UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
Do demand characteristics explain empathy-induced altruism and dictator game giving?

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Michael E. McCullough
Email: mikem@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of this experiment is to determine to what extent previous findings on human altruism are confounded with self-presentation bias (that is, we are interested in whether people are generous or helpful because they simply want to help people in need or act fairly, or rather merely want to be seen as helpful or fair). The data we collect will also be used to test other questions, such as whether there are gender differences in how empathy people feel toward those in need. Research Assistants who are involved will run participants’ experimental sessions, assist with entering data, and will serve as independent raters in order to quantify qualitative data that we collect from the project.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
Are popular measures of altruism and trust valid?

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Michael E. McCullough
Email: ehblabum@gmail.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of these studies is to determine whether popular methods of measuring altruism and trust in experimental settings are valid (that is, whether these experiments really do measure altruism and trust, or rather just appear to but really do not). These studies are important because scientists and policymakers have drawn conclusions about human behavior based on these measures, despite their questionable validity. Participants in these experiments will play economic games and fill out questionnaires related to altruism and trust. Research Assistants who are involved with the project will help to recruit participants, will run participants' experimental sessions, will assist with collecting and entering data, and will have the opportunity to be involved in many other aspects of the research process.
PROJECT TITLE:
Is religiosity associated with self-control and nurturing childhood environments?

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Michael E. McCullough
Email: mikem@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of this experiment is to clarify conflicting findings about whether religiosity is associated with the ability to delay gratification. We are also examining whether religiosity is (negatively) associated with the harshness of one's childhood environment. Research Assistants who are involved with the project will help to recruit participants, will run participants' experimental sessions, will assist with collecting and entering data, and will have the opportunity to be involved in many other aspects of the research process.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MOOD AND ANXIETY TREATMENT (CAMAT) PROGRAM

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Jill Ehrenreich-May
Email: anxietylab@psy.miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The Child and Adolescent Mood and Anxiety Treatment (CAMAT) Program is a clinical research and service program dedicated to developing and evaluating state-of-the-art, evidence-based treatments for children and adolescents with anxiety and depression. Individuals with the CAMAT Lab gain hands on clinical research experience. We recruit undergraduate students to receive 280/380/480 credit on an as needed basis. Students will gain research experience by participating in key research activities, included but not limited to: conducting literature searches, data entry, and other administrative research tasks. Students will also get the unique experience of gaining clinical knowledge and experience by participating in clinical meetings to determine diagnoses, identifying treatment components used in therapy via viewing actual therapy footage, assisting clinical therapists in implementing interventions, and helping clients complete clinical measures.

For more information visit our website: http://www psy.miami.edu/camat/
or contact our research coordinator, Stefania Pinto, at anxietylab@psy.miami.edu
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS  

PROJECT TITLE:  
SOCIAL COGNITION LAB  

SUPERVISING FACULTY:  
Faculty: Elizabeth (Liz) Simpson  
Email: simpsone@miami.edu  

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:  
OUR LAB FOCUSES ON SOCIAL COGNITION/SKILLS FROM AN EVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE. IN BEHAVIORAL STUDIES OF HUMAN AND MONKEY INFANTS WE EXPLORE FACE PERCEPTION (DETECTION/RECOGNITION/IMITATION) AND ACTION UNDERSTANDING (ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND GOAL-DIRECTED ACTIONS, PERCEPTION OF BIOLOGICAL MOTION). MANY OF OUR STUDIES USE REMOTE EYE TRACKING SO WE CAN MEASURE VISUAL INTEREST AND VIEWING PATTERNS OF PHOTOS AND VIDEOS. WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL SKILLS AND THE CAUSES/CONSEQUENCES OF THESE DIFFERENCES. UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMMIT TO WORKING IN OUR LAB FOR ONE YEAR AND A MINIMUM OF 9 HOURS PER WEEK. LAB TASKS INCLUDE MANAGING A PARTICIPANT DATABASE, RECRUITING FAMILIES AT LOCAL EVENTS, CONTACTING FAMILIES VIA EMAIL AND PHONE, SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS, ASSISTING WITH DATA COLLECTION (MAINLY NEONATAL Imitation and EYE TRACKING STUDIES), CREATING STIMULUS MATERIALS, CODING BEHAVIORS FROM VIDEOS, ORGANIZING DATA, GRAPHING RESULTS IN EXCEL, DATA ANALYSIS, AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS INCLUDING POSTER PRESENTATIONS AT CONFERENCES AND WRITING PAPERS. STUDENTS WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR LAB COORDINATOR AND GRADUATE STUDENTS. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND WEEKLY 1-HOUR LAB MEETINGS. COMPUTER SKILLS, ESPECIALLY WORD AND EXCEL, ARE REQUIRED. EXPERIENCE WITH SPSS AND ePrime ARE DESIRED BUT NOT REQUIRED. GPA PREREQUISITE: 3.0 OR HIGHER. SPANISH SPEAKING DESIRED BUT NOT REQUIRED. (PLEASE NOTE: WE DO NOT HAVE MONKEYS IN OUR LAB. THE INFANT MONKEY RESEARCH IS PART OF A COLLABORATION WITH THE NIH. INVOLVEMENT IN THESE PROJECTS WOULD PRIMARILY CONSIST OF BEHAVIORAL SCORING OF VIDEOS.)
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:

Kinship and Forgiveness

SUPERVISING FACULTY:

Faculty: Debra Lieberman
Email: debra@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Conducted under the auspices of the Lieberman Lab, the Kinship and Forgiveness study has two primary goals. The first is to examine forgiveness through the lens of evolutionary psychology. Using a series of economic decision-making games, we test the differing effects of apologies and compensation offers upon sibling pairs versus stranger pairs. The second objective is to pit competing hypotheses of kin detection against one another. We gather a range of kinship measures from sibling pairs, then test which measures best predict forgiveness and other prosocial outcomes. Research Assistants who are engaged in this study will assist with recruiting participants (particularly siblings), run experimental sessions, help with coding and data entry, and have an opportunity to be involved in other aspects of the research process.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
A Unified Intervention for Young Gay and Bisexual Men’s Minority Stress, Mental Health, and HIV Risk

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Steven Safren. Ph.D.
Email: ssafren@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
ESTEEM (Effective Skills to Empower Effective Men) is a 10-session skills-building intervention designed to reduce young gay and bisexual men’s (YGBM) co-occurring health risks by reducing the underlying cognitive, affective, and behavioral pathways through which minority stress impairs YGBM’s health. ESTEEM is based on the Unified Protocol, a cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) approach with efficacy across mental health and risk behaviors. The Unified Protocol changes underlying stress pathways using motivational interviewing, emotional and situational exposure, cognitive restructuring, mindfulness, and self-monitoring exercises.

The first aim is to test the efficacy of ESTEEM against (1) community mental health treatment (CMHT) and (2) HIV voluntary counseling and testing (VCT). Our primary outcome is condomless anal sex in the absence of either PrEP or known undetectable viral load of HIV+ primary partners. Knowing whether ESTEEM yields greater improvement than time-matched CMHT will establish the benefit of our transdiagnostic approach. Comparing ESTEEM to VCT offers a strong test of ESTEEM’s incremental cost-effectiveness. The second aim is to determine whether ESTEEM works through its hypothesized cognitive, affective, and behavioral minority stress processes. 3-, 6-, and 12-month follow-ups will determine if improvements in minority stress processes precede and statistically mediate outcome improvements. Mediation will validate the minority stress theory of ESTEEM and provide transdiagnostic targets for future YGBM health interventions. The third aim is to estimate ESTEEM’s incremental cost-effectiveness compared to VCT in terms of HIV infections averted and improved mental health. ESTEEM shows preliminary efficacy for improving the full spectrum of YGBM health. We will collect resource use and cost data to estimate return on investment of this transdiagnostic health approach compared to standard single outcome/stand-alone treatment approaches. The overall study PI is Dr. John Pachankis of Yale University School of Public Health. Undergraduate Research Assistants will also be expected to complete miscellaneous tasks for various projects in the lab.
Effectiveness of Nurse-Delivered Care for Adherence/Mood in HIV in South Africa

