

Friday, March 27

Session 1: Graduate Empirical and Theoretical Oral Presentations

William S. Knight Center Room 109

2:45	Samantha Carstens	Missouri State University	Will They Stay or Will They Go? Predicting Retention in First-Year College Students	<p>Student attrition is a significant concern during the first year of college. The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether a brief student engagement survey could be used to identify first-year undergraduates at risk of leaving their university. Participants were first-year students at a large public university who completed measures of academic integration, emotional commitment, social integration, and intent to quit. Retention outcomes were examined by comparing groups of students with different levels of intent to quit. Results indicated that students reporting higher intent to quit were less likely to be retained. Both academic factors (such as academic integration and self-confidence) and emotional factors (such as commitment to the university and homesickness) were associated with retention outcomes. These findings suggest that short, practical assessments can be used to identify at-risk students and support early intervention efforts. This applied approach provides institutions with a data-informed strategy for reducing dropout and improving student retention.</p>	Dr. Jeff Foster
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3:00	Karla G. Ponce-Mérida, Daisy Angel, Keilly G. Ponce-Mérida, Emily K. Robles, and Mahima Saxena	University of Nebraska at Omaha	Exploring the Experiences of Latine First-Generation College Students: A Systematic Review	<p>Latine first-generation college students (FGCS) face unique challenges, balancing being the first in their families to attend college with navigating distinct cultural influences. This systematic review synthesizes empirical research examining the barriers, sources of support, and institutional factors shaping Latine FGCS experiences. Articles were pulled from multiple databases, including PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Source, and more. Study sites were U.S.-based. Following PRISMA guidelines, peer-reviewed studies published between 2014 and 2024 were identified and screened, yielding 105 articles from an initial pool of 389. Thematic analysis revealed four primary themes: (a) the role of academic and familial support systems, (b) negotiation of cultural identity, (c) adjustment to the college environment, and (d) experiences of discrimination, stereotyping, and systemic barriers. Recommendations for future practice include implementing programs and campaigns addressing academic barriers, recognizing cultural influences in academic practices, training for staff and faculty, updating policies, and elevating student support through financial assistance, mentorship, and increased representation. This study can help higher education personnel understand how to best support Latine FGCS.</p>	Dr. Mahima Saxena
3:15	Kellen Hendrix	University of Missouri-Columbia	On the Ethics of Inducing False Memories During Research	<p>Research on false memory and memory's reconstructive nature has been a fruitful field within cognitive psychology for decades. Although research on false autobiographical memory induction began with noble intent, the original justification has likely already been met. This leaves certain ethical issues within the field. For example, we are unable to totally remove false memories from the minds of participants. This prompts the question, when is it okay to implant a false memory in a participant? Since the problem of justification is contingent on the false memory's persistence, careful review is given to the topic of eliminating false memories. In addition, the rights of familial informants, who provide the information necessary to create a false autobiographical memory, are rarely discussed when conducting research on false memory. In light of these issues and others, practical suggestions are made to move the field towards more ethically conducting research on false memory.</p>	Rebecca Hendrix

Session 2: Undergraduate Theoretical Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 102

2:45	Susie Moran and Kevina King	College of the Ozarks	Sleep deprivation and cognitive function	The purpose of this presentation is to identify the effects of sleep deprivation on cognitive function, examine the neurological effects that occur, and determine ways to mitigate the effects of sleep deprivation. This proposal was based on 8 research articles that examined the effects of sleep deprivation on cognitive function through different methods. The findings emphasized the importance of adequate sleep as crucial for cognitive function and overall health of the individual. These articles provide insight and understanding of the specific aspects of the brain that are affected through sleep deprivation, and proposes tools to decrease and prevent the adverse effects.	Jeff Elliott
3:00	Caleb R. Zurbruggen	College of the Ozarks	Sleep, your body, and why you really should get the recommended amount of rest.	Sleep is a critical biological process that supports cognitive functioning and health, emotional well-being, and overall psychological health. This literature review examines the mechanisms and processes of the sleep system, including circadian rhythms and sleep stages, and their role in optimizing mental and physical performance. Understanding the sleep system provides important insight into strategies that promote optimal human performance and well-being.	Jeff Elliott
3:15	Madeline Keck and Emma Whitlock	College of the Ozarks	The Role of Sleep in Cognitive Function and Behavioral Regulation	Our literature review will be a comprehensive overview of sleep duration's role in cognitive functioning and behavioral regulation. We are college students attending a small liberal arts college and have noticed the difficulty of achieving adequate sleep duration in day-to-day life. We would like to explore the neurological components of sleep and review prior studies providing insight into how sleep directly affects neurological processing and behavioral characteristics. Our review will explore the negative and positive impacts of both sleep deprivation and proper sleeping habits.	Jeff Elliott

3:30	Patrick A. Dunker	College of the Ozarks	Placebo Effect and the Brain.	This lit review will provide an overview of the neurobiological functions of the placebo effect, with particular emphasis on the brain regions implicated in expectancy, pain modulation, and reward processing. Research shows that several brain regions become active during placebo responses. These include the prefrontal cortex, anterior cingulate cortex, insula, amygdala, and periaqueductal gray. Their activation highlights how thoughts and beliefs can influence physical sensations such as pain. A major part of this process involves the brain's natural opioid system. In this system, naturally occurring opioids, including endorphins and enkephalins, are released and bind to opioid receptors. This binding produces measurable changes in pain perception and emotional response. I will also discuss evidence showing that medications such as naloxone can reduce or eliminate placebo-related pain relief. This demonstrates that the placebo effect is not simply "all in the mind." Instead, it is supported by real, measurable brain activity and natural chemical processes.	Jeff Elliott
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Session 3: Undergraduate Empirical Oral Presentations					
William S. Knight Center Room 110					
2:45	Couper Kerns	Oklahoma Christian University	The Effects of Partnering Conditions and Perceived Time Constraints on The Purdue Spatial Visualization Test	Real-world performance often requires working with others under time pressure, yet little is known about how these factors interact on spatial tasks. This study examined the effects of partnering condition (individual vs. dyad) and perceived time constraint (sufficient vs. insufficient) on performance on the Purdue Spatial Visualization Test – Rotations (PSVT-R). Participants were 26 college students (ages 18–22) who completed the PSVT-R on two separate nights, one week apart, under counterbalanced time perception conditions. Dyads worked with the same partner across both sessions. A mixed-model ANOVA revealed no significant main effects for partnering condition or perceived time constraint, and no significant interaction between the two. These null results suggest that mental rotation performance may be resistant to perceived time pressure, possibly because the PSVT-R does not tap inhibition-based executive function. Additionally, dyads without clear role specialization may not show a collaborative advantage. Future research should examine psychomotor tasks and manipulate actual time limits rather than perceived ones.	Dr. Ryan Newell

