy 202 and ideally will have also taken Psy 205 or Psy 392/394, and Psy 321. They should also be very comfortable taking about sensitive topics, like sexuality. Interested students should email Dr. Smith for a lab application ([csmith4@olemiss.edu](mailto:csmith4@olemiss.edu)).

### **Dr. Rebekah Smith** – Cognitive Psychology ([rebekah@olemiss.edu](mailto:rebekah@olemiss.edu)) & **Dr. Reed Hunt** – Cognitive Psychology ([reed@olemiss.edu](mailto:reed@olemiss.edu))

Our research focuses on human memory in young and older adults. Specific topics include prospective memory (remembering to perform an action in the future), false memory (remembering that something happened when it did not), memory correction and improvement, implicit or unconscious influences on memory. Applicants for this lab should have taken multiple psychology courses and maintain a strong GPA. Research assistants will attend lab meetings, read background literature, and will be involved in data collection and discussion of data analysis and outcome. This experience will give you a closer look at what research involves and provides valuable experience and contact with faculty members that is especially helpful if you plan to attend graduate school, but can benefit all students, regardless of their future plans. All activities take place on Oxford campus and require 8 to 9 hours a week.

### **Dr. Todd Smitherman** – Clinical Health Psychology ([tasmithe@olemiss.edu](mailto:tasmithe@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 310D)

Dr. Smitherman's lab focuses on the relationship between psychological factors and physical health/illness. We study the roles of stress, psychiatric

symptoms (depression, anxiety), and behavioral interventions in chronic medical problems. Particular chronic health problems include migraine and other headache disorders, chronic pain, obesity, and insomnia. Applicants for this lab should have taken multiple psychology courses, maintain a strong GPA, and have sincere interests in graduate or medical school. Research assistants are expected to attend a weekly lab meeting and contribute several additional hours each week running various studies.

**Dr. Joseph Wellman** – Social Psychology ([wellman@olemiss.edu](mailto:wellman@olemiss.edu), Peabody 310B)

Dr. Wellman's research focuses primarily on examining the consequences of stigma and discrimination from the targets perspective. The lab's research focuses on how being the target of stigma affects behavior, well-being (e.g., self-esteem, eating, physiological and psychological stress), and performance (e.g., GPA, cognitive performance) among both low status (e.g., women, gay men, lesbian women, racial minorities) and high status (e.g., men, European Americans) groups. We also examine factors that may moderate individual's response to discrimination (e.g., system-legitimizing beliefs, group identification, perceived stigma). In addition we are interested in examining what leads individuals to stigmatize, stereotype and discriminate against others. Applicants to the lab should have taken multiple psychology courses and possess a strong GPA. Research assistants will attend weekly lab meetings, read articles on current research, run participants, design and setup online surveys, provide feedback on/assist in designing experimental manipulations and studies. Starting in Spring 2020 research assistants will be learning to conduct and run psychophysiological experiments focusing on examining patterns of cardiovascular threat and challenge. Being a research assistant in this lab will help to prepare you for graduate study in social psychology and related fields. Research assistants are required to commit to 8 to 9 hours of lab activities per week during the course of the semester.

**Dr. John Young** – Clinical Psychology ([jnyoung1@olemiss.edu](mailto:jnyoung1@olemiss.edu), Peabody Room 310B)

Research areas: Evidence-based services for children and adolescents, dissemination, mental health care systems, and clinical supervision