Faculty: Steven Safren, Ph.D.
Email: ssafren@miami.edu

This study is a two arm randomized effectiveness trial investigating whether a task shifting/sharing model of treating depression and improving adherence to ART in patients who fail first line antiretroviral therapy (ART) can occur using nurses in South Africa trained in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). South Africa is the country with the highest number of HIV infections in the world and the highest number of HIV/AIDS-related deaths, and where access to third line ART treatment is not currently available in the public healthcare system. Clinical depression, like elsewhere, is one of the highest comorbidities to HIV/AIDS, with estimated rates up to 34.9 percent. Depression, in the context of HIV, leads to poor self-care behavior such as non-adherence to ART and worse retention in care, which are critical for treatment success. Given that CBT is a validated treatment for depression, and that dissemination of evidenced-based interventions in HIV is a noted priority, this is a two-arm effectiveness RCT (stratified by antidepressant medication initiation/use or not) of nurse-delivered CBT for depression and adherence integrated into the HIV primary care setting in S. Africa. To ensure that those who need this intervention the most will receive it, participants will be patients with HIV who have failed first line ART, and have a unipolar depressive mood disorder. The primary outcomes (Aim 1) include adherence to ART (assessed by WisePill), depression (assessed by an independent evaluator), and proportion of (second line) treatment failures in each condition. Comparing this integrated care model to usual care (enhanced adherence counseling for first-line treatment-failures in this setting), will allow for an incremental cost-effectiveness analysis in Aim 2. This study is in collaboration with the University of Capetown (UCT) in S. Africa (John Joska and Lena Andersen), and Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School (Conall O’Cleirigh and Ken Freedberg). Undergraduate Research Assistants will also be expected to complete miscellaneous tasks for various projects in the lab.
PROJECT TITLE:
Addressing Psychosocial Comorbidities in HIV Treatment and Prevention

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Steven Safren, Ph.D.
Email: ssafren@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Mental health problems, including substance abuse, are among the most frequent comorbidities to HIV and are consistently identified as barriers to adherence, engagement in care, and reductions in risk behavior. Typically these problems co-occur as "syndemics" (co-occurring psychosocial problems that interact with each other and with HIV risk). Studies have found exceptionally high levels of comorbidity in patients with HIV and depression. This has raised the need to address other syndemics (e.g. substance abuse, PTSD, other anxiety disorders) in addition to depression in the context of care. Studies for this project include 1) using cognitive behavioral therapy to address syndemics in the context of HIV care in patients with uncontrolled virus, 2) analyses of cohort data on syndemics in individuals living with HIV care who are in treatment, and 3) qualitative data to examine the impact of syndemics on HIV transmission risk and adherence in individuals living with HIV in care. Undergraduate Research Assistants will also be expected to complete miscellaneous tasks for various projects in the lab.
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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
CHILD HEALTH LAB RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Alexandra Quittner, Ph.D.
Email: childhealthlab@psy.miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Thank you for your interest in the Child Health Lab! We conduct research focused on child and family adaptation to chronic illness, including adherence to medical regimens and family interventions to improve disease management. We focus on the development of measures of health-related quality of life, adherence, and family functioning. We also study the effects of childhood deafness on visual attention and outcomes of cochlear implants on children's cognitive, behavioral, and social development. Pediatric populations include children with cochlear implants, cystic fibrosis, and other rare pulmonary diseases.

We are looking for volunteers to assist with data entry, coding, and management. We require at least a 2-semester commitment, as well as at least 6 hours weekly in the lab. Volunteers must have a 3.3 GPA or above to join. Volunteers work on numerous projects, which allows for exposure to multiple types of research. Please see quittnerlab.com for more specific information about our ongoing studies.

If you are interested and able to make this commitment, please email us at childhealthlab@psy.miami.edu and we can set up a time to meet for a brief interview. Thank you!
PROJECT TITLE:
Effects of Stress Management Intervention in Patients with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) and Their Partners: The VideoHealth Study

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Michael Antoni
Email: mantoni@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is a debilitating neuro-immune disorder that affects people in their prime and can cause significant stress in their relationships. The project examines the biopsychosocial intervention effects of a tablet-delivered group-based cognitive behavioral therapy for stress management (CBSM) intervention for individuals who are diagnosed with CFS/ME, and their partners. Research assistants will help with data management and analysis, among other research-related tasks associated with psychobiological intervention studies. Opportunities for presenting research results will be available.
PROJECT TITLE:
BRAIN CONNECTIVITY IN TYPICAL AND ATYPICAL DEVELOPMENT

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Lucina Uddin
Email: l.uddin@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Within a cognitive neuroscience framework, our research combines functional connectivity analyses of resting-state functional magnetic resonance imaging data and structural connectivity analyses of diffusion tensor imaging data to examine the organization of large-scale brain networks supporting high-level cognitive processes. Current projects focus on understanding dynamic network interactions underlying cognitive flexibility in neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism.
**PROJECT TITLE:**
Object and Word Learning Lab

**SUPERVISING FACULTY:**
Faculty: Lynn Perry
Email: lkperry@miami.edu

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**
We have several ongoing studies investigating word learning and object recognition in adults and children between 1-7 years old. We use a variety of methods including behavioral experiments with toys or pictures on a computer; eye tracking; and naturalistic observation. There is a 3.0 GPA minimum and two-semester commitment for working in the lab. Interest in working with children and parents necessary. Professional, dependable, attentive to detail. Bilingual English/Spanish skills are desired but not necessary.