3:00	Je'Zhon Baker, Sean Madore, and Donald Gerle	Benedictine College	You're Grounded: Does Tactile Grounding Reduce Stress Faster than Other Relaxation Techniques?	<p>The purpose of this study was to explore whether the tactile grounding technique of rubbing a rough stone in one's hand reduces physiological arousal faster than passive relaxation or 5x5 breathing (a pattern of breathing in, holding the breath, exhaling, and holding again for 5 seconds each). We hypothesized that tactile grounding would help participants relax faster than passive relaxation but slower than 5x5 breathing. We analyzed data from 37 college students (31 female, 6 male) with ages 18 between 22 ($M = 19.5$, $SD = 1.15$). Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) data were collected before and after participants were exposed to the following "stressful tasks": listening to the recording of a crying baby while seeing 53 mildly distressing images, and then completing timed arithmetic operations for 2.5 minutes. Participants were then asked to relax using one of the three techniques under study and we measured their arousal levels at one, two, and three minutes after the relaxation started. Our study revealed that completing the stressful tasks indeed increased physiological arousal in participants significantly compared to their baseline. However, while all techniques significantly reduced arousal during the subsequent three minutes of observation, they did so at the same rate; no technique proved to be significantly more effective than the other techniques at reducing GSR levels over each of the three measures. These results do not lend support to the use of 5x5 breathing or tactile grounding over passive relaxation during the first three minutes of relaxation after increased stress. Future research may explore whether this pattern of result holds over longer periods of observation, and whether other operationalizations of grounding and breathing techniques are better at reducing stress than passive relaxation.</p>	Dr. Hans Stadthagen-Gonzalez
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3:15	Mariah Farmer and Angela B. Duncan, PhD	Washburn University	College Students' Trust in Nutrition and Scientific Information	Few college students meet nutrition recommendations, and distrust in scientific institutions has increased. Individuals tend to defer to experts for understanding, but this is contingent on whether the expert is deemed trustworthy. We investigated college students' trust in nutrition and scientific sources. In this diverse sample of 201 undergraduate psychology students, the average age was 21.97 (SD = 7.57), about 54% (n = 109) were Caucasian, and 69% (n = 139) were female. The majority of the sample (64.7%) indicated they are only "somewhat knowledgeable about nutrition". We also found differences in consulting versus trusting social media for nutrition information. Additionally, trust in social media influences and bloggers was different between class levels. Lastly, we found significant differences between Caucasian and non-White students regarding who they prefer to consult with and trust regarding nutrition and scientific information. Further details about our findings and implications for future directions will be shared.	Angela B. Duncan, PhD
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Session A: Undergraduate Empirical and Internship Posters
2:45 p.m.-3:45 p.m.
William S. Knight Center Room 108

A	Ava Garaway, Lauren George, Autumn O'Brien, Kylan Stout, and Erica Terrell	Missouri Western State University	Contributions to College Leadership Formation	While in college, students have opportunities to participate in clubs, organizations and activities, and gain valuable leadership experience. Some students take advantage of these opportunities while others do not. Literature on leadership development suggests academic motivation, self-efficacy, parenting behaviors, and previous participation in organizations may contribute to leadership in college. The current research explored whether these variables distinguished college leaders from non-leaders. Our data analysis will compare college leaders to non-leaders (n = 70+) on the variables of interest using ANOVAs.	Dr. Teddi Deka
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B	Abegale Denly, Derek Ponce-Gonzalez, and Anika Fairbanks	Southwestern College	Screen Time and How It Influences the Mental Health of Undergraduate Students	<p>Past research has indicated that excessive screen time is correlated with poorer mental health outcomes. The current study utilized a survey given to students at a small, midwestern college. Participants self-reported their daily screen time usage and indicators of mental health including anxiety, sleep quality, stress, depression, and social comparisons. This project examines correlations between screen time and mental health, taking designated breaks from screens and mental health, comparing yourself to others online and anxiety, and screen time delaying your bedtime and using screens to cope with negative emotions. Four hypotheses were tested. Two of the four hypotheses were supported, and two were not supported. Exploratory analyses revealed a number of additional significant correlations. More investigation is needed to better understand the relationships between screen time, behavior, and mental health.</p>	Jacob Negley
C	Brandon Collins and Tori Dahmer	University of Central Missouri	Eye Contact and its Effect on First Impressions	<p>The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between eye contact and first impressions. It is hypothesized that reduced eye contact will negatively affect the quality of a first impression. The experiment involves a confederate who engages in either minimal or normal amounts of eye contact while conversing with a participant. Following the interaction, participants are asked to rate their first impression of the confederate using measures such as perceived anxiety, engagement, and overall opinion. It is expected that participants who interact with the confederate displaying minimal eye contact will report more negative impressions compared to those who experience normal levels of eye contact.</p>	Dr. David Kreiner

D	Yasmin V. McPoil and Michelle R. P. Durham	Missouri State University	The effect of framing on people's responses to artificial intelligence screeners for depression	This research investigates how the framing of an artificial intelligence (AI) mental health screening tool impacts attitudes toward AI. Participants (n = 119 undergraduate students) read a story about a person whose social media activity was flagged for signs of depression by an AI screening tool. In the positively framed condition, AI detected subtle symptoms and provided useful resources. In the negatively framed condition, AI misinterpreted artistic expression as depression and violated privacy. A neutral frame presented positives and negatives equally. Participants then answered questions about their general attitudes toward AI and how they would respond to the screening tool. The study found that general attitudes were not affected by the framing. However, participants in the positive framing condition reported being more likely to follow up on resources shared by the AI screening tool. These findings shed light on how the presentation of AI technology shapes public perception and acceptance.	Michelle Durham
E	Maggie Durham, Myla Cathey, Piper Foreman, Callie Jackson, Reece Troyer, Chris Genseal, Brandon Collins, and Cody Millard	University of Central Missouri	BIOPAC Research Training Experience: Santa Barbara, CA Summer 2025	We are a group of eight undergraduate students majoring in Psychology who had an unimaginable experience in Santa Barbara, California, in 2025. Though full-time students, we are also research assistants in the Neurophysiology of Cognition, Attention, and Learning Lab (NeuroCALL). NeuroCALL is a collaborative EEG and physiology lab at UCM, and we use BIOPAC Systems Inc. hardware and software to conduct research. The director of NeuroCALL, Assistant Professor Dr. Adam Runyan, worked diligently to acquire this system for our lab, and he has maintained professional connections with BIOPAC representatives. Dr. Runyan's dedication and service to his students were demonstrated through his partnership with our sponsors to fully fund all eight students. The BIOPAC Research Training Experience provided 3 days of experiential training sessions in July 2025. During these sessions, experts from BIOPAC trained, taught, and reviewed concepts related to the work we do in NeuroCALL at UCM in Warrensburg, MO.	Dr. Adam Runyan, PhD and Nikole Wright-Montgomery

Session B: Undergraduate Theoretical and Research Proposal Posters

2:45 p.m.-3:45 p.m.

William S. Knight Center Room 108

F	McKulla Paszkiewicz, Aubrey Agovino, and Adam Runyan	University of Central Missouri	Prayer and Meditation: Differential Impacts on Stress and Stress Recovery?	<p>People have long used prayer and meditation to cope with stress, fear, and uncertainty. This between-subjects study examines their physiological effects on stress and recovery. Researchers aim to recruit 120 participants from the University of Central Missouri (85 collected so far). Heart rate (HR) is measured using BIOPAC sensors while participants complete a mock U.S. Civics exam designed as a mild-to-moderate stressor. All participants receive false feedback that they scored in the bottom 10th percentile. After the stressor, participants are randomly assigned to either an intervention or control group. Intervention participants self-select prayer or mindfulness meditation for five minutes, while control participants are asked to “relax” for five minutes. Average HR during the five-minute recovery period is compared across groups. Researchers hypothesize that those who engage in prayer or meditation will show lower post-stressor HR and faster HR recovery than those in the passive rest control group.</p>	Adam Runyan
G	Rachel Deters, Natalie Scott, Noah Carrow, Jayden Echols, Madie Hager, and Dr. Carly Yadon	Missouri State University	It Just Makes Scents: Olfactory Function & Mental Health	<p>Olfactory dysfunction has been associated with negative psychological and quality of life outcomes, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Although prior studies have examined these associations, fewer have integrated both objective olfactory testing and subjective self-report measures within a young adult population. Participants 18 and older will be recruited through an online participation system and campus advertisements. Olfactory functioning will be assessed using the Sniffin’ Sticks Threshold and Screening tests. Participants will also complete questionnaires assessing quality of life, perceived stress, anxiety, depression, and COVID-19 history. We predict that participants with olfactory deficits will report higher levels of perceived stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, as well as lower olfactory-related quality of life. Individuals with a history of COVID-19 and persistent olfactory dysfunction are expected to demonstrate the greatest impairments across both sensory and psychological measures. By integrating objective and subjective assessments of olfactory functioning, this study seeks to clarify the relationship between sensory impairment and mental health in a college population.</p>	Dr. Carly Yadon

H	Mercedes N. Rodriguez and Hyecheon Hwang, Ph.D.	University of Central Missouri	Can traditional journaling enhance your well-being?	<p>The purpose of this study is to measure differences in the use of digital versus traditional journaling among college students. I hypothesize that if participants use traditional journaling, their stress levels will be reduced and they will experience increased self-awareness and emotional expression, compared with digital journaling. I will use an experimental between-subjects multigroup design, randomly assigning participants to a digital or a traditional journaling group. All participants will journal on three prompts: how college has changed them personally and academically; how they balance life, college, and perhaps work; and, if their current emotion were a color, what would it be and why? After both groups have written for 15 minutes, they will first complete some background questions, then complete an emotional expressivity scale by Kring et al.(1994), a short stress state questionnaire by Helton and Näswall (2015), and a self-awareness outcomes scale by Sutton and Carey (2024).</p>	Hyecheon Hwang, Ph.D.
I	Ruby Ochoa and Thomas Skinner	Wichita State University	The Role of Ethnic-Racial Identity and Familial Stigma in the Self-Stigma of Seeking Psychological Help Among Latino Individuals	<p>Within Latino communities, stigma and negative attitudes toward psychological treatment remain significant barriers to seeking mental health services. Cultural factors such as ethnic-racial identity development and family beliefs may influence how individuals perceive mental health services and help-seeking. The purpose of this proposed study is to examine the relationships among ethnic-racial identity development, perceived family stigma regarding mental health, and self-stigma of seeking psychological help. The study will also explore whether these relationships differ across immigrant generations and consider variability within subgroups of the Latino community. Participants will complete an anonymous online survey measuring ethnic identity development, perceived family attitudes toward mental health, and self-stigma of seeking psychological help. It is hypothesized that greater ethnic-racial identity development will be associated with lower self-stigma of seeking psychological help, while higher perceived family stigma will be associated with greater self-stigma. Additionally, ethnic-racial identity achievement will moderate the relationship between perceived familial stigma and self-stigma of seeking psychological help.</p>	Dr. Rhonda K. Lewis

J	Hadleigh P. Winfrey and Hyecheon Hwang, Ph.D	University of Central Missouri (UCM)	Exploring the Impact of Creativeness on Emotional Well-being	The purpose of this study is to examine how participants' anxiety levels change throughout the series of coloring assessments. During these activities, participants will be asked to focus on the coloring process rather than on their own thoughts. Along with the coloring, participants will also be asked to complete reflective journaling to capture their emotional responses and their own observations before and after each coloring session. The reflective journals will serve as a dependent variable characteristic to understand the participants' internal experiences and the effects of the coloring. These entries could include their mood, concentration, or even relaxation levels. Measuring emotional tone (positive or negative) and the presence of anxiety-related words will be rated on a numerical scale to allow for comparison across sessions. This approach will help determine whether the coloring assessment enables greater positive emotional expression and reduced anxiety among participants.	Hyecheon Hwang, Ph.D
K	Arianna Schwellensattl	Lindenwood University	The Relation between Cultural Perspectives and Cognitive Processes	Culture is a shared system of meaning, norms, and values. Cultural perspective is the interpretation of information from a cultural standpoint. The purpose of my literature review was to examine the differences in cultural perspectives with respect to various cognitive processes, including the visuospatial sketchpad, information processing, memory, decision-making, language, and social cognition. A review of the literature revealed cultural differences in all these cognitive processes, highlighting the importance of understanding cognitive processes in the context of culture. The findings highlight a need for more research examining the relationship between cultural perspectives and various cognitive processes.	Michiko Nohara-LeClair

Friday, March 27

Session 4: Undergraduate Research Proposal Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 110

4:00	G. Diophante Rives	College of the Ozarks	The Yerkes-Dodson Law as it Relates to College Students	How do varying levels of time pressure/deadlines impact the quality of a student's work? This research will examine the Yerkes-Dodson Law by giving students timed tests, with the amount of time varying for each group. All participants will be given the same assignment to complete, but there will be three different randomly assigned groups with different deadlines for the assignment. The expected results are that the group with moderate time pressure will perform better than the groups with either a higher or lower time pressure. As a college student, I am always facing deadlines of varying degrees. I think this will provide fascinating insight into better performance as a student.	Jeff Elliott
4:15	Emma Willesden	Southwestern College	The Effect of Biopsychological Models on Mock Juror Perceptions of Defendants with Co-Occurring Disorders	The present proposal aims to explore mock jurors' sentencing and treatment suggestions regarding a defendant with co-occurring (mental health and substance abuse) disorders after reading a court transcript of an expert witness detailing the biopsychosocial models of each disorder. Participants will also rate defendant culpability, dangerousness, treatability, and likelihood of reoffending. Based on previous findings (Ricardo & Henderson, 2021; Rimmel et al., 2019; Marshall et al., 2017; Medeiros, 2025), we expect the presentation of biopsychosocial models to have no effect on given sentence lengths, however, we also predict that biopsychological explanations will increase treatability ratings (Marshall et al., 2017), thereby increasing the likelihood that participants opt to divert defendants into treatment in lieu of imprisonment.	Dr. Jacob Negley

4:30	Rorie G. Britton	College of the Ozarks	Independent Versus Interdependent Self- Construal in Competitive Settings: A Research Proposal	This research proposal examines whether individuals with independent self-construal are more likely to prioritize personal achievement over group harmony in competitive settings. Self-construal describes the way people view and understand themselves, including whether they see their identity as primarily individual or closely connected to others. Because independence emphasizes autonomy and personal success, individuals higher in independent self-construal are expected to be more likely to focus on winning, outperforming others, or standing out, even when it may disrupt group harmony. In contrast, individuals with interdependent self-construal are expected to be more motivated to maintain cooperation and positive relationships, sometimes at the expense of individual achievement. This study will be comprised of an online survey examining how these differences influence decision-making in competitive scenarios and how individuals respond when personal success conflicts with group outcomes. Understanding these tendencies may help improve teamwork, conflict management, and motivation in competitive environments.	Jeff Elliott
4:45	Mariam Sowers	College of the Ozarks	The Role of Public Self- Perception in Veterans Choosing Whether to Utilize a Service Dog	Many people utilize service dogs including both veterans and civilians, however many people pass up the opportunity in fear of how others will perceive them. I am studying whether public self -perception plays a role in how willing veterans are to utilize a service dog. I will be pulling research methods from multiple other articles and synthesizing them to produce a viable research proposal of my own. I hope to shed some light on to one of the possible causes of why veterans may be hesitant to utilize a service dog even though service dogs have been proven to be a beneficial addition to a veteran's treatment plan.	Jeff Elliott

Session 5: Undergraduate Theoretical Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 102

4:00	Brooke Elizabeth Stephens	College of the Ozarks	Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Eating Disorders	<p>Eating disorders (EDs) are a significant public health concern, with a range of disorders and high mortality rates. This literature review examines the application of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) in treating EDs. DBT, a cognitive-behavioral approach, focuses on skill deficits in mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness to address internal emotional dysregulation. The goal of therapy is to work toward resilience and increase ability to handle distress. Evidence from the current literature supports the efficacy of the model, particularly for complex and challenging cases. Strengths of the model include DBT's skill-building with a focus on the internal experience helping to teach clients emotional regulation. Though limitations highlight the need for integrated approaches that could also analyze the impact of the client's external environment. Future research could explore the high prevalence of ED comorbidity, further exploring etiology and hybrid therapies to enhance treatment outcomes.</p>	Rebecca McGarry
4:15	Zachary M. DeFoe	University of Central Missouri	Beyond Overlap: Unraveling AuDHD	<p>The American Psychiatric Association's (2000) DSM-IV-TR did not allow clinicians to diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) together. In the differential diagnosis section, the authors wrote that "Symptoms of overactivity and inattention are frequent in Autistic Disorder, but clinicians do not diagnose Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder when Autistic Disorder is present" (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 74). This reflected the view that these symptoms belonged to ASD rather than ADHD. In 2013, DSM-5 permitted co-occurring diagnoses (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), allowing people to describe patterns that do not fit a single category. Many report experiences that are not captured by simply adding symptoms and use the term AuDHD (Craddock, 2025). Research suggests that the dual presentation differs from a single diagnosis in its biological, cognitive, and subjective aspects. This study suggests AuDHD has an interaction effect, compounding symptoms rather than a comorbid diagnosis of ASD+ADHD. Next steps will be to test this potential interaction effect, comparing it to the additive model, to better understand how these conditions interact in an individual.</p>	Dr. Katie Jacobs, Dr. Adam Runyan, and Professor Sanja Gidakovic

4:30	Makia McRoberts	College of the Ozarks	Bipolar Disorder and Schizophrenia treatments	A critical evaluation and synthesis of existing research rather than just a summary of papers based on findings from peer reviewed sources indicating that the treatments are effective or not effective and where the gaps are located.	Dr. Jennifer Maloney
4:45	Abigail G. Bull	College of the Ozarks	The Role of Kinesiophobia in Movement Among Older Adults	Kinesiophobia is the excessive fear of movement or physical activity caused by a fear of causing pain or reinjury and is often found in older adults and geriatric patients. Research on kinesiophobia highlights the relationship between injury, fear or avoidance of movement and physical activity, and the decline or perceived decline in function among elderly individuals. The findings provide valuable insight for occupations such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and psychology. Addressing and understanding kinesiophobia could potentially improve quality of life and overall patient outcomes in elderly adults.	Rebecca Hendrix

Session 6: Undergraduate Empirical Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 109

4:00	Ashley Richardson	Oklahoma Christian University	Teaching Method and Classroom Environment on Learning	With the increasing usage of technology as well as elaborate decorations in classrooms, it is vital to know how these things affect student learning. This study tested how teaching method and classroom environment affect academic performance in college students. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups. One group listened to a prerecorded video lecture played on a classroom projector, the other group listened to the same lecture but given in-person by the same lecturer. After the lecture, participants were given a 15 question multiple choice test over the lecture material. Both groups listened to the lecture twice and took the test twice with the instances being one week apart to reduce carryover, once in a cluttered classroom and once in a tidy classroom. Data was analyzed using a 2X2 mixed model ANOVA, with teaching method being the between subjects factor and classroom environment being the within subjects factor. Neither teaching method or classroom environment were found to have a significant effect on academic performance. The major limitation of this study was the very small sample size of 17 participants. Additional research with a larger sample size would be recommended.	Dr. Ryan Newell
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4:15	Abigail Skipper and James Knabe	College of the Ozarks	The Effects of Faith-Based Practices on Perceptions of Spiritual Experiences	The present research sought to explore the effects of faith-based practice on subjective perceptions of spiritual experience. Participants were analyzed quantitatively through a survey study. Researchers hypothesized a curvilinear trend, where both high and low faith-based practice result in high positive spiritual experience, and medium faith—based practice results in low positive spiritual experience. These findings have implications for understanding spiritual self-perception, as well as the effect of conflicting factors inhibiting participation in expressions of faith.	Dr. Rebecca Hendrix
4:30	Daniela Dixon	Oklahoma Christian University	The Impact of the Smartphone on Anxiety Levels Among College Students	Our smartphones have made their way into classrooms and learning settings, which has given rise to questions about the impact of smartphones on our emotional regulation. Thus the purpose of this study was to investigate and explore the effects of the location (in sight vs off sight) and the sound (ON vs OFF) of smartphones on anxiety levels among college students. Fifty five undergraduate students participated in this study and were randomly assigned into a 2x2 ANOVA Between Subjects. They completed a reading comprehension assignment, followed by a test over the material. At the end, state anxiety levels were assessed through an adapted anxiety Likert scale. Results indicated a significant interaction between location and sound of the smartphone on anxiety ($F(1,51)=8.459, p0.005$). The highest levels of anxiety occurred when the smartphone was in sight and the sound was OFF (Mean=63.64, SD=17.14). It was hypothesized that participants in the condition OFF sight and sound ON will show higher levels of anxiety compared to the other groups, which was not supported. However, these findings highlight the complex interplay between auditory and visual cues of smartphone presence in anxiety levels, suggesting that both of these aspects of the smartphone should be considered in understanding the psychological impact of modern technology in our daily lives.	Dr. Ryan Newell

Session C: Graduate Research Proposal Posters
4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
William S. Knight Center Room 108

A	Taka Yamaguchi, Juanita Gonzalez, Mariah Harnish, and Tyler Adams	Northeastern State University	Social Categorization and the Composite Face Effect	<p>According to the social-cognitive model, social categorical labels (e.g., racial names) influence face processing. Despite faces constantly moving during daily interactions, most face-processing research has used static 2D face stimuli.</p> <p>In the composite face tasks, commonly used to study face processing, participants view static 2D faces created by merging the top half of one face with the bottom half of another. When the composites are aligned, they are usually processed holistically, while misaligned composites promote analytical processing.</p> <p>Although dynamic information often improves face recognition by enhancing 3D mental representation, evidence shows that moving faces are processed holistically like static faces. If static and dynamic faces are processed similarly, then own-race names should boost holistic processing for moving 3D faces.</p> <p>In our study, we examine whether own-race names improve recognition accuracy and holistic processing in both static 2D and moving 3D composite face tasks.</p>	Taka Yamaguchi
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B	Molly R. Hermann	University of Nebraska at Omaha	Hemispheric Differences in Reading Aloud Monosyllabic Words: A Divided Visual Field Approach to Examining Predictor Effects Across the Left and Right Visual Fields	<p>The human brain follows a contralateral organization, such that stimuli presented to the right visual field (RVF) is initially processed by the left hemisphere (LH). Hemispheric specialization is particularly evident in language processing, with the left hemisphere typically showing dominance; however, less is known about how hemispheric differences manifest during the reading-aloud of monosyllabic English words at the item level. Using a megastudy approach, the present research examines whether reaction times and accuracy differ across visual fields, whether key lexical predictors exhibit hemisphere-specific effects, and whether large-scale item-level analyses reveal patterns not captured by traditional factorial designs. Using the divided visual field (DVF) methodology, words are presented briefly to either visual field while participants maintain central fixation and read each word aloud as quickly and accurately as possible. Reaction times and accuracy are recorded, and word-level predictor variables derived from the SCOPE database are incorporated into multiple regression and mixed-effects models. It is expected that words presented to the RVF/LH will yield faster and more accurate responses overall, reflecting LH language dominance. Additionally, lexical predictors such as frequency and age of acquisition (AoA) are predicted to show stronger effects in the LH, whereas semantic predictors may contribute differently to performance depending on visual field of presentation. By combining DVF methodology with a megastudy design, this research aims to provide a more nuanced account of hemispheric contributions to reading aloud and to clarify how lexical and semantic variables interact with neural lateralization.</p>	Michael Cortese
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C	Maya N. Gulliford	Wichita State University	Holding Space in Shifting Times: Assessing Well-being among BIPOC Emerging Adults in Uncertain Political Context	<p>The recent administrative and legislative shifts have led to the adoption of anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives across multiple higher education context, raising concern about their implications for marginalized student populations, This qualitative study plans to employ reflexive thematic analysis to explore how anti-DEI policies are perceived and experienced by BIPOC university students, with attention to their sense of belonging and mental health on campus in areas that are meant to be places that foster sense of belonging, identity and relaxation. Interviews will be conducted with undergraduate students from racially, ethnically, and historically marginalized backgrounds, who attend a popular university in the Midwest. Data will be analyzed following a reflexive thematic analysis approach to identify recurring patterns of meaning within participants' narratives. The finds hope to highlight the broader psychosocial consequences of anti-DEI policies beyond structural change, underscoring the need for higher education institutions to consider how policy decisions shape campus climate and student well-being. This study plans to contribute qualitative evidence to ongoing debates about diversity, equity, and inclusion and student sense of belonging in higher education. This study plans a significant contribution by combining Barker's behavior setting theory and the BLAC model (Black Love, Activism, and Community) to clarify how the loss of DEI-specific spaces shapes minority student belonging, and whether digital or alternative physical spaces can meaningfully replicate those settings.</p>	Dr. Rhonda K. Lewis
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D	Samuel Paunetto, Ph.D. Student, LMSW, MDiv.	Wichita State University	Flying Blind: The Impact of the Kansas Student Data Privacy Act of 2022 for Youth Behavioral and Prevention Programs	<p>The national conversation about student data privacy began in 1974 with the passage of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In Kansas, the Student Data Privacy Act was enacted in 2014, fundamentally changing how non-academic student data is collected. Before 2014, Kansas used an "opt out" system: students were automatically included in non-academic assessments (like physiological or emotional surveys) unless a parent or guardian explicitly refused participation. The Student Data Privacy Act of 2022 shifted this to an "opt in" system, requiring parents or guardians to provide written consent before their child can take part in such assessments. This change presented a significant challenge to collecting data for non-academic surveys like the Kansas Communities That Care (KCTC) and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The second key piece of legislation related to student privacy and parental consent in Kansas was passed in 2022. With Senate Substitute for House Bill 2567, Section 27, schools were required to notify parents or guardians no more than four months before each assessment, providing details on its content and consent process. This new requirement further complicated the data collection process for non-academic surveys. This proposal for a study seeks to understand the impact of the Student Data Privacy Act of 2022 on the implementation, and delivery of services for youth behavioral, and prevention programs in the state of Kansas. These are programs that need to track the outcomes of risk behaviors to evaluate the efficiency of their interventions. Without accessing the data, programs cannot set up baselines to track progress. Federal grants like SAMHSA, require most grantees to engage in outcome monitoring and rigorous evaluation. We are proposing a non-experimental, mixed methods approach, using a questionnaire with essay questions. We have identified 20 local organizations that meet the criteria of organizations providing behavioral health and prevention services to youth in the state of Kansas. Study is expected to begin in the fall of 2026. Our poster presentation seeks feedback from the extended psychology community on ways of improving our study, and to explore opportunities for collaboration. Keywords: Privacy, Youth, Prevention, Behavioral, Parents Rights, Data Access.</p>	Dr. Rhonda K. Lewis
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E	Ngoc Vuong, Ruby Ochoa, Lawrence Dao, Daniel Dao, Kelli Tran, Kiara Ochoa, and Rhonda K. Lewis.	Wichita State University	Phone-Free Schools in the Sunflower State: A Quasi-Experiment Assessing Outcomes of Personal Electronic Device Policies	<p>Amid growing concerns and increasing urgency for institutions and systems to address the academic/educational, behavioral/psychological, and physical harms of children and adolescents' unhealthy relationships with digital technology, a national trend has emerged in the past few years, with an increasing number of schools, school districts, and state governments either banning personal electronic devices during class time, the entirety of the school day, or considering such bans. However, findings on the effects of personal electronic device (PED) policies have been mixed, and there is an immense need for future research that can better infer and establish causality between the implementation of PED policies and changes in student outcomes. In Kansas, immense heterogeneity in the PED policy landscape due to local control provides a prime opportunity for a quasi-experiment estimating differences in the effects of PED policies at the middle and high school level. Through the compilation of Kansas schools' policies on personal electronic devices, longitudinal data from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), and staggered difference-in-differences (DiD) analyses, this quasi-experimental study hypothesizes that adoption of bell-to-bell (all-day) PED policies predicts improvement in standardized test scores, attendance and chronic absenteeism rates, and graduation rates. Findings will be finalized in advance of the conference.</p>	Rhonda K. Lewis
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Saturday, March 28

Session 7: Undergraduate Research Proposal Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 102

10:00	Adelaide Johnson	College of the Ozarks	The A.I. Generated Cycle of Loneliness	<p>In an increasingly digital age, substituting face-to-face interactions and relationships with digital ones is easier than ever. Furthermore, the use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) as a substitute for friendships, therapists, and even romantic relationships has increased. In this presentation, I will be discussing the effects that participating in an A.I. relationship has on human relationship formation and loneliness. A specific look will be taken at the previous research done on the benefits and harms that A.I. relationships produce, as well as the similarities and differences between A.I. and human relationships. After this discussion, I will propose a study that uses peer reviewed surveys to measure how prosocial behavior correlates with the use of A.I as a substitute for human relationships and the subsequent effect on loneliness levels.</p>	Jeff Elliott
10:15	Angelica Wilson	College of the Ozarks	Why Studying Life Satisfaction in College Students Matters	<p>College students frequently experience elevated levels of stress during an academic semester, which can influence their overall wellbeing and satisfaction with life. Understanding the components that help students maintain life satisfaction despite stress is important for improving mental wellness and academic outcomes. My study will examine how coping strategies moderate the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction among college students across a semester. This research focuses on whether adaptive coping strategies reduce the negative effects of stress on life satisfaction. Perceived stress will be measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), while life satisfaction will be assessed through the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). Coping strategies will be evaluated using the Brief COPE scale to distinguish between adaptive and maladaptive coping patterns. Based on previous research on stress and adjustment, it is expected that higher perceived stress will be associated with lower life satisfaction. However, students who report stronger and more adaptive coping strategies may be expected to maintain higher life satisfaction across the semester compared to those who rely on less effective coping methods.</p>	Jeff Elliott

10:30	Julia Dyck	College of the Ozarks	Dual Attitudes and Their Impact on Marital Satisfaction	<p>My research proposal is about dual attitudes (concurrent explicit and implicit attitudes towards objects, ideas, people, etc.) and marital satisfaction. I would like to research how dual attitudes in one or both partners in a marriage impact the level of satisfaction each partner experiences in that relationship.</p> <p>The participants will all be married people. The study will feature three assessments. First, the IAT (Implicit-Association Test) will be administered with a focus on a variety of marital topics. Then, the participants will take the RAS (Relationship Assessment Scale) to rate their current marital satisfaction. Following this, the participants will fill out a Likert-style self-report survey designed to capture their explicit attitudes about the same marital topics, then immediately take the RAS again. The marital topics in question may include communication styles, conflict resolution strategies, social support, relational commitment, spiritual and religious factors, emotional and physical intimacy, mental health, extended family relationships, and work-life balance.</p> <p>Once the data has been collected, it will be analyzed to determine if there may be some relationship between the expression of dual attitudes and marital satisfaction of one or both partners.</p>	Jeff Elliott
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10:45	Erin G. Tierney and Emma M. Whitlock	College of the Ozarks	Prizes or Praise? Examining the Overjustification Effect	<p>Understanding the overjustification effect, or “the tendency for intrinsic motivation to diminish for activities that have become associated with rewards” (Baumeister & Bushman, 2017, p. 82), is essential when managing businesses, households, and those around us. The focus of this experiment is to better understand the effects of specific rewards on intrinsic motivation. Our research question is: Do tangible rewards reduce intrinsic motivation more than verbal encouragement? To test this idea, we plan to examine how verbal, tangible, and no-reward conditions affect intrinsic motivation in three randomly assigned groups. Each group will meet for two sessions. At the initial session, each individual, depending on the group, will receive a word search and information about possible rewards. The follow-up session will include a similar difficulty-level word search, and information that no rewards will be given for that session. The follow-up word search will present ten new words for participants to find. The level of intrinsic motivation will be assessed through engagement with the word search within each group, measured by the number of words found on the follow-up word search. The average number of words found will be compared across each reinforcement group.</p>	Jeff Elliott
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Session 8: Undergraduate Research Proposal Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 110

10:15	A. Lynn Cassani	Missouri Western State University	Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and the Professional's Point of View	<p>Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) is an experiential mental health intervention that integrates psychotherapy with structured interactions involving horses. Although evidence for EAP is growing, variability in training, implementation, and research design limits replication and hinders broader clinical legitimacy. This proposed study uses a qualitative phenomenological design to explore licensed, certified EAP professionals' lived experiences and interpretations of EAP practice. Approximately 524 practitioners affiliated with EAGALA and PATH Intl. will be invited to complete an anonymous, semi-structured online questionnaire addressing theoretical orientation, the role and meaning of the horse, perceived mechanisms of change, training and ethical considerations, systemic barriers, practitioner growth, and future research needs. Responses will be analyzed using conventional qualitative content analysis to identify meaning units, codes, categories, and themes, supported by triangulated coding across two AI-assisted platforms (Looppanel and Taguette). Findings are expected to clarify how practitioners conceptualize therapeutic change within the therapist–client–horse triad and to inform future standardization, training, and research in EAP.</p>	Dr. Teddi Deka
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10:30	Ava Bilton	Lindenwood University	Perceptions of Physical Disabilities and Campus Accessibility: A Research Proposal	<p>The purpose of my study is to assess perceptions of physical disabilities and accessibility at a medium-sized Midwestern private university. Existing research has identified barriers that disabled students face in higher education and found that there are discrepancies between what disabled students are promised and what they experience (García-González et al., 2021). My study aims to uncover what perceptions people have regarding individuals with physical disabilities and accessibility on campus. In addition, whether participants' perceptions change after being asked to think about themselves in a wheelchair. To answer these questions, I will use an Implicit Association Test (IAT) to measure participants' implicit biases regarding physical disabilities before and after they are randomly assigned to one of two groups. Group A will consider no change in their current physical abilities, and Group B will consider themselves permanently in a wheelchair as they answer questions about their perceptions and experiences regarding hypothetical but realistic scenarios on campus. My results will shed light on how physically disabled students are perceived and how a simple hypothetical task can put accessibility at the forefront of people's minds. This increase in awareness may inspire people to continue the conversation regarding physical disabilities and campus accessibility.</p>	Michiko Nohara-LeClair
10:45	Woody Orr and Cassidy Terry	University of Central Missouri	The Effectiveness of Multimedia Exhibitions on Mental Health Outlooks	<p>Barriers to care (BTC) for mental health affects all of society. In 2023 70.5% of adult participants indicated that they had unmet mental health treatment needs (SAMSA, 2024). Barriers to mental health treatment include mental health stigma, cost, time, readiness for treatment, knowledge about treatment, and negative beliefs about mental health services (Elshaikh et al., 2023; SAMSA, 2024). The education approach and the contact approach have both been shown to reduce BTC (Corrigan et al., 2012). The education approach provides information about mental health (Curran et al., 2023; Ward & Witt, 2023) The contact approach has individuals discuss their mental health experience (Morgiève et al., 2018). Our study will combine them to reduce BTC through an interactive exhibit. Participants will watch 10 videos of individuals discussing mental health. Information will be provided on topics addressed in the videos. We believe that this project will reduce barriers associated with help seeking.</p>	Dr. Katie Jacobs

Session 9: Undergraduate Empirical Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 109

10:15	James Knabe and Caelei Stanton	College of the Ozarks	Human Connectivity: Analyzing Social Perception of Personality Through First Impressions	Our study focused on first impressions through the assessment of both positive and negative social perceptions of such interactions. Our study consisted of 135 students who filled out a survey consisting of the Big Five Personality Test and the Positive and Negative Social Exchanges (PANSE) Scale. It also included questions regarding the participants' responses to meeting someone new who was introverted vs. someone who was extraverted. Results of the relationships between these variables will be discussed as well as their implications.	Rebecca Hendrix
10:30	Ariel Hartshorn, John Paul Bugos, and Christian Lewis	Benedictine College	The Relationship Between Personality Traits and Emotional Response to Inconsistent Feedback	In this study we asked if the Big 5 personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, and neuroticism) are correlated with the strength of emotional responses to inconsistent feedback. Participants (N = 36, 30 women, 6 men) from Benedictine College, ages 18 to 23 (M = 19.5, SD = 1.26), completed the 44-item Big-Five Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and engaged in a computerized card-sorting task. They were asked to sort a series of cards according to color, number, or shape but the correct sorting rule was not initially disclosed. Emotional response was measured during the task using galvanic skin response (GSR) while they received feedback after each trial that allowed them to discover the correct rule. On the 11th trial and again on the 19th trial, the rule changed without the participant's knowledge leading to feedback that was inconsistent with the previously learned rule. We hypothesized that only neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness would correlate with emotional response. We found emotional response, as measured by minimum amplitude from the participants' baseline GSR, had a moderate, positive association with conscientiousness, $r(34) = .36, p = .031$, and also a moderate, positive association with agreeableness, $r(34) = .42, p = .011$. Neuroticism, openness to experience, and extraversion were not significantly associated with emotional response. These findings could suggest that conscientiousness and agreeableness are linked with a decreased emotional response to inconsistent feedback. Future research could implement a study using in-person feedback and a more naturalistic task.	Dr. Hans Stadhagen-Gonzalez

10:45	Rorie G. Britton	College of the Ozarks	The Impact of Personality on Time Allocation in College Students	The purpose of this study was to view the correlation between the Big Five Personality Traits and the apportionment of time allotted for academics by college students. There were 136 participants, both male and female, between the ages of 18 and 29, from a small liberal arts college in the Midwest, who participated in a 54-question online survey through Microsoft Forms. Participants answered questions regarding time allotment for studying, homework, and sleep, and were asked their class rank and how many credit hours for which they were enrolled. After answering these questions, participants were prompted to complete a shortened version of the Big Five Personality Quiz. Results and their implications will be discussed.	Rebecca Hendrix
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Session D: Undergraduate Empirical Posters
10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
William S. Knight Center Room 108

A	Addison Huber and Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph. D.	University of Central Missouri	Know better, do better: A study of mental health literacy	The purpose of this study is to explore the effect of mental health literacy on mental health anxiety and help seeking behaviors. What these constructs have in common is that an exposure to mental health literacy seems to be related to an increase in mental health anxiety and an increase in help-seeking behaviors. However, there is little to no information about mental health literacy and its effect on anxiety of one's own symptoms. This study is to see exactly how mental health literacy affects one's mental health anxiety and their attitudes to help seeking.	Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph. D.
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B	Rebecca Tumusifu and David Kreiner, Ph.D.	University of Central Missouri	Memes And Optimal Study Methods	<p>Educators often suggest strategies to help students learn more effectively. However, students may not frequently rely on those empirically supported techniques. Previous studies indicated that memes can be an effective and creative way for students to learn and retain information. Based on previous empirical educational research, we identified three study strategies shown to be effective: practice testing/self-testing, distributed practice, and the read, recite, review (RRR) method. Practice testing helps improve memory through active recall of the material; distributed practice involves having a study schedule that spaces out learning sessions across a period; and the RRR method involves surveying and then reading the material to answer questions, attempting to recall, and then reviewing one's notes. In an experimental design, we provided participants with memes illustrating the three effective study methods to investigate whether educational memes can improve students' understanding of and intentions to use these methods in the future. We randomly assigned 19 participants to one of two groups. One group was assigned to receive text descriptions of the study methods only; in the other group, we gave participants a meme handout, containing a meme to illustrate each of the three study methods, along with the text descriptions. After viewing the handouts, participants were given a questionnaire in which they were asked to rate the effectiveness of each of the three study methods, how engaging the study methods were, and how likely they were to use them. The differences between the two conditions were not statistically significant for any of the dependent variables: effectiveness, engagement, and likelihood of use. These findings suggest that adding educational memes may be insufficient to produce measurable effects. Further research with larger sample sizes is recommended.</p> <p>Keywords: study strategies, education, learning techniques, college success, memes</p>	David Kreiner, Ph.D.
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C	Grant P. Howison and Michelle R. P. Durham	Missouri State University	The effect of short form content on negative cognitive bias	The rise of short form content has raised concerns about its psychological impact on young adults. The present study examined whether exposure to positive or negative short form media content influenced negative cognitive bias as well as positive and negative affect. Participants (n = 195 undergraduate students) were randomly assigned to view positive TikTok videos, negative TikTok videos, or complete a neutral control task. Negative cognitive bias was measured using the Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS), while affect was assessed using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule. The study found no significant differences between groups for negative cognitive bias. However, participants exposed to positive content reported higher positive affect, while those exposed to negative content reported higher negative affect compared to a control. These findings suggest that brief exposure to short form media does influence mood but its effects on negative cognitive bias may require more research.	Michelle Durham
D	Lauren Lynch, Alyssa Cage, Salem Atkinson, Tobias Cervantes, Gabriela Cinelli Da Silva, Dr. Amy Underwood Barton, and Elizabeth Dimmitt	Northwest Missouri State University	The Effect of Art Interventions on Self-Reported Emotional Wellness	This study evaluates the influence of art-based interventions in promoting favorable mental health outcomes in youth and adult populations. Qualitative surveys gauging the impact of (1) contributing to and (2) viewing mental health-themed artwork at the Northwest Missouri State University I WILL LISTEN event were analyzed. Responses from three age groups (aged 5-13 years, aged 14-17 years, and aged 18+) were analyzed and coded into three qualitative themes: community connectedness, self-expression, and healing and empathy . Overall, results indicated that attitudes toward contributing art (i.e. creating and displaying artwork publicly) were predominantly positive in each age group. Specifically, contributors of all ages noted attitudes of positive community engagement (i.e. bridging generational gaps), feeling connected, and appreciation for being "seen". Contributors also reported an increased ability to express themselves in a nonverbal manner. Most notably, both viewers and contributors of all age groups reported heightened empathy and healing, including feeling less alone and recognizing personal growth.	Dr. Amy Underwood Barton and Elizabeth Dimmitt

E	Kathryn Wilson	Emporia State University	The Role of Coloring on Stress	Stress affects many college students and many people who have big and small life events happening in their life. Coloring is something that as kids we tend to do some of, however is there a way that we can use coloring to help with our stress levels. This research works on answering this question using a mandala coloring page and college students as participants. Participants (31 Female, 3 Male) completed the perceived stress questionnaire. Some of these participants also did coloring before they took this questionnaire. The perceived stress questionnaire is a self-evaluation from the participants and how they are feeling. The mandala coloring page I used is lines to make it as simplistic as possible. The results I found showed that there is some merit to the research findings.	Professor Chelsea Bell
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Session E: Undergraduate Research Proposal Posters
10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
William S. Knight Center Room 108

F	Sarah B. Elias	Northeastern State University	Gendered Responses to Sadness: How Helpers Choose Autonomy Versus Dependency Support	This study examines how emotional expression and gender shape the type of help people provide. Utilizing the Gender Roles Inhibiting Prosociality (GRIP) model and emotional signaling theories, this study investigates whether female and male helpers differ in their likelihood of offering autonomy-oriented versus dependency-oriented support when exposed to individuals of different genders expressing vulnerability (sadness). Participants will be randomly assigned to read one of four vignettes that vary the helpee's gender (female vs. male) and emotional tone (neutral vs. sad). Participants will then rate their willingness to help, the likelihood of offering autonomy-oriented help, the likelihood of offering dependency-oriented help, and expected recipient satisfaction. I hypothesize that men will provide more dependency-oriented help towards sad women than towards sad men. The study's findings aim to clarify how gender norms guide prosocial behavior and emotional support in everyday life.	Ashalee Hurst, PhD
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G	Katelina Harris and Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph. D.	University of Central Missouri	Mindset over matter: How motivation messaging shapes student learning outcomes	<p>Motivation is a cornerstone of academic success, yet research on how motivational priming specifically impacts study behaviors and long-term retention remains inconsistent. While growth mindset interventions are known to boost persistence, their direct effect on objective learning outcomes among college students requires further exploration.</p> <p>The proposed study will examine how exposure to motivational priming in the form of a passage influences college students' studying behaviors, academic achievement, and retention of learning material. Participants are to be randomly assigned to a motivational or neutral passage before completing two study sessions on social psychology concepts. After studying, participants will report their study strategies. Academic performance will be measured through a 15-item exam, followed by completion of a delayed retention quiz several days later. It is expected that participants assigned to the motivation passage will report more effective study strategies and achieve higher exam and delayed retention quiz scores.</p>	Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph. D.
H	Iteara Christian	University of Central Missouri	Differences in Autobiographical Memory Accuracy and Suggestibility Between Juveniles and Adults	<p>This study examines how age, suggestibility, and confidence interact to influence memory accuracy. While eyewitness testimony is critical to the justice system, memory is a reconstructive process vulnerable to change. Research indicates children often show lower accuracy and greater suggestibility than adults. This study addresses gaps in prior research by using free recall and delays to better simulate real-world legal contexts. Participants, including juveniles (12–17) and adults (25–40), view a mock crime video. They are randomly assigned to either a neutral interview or a suggestive interview containing misleading questions. Accuracy and confidence are measured through immediate and delayed free recall. It is expected that juveniles will demonstrate significantly lower accuracy and higher suggestibility and confidence ratings than adults. These findings aim to inform interviewing practices and courtroom protocols, particularly in Missouri, where no minimum age requirement for testimony exists.</p>	Adam Runyan

I	Susannah L. A. Ehlert and Avery E. White	University of Central Missouri	Binge Scrolling: Does it Impact Mood, Executive Function, and Time Perception?	<p>This study investigates the effects of "binge scrolling"—prolonged, continuous social media engagement—on time perception, mood, and physiology. While existing research links excessive scrolling to decreased well-being, most data rely on self-reports, leaving immediate cognitive and physiological consequences under-explored.</p> <p>We propose a randomized controlled experiment comparing binge scrolling to structured, limited content exposure. Participants will be fitted with heart rate (HR) sensors before engaging with either a continuous simulated feed or a controlled version. Following the session, participants will complete the Stroop task to assess executive functioning, alongside mood measures, the Binge Scrolling Scale (BSS), and demographic surveys.</p> <p>By utilizing objective metrics like HR and the Stroop task, this research seeks to determine how sustained attentional capture distorts temporal perception, shifts emotional states, and influences physiological arousal. These findings aim to bridge the gap between digital behavior and its immediate impact on the human stress response and cognitive control.</p>	Dr. Adam Runyan
J	Madyson Wheatley and Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph.D.	University of Central Missouri	Sniffing out the answers: Can Scent Improve Test Scores?	<p>Memory can be a complex subject, especially when it comes to studying for a test. What if it is possible to recall all the studied information by smelling perfume? The purpose of this study is to investigate whether students exposed to a scent during the studying and test-taking process will remember more information than students not exposed to the scent. If a student is exposed to a scent that is present in both the studying and test-taking phases, they will perform better on the test than a student not exposed to the scent. To test this hypothesis, participants will be randomly assigned to either a control group or an experimental group. The experimental group will receive a popsicle stick with rosemary oil throughout the experiment. Participants will study the provided material for 15 minutes, then take a 20-question quiz. Results will analyze differences in retention between the two groups.</p>	Professor Hyeyeon Hwang, Ph.D.

Saturday, March 28

Session 10: Undergraduate Research Proposal Oral Presentations

William S. Knight Center Room 110

11:15	Katie Majors, Abigail Winter, and Brooke Rowley	Central Methodist University	The Relationship Between Caffeine Intake, Sleep Quality, and Mental Focus	Getting enough sleep is a persistent problem for college students, with Lund et al. (2010) estimating that only 30% of college students get eight hours of sleep per night. To deal with fatigue, students may use caffeinated beverages to give them an energy burst. But is this effective? The proposed study looks to answer that question. To measure mental focus, student participants will complete a memory recall task and take a brief mathematical reasoning exam. Participants will also state how many hours of sleep they got the previous night, the amount of caffeine consumed the morning of the study, and their self-reported energy levels. It is expected that hours and sleep and caffeine consumption will both be positively correlated with mental focus. However, as amount of sleep and caffeine consumption are likely to be negatively correlated, it is unclear which will have a stronger effect. Preliminary findings from will be discussed, if available.	Christoph er Arnold
11:30	Zachary M. DeFoe	University of Central Missouri	A Move to Remember: How Self-Regulatory Movement Shapes Cognitive Control	Fidget and sensory tools are small, handheld devices that provide tactile or motor stimulation (e.g., squeezing, twisting, clicking, etcetera) during cognitive tasks. Prior research suggests fidgeting may support attention regulation and sustained attention in individuals with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. In contrast, repetitive movements (“stimming”) associated with autism spectrum disorder are often described as regulatory rather than distracting. Findings on the effectiveness of fidget tools remain inconsistent, and little research has examined their effects on memory performance. This proposal addresses a practical question about learning and self-regulation: Does allowing movement with fidgets support memory or distract from it? Participants will be tested in three conditions in a within-subjects design, with order counterbalanced. We will test whether fidgeting influences free recall accuracy across the No-Device, Assigned-Device, and Choice-Device conditions. Free-recall accuracy will be compared across conditions, including whether device choice yields outcomes different from assignment.	Dr. Kreiner

11:45	Leyton Kelso and Brock Jenkins	Central Methodist University	Seeing Red - Lighting and its Effect on Performance and Mood	There has long been an association between color and mood, especially blue and red. The proposed study will explore the way that red lighting affects both mood and cognitive performance. Using a within-subjects experimental design, participants will enter a room that either has fluorescent lighting or lighting that is modified to be red. While in the room, participants will take a short quiz to measure cognitive performance and will self-report on their current mood. We expect that red lighting will negatively impact participants, leading to lower performance on the quiz. We also expect that red lighting will be associated with higher levels of self-reported stress and anger, but lower levels of happiness. The proposed study has received IRB approval and preliminary findings will be discussed. Through this study we will discover what happens when participants literally see red.	Dr. Christopher Arnold
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Session 11: Undergraduate Theoretical Oral Presentations					
William S. Knight Center Room 102					
11:15	Grace Bredbenner	College of the Ozarks	Hormone Effects in Fathers	This literary review will cover some of the hormone effects in fathers. The male brain begins to activate parental patterns during pregnancy and continues after birth. This development can be seen in MRI brain scans. The lactation hormone, prolactin, is associated with emotional responses to infant cries. Experienced fathers have higher levels of prolactin than new fathers. Estradiol decreