



Undergraduate Psychology  
Research Conference  
Est. 2023

**Program**

**Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>**





## **2<sup>nd</sup> Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference**

at the University of Southern Indiana  
Psi Chi, Psychology Department

University Center: Carter Hall, 226/227

1:00-1:15 p.m. **Check-in & presentation set up**, *Hallway outside Carter Hall*

1:15-1:30 p.m. **Opening Remarks**, *Carter Hall D*

Dr. Urska Dobersek, Psi Chi Advisor, UPRC Chair

Dr. Amie McKibban, Chair of the Psychology Department

1:30-3:30 p.m. **Oral Presentations**, *UC 226/227*

3:30-4:15 p.m. **Poster Presentations**, *Carter Hall D*

4:15 p.m. **Awards Presentation & Closing Remarks**, *Carter Hall D*

Dr. Urska Dobersek, Psi Chi Advisor, UPRC Chair

## **Faculty Mentors**

- Jubilee Dickson, Chicago State University
- Urska Dobersek, University of Southern Indiana
- Catherine Dowell, University of Southern Indiana
- Julie Eyink, University of Southern Indiana
- George Gaither, Ball State University
- Regan Lookadoo, Georgetown College
- Zach Pilot, University of Southern Indiana
- LaurelStandiford-Reyes, University of Southern Indiana

**1:30-3:10 p.m.**  
**ORAL SESSIONS**  
**UC 226/227**

- 1:30 – 1:45 **Tyler Robinson**, University of Southern Indiana  
Multidisciplinary and Integrated Team-Based Behavioral Healthcare for Children in Evansville: The Neurodevelopmental Center
- 1:50 – 2:05 **Sarah Crossley & Gabriel Del Greco**, Ball State University  
Development of the PSEQ-R
- 2:10 – 2:25 **Hannah Gardner**, University of Southern Indiana  
A Literature Review on the Prevalence and Risk Factors of Eating Disorders in Athletes and Non-Athletes
- 2:35 – 2:50 **Regginald Mickens-Ridgenal, Cornesia Graham, Ayicia Murray, & Mohammed Islam**, Chicago State University  
Can Trauma Cause the Misidentification of Everyday Objects as Weapons at First Glance?
- 2:55 – 3:10 **Emma Lear**, Ball State University  
Relationships Among Weight Management, PCOS Symptoms, Femininity Contingency, and Mental Health
- 3:15 – 3:30 **Omaima Khan**, University of Southern Indiana  
Investigating Public Perceptions Towards Cancer Etiology

**3:30-4:15 p.m.**  
**POSTER SESSION**  
**Carter Hall**

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| <b>Ragan Welch &amp; Regan Lookadoo</b>                                  | The Impact of Value-Importance and Neuroticism on College Distress                            |
| <b>Kristina Yang &amp; Allie Howell</b>                                  | Exploring Associations between Attachment Style and Mental Health                             |
| <b>Lily Robbins</b>  | The Influence of Social Norms on Course Evaluations   |
| <b>Omaima Khan, Faith Alldredge, Caitlyn Selby, &amp; James McCauley</b> | Assessing College Students' Ability to Detect AI-Generated Content Across Various Media Types |

**Jessica Tansella, Danica  
Dunn, & Sara Hamilton**

Parental Influences on Prosocial Behaviors

**Yoel Alvarez**

Exploring Cultural Sensitivity: A Comparative Analysis between  
Multilingual and Monolingual Individuals

# Abstracts

## Oral Presentations

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### **Multidisciplinary and Integrated Team-Based Behavioral Healthcare for Children in Evansville: The Neurodevelopmental Center**

