Southern Miss Department of Psychology
2017-18
Hattiesburg Campus
Faculty Accepting Undergraduate
Student Research Assistants
Anger & Traffic Psychology Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Eric Dahlen
Program: Counseling Psychology
Email: Eric.Dahlen@usm.edu
Lab Website: http://anger-lab.com/

Research Focus:
We conduct psychological research on overt and relational aggression and victimization among emerging adults, dysfunctional anger, clinical traffic psychology (i.e., the study of driver personality in motor vehicle accidents and accident-related behaviors), and related areas. Much of our recent work focuses on normal and “dark personality” variables (e.g., psychopathy, narcissism) in relational aggression, cyber aggression, and aggressive driving.

Undergraduate research activities available
Gain exposure to the full research process.
Specific activities will depend on the projects and need for assistance.
Receive mentoring from Counseling Psychology graduate students.

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Conscientious, reliable, motivated
Detail-oriented
Interested in gaining research experience to support graduate applications

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes – if research interests are consistent with the lab’s focus and depending on availability.

Requirements:
Minimum GPA of 3.0
Willingness to complete university-required online human subjects research training
Attendance at weekly lab meetings preferred
Psychology majors preferred

Apply at http://anger-lab.com/prospective.html
Faculty Member
Dr. Dan Capron
Program: Clinical Psychology
Email: daniel.capron@usm.edu

Research Focus
Risk factors for anxiety and trauma related disorders

Undergraduate research activities available
Contacting, scheduling and running participants through computerized interventions
Contacting, scheduling, and running participants through experimental studies using virtual reality technology

Successful undergraduates in the lab are
Reliable
Detail-oriented
Motivated

Number of undergraduate research assistants available
To be determined

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses
Yes if the project is appropriate to lab mission

Requirements
3.5 GPA
Behavior and Alcohol Research (BAR) Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Michael Madson
Program: Counseling Psychology
Email: michael.madson@usm.edu
Website: http://usmcart.weebly.com/

Research Focus:
The focus of BAR research is on social-cognitive, behavioral and mental health predictors of college student harmful and safe substance use behaviors with an emphasis on protective behavioral strategies. We also evaluate the outcomes of a brief motivational intervention to reduce harm associated with college student drinking. Motivated and successful students will be exposed to motivational interviewing – an evidence based intervention for behavioral problems.

Undergraduate research activities available
Learn about the research process from reading literature to designing a study and presenting results.
Attend weekly research meetings with graduate students.
Develop skill in using behavioral rating forms to code counseling sessions
Participate in national college alcohol awareness week at USM
Bi-weekly journal club
Receive mentoring from graduate students

Successful undergraduates in the lab
Conscientious, dependable, ethical
Good team player
Willing to learn about lab topics and research
Interested in seeking graduate school
Good communicator
Fun

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes – if consistent with lab focus.

Requirements:
Psychology major
Minimum GPA of 3.3
Attendance at weekly lab meetings
At least 1 year left before to graduation
Faculty Member
Name: Dr. David Echevarria
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: david.echevarria@usm.edu

Research Focus
Stress, learning, addiction, and sleep using a zebrafish model

Undergraduate research activities available
Data collection, coding video, breeding and maintaining zebrafish, and general caring for zebrafish

Number of undergraduate research assistants available
We typically have 3-4 students as part of our research team

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses
Yes

Requirements:
We seek hard working and dedicated individuals

Apply through www.zebrafishscience.com
Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders Lab

Faculty Member:
Name: Dr. Stephanie D. Smith
Program: Clinical Psychology
Email: SD.Smith@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Child & adolescent psychopathology
ADHD
Aggression & disruptive behaviors
Treatment outcome studies
Interventions using technology
Neural mechanisms of change (electrophysiology)
Risk and protective factors