Tasks: testing subjects, library research, and computer work. Participant recruitment, stimulus creation, video coding, data preparation, attend research meetings
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

**PROJECT TITLE:**
UM Linda Ray Intervention Center Project (LRIP)

**SUPERVISING FACULTY:**
Faculty: Lynne Katz, EDD DIRECTOR
Email: lkatz@miami.edu

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The UM LRIP project is an early intervention program for children 0-3 born prenatally drug exposed with identified developmental delays from a diverse group of low resourced families. Ongoing data is collected on developmental progress of all children across multiple variables, to determine program effectiveness and effectiveness at the individual child level. Opportunities to assist in data collection and data analyses are coupled with a requirement to assist directly with the children in their classrooms with staff. Program hours are 9:00am-2:00pm daily. Students must complete UM human subjects protection modules before working with children. (Center is located adjacent to UM Medical Campus and is accessible by metro rail or car) Interested students will be interviewed.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
TRAUMA AND HEALTH IN LATINO YOUTH PRESENTING AT A PRIMARY CARE CLINIC

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Annette La Greca
Email: Contact Ashley Marchante at a.marchante@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Dr. La Greca’s lab focuses on how peer relationships (i.e., friendships, romantic relationships), and reactions to trauma (i.e., natural disasters, peer victimization) affect mental and physical health in youth. We are currently recruiting Research Assistants (RAs) for a study assessing the relationship between trauma and physical health in foreign-born Latino youth. Foreign-born Latino youth who migrate to the US are at high risk for experiencing a variety of potentially traumatic events and migration-related stressors before arriving in the US, during migration, and after arrival in the US. When they arrive in the US, many of these youth also experience lack of healthcare resources and continued poverty. Thus, the purpose of this project is to better understand the relationship between potentially traumatic events, migration-related stressors, and physical health (sleep, somatic complaints, and cardiometabolic risk) in foreign-born Latino youth. The association between migration experiences and mental health (anxiety, depression) are also being examined. Currently, we are collecting data in a primary care setting (University of Miami Pediatric Mobile Clinic) that provides free medical services to children without health insurance in the South Florida area.

For this project, Research Assistants (RAs) must be fluent in Spanish and be available to help with recruitment on Monday or Friday mornings. Tasks will primarily include (but are not limited to) preparing and organizing study materials, participant recruitment, administering questionnaires, and data management.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
HEART IN MIND STUDY

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Roger McIntosh Ph.D.
Email: r.mcintosh@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The aim of the study is to determine neural predictors of cardiovascular, autonomic, and immune dysfunction in post-menopause women living with HIV. Some of our methods include: functional neuroimaging (resting state functional connectivity, task-based fMRI); psychophysiology (EKG, skin conductance, blood pressure, respiration); and cellular biology (flow cytometry, endothelial cell-culturing).
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
Intensive Behavioral Intervention Services (IBIS) Clinic

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Anibal Gutierrez, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Email:a.gutierrez5@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The IBIS clinic is a Department of Psychology affiliated clinic that serves children ages 18 months to 4 years of age with autism and developmental delays. The clinic provides behavioral intervention services and also conducts clinical research in the area of behavioral interventions.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
FAST: FERGUSON ADOLESCENT SCHOOL TRANSITIONS PROJECT

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Annette M. La Greca
Email: Contact BreAnne Danzi at bdanzi@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
This lab researches adolescents’ peer relations, friendships, and romantic relationships, and how these factors influence mental and physical health. The transition from middle to high school is a particularly stressful time for adolescents. We are collecting data from adolescents during this transition period, to better understand which “risk” and “resilience” factors affect psychosocial functioning. We are particularly interested in evaluating the various ways in which adolescents’ close friends and romantic partners contribute to their adjustment (social anxiety, depression) as well as their health-related behaviors (smoking, drinking substance use). The potential adverse effects of peer victimization, including cyber victimization, on mental health are also being investigated. Involvement in this project may include traveling to local high schools to collect data, preparing study materials, data entry and management, and conducting literature reviews. Our lab also values professional development, and provides mentorship to undergraduates interested in applying to graduate school or having a career in mental health. We ask for a minimum commitment of 5 hours per week from new research assistants. Please contact BreAnne Danzi (bdanzi@miami.edu) to apply.
PROJECT TITLE:
Web-based Interventions for Distressed Couples

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Brian Doss, PhD
Email: bdoss@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Although several empirically-supported interventions to prevent and treat relationship distress have been developed, the majority of couples - especially high-risk and low-income couples - do not seek these face-to-face interventions. Our previous project translated a leading empirically-supported couple therapy into a Web-based format and showed that the web-based program creates significant and medium-sized gains in both relationship functioning and symptoms of depression/anxiety. We are currently working on a 5-year grant sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families and translating our web-based program to be used on computer and mobile devices. Our study aims to exclusively serve low-income couples in distressed relationships nationwide through two web-based relationship therapy programs.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MOOD AND ANXIETY TREATMENT (CAMAT) PROGRAM

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Dr. Jill Ehrenreich-May  
Email: anxietylab@psy.miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
THE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MOOD AND ANXIETY TREATMENT (CAMAT) PROGRAM IS A CLINICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICE PROGRAM DEDICATED TO DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING STATE-OF-THE-ART, EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE CAMAT LAB GAIN HANDS ON CLINICAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE. WE RECRUIT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE 280/380/480 CREDIT ON AN AS NEEDED BASIS. STUDENTS WILL GAIN RESEARCH EXPERIENCE BY PARTICIPATING IN KEY RESEARCH ACTIVITIES, INCLUDED BUT NOT LIMITED TO: CONDUCTING LITERATURE SEARCHES, DATA ENTRY, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE RESEARCH TASKS. STUDENTS WILL ALSO GET THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF GAINING CLINICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE BY PARTICIPATING IN CLINICAL MEETINGS TO DETERMINE DIAGNOSES, IDENTIFYING TREATMENT COMPONENTS USED IN THERAPY VIA VIEWING ACTUAL THERAPY FOOTAGE, ASSISTING CLINICAL THERAPISTS IN IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS, AND HELPING CLIENTS COMPLETE CLINICAL MEASURES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.PSY.MIAMI.EDU/CAMAT/  
OR CONTACT OUR RESEARCH COORDINATOR, STEFANIA PINTO, AT ANXIETYLAB@PSY.MIAMI.EDU
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS  

PROJECT TITLE:  
RISK FACTORS OF ANXIETY & OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE SPECTRUM DISORDERS  

SUPERVISING FACULTY:  
Faculty: Kiara Timpano, PhD  
Email: klaratimpano@gmail.com  

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:  
This study investigates a range of hypothesized risk and vulnerability factors associated with anxiety and obsessive compulsive spectrum disorders, such as OCD and Hoarding Disorder. We are interested in individual difference variables that may play a role in the onset and maintenance of symptoms. A variety of cognitive, neuropsychological, psychophysiological, and environmental factors will be considered.  

RA duties may include helping with literature searches, participant recruitment, conducting experimental sessions, and coding and entering data. More senior research assistants may also have the opportunity to receive training in conducting clinical phone screens and helping to present study findings at scientific meetings.
**UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI**
**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**PROJECT TITLE:**

| GENDER DIFFERENCES AS THEY RELATE TO THE FORMATION OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN PRESCHOOL SETTING |

**SUPERVISING FACULTY:**

| Faculty: Daniel Messinger |
| Email: dmessinger@miami.edu |

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

| Our Lab uses an interdisciplinary approach to investigate social and emotional development in infants and children. For this project, we are going to intervention centers for low-SES toddlers and children with developmental and speech delays. There, we will be using radio-frequency identification (RFID), to track the movement of children and teachers in the intervention classrooms. We are interested in assessing group formation and social networking, including how boys and girls separate or join together when playing. Our lab is looking for undergraduates who are interested in helping us in the schools and with implementing this exciting new technology. Strong computer skills or experience with young children are preferred. |
PROJECT TITLE:
STUDY OF ATTACHMENT IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Daniel Messinger
Email: dmessinger@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Our Lab uses an interdisciplinary approach to investigate social and emotional development in infants and toddlers. We are applying motion tracking and audio analysis to a classic measure of infant attachment: the Strange Situation. We are hoping to gain a greater understanding of early childhood behavior and the nature of the bond between parents and infants. Undergraduate students with skills in programming (e.g. Matlab) and/or audio analysis would be particularly valuable for this project. Overall, students would be expected to participate in activities including but not limited to, assisting in visits with families, data management, literature search, and data analysis. If you are interested in working with infants and learning more about cutting edge research techniques in developmental psychology, we would love to have you join us!
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
STUDY OF EARLY PARENT-INFANT INTERACTION

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Daniel Messinger
Email: dmessinger@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Our Lab uses an interdisciplinary approach to investigate early social and emotional development. We use automated measurements of facial expression to study parent-infant interaction across the first year of life. Our goal is to better understand early communication and development, and we want to use new and exciting measurement techniques to achieve this goal. Undergraduate students are expected to get involved at all levels, including but not limited to, assisting in visits with families, data management, literature search, and coding video recordings of these interactions. If you are interested in helping us learn more about parent-infant interaction and facial expressions, we’d love to work with you!
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:
BEHAVIORAL AND NEUROLOGICAL STUDY OF PLAY INTERACTION IN CHILDREN WITH AND WITHOUT AUTISM

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Daniel Messinger
Email: dmessinger@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Our Lab uses an interdisciplinary approach to investigate social and emotional development in infants and children. For this particular study, we are interested in understanding children’s social development with peers as it relates to Autism Spectrum Disorder. The protocol involves video recording a brief play interaction between 3 children (6-13 years). These triads are composed of one typically developing child, one child with a high-risk for autism, and one high functioning child with autism. After the play interaction is complete, participants move on to the fMRI scan portion of the study, and a genetic sample is collected. Undergraduate students are expected to participate in a series of activities regarding these protocols including but not limited to, contacting families, attending the visits, data management, literature search, and coding activities.
PROJECT TITLE:
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SCHOOL READINESS AND PEER INTERACTIIONS IN TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS

SUPERVISING FACULTY:
Faculty: Rebecca Shearer
Email: rshearer@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

THROUGH THIS PROJECT WE WILL BE OBSERVING CHILDREN’S SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND PEER INTERACTIONS WITHIN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS. WE WILL BE EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILDREN’S CLASSROOM SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT IN TODDLER AND PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOL READINESS OUTCOMES. OUR RESEARCH TEAM WILL BE CONDUCTING SITE VISITS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS INCLUDING THE LINDA RAY CENTER, IN THE FALL, WINTER, AND SPRING WORKING DIRECTLY WITH TEACHERS TO COLLECT QUESTIONNAIRES ABOUT CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOR AND LEARNING. IN ADDITION, OUR TEAM WILL BE CONDUCTING CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND COLLECTING DIRECT ASSESSMENTS OF CHILDREN’S READINESS IN THE FALL, WINTER AND SPRING. RESEARCH ASSISTANTS WILL ALSO ASSIST IN DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS AND DATA ENTRY OF CHILDREN’S SCHOOL READINESS TEST DATA ON THE COMPUTER.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 280/380/480 - INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE:

HISPANIC COMMUNITY HEALTH STUDY/STUDY OF LATINOS

SUPERVISING FACULTY:

Faculty: Marc Gellman
Email: mgellman@miami.edu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL) is a multi-site, interdisciplinary epidemiologic study in Hispanic populations in the U.S. sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and other institutes and offices of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Its goals include studying the prevalence and development of disease in Hispanics, the role of acculturation, and to identify risk factors that play protective or harmful roles in Hispanics. The longitudinal study began in 2006 and enrolled a population of 16,000 persons of Hispanic origin, specifically Cuban, Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Central American. They were recruited through four Field Centers affiliated with San Diego State University, Northwestern University in Chicago, Einstein College of Medicine in New York, and the University of Miami. Each Field Center was successful in recruiting over 4,000 participants at each site.

Study participants aged 18-74 years underwent an extensive clinic examination and assessments to determine baseline risk factors (Visit 1) during the year 2008-2011. Currently we are conducting a Visit 2 examination. Distinctive factors hypothesized to influence risk of cardiovascular disease that were measured included social, behavioral, occupational and lifestyle characteristics (e.g., nutrition, physical activity) as well as acculturation, psychosocial factors and barriers to healthcare. Measures were taken of obesity, diabetes, lung function, cognitive function, hearing, dental status, sleep and cardiovascular risk factors. Study results are being disseminated through scientific journals and also conveyed to the communities involved in the study in order to improve public health at the local level.

The study is conducted at the Miller School of Medicine by faculty and staff from the Department of Psychology. The study sees participants Tuesday-Saturdays.

Assistance is needed in the lab with a variety of tasks including: preparing biospecimen collection tubes; creating informational packets about the study; filing of forms; entering information into the study local database; and well as other activities.

Please contact Dr. Marc Gellman mgellman@miami.edu for further information.