**Tyler Robinson**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Zach Pilot**

Community health needs assessments conducted by local health organizations have repeatedly identified behavioral health services as a top priority since 2018. In our region, wait times for psychological assessment can extend to over 18 months. Delays in access to care for children can produce long-term delays in various domains. Children with intellectual/developmental concerns often require additional services, increasing the delay. The Neurodevelopmental Center (NDC), a grant-funded clinic in downtown Evansville, opened in January of 2023 to address this problem. The NDC implemented a multidisciplinary, integrated, team-based treatment approach designed to address all the needs these children may have in one location quickly. This presentation describes regional mental healthcare crises, the population NDC is serving, and the success of the NDC model. BASC-3 scores, a common assessment of child and adolescent behavioral and emotional functioning, were collected at intake and at a 6-month follow-up. Repeated measures t-tests revealed significant differences for the adaptive,  $t(62) = -3.04, p = .004, d = -.383$ , internalizing,  $t(62) = 2.22, p = .03, d = .28$ , and behavioral subscales,  $t(62) = 3.15, p = .002, d = .397$ , indicating that treatment is positively influencing these domains.

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### **Development of the PSEQ-R**

**Sarah Crossley & Gabriel Del Greco**, Ball State University

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. George Gaither**

Prior research completed by Corbett (2023) piloted the Perceived Sexuality Education Quality Measure (PSEQ). This was done as a component of a larger study that examined sex education and sexual violence. Originally, seven different scales were utilized. Previously, Crossley et al. (2024) examined the first two scales as part of a study examining Autism and Sex Education correlations. Crossley et al. (2024) examined sex education knowledge and sources of information utilizing a Revised Perceived Sexuality Education Quality measure (PSEQ-R) for those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and those without. The rationale for the previous study made use of research indicated by differences in sex education for those with ASD compared to those without. Results of the study showed that there were differences in sources of sex education and the number of topics learned from each source. Although trends in the results indicated differences between those with and without ASD, there was no statistical significance in actual perceived knowledge or at what age people learned about a topic. For the current study, we ran a factor analysis on the PSEQ-R in order to break it down further. We hypothesized that breaking the PSEQ-R down into factors

would highlight differences in certain areas of sex education, rather than sex education broadly. Factors of the PSEQ-R include, 'communication,' 'basics,' 'constructs,' 'negative aspects', and 'impact of changes.' Results indicated differences in the communication and negative knowledge factors and differences were indicated in basics, negative aspects, and in impact of changes in age factors. We also compared straight and non-straight participants, and cisgender and non-cisgender participants on the factors outlined above. Similar differences were found, which may be a result of many autistic participants identifying as non-cisgender and non-straight. Implications of these differences indicate that sex education should be viewed in certain content areas, rather than broadly.

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## **A Literature Review on the Prevalence and Risk Factors of Eating Disorders in Athletes and Non-Athletes**

**Hannah Gardner**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Urska Dobersek**

Eating disorders (EDs) present a significant global health concern. EDs are severe psychiatric conditions affecting millions worldwide and are most seen within the young female population. Current research suggests that being an athlete increases the risk of developing an ED. Some studies report a higher prevalence among athletes, especially those in aesthetic sports. Others indicate that non-athletes have a higher prevalence due to lower self-esteem and body dissatisfaction. Therefore, in this literature review, I critically synthesized the existing literature on the prevalence and risk factors for EDs in athletes and non-athletes and provided suggestions for further research. Most studies suggest that athletes face unique, sport-specific challenges, including pressure from coaches and teammates, early specialization, participation in excessive exercise, and the demands of maintaining a sport-specific body type, which increases the risk and the prevalence of EDs in athletes. Recommendations for researchers, athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, and policymakers are provided to address EDs effectively, emphasizing education and training, early interventions, collaboration with mental health professionals and registered dietitians, and support systems.

