

Psychology Research & Scholarship Symposium

6 December 2023

PROGRAM

HUNTER ALUMNI CENTER

Schedule at a Glance

What	Where	When
Talks	Whiting Room	9:30am-4:00pm
Posters (Morning)	The Great Hall	9:30am-12:45pm
Presenters at Posters	The Great Hall	11:45am-12:45pm
Lunch	The Great Hall	11:45am-1:00pm
Posters (Afternoon)	The Great Hall	1:00pm-5:00pm
Presenters at Posters	The Great Hall	4:00pm-5:00pm
Reception	The Great Hall	4:30pm-5:00pm
Awards	The Great Hall	5:00pm



Schedule

9:00-9:30 The Great Hall

PRESENTERS SET UP MORNING POSTERS

9:30 Whiting Room

Is Gender Worth Teaching?: Effect of Psychology of Gender on Breaking Down Implicit Biases

Kaden Gardner

9:45 Whiting Room

Stress, Anxiety, and Self Efficacy and the Relationship between SUU Students

Samantha Brooks & Bailey Gray

10:00 Whiting Room

A Review of the Theories, Benefits, and Development of Connectedness to Nature

Kendra Nelson

10:15 Whiting Room

Interpersonal Guilt in the University: An Exploration of Risks, Predictors, and Outcomes in a Rural University Setting

Hunter Castleton

10:30 The Great Hall

BREAK *Snacks provided. All are welcome.

11:00 Whiting Room

What Brings Us Together: How Global Identity is Influenced by Images of Success or Suffering

Makenzie Vance, Jaiden Sherratt, Lexie Clements, Chris Furlow, & Madison Ward

11:15 Whiting Room

Perceptions of Gun Violence in America

Bailey Watson & Shannon Helquist

11:30 Whiting Room

Discrimination Everywhere Except my Backyard

Ayden Bash, Mason Huff, Chase Chamberlain, & Jenny Funk

11:45-1:00 The Great Hall: LUNCH

11:45-12:45 The Great Hall

PRESENTERS STAND AT MORNING POSTERS

Caffeine's Cognitive Edge: Investigating Memory Enhancement during Non-Optimal Times of the Day (poster)

Gregory Avalos

Short Term Memory and Distraction: A Test of Sesquipedalian Words (poster)

Brenna Bushman, Tessayanne Sanchez, Lacy Stirling, & Kira Wootton

Seizures & Stigma (poster)

Kelsey Grimshaw

Examining Implicit Bias on the Political Spectrum (poster)

Jared Hanks

From Struggles to Strength: Strategies, Identity, and Acceptance with the LGBT Community (poster)

Ricardo Heredia

Small Means to Happiness (poster)

Spencer Jackson

Adult Attachment: Its History and Associations across Relationships, Physical Health, and Mental Health (poster)

Mckel Jenson

Perceptions and Impact of Mentorship at SUU (poster)

River Lee, Gilbert Moen, Darian Hall, Kylee Navin, & Jacob Schultz

Loneliness and Parasocial Relationships at SUU (poster)

Haley LeFevre

Does God Care about Premarital Sex? Diving into the Sacred Bed Phenomenon (poster)

Ivelynn Noel

Unveiling Sex Differences in Anger Expression: A Literature Review (poster)

Brice Page

12:45-1:00 The Great Hall

PRESENTERS SET UP AFTERNOON POSTERS

1:00 Whiting Room

Eating & Exercise Valuation in College Students

Mason Lyman & Kaitlyn Chamberlain

1:15 Whiting Room

Beliefs about Mental Health and Personality

HannaJo Neisen, Megan Bates, Caylie Brown, Qinyu Chen, & Hannah Archibald

1:30 Whiting Room

Gender Roles and Self Perceptions in LGBTQ+ Parent Families: A Literature Review

Talia Jenkins

1:45 Whiting Room

Americans Perceptions of Immigrants Living in the U.S.A.

Jackson Campbell, Corbin Cowan, Dani Asher, & Aubrey Meehan

2:00, BREAK**2:15 Whiting Room**

The Media's Portrayal of Poverty: A Study of National Identity

Paige Kennedy, Gracelynn Lee, Scout Hansen, Robert Hutcheson, & William Powers

2:30 Whiting Room

Do Images of Gender Conformity Affect Individual Comfort and Conformity with Gender Expression?

Alexis Downey, Kylee Navin, Brice Page, Alyssa Franklin, & Hannah Cluff

2:45 Whiting Room

Development of the Attitudes Towards Religion Scale

Samantha Denbow, Katie Finlinson, Joseph Johnson, Tanner Dougherty, & Carley Grube

3:00, BREAK**3:15 Whiting Room**

Meditation and Survival: Connections Between Humanity and Nature

Reagan Wexels, Lauren Davis, Mason Peterson, Oliver Swanson, & Rebekah Story

3:30 Whiting Room

A Replication Study Testing Polarization and the Backfire Effect: Assessing Reactance to Black and Blue Lives Movement Messaging

Kasia Watson, Sarah Loertscher, Mason Lyman, & Alissa Starnes

3:45 Whiting Room

Learned Helplessness: Its Relation to Depression and School Interventions

Isabelle Packham

4:00-5:00 The Great Hall

PRESENTERS STAND AT AFTERNOON POSTERS

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Symptoms, Risk Factors, and Demographic Differences (poster)

Samantha Brooks

Religious Status, Religious Struggles, and Meaning in Life (poster)

Grace Collier

Sentencing Decisions and Age (poster)

Darian Hall & Kelsey Shields

SUU's Student Affairs Resources Effect on Student Sense of Belongingness (poster)

Sarah Loertscher

Music and Recall: A Study of the Impacts of Music on Performance (poster)

Cari Monson

Disparity of Sentencing Decisions Based on Gender (poster)

Tessyanne Sanchez, Brenna Bushman, Lacy Stirling, & Kira Woottan

Poor College Students: Poverty Rates at SUU (poster)

Sarah Smith

Short Term Memory and Distraction: A Test of Everyday Words (poster)

Lacy Stirling, Kira Wootton, Brenna Bushman, & Tessyanne Sanchez

The Mental and Social Impacts of Exiting a Religion/

Transitioning Faiths: A Replication Study (poster)

Emma Streadbeck, Keelie Stewart, Lilly Puckett, Summer Pereira, Brenna Bushman, Janeth Chavez, Kylee Navin, Jaggur Walker, & Sammy Hodgson

Ink and Income: Influence of Tattoos on Hiring and Pay Decisions in a Personal Employment Context (poster)

Kasia Watson

4:30 The Great Hall

RECEPTION *Snacks provided. All are welcome.

5:00 The Great Hall

AWARDS CEREMONY. All are welcome.

Abstracts

9:30, Whiting Room, Talk

Is Gender Worth Teaching?: Effect of Psychology of Gender on Breaking Down Implicit Biases

Kaden Gardner

Implicit attitudes and biases are feelings that exist outside the conscious mind. Research has shown that implicit biases can often be created and/or reinforced by a person's environment (Brownstien, 2016). A study done by Chowdhury et al. showed that an interactive intervention was able to decrease bias on a Disability Implicit Attitudes Test (Chowdhury et al., 2021). The purpose of our study is to see if an interactive several week long course breaks down the implicit attitudes surrounding gender. Using a pre-post test style experiment, we predict that the participant from the Gender Psychology course will have more neutral score than when they first took the class. This will help us determine if the course is effective and possible improvements can be made to the course. (*Mentor: Dr. LaFrance*)

9:45, Whiting Room, Talk

Stress, Anxiety, and Self Efficacy and the Relationship between SUU Students

Samantha Brooks & Bailey Grey

The present study investigated the concurrent validity of the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) by comparing scores on this scale with scores on two other scales that measure similar constructs: the Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale and the Self-Efficacy Scale. All three scales were administered online and anonymously using Qualtrics. The correlational analysis revealed a significant finding. Those who scored high on the PSS typically scored high on the GAD scale and low on self-efficacy. Further tests are being conducted to investigate which demographics such as gender, social class, financial income, hours worked, and how much financial support is being provided by SUU might affect the relationship among the scores on each of the scales. This

presentation will discuss our findings and how they relate to students here at SUU. (*Mentor: Dr. White*)

10:00, Whiting Room, Talk

A Review of the Theories, Benefits, and Development of Connectedness to Nature

Kendra Nelson

In a society that is increasingly reliant on technology, fewer people are spending time outside and developing connectedness to nature. Connectedness to nature involves the way a person views their own connection with nature, and includes a sense of belonging to the natural world. This literature review covers the theories supporting the link between connectedness to nature and well-being, and covers the various cognitive, psychological, physiological, and social benefits. This literature review also suggests ways to foster a genuine connection with nature, and discusses the importance of connectedness to nature on a world that is experiencing more environmental and climate disasters. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

10:15, Whiting Room, Talk

Interpersonal Guilt in the University: An Exploration of Risks, Predictors, and Outcomes in a Rural University Setting

Hunter Castleton

Interpersonal guilt, simply defined as guilt revolving around one's relationships with others, is an issue commonly explored in university students. It has historically been shown to correlate with mental health variables such as depression and suicidality. This study breaks down the effects of different domains of interpersonal guilt and its unique relationships with depression, stress, anxiety, suicidality, and adverse childhood experiences. Preliminary data shows a variety of interactions between different domains of interpersonal guilt (self-hate, survivor, and omnipotent responsibility), and each of the above described variables. Analysis included use of correlations and regressions to compare predictive mental health factors, as well as comparison of means between different demographic groups to identify populations with more potential risk for interpersonal guilt. (*Mentor: Dr. LaFrance*)

10:30-11:00, Great Hall**BREAK. Snacks provided. All are welcome.****11:00, Whiting Room, Talk***What Brings Us Together: How Global Identity is Influenced by Images of Success or Suffering*

Makenzie Vance, Jaiden Sherratt, Lexie Clements, Chris Furlow, & Madison Ward

Maslow (1954) defined Global Identity as a “feel[ing] of kinship and connection, as if all people were members of a single family... self-actualizing people have a genuine desire to help the human race.” This research sought to answer the question, “Can images of global success or suffering affect subjects’ feeling of connection with humanity?” Participants took the Identification With All Humanity Scale, which measures concern for various global issues (Hamer, 2021). Participants were randomly assigned to images of human success or suffering. Participants took the scale again to determine if their respective image exposure impacted their sense of global identity. Overall, there seemed to be a trend that images of success cultivated global identity more than images of suffering. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

11:15, Whiting Room, Talk*Perceptions of Gun Violence in America*

Bailey Watson & Shannon Helquist

Our study investigated variables that may determine who supports firearm restrictions and who believes that gun restrictions will increase gun violence. Our results showed that female participants support firearm restrictions more than males. Democrats support firearm restrictions more so than Republicans, with independent and none in the middle. Additional analyses will show 1. if there is a relationship between what people expect to see if firearm restrictions were enforced (i.e. increased gun violence, decreased gun violence, no effect on gun violence) and political party affiliation 2. which variables (concern with societal issues, belief in the statement that people kill people, perceived severity of gun

violence in the U.S.) correlate with and predict support firearm restrictions. (*Mentor: Dr. White*)

11:30, Whiting Room, Talk

Discrimination Everywhere Except my Backyard

Ayden Bash, Mason Huff, Chase Chamberlain, & Jenny Funk

Our study addressed whether perceptions of discrimination depend on the reference location (the United States, Utah, or the SUU campus) and other key variables. Participants believed that discrimination is most serious in the United States, followed by Utah, and then SUU. With the U.S. as the reference, Democrats believed that discrimination is more serious than Republicans. Female participants believe discrimination is more serious at SUU compared to male participants. Additional analyses will show 1. if personal experience with discrimination depends on political party affiliation and 2. which variables (concern with societal issues, personal experience with discrimination, and perceived severity of discrimination in the U.S.) correlate with and predict how serious discrimination is thought to be at SUU. (*Mentor: Dr. White*)

1145-1:00, The Great Hall

LUNCH

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall

PRESENTERS STAND AT MORNING POSTERS

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Caffeine's Cognitive Edge: Investigating Memory Enhancement during Non-Optimal Times of the Day

Gregory Avalos

Caffeine, often recognized as the most widely consumed psychoactive substance globally, plays an integral role in the daily routines of roughly 80 percent of adults in Western society. While its physiological effects are well-documented, there remains a gap in our understanding of how caffeine affects people at the psychological level. My prediction is that participants who consume a caffeinated beverage will demonstrate better performance on a memory test compared to participants who

consume a non-caffeinated beverage. Understanding the cognitive effects of caffeine has practical implications, especially for students struggling with early morning classes. This research may provide valuable insights into how caffeine can be used to enhance attentiveness and information retention, potentially benefitting students seeking academic excellence. Results pending. (*Mentors: Drs. Pynn & Warner*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Short Term Memory and Distraction: A Test of Sesquipedalian Words

Brenna Bushman, Tessyanne Sanchez, Lacy Stirling, & Kira Wootton

Previous research has found that distraction or irrelevant sound impairs and disrupts short term memory. Based on this research we determined distraction likely inhibits short-term memory performance. However, what is less known, is how this inhibits performance when you are studying a difficult topic. In order to test our hypothesis we created a between subjects experiments in which half the participants would memorize 30 difficult words in silence and the other half would memorize the same 30 difficult words with distractions. Each participant after 2 minutes of memorizing had 1 minute to recall and write down as many words as they could remember. We then measured the number of words recalled. Contrary to our hypothesis we found that there was no significant difference between groups. This is likely due to the lack of participants, as this study was conducted as a class project and not IRB approved. In terms of future research this should be done with a larger sample size and with a more diverse sample. (*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Seizures & Stigma

Kelsey Grimshaw

Epilepsy is the most common chronic neurological illness, yet very little is known about it. Studies have found that stigma has created challenges for people with epilepsy in economic and social capacities (Walker, 2018). It is suggested that stigma surrounding

epilepsy is due to a lack of awareness (Al-Dossari, 2018). A Qualtrics survey will be administered to a sample of Southern Utah University students to solicit their awareness of epilepsy and their perceptions of stigma regarding people with epilepsy. Additionally, interviews will be conducted with a second sample of people who identify as having epilepsy to discover their perceptions regarding awareness and stigma. The results of the two samples will be compared. It is hypothesized that the stigmas identified in university students will be consistent with experiences described in interviews of people with epilepsy. The findings from this study could aid in the normalization and destigmatization of epilepsy and other chronic illnesses in society. (*Mentors: Drs. Graham & Pynn*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Examining Implicit Bias on the Political Spectrum

Jared Hanks

Implicit Bias is a recurring issue especially in regards to racial bias. As supported by research, those who are more conservative leaning in political affiliation are more prone to racial bias when evaluated through other surveys. Participants in this study are given an Implicit Association Test on racial bias as well as a self-report Likert scale of political affiliation. Research shows a faster response time correlates to a higher implicit association between categories. We predict those with conservative views will have a higher rate of association between African-American faces and bad themed words as opposed to European-American faces than those of progressive political affiliation. (*Mentor: Dr. LaFrance*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

From Struggles to Strength: Strategies, Identity, and Acceptance with the LGBT Community

Ricardo Heredia

This study looks at how the LGBT+ population deals with concerns of identity, societal acceptance, and discrimination. The research identifies three primary coping mechanisms that affect resiliency: problem-focused coping, emotional coping, and avoidant coping. The purpose of the study is to determine how

coping strategies and resilience relate to obstacles faced by Southern Utah University students. It makes use of qualitative data analysis, the Brief-Scale COPE, and the Brief-Resilience scales. I hypothesize with the quantitative data LGBT individuals who employ strong problem-focused skills are expected to demonstrate higher levels of resilience scoping, LGBT individuals who employ high levels of emotion focused-coping skills are expected to demonstrate low levels of resiliency, and those that demonstrate high levels of avoidant focused-coping are expected to demonstrate low levels of resiliency. Qualitative data analysis will reveal common thematic patterns in the use of problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping skills among LGBT+ individuals, providing insights into their coping strategies related to discrimination, social acceptance, and identity. Understanding how the LGBT+ community at Southern Utah University manages to cope with challenges is crucial because it can result in better support and wellbeing. Results are forthcoming. (*Mentors: Drs. Pynn & Graham*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Small Means to Happiness

Spencer Jackson

I am researching the immediate effects of gratitude on well-being and mood. Although there is research to support that gratitude has positive effects on well being over time (Mongrain & Anselmo-Matthews, 2012). There is no research on the immediate effects of a gratitude manipulation on well being. My prediction is that those exposed to the gratitude manipulation (listing three things you are grateful for that day) will see an increase in several positive psychological measures compared to those who will be asked to recall an early life memory. According to the broaden-and-build theory, employing simple tactics to increase our mood, can result in an upward spiral of emotion. If it is the case that gratitude has an immediate positive effect on well being and mood, we can utilize gratitude exercises not only to improve well being but also to prompt creative and adaptive states of being. Results are forthcoming. (*Mentors: Drs. Hatch & Pynn*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Adult Attachment: Its History and Associations across Relationships, Physical Health, and Mental Health

Mckel Jenson

This presentation briefly reviews the literature on the origin of adult attachment theory and the associations of each attachment style in different aspects of life. John Bowlby originally proposed attachment theory, focusing on the relationship between infants and their mothers/primary caretakers. Building on Bowlby's theory, three leading adult attachment theories split adult attachment mainly into secure attachment versus differing insecure attachment styles. This presentation explores the different attachment styles across contexts of physical health, mental health, and relationship quality and behaviors. Secure attachment is associated with the most positive effects and attributes. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Perceptions and Impact of Mentorship at SUU

River Lee, Gilbert Moen, Darian Hall, Kylee Navin, & Jacob Schultz

A mentor is a peer, instructor, or colleague who is more experienced, older, or in a higher grade level than an individual and is generally focused on guiding that individual to attain their full potential through personal guidance. Mentors are utilized by both by Undergraduate and Graduate college students. Previous research has found that perceptions of mentors specifically in Psychology have been changing over the field's history, and that mentorship is importantly related to student success. However, previous research has largely focused on graduate mentorship or undergraduate mentorship at the R1 level. There is a dearth of research on this topic looking at students at teaching focused colleges such as SUU, specifically. This research project's purpose is to better understand perceptions of mentorship at SUU and how this is affecting student achievement and success. We are hypothesizing that students who have access to a mentor, will have higher rates of academic achievement and success but we are not sure what these achievements or success will look like and if they

will be comparable to research conducted at R1 universities.
(*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Loneliness and Parasocial Relationships at SUU

Haley LeFevre

Loneliness is a perceived isolation resulting from a lack of meaningful social connections. The COVID-19 pandemic increased rates of loneliness for many people, including college students. At the same time, internet use also went up. As loneliness and internet use increased, many people turned to parasocial relationships, forming one-sided emotional connections with online content creators and celebrities. Do students at SUU use parasocial relationships to cope with loneliness? We predict that students at SUU who are experiencing loneliness will be more likely to engage in parasocial relationships. Understanding how people interact with online content and develop relationships with online personalities is essential for promoting digital literacy and positive online behavior as internet usage grows. This research can explain the significance of digital media in students' lives if SUU students are using parasocial relationships to deal with loneliness. In that case, the university can create specialized support programs, workshops, or counseling services to assist students in making more effective coping strategies and minimizing feelings of isolation. Projected results will be presented. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Does God Care about Premarital Sex? Diving into the Sacred Bed Phenomenon

Ivelynn Noel

High levels of sexual satisfaction have been correlated with higher levels of marriage satisfaction (Litzinger & Gordon, 2005), relationship satisfaction (Santilla et al., 2008), and mental health and general well-being (Brody & Costa, 2009). While we know that sex frequency and frequency of orgasm affect sexual satisfaction (Barrientos & Paez, 2006), we also need to explore nonsexual factors that affect sexual satisfaction. The existing

literature of the effects of religiosity on sexual satisfaction is contradictory, and may have mediating factors such as sex guilt or marital status (Hackathorn et al., 2016). The proposed study aims to examine the effects of religious identity and marital status on sexual satisfaction by measuring sexual-spiritual integration. We predict that unmarried individuals will score higher than married individuals, which indicates a lower sexual-spiritual integration. The findings of this study will add clarity to the convoluted findings in the existing literature, and will help identify nonsexual factors that affect sexual satisfaction. The findings of the study will also provide insight that may help healthcare workers, pastoral counselors, and therapists to better service their clients. Results are forthcoming. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

11:45-12:45, The Great Hall, Morning Poster

Unveiling Sex Differences in Anger Expression: A Literature Review

Brice Page

Some researchers study violence, which focuses on the consequences of aggressive behavior. Whereas this presentation focuses on aggression without regard to the consequences. The stereotype suggests that men are the primary perpetrators of aggression. However, research suggests both males and females exhibit similar amounts of aggression. Differences in the sexes have been found to come from societal norms, different provocations, and perceptions of how aggression is exhibited. This review will explore those sources and the differences in how each sex presents aggression. Males typically lean towards physical or verbal aggression, whereas females predominantly express aggression through verbal or indirect means. Recognizing these distinct ways in which males and females express anger allows for the development of tailored and gender-sensitive strategies. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

12:45-1:00, The Great Hall

PRESENTERS SET UP AFTERNOON POSTERS

1:00, Whiting Room, Talk*Eating & Exercise Valuation in College Students*

Mason Lyman & Kaitlyn Chamberlain

Nutrition and exercise are two of the stressors that college students in America frequently identify (Hudd et al., 2000). This study explores the relationship between the attitudes and values that college students hold towards exercise and eating. The researchers used measures commonly used in the fields of nutrition, exercise science, and sport psychology to measure these attitudes and values. Differences between students' fields of study, financial strain, and academic status are considered as possible contributors to differences in reported scores. (*Mentor: Dr. McFadden*)

1:15, Whiting Room, Talk*Beliefs about Mental Health and Personality*

HannaJo Neisen, Megan Bates, Caylie Brown, Qinyu Chen, & Hannah Archibald

Research on the relationship between religion and health shows that religion can create barriers to mental health resources, which can lead to worse mental health (Nakash, 2018). The purpose of our study is to better understand the relationship between religious affiliation (LDS, other, spiritual, nonreligious), and views of mental health, with a focus on whether stigma regarding seeking mental health services exists. We predicted that the LDS group would score higher on the perfectionism scale and lower on the mental health scale. Results show that there is no significant difference between religious identity and both mental health and perfectionism scores. However, trends were found between the groups regarding the qualitative data that may support the hypothesis if more data were gathered. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

1:30, Whiting Room, Talk*Gender Roles and Self Perceptions in LGBTQ+ Parent Families: A Literature Review*

Talia Jenkins

LGBTQ+ parent families are a growing demographic as legal reform paves the way for more accessibility to parenthood for

sexual minority individuals. As many LGBTQ+ individuals grow up in a heteronormative society, their ideas of family and parenthood may be influenced by gender roles. Findings indicate that sexual minority parents and their children perceive their families similarly to each other. Additionally, internalized stigma impacts the development of LGBTQ+ individuals and families. The research often juxtaposes sexual minority parent families to cisgender heterosexual parent families. This presentation summarizes the research concerning how sexual minority individuals and LGBTQ+ parent families perceive themselves. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

1:45, Whiting Room, Talk

Americans Perceptions of Immigrants Living in the U.S.A.

Jackson Campbell, Corbin Cowan, Dani Asher, & Aubrey Meehan

Our study addressed how favorable or unfavorable university students' perceptions are of immigrants living in the USA and the variables that might affect those perceptions. Our results showed that male participants reported stronger negative beliefs about immigrants compared to females. Male and female participants did not differ with respect to positive beliefs. Democrats reported stronger positive beliefs than did Republicans, while Independent and none were in the middle. Additional analyses will show 1. if opinion valence (positive beliefs minus negative beliefs) is related to political party affiliation 2. which variables (concern with societal issues, personal experience with discrimination, and negative beliefs) correlate with and predict positive beliefs about immigrants in America. (*Mentor: Dr. White*)

2:00-2:15, BREAK

2:15, Whiting Room, Talk

The Media's Portrayal of Poverty: A Study of National Identity

Paige Kennedy, Gracelynn Lee, Scout Hansen, Robert Hutcheson, & William Powers

Our study focuses on national identity, which is the pride people feel for their country (Hanson & O'Dwyer, 2019). Gilmore's 2015

study found that by manipulating an aspect of national identity you can increase positive feelings towards one's country. The purpose of this study is to understand whether media portraying positive and negative headlines about poverty will increase or decrease national identity. Both forms of media increased participants' feelings of national identity. These findings are important given the plethora of positive and negative media. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

2:30, Whiting Room, Talk

Do Images of Gender Conformity Affect Individual Comfort and Conformity with Gender Expression?

Alexis Downey, Kylee Navin, Brice Page, Alyssa Franklin, & Hannah Cluff

The purpose of our study is to understand the effects of appearance and political affiliation on comfort and conformity with gender expression. Participants were asked to complete the Comfort and Conformity with Gender Expression Survey before and after being exposed to one of two visual manipulation conditions: images of gender-conforming individuals, and images of gender-nonconforming individuals. We predicted that viewing images of gender non-conforming individuals would decrease participants' comfort and conformity with their gender expression, while viewing images of gender-conforming individuals would increase participants' comfort and conformity with their gender expression. Results indicate that although our manipulation did not have a significant effect, means were trending towards conservatives and males being less comfortable with gender non-conformity. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

2:45, Whiting Room, Talk

Development of the Attitudes Towards Religion Scale

Samantha Denbow, Katie Finlinson, Joseph Johnson, Tanner Dougherty, & Carley Grube

Religious affiliation is rapidly declining. Given that religions often perpetuate an in-group out-group dynamic, bidirectional prejudices can be seen between both people who are a part of and people who are not a part of religion. One explanation for this phenomena of leaving religion and increased prejudice is that

there is a shift in attitudes towards religion. Attitudes affect behavior and may give insight into these trends. Little research has been done to determine attitudes as a tripartite model (affect, cognition, and behavior) when examining religion. The Attitudes Towards Religion scale (ATR) was developed to measure attitudes towards religion within the tripartite model (thoughts, feelings, and behaviors) to better understand why these cultural shifts are happening. In the present study, we conducted item analyses/revisions and explored ATR's factor structure, reliability, and validity. With this information, further research can be done to understand the correlation between attitudes towards religion and religious participation/exit. (*Mentor: Dr. Graham*)

3:00-3:15, BREAK

3:15, Whiting Room, Talk

Meditation and Survival: Connections Between Humanity and Nature

Reagan Wexels, Lauren Davis, Mason Peterson, Oliver Swanson, & Rebekah Story

Environmental identity affects pro-environmental behaviors. The degree of connection that an individual feels can be measured by the Connectedness to Nature Scale. This study's purpose is to better understand the effect of Peter Kahn's technological nature on connection to nature. It was hypothesized that a mindfulness meditation video will increase the connection experienced by participants in comparison to wilderness survival instruction video. It was found that data were trending in the hypothesized direction. However, a significant difference was not found. Understanding how to reconnect with the environment will allow greater access to the benefits of doing so. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

3:30, Whiting Room, Talk

A Replication Study Testing Polarization and the Backfire Effect: Assessing Reactance to Black and Blue Lives Movement Messaging

Kasia Watson, Sarah Loertscher, Mason Lyman, & Alissa Starnes

Political polarization in places such as the U.S. seems to be a prominent issue. Although echo chambers are blamed for increasing polarization, messages intended to persuade can backfire in the opposite direction. We predict that reactance (i.e., a perceived threat to one's freedoms) explains this effect. In a replication of previous research, participants will read a political message they will be led to believe came from a political candidate running for office either in support of Black or Blue Lives Matter, relative to a control message. We predict that a threat to one's freedoms will contribute to five different polarization outcomes. Liberals receiving the Blue and conservatives receiving the Black Lives Matter argument should feel threatened and polarize. (*Mentor: Dr. Strosser*)

3:45, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Learned Helplessness: Its Relation to Depression and School Interventions

Isabelle Packham

Learned helplessness is a theory of depression describing the unrelenting feelings of helplessness resulting from repeated exposure to uncontrollable stress. Research reveals the cognitive and neurological mechanisms underlying learned helplessness' connection to depression. Learned helplessness appears in schools due to uncontrollable stressors in classrooms. Students are at risk of developing learned helplessness without (a) self-efficacious behaviors and high self-esteem, (b) social support, and (c) supportive teachers. Reforming what students attribute to success and failure can boost self-efficacy and self-esteem. Additionally, self-efficacious behaviors are correlated to social support. Therefore, introducing autonomy-supportive teaching styles and attribution training in schools can alleviate learned helplessness and decrease depressive symptoms among students. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall

PRESENTERS STAND AT AFTERNOON POSTERS

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Symptoms, Risk Factors, and Demographic Differences

Samantha Brooks

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety-related disorder resulting from an individual's exposure to traumatic events. This research looks at variations in PTSD symptoms and how they manifest in individuals. Certain risk factors such as parents' mental health, past trauma experiences, and childhood can put an individual at higher risk of developing PTSD. The kind of trauma one experiences and its intensity can also predict an individual's likelihood of forming PTSD. An individual's age, gender, and ethnicity have also been shown to affect PTSD symptoms. This presentation will go over the symptoms, risk factors, and demographic differences that can affect PTSD symptom manifestation. (*Mentor: Dr. Koenig*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Religious Status, Religious Struggles, and Meaning in Life

Grace Collier

There has been a significant increase in individuals who identify as religiously unaffiliated (Pew Research Center, 2012)—and 74% of unaffiliated adults reported that they had been raised with some affiliation. This indicates that the overwhelming majority of those who identify as religiously unaffiliated have left a religion. Religious disengagement is associated with an increase in feelings of conflict, tension, or distress within several domains of religious and spiritual struggles including perceived meaning or purpose in life (Exline et al., 2022). Because of the rise in individuals identifying as religiously unaffiliated, it is becoming increasingly important to look into that demographic group and their experience with religious deidentification and how it may impact their sense of meaning in life. (*Mentors: Drs. Pynn & Warner*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Sentencing Decisions and Age

Darian Hall & Kelsey Shields

Previous research has found that there are a multitude of factors that influence sentencing decisions so much so that in the United States 2 people may receive different sentences for the same crime. Our research aimed to look at ages effect on sentencing decision within the same crime. Students in a 2010 class read a vignette about someone who committed a DUI and were asked to decide what the offenders sentencing length should be. We manipulated whether or not students read a vignette about an older adult or a younger adult committing these crimes. An independent sample T-Test was used suggesting that no differences were found between younger and older offenders. More research is needed with larger or more diverse samples. (*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

SUU's Student Affairs Resources Effect on Student Sense of Belongingness

Sarah Loertscher

Belongingness on college campuses has proven to be essential to the retention rates of students. In addition, the resources provided can make a significant impact on students' belongingness and overall well-being). In order to learn more about whether or not SUU's resources are effective at aiding in student belongingness, this study looks into how often students are attending specific, student affairs-related resources on campus and then determines their sense of belongingness. This hypothesis includes the idea that the more frequently that students utilize resources on campus, the greater the sense of belongingness they will have. Projected results will be shared. (*Mentor: Dr. Hatch*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Music and Recall: A Study of the Impacts of Music on Performance

Cari Monson

Background music refers to music that is played while the listener's attention is focused on another task (Radocy & Boyle, 1988). Research suggests that the effect of background music on performance during a cognitive task showed improvements in episodic memory. Music activates the limbic system which is

involved in controlling memory(e.g., Blood et al., 1999). The purpose of this study is to predict the relationship between music and performance on a cognitive task. It is hypothesized that students who listen to white noise while studying a text will recall more information, than those listening to classical music or pop music. In particular, the lyrics in pop music will be especially distracting(Cheah, 2022). Studying the relationship between music and performance on a cognitive task has implications for understanding memory. (*Mentor: Dr. Pynn*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Disparity of Sentencing Decisions Based on Gender

Tessyanne Sanchez, Brenna Bushman, Lacy Stirling, & Kira Woottan

Past studies have suggested that there may be disparities in sentencing decisions for the same crime. Specifically, previous research has suggested that men will be sentenced longer than women within similar crime brackets when on trial. For this study, we wanted to look into the disparity of sentencing decisions. To test this, we gave a survey to students in a 2010 class for a class project where students were randomly assigned to read about a DUI committed by either a male or female. Contrary to our hypothesis, no differences between conditions were found. Future research should conduct this study again with a larger more diverse sample and work to make sure participants are not aware of the conditions before they participate in the study. (*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Poor College Students: Poverty Rates at SUU

Sarah Smith

The Southern Utah University Suicidality Research Project is mainly concerned with identifying variables that contribute to higher rates of suicidality, including perceived social support, LGBTQ+ status, and so forth. It has also accounted for poverty rates, a stereotypical concern among college students. The aim of this research project is to identify the subscales of poverty among

SUU students, and which are the most pressing among the student population. (*Mentors: Drs. Koenig, Graham, & Hatch*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Short Term Memory and Distraction: A Test of Everyday Words

Lacy Stirling, Kira Wootton, Brenna Bushman, & Tessa Sanchez

In previous research, studies have suggested that distractions negatively impact concentration during memorization tasks. In order to test this, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. The first condition participants memorized 30 everyday words in silence while a partner timed them. The second condition participants memorized the list of words while background noises (specifically murmuring or non-comprehensive conversations) were playing. After the memorization task, all participants were instructed to write down as many words as they could remember. Contrary to our hypothesis, the results suggested that there were no group differences in memorization. Future research should conduct this study with IRB approval as opposed to class research, in a larger more diverse sample. (*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

The Mental and Social Impacts of Exiting a Religion/Transitioning Faiths: A Replication Study

Emma Streadbeck, Keelie Stewart, Lilly Puckett, Summer Pereira, Brenna Bushman, Janeth Chavez, Kylee Navin, Jaggur Walker, & Sammy Hodgson

The U.S. and Utah especially are seeing significant rates of mental health challenges and suicide. If unique challenges are associated with leaving a religion or embarking on a faith transition they must be identified. The population of people going through and have gone through a faith transition is rising. While these rates are rising not much research is being done on this group of people. This research project aims to show the impact that leaving a religion can have. Our first round of data collection showed those who exited a religion had both positive and negative

consequences. We believe that there will be similar results in our second round of data collection. (*Mentor: Dr. Warner*)

4:00-5:00, The Great Hall, Afternoon Poster

Ink and Income: Influence of Tattoos on Hiring and Pay Decisions in a Personal Employment Context

Kasia Watson

In a time where self-expression and individuality is on the rise, it is crucial to understand where biases towards tattooed individuals arise in the context of employment to meet the personal affairs of the employer. Unlike many studies that have focused their attention on public-facing roles, this research aims to explore how individuals would assign monetary value (hourly compensation) to those in a more personal employment context. The hypothesis of this study is that within this hypothetical hiring situation, the “applicant” with tattoos will be assigned a lesser hourly wage than the applicant without tattoos and that differences in scores of work abilities and personal perceptions will also be significant. Projected results of this study will be shared. (*Mentors: Drs. Corser & Pynn*)

4:30, The Great Hall

Reception. Snacks Provided. All are welcome.

5:00, The Great Hall

Award Ceremony. All are welcome.

Special Thanks

Garrett Strosser, Breanna Schurtz, Lynn White, and all the psychology faculty and students that helped put this together.

Map of Level 2 of the Hunter Alumni Center

**Whiting
Room**
available
9:00am–5pm

**The Great
Hall**
available
9:00am–5pm

Red Hill Room
available
9:00am–5pm