Undergraduate research activities available:
Participant recruitment
Data entry; database management
Training on how to administer/score basic symptom checklists
Training on how to assist in running EEG (electroencephalogram) subjects (i.e., assisting with net placement & impedances)
Completing behavior observations in school settings
Opportunities to assist with dissemination of lab research findings (e.g., presentations at conferences)

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Motivated
Independent
Detail-oriented
Seek appropriate supervision
Excited about research and the field of child clinical psychology

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Sophomore standing or higher
GPA > 3.5 or higher
Prior experience working in a research setting and with children (preferable if experience is with clinical populations)
Child Routines and Behavior Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Sara Jordan
Program: Clinical Psychology
Email: sara.jordan@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Routines of young children and their relation to parent and child characteristics, parenting practices, and child outcomes, particularly externalizing behavior problems
Development and validation of assessment instruments related to children’s routines
Child routines and chronic illness/medical regimen adherence
ADHD symptoms in children, ADHD endophenotypes (e.g., working memory deficits, response disinhibition), family functioning and resilience of children with or without ADHD symptoms.

Undergraduate research activities available:
SONA recruitment, participant scheduling, testing of participants
Field data collection & coding
Data scoring, entry, and cleaning
Literature reviews
Assist with preparation of research presentations, manuscripts
Participation in weekly lab meeting with graduate student researchers

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Organized, dependable, flexible
Strong work ethic
Comfortable interacting with parents and children of preschool and school age

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
3-5

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Interested students can contact me via email to complete a lab application to be reviewed.
Interview
Correctional and Forensic Psychology Lab

Faculty Member:
Name: Dr. Ashley Batastini
Program: Counseling Psychology
Email: Ashley.Batastini@usm.edu
Website: http://ashbat102.wix.ashleybatastini

Research Focus:
Mental health interventions for offender populations, re-entry programming (e.g., employment) for community released offenders, forensic mental health assessment (e.g., violence risk), juvenile justice issues, and the use of telepsychology to underserved populations.

Undergraduate research activities available:
Undergraduates will be exposed to all stages of the research process from project development to implementation. Tasks may include literature/library searches, organization and administrative tasks, and data collection and entry. Depending on need and level of contribution, undergrads may present at conferences or serve as co-authors on academic publications. The lab also offers a graduate student mentorship program, which is ideal for students thinking about pursuing a graduate degree in psychology.

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Self-motivated, dependable work ethic, organized, courteous, comfortable with the possibility of interacting with inmate participants, has a basic understanding about correctional and forensic psychology (not based on watching Law and Order or Criminal Minds).

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
1-2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes (please note: all students will be required to register for at least 1 credit of PSY 491 each semester)

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes (please note: research interests must be generally consistent with lab focus)

Requirements:
Requirements may be flexible, but generally include:
Minimum GPA of 3.0
Attendance at weekly lab meetings
Must be able to dedicate at least one academic year (fall and spring semesters)
8-10 available work hours per week
Psychology majors preferred (not required)

Apply online at http://ashbat102.wix.ashleybatastini
Evolutionary Social Psychology Laboratory (ESPL)

Faculty Member:
Dr. Donald Sacco
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: Donald.Sacco@usm.edu.

Research Focus:
My research focuses on how natural and sexual selection have shaped human cognition and behavior, particularly social behavior. Specific research in the ESPL focuses on understanding the evolutionary psychology of human social cognition as it relates to sexual behavior (e.g., short-term versus long term-mating), personality (e.g., sociosexuality), group dynamics (e.g., social inclusion and exclusion, cheater detection), and stigmatization (e.g., based on disease avoidance concerns).

Undergraduate research activities available
Undergraduate research assistants begin their work in the lab by completing research ethics training and training with data collection software in the lab. Students who demonstrate high aptitude with these responsibilities have the opportunity to conduct independent research projects should they have interest in doing so. Students are responsible to read one article a week that is discussed during weekly lab meetings.

Successful undergraduates in the lab
Conscientious
Self-motivated

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
3-5

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Basic background in psychology (e.g., have completed Introduction to Psychology)
Demonstrate an interest in how evolutionary biology informs human psychology.
Must have at least a 3.0 GPA.
Must be able to devote approximately 10 hrs/week to data collection in the lab
Must be available for a weekly lab meeting.

Interested students can contact me via email to complete a formal lab application to be reviewed. Research assistant positions in the ESPL are competitive; as such, completing an application to work in the lab does not guarantee that a person will obtain a research assistant position.
Human Operant Evaluation and Performance (HOPE) Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. James W. Moore,
Program: Applied Behavior Analysis Program
Email: james.moore@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Applied behavior analysis, particularly stimulus preference, self-control/impulsivity (known in our field as temporal discounting), and reinforce effectiveness. We will also conduct practice-driven research with children with Autism.

Undergraduate research activities available
Presentation, team research meetings, materials preparation, and acting as the therapist with children once they have sufficient training

Successful undergraduates in the lab
Interest in the behavioral orientation

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
Up to 10

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Case-by-case basis.
Faculty Member:
Dr. Mark J. Huff
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: mark.huff@usm.edu

Research Focus:
False memory/Memory suggestibility
Attentional control
Cognitive aging
Testing and assessment effects on learning
Personality effects on cognition

Undergraduate research activities available:
For new research assistants:
Data collection (running human participants)
Data entry and scoring
Participant recruitment, particularly of older adults
For more advanced/experienced research assistants (training provided):
Experiment programming
Experimental design
Data/Statistical analyses/Manuscript writing

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Conscientiousness and interest in gaining some experience in experimental psychology, particularly in human cognition and how cognition changes over the lifespan. Students should be interested in pursuing an advanced degree in Psychology or research-focused field.

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2-4

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes.

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes.

Requirements:
Background/Interest in Psychology (a major/minor or currently enrolled in a Psychology course). A GPA of 3.0 and above. Must be able to devote at least 7 hours a week to lab-related activities (data collection, scoring, etc.) and 1 hour for a weekly lab meeting. Hours are very flexible.

Interested students can contact me via email with a short paragraph declaring their interest in joining the lab. Attach an unofficial transcript and provide information about your career goals. Career goals need not necessarily be in the field of Psychology.
Memory for Parents

Faculty Member: Lawrence Patihis
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: L.Patihis@usm.edu

Research Focus: Memory for Parents

Undergraduate research activities available
Literature reviews
Lab meetings
Learning experiment planning
Running participants through experiments
Statistics, database management,
Learning and using Qualtrics, Sona, Excel, SPSS, Word, and Powerpoint
Poster presentations
Possible scientific conferences

Research assistants must be able to genuinely contribute 6 hours per week for the 3 units of PSY 491 (or PSY 498 if applicants are doing a written project for their senior thesis) they receive. Some work is in the lab (e.g. meetings and running participants) while other work can be done away from the lab (e.g. literature searches).

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Those that are aiming for a research career in psychology, or those aiming to teach and research.

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
6

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes, I will be very happy to be the supervising professor on undergraduate projects as long as I am able to guide the project from the design stage onward, and that the projects are conducted in the realm of my current research program which is Memory for Parents.

Requirements:
3.50 GPA or above in the last two years (of college or high school if they are freshmen).
Aiming to go to graduate school in research psychology
Those strong in statistics are especially welcome.
Perception Action and Cognition Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Alen Hajnal
Program: Brain and Behavior Psychology
Email: Alen.hajnal@usm.edu

Research Focus:
We study visual and haptic perception of 3D space. The lab conducts behavioral experiments using state-of-the-art motion capture equipment that is typically used in the movie industry for creating animations. Cross disciplinary topics include suicide prevention studies using virtual reality technology (Oculus Rift).