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## **Can Trauma Cause the Misidentification of Everyday Objects as Weapons at First Glance?**

**Reginald Mickens-Ridgenal, Cornesia Graham, Ayicia Murray, & Mohammed Islam**,  
Chicago State University

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Jubilee Dickson**

Can a history of trauma affect our ability to correctly identify objects that we see? For instance, everyday objects such as a blow dryer can be misperceived as a weapon at first glance (e.g., gun; Islam & Barenholtz, 2024). Ullman (1995) posited that multiple object candidates are activated during the early stages of visual object recognition. This means that when we first see something, our brain creates multiple guesses (object candidates) as to what an object might be. Context and other top-down processes can influence

the activation of one candidate over another (Bar, 2004). Moreover, Islam and Barenholtz (2024) found that one candidate can suppress another candidate. We propose that an everyday object can be misinterpreted as a weapon by erroneous top-down mechanisms caused by trauma. Thus, the current study seeks to assess the influence of trauma on the (mis)identification of everyday objects. Utilizing a lexical decision task (Swinney, 1979), we propose that more experiences of past trauma can prime threatening object candidates in early visual object recognition (that is, what we perceive at first glance). In this regard, we hypothesize that past trauma will make people more likely to identify an everyday object as something threatening. Additionally, we hypothesize that trauma-congruent object candidates (e.g., gun) will suppress competing object candidates (e.g., blow dryer). This proposal seeks to collect data using a convenience sample obtained by students at Chicago State University.

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## **Relationships Among Weight Management, PCOS Symptoms, Femininity Contingency, and Mental Health**

**Emma Lear**, Ball State University

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. George Gaither**

Rates of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) have been increasing, with up to 15% of reproductive-age women being affected. PCOS is a neuroendocrine disorder that affects both the nervous and hormonal systems in the human body and can affect anyone with ovaries. PCOS causes a wide range of symptoms, including weight gain, difficulty losing weight, various mental health disorders, hirsutism, infertility, and ovarian cysts. The purpose of the study is to examine how perceptions of one's femininity, body image, and mental health symptoms relate to symptom management and quality of life in cisgender women with PCOS. Due to the masculinizing effects of PCOS, many patients may feel a loss of femininity, which may be associated with mental health concerns and a lower quality of life (Forslund et al., 2024). Similarly, due to weight management issues, some patients may also experience a negative body image and, thus, may also experience more mental health concerns and lower quality of life. Participants who identify as cisgender female, are over the age of 18 and have been diagnosed with PCOS, or who are eligible for weight management will consent to participate in the study and will be asked to complete a 25-30 minute survey assessing weight management, PCOS symptoms, femininity contingency, and mental health. It is hypothesized that women with high femininity contingency scores will show decreased mental health and body image when reporting that treatment for symptoms of PCOS or weight management has been unsuccessful.

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## **Investigating Public Perceptions Towards Cancer Etiology**

**Omaima Khan**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Julie Eyink**

Cancer is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality globally, with substantial medical research dedicated to understanding its causes. However, little is known about how laypeople perceive cancer causation—whether they rely on accurate information or fall back on heuristics and stereotypes. This study aims to



investigate causal attributions for six cancer types: esophageal, cervical, skin, lung, colon, and breast cancer, by comparing perceptions of internal factors (e.g., lifestyle choices) and external factors (e.g., genetics). A survey methodology will be employed to examine public perceptions. We hypothesize that laypeople will perceive skin and lung cancer as more internally attributed, while breast and colon cancer will be seen as more externally caused. The findings could inform targeted educational campaigns to improve public understanding of cancer causation, potentially aiding prevention efforts and treatment-seeking behaviors. Furthermore, these insights may offer healthcare professionals better strategies for addressing patient concerns and promoting healthier lifestyles.

## Poster Presentations

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### The Impact of Value-Importance and Neuroticism on College Distress

Ragan Welch & Regan Lookadoo, Georgetown College

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Regan Lookadoo**

Values are cross-culturally known to guide actions and express needs. Value-based living is often recognized as a mechanism that increases well-being. Recently, however, researchers have begun to question how value-importance and individual differences participate in how value-based actions improve one's well-being. As is commonly known, college students are stressed. Identifying mechanisms to decrease distress levels in college students remains a priority. We investigated how one's values, which are embedded in personality and well-being, can become maladaptive depending on the trait of neuroticism. Investigations examining personality traits as the link between distress levels and value-importance are lacking. The study was performed on ( $N = 144$ ) undergraduate college students who were asked to complete the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), Distress Questionnaire (DQ5), and a condensed Big Five Inventory (BFI). Every value was independently assessed for distress, which created ten values and ten distress level scales. We hypothesized that an increased importance placed on specific values would further increase the distress level associated with that value when the trait of neuroticism was high. Running a linear regression, our findings support this idea for two values: power and conformity. Specifically, individuals who placed a higher value on power or conformity experienced significantly greater distress levels related to these values. A correlational analysis revealed the personality trait of neuroticism to be correlated to all ten distress levels' it did not discriminate between any values. Value-congruent living can decrease distress; however, when one is high in neuroticism, those values can become the exact thing that causes distress. The knowledge of this can strengthen already existing value-based therapeutic interventions, such as acceptance and commitment therapy. The narrative can be reframed for college students to suggest that their intensity of emotional suffering often comes from deep investment in what they care about.

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### Exploring associations between attachment style and mental health

Kristina Yang & Allie Howell, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Urska Dobersek**

Attachment styles that individuals form during their childhood can have both positive and negative consequences on their mental health in their adulthood. For example, childhood abuse and neglect are often associated with depression and anxiety. While past studies examined the relation between attachment styles and mental health, research on the contribution of biological sex in relation to these components is limited. Using a correlational design, participants are recruited via convenience sampling through SONA. They completed an online survey using Qualtrics that included the following questionnaires: Demographic Questionnaire, adapted Attachment Style Inventory, Patient Health Questionnaire-9, and General Anxiety Disorder-7. The data collection is currently underway, and we have over 50 responses. We hypothesized that females would display higher levels of insecure attachment style

and poorer mental health (depression, anxiety) compared to males. Additionally, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation would show that dismissive, preoccupied, and fearful attachment styles are positively related to depression and anxiety. While our research extends the prior findings on attachment-mental health relation, the study has a number of limitations, including small sample size (leading to a lack of generalizability), the use of non-probability sampling (making it unrepresentative of the current population), self-report questionnaires (making results possibly inadmissible), online surveys (meaning behavior cannot be observed), and cross-sectional design (cannot determine causal or temporal relations). Finally, our results can be important for developmental psychologists, parents/guardians, and individuals who work with children.

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## **The Influence of Social Norms on Course Evaluations**

**Lily Robbins**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Julie Eyink**

At the end of each semester, college students are asked to provide course feedback. While all students are invited to give feedback, participation rates are low (Chapman & Joines, 2017). One way to motivate students to complete these valuable surveys is to use social norms which are 'rules' about what others actually do (descriptive) or should do (injunctive; Mortensen et al., 2019). Although we might predict that matching injunctive and descriptive norms would be the most helpful in changing behavior, recent research finds that a high injunctive/low descriptive combination makes individuals feel as though their efforts make a bigger difference and thus produces the most behavior change (Eyink et al., in prep). This research aims to examine which norm combination is the most effective at increasing participation for course evaluations. During Fall 2024, students in one section of PSY201 will receive one of three emails all of which contain our social norm manipulations and a link to a course feedback survey. If in the high injunctive norm condition, the email will tell students they should be doing course evaluations. If in the high injunctive/low descriptive condition, the email will tell students they should be doing course evaluations, but most students do not do them. If in the high injunctive, high descriptive condition, the email will tell students they should be doing course evaluations, and most students do them. We will only analyze students who opened the email. We plan to use Chi-square tests to determine which condition was most likely to start and complete the survey. A one-way ANOVA will also be used to determine which group spent the most time taking the survey. We expect that the high injunctive/low descriptive norm condition will be the most effective in garnering student feedback.

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## **Assessing College Students' Ability to Detect AI-Generated Content Across Various Media Types**

**Omaima Khan, Faith Alldredge, Caitlyn Selby, & James McCauley**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Catherine Dowell**

With rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, AI-generated content has become increasingly difficult to distinguish from human-created material. This poses significant implications for the academic integrity

of student work and the reliability of information in digital spaces. Our study aims to explore college students' ability to detect AI-generated content across different media types, focusing on images and written text. Prior research has demonstrated that AI-generated faces, artwork, and written outputs, such as essays and poetry, have reached unprecedented levels of realism, often surpassing human capabilities in creating lifelike representations. However, despite the increasing sophistication of AI, subtle imperfections remain, particularly in areas like human pupil shapes in generated faces or the tone and coherence of generated writing. This research seeks to address the gap in understanding how accurately students can detect AI-generated content compared to human-generated content. The study employs a survey methodology, presenting students with a set of 10 images (5 AI-generated, 5 human-generated) and 10 text samples (5 AI-generated, 5 human-generated) across various genres, including faces, landscapes, poetry, and essays. Participants will be asked to identify whether the content is AI or human-created and will provide open-ended responses on the strategies they used to make their determinations. Our hypothesis predicts that students will struggle to accurately detect AI-generated content, with lower accuracy rates for text-based materials than for images. This research has significant implications for education and digital media, highlighting the challenges of AI detection in academic and creative fields.

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## **Parental Influences on Prosocial Behaviors**

**Jessica Tansella, Danica Dunn, & Sara Hamilton**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Laurel Standiford-Reyes**

“Prosociality is a critical issue in behavior research” (Baumsteiger & Seigel, 2018). Preliminary analysis suggests that variations in upbringing and exposure to different social influences significantly affect how prosocial intentions are understood and expressed (Gross et al., 2015; Batool & Lewis, 2022; Malti, 2024). The present study explores developmental influences on perceived prosocial intentions among individuals aged 18-24. Through a mixed-method approach, this study employs both qualitative and quantitative previously validated surveys (Prosocial Behavioral Intentions Scale, PBIS; Baumsteiger & Siegel, 2018) to examine how young adults in this age group interpret and express prosocial intentions. Within the quantitative survey, participants are to be asked to reflect on past experiences, motivations, and perceptions of prosocial behavior in everyday contexts and to indicate how willing they would be to perform certain encounters where the opportunity to help others presents itself. Using an adaptation of the PBIS, participants are also to be asked to express their thoughts on how willing a close parent or caregiver would be to perform the same certain behaviors. The premise for these questions will be the same. However, they will be slightly adapted for when participants are asked to remember how a close parent or guardian would help others. Parenting has short-term and long-term impacts on children's personality development, behavior, and relationships, and with this, it is important to not only look at the individual but also their thoughts on their parent or caregiver's behavior. Within the qualitative section, participants are to be given two prompts that ask them to describe how they have helped someone in the past and how they could help someone in the future. The findings of this study can help contribute to a deeper understanding of how early life experiences and environmental factors shape moral and social development in young adults.

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## **Exploring Cultural Sensitivity: A Comparative Analysis between Multilingual and Monolingual Individuals**

**Yoel Alvarez**, University of Southern Indiana

Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Urska Dobersek**

Globalization increased the interactions between diverse cultural groups, resulting in a higher importance of cultural awareness and competence in professionals and social areas of the population. Previous studies suggest that multilingualism or exposure to multiple languages and cultures can enhance the individual's ability to engage with people from different cultural backgrounds effectively. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine cultural sensitivity and competence between individuals who are multilingual and monolingual. Specifically, using a correlational design, I have been recruiting individuals from multiple racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds via university campus, social media, and word of mouth. Cultural sensitivity and competence will be measured by using two modified questionnaires: The Cross-Cultural Competence Inventory and the Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Checklist to assess participants' awareness, adaptability, sensitivity, and willingness to be involved in other cultures, respectively. I expect that individuals who are multilingual would exhibit higher levels of cultural sensitivity and competence compared to individuals who are monolingual due to the higher exposure to multiple/varied languages and cultures. The findings will provide valuable insight into the role of language in the understanding and improvement of communication across cultural boundaries, potentially creating more diversity-engaged cultural societies.