Undergraduate research activities available
Run experiments
Data processing
Statistical analyses
Writing manuscripts

Successful undergraduates in the lab are
Stick to lab schedule
Good team player
Dependable, honest, has integrity
Willing to learn new quantitative research skills (stats, research design)

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2-3

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes if in lab focus area

Requirements:
3.0 GPA or above preferred

Research experience is a must for graduate school applications. I train students to adopt rigorous research standards and procedures.
Personality, Assessment, & Clinical Outcomes

Faculty Member:
Dr. Joye Anestis
Program: Clinical Psychology
Email: joye.anestis@usm.edu

Research Focus:
The PACO lab focuses on broad, overlapping areas: externalizing behaviors and disorders in adults and treatment outcomes. We are interested in how constructs such as gender and emotion impact the expression of externalizing symptoms (such as psychopathic personality traits or antisocial behaviors), and how externalizing problems are understood by researchers and clinicians. We are also interested in ways to improve the outcome of psychotherapy for clients. A current project focuses on how personality traits may influence who needs psychotherapy but never gets it, who drops out therapy before it is completed, who comes to therapy but is minimally engaged, or what type of therapy or treatment individuals prefer. More information about our lab can be found here: http://joyeanestis.weebly.com/

If you are interested in any of the following topics, the PACO lab may be a good fit for you:
- Externalizing problems (such aggression, antisocial behavior, borderline personality traits)
- Psychopathic personality traits
- Sex, gender, race, ethnic, and/or cultural influences
- Psychotherapy outcomes
- Broad personality assessment

Number of undergraduate research assistants available: 1-2
Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits: Yes
Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses: Yes

Requirements:
Minimum GPA 3.0
Successful completion of application and interview
Must be able to commit to at least 2 consecutive semesters
Faculty Member:  
Dr. Bonnie Nicholson  
Program: Counseling Psychology  
Email: bonnie.nicholson@usm.edu

Research Focus:  
Factors associated with parenting success  
Overparenting/ helicopter parenting and emerging adults

Undergraduate research activities available
Data collection  
Literature reviews  
Writing  
Reviewing manuscripts  
Transcribe interviews

Successful undergraduates in the lab  
Flexibility  
Strong work ethic

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:  
TBD

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:  
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:  
No

Requirements:  
Review of transcript & writing sample
Preventing Emotional Disturbance in Children

Faculty Member:
Dr. Brad Dufrene
Program: School Psychology
Email: brad.dufrene@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Tiered interventions and consultation procedures aimed at preventing emotional disturbance in children that experience health disparities

Undergraduate research activities available
Conduct direct-observations of child behavior in applied settings such as the clinic and/or schools
Shadow advanced graduate students during teacher interviews and/or therapy sessions

Successful undergraduates in the lab
Strong work ethic
Dependability

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
TBD

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Interview
Preference to those who have taken applied behavioral analysis/behavioral interventions
Psychology of Existential Concerns Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Lucas A. Keefer
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: Lucas.keefer@usm.edu

Research Focus:
My research explores the psychological processes by which individuals maintain functional beliefs about themselves and society. These include social cognitive processes involved in finding and maintaining meaningful conceptions of the social world, moral psychology, and the psychological defenses people employ in response to salient threats to their well-being. This work synthesizes contemporary empirical research with insights from theoretical psychology, philosophy, and psychoanalysis.

Undergraduate research activities available:
Primary responsibilities involve data collection and management (in and outside the lab), preparing research materials, and assisting in the publication and presentation of findings. Weekly lab meetings are expected and will provide opportunities to discuss current and future projects.

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Highly motivated, organized, willing to work in a collaborative setting

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
4-5

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Basic background in psychology (e.g., Introduction to Psychology)
>3.0 GPA
Must be available for weekly lab meeting
Interdisciplinary interests/background a plus
Social Cognition and Behavior Lab (SCBL)

Faculty Member:
Name: Dr. Elena Stepanova
Program: Brain and Behavior
Email: Elena.Stepanova@USM.edu

Research Focus:
- Effects of alcohol and nicotine cues on social judgments
- Social categorization, prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination
- Implicit and explicit attitudes
- Conceptualization of race
- Group polarization phenomenon in politically-centered discussion

Undergraduate research activities available:
Conduct experiments (lab experiments and focus groups)
Record, code and analyze data
Conduct literature searchers
Attend lab meetings

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Reliable
Motivated

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2-4 for fall of 2017

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Show strong interests in social behavior
GPA of 3.0 and above
Commitment to two semesters of lab work
Southern Miss Autism Research and Treatment (SMART) Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Keith Radley
Program: School Psychology
Email: keith.radley@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Behavioral interventions for individuals with autism spectrum disorder; school-based interventions for problem behaviors

Undergraduate research activities available
Data collection
Implementation of interventions

Successful students in the lab are:
Dependable & motivated
Have good interpersonal skills
Interested in working directly with children, teachers, and parents to improve the wellbeing of children with disabilities.

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
3-5

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
Some level of availability during school hours (i.e., 7:00 am to 3:00 pm)
Individuals interested in working with children with problem behaviors and/or disabilities
Vocational Psychology

Faculty Member:
Dr. Emily Yowell
Program: Counseling Psychology
Email: emily.yowell@usm.edu
Website: www.usm.edu/counseling-psychology/faculty/emily-yowell

Research Focus:
The practical application of career-related assistance in people’s lives. Projects involve the exploration career interests, career assessment, career decision-making, career thinking, and career self-efficacy in populations ranging from college students to military veterans.

Undergraduate research activities available
Undergraduate members can be engaged at research from conception to data collection/analysis to presentation. There are also opportunities to support the work of graduate students.

Successful students in the lab are:
Curiosity and responsibility

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
1-2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
No

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Not this semester

Requirements:
No specific requirements
Work and Occupations Research Collaboration (WORC)

Faculty Member:
Name: Melanie Leuty
Program: Counseling
Email: Melanie.leuty@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Research on career development of college students and adults including examining issues such as; individuals’ fit with their careers, work values, vocational interests, personality, use of career assessments, and the effectiveness of career counseling. Additional areas of interests include career development issues of specific populations and generational issues.

Undergraduate research activities available:
Data entry, manuscript preparation, data collection, data management, and other tasks as assigned or as students are interested in learning.

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Conscientiousness and dependability are necessary. Students interested in research related to career issues and those wanting to learning research skills as they consider graduated school options are the best fit.

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
1-2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes, for appropriate topics that fit with lab projects

Requirements:
Minimum requirements:
3.0 GPA or higher,
Sophomore status
Available to attend weekly research meetings
Must enroll for PSY 491 credit their first semester

Commitment to work more than one semester and completion of PSY 360 preferred
Youth Substance Use and Risky Behavior Lab

Faculty Member:
Dr. Nora Charles
Program: Clinical Psychology
Email: nora.charles@usm.edu

Research Focus:
Externalizing behaviors such as aggression and other kinds of acting out in children and adolescents, risk-taking during adolescence and young adulthood, the development of substance use disorders, the effects of stress on children and adolescents, juvenile delinquency, and community-based interventions for at-risk youth

Undergraduate research activities available:
Data collection (administering questionnaires, directing participants in activities, conducting interviews with children and parents), data scoring & entry (typically entering data into a spreadsheet), project management (recruiting participants, scheduling appointments, maintaining study supplies). Undergraduates who are successful in these activities have the opportunity to work with the faculty member to design new studies, perform statistical analyses, present results at scientific meetings, and publish in scientific journals.

Successful undergraduates in the lab are:
Organized, responsible, comfortable working directly with study participants, able to ask for help when needed, and excited about research!

Number of undergraduate research assistants available:
2

Willing to offer PSY 491 research credits:
Yes

Supervise Honors College, McNair & Senior Theses:
Yes

Requirements:
GPA > 3.0 or higher,
Sophomore standing or higher
Interest in pursuing graduate school in psychology or a related discipline is preferred
Email the faculty member (nora.charles@usm.edu) if you are interested in joining the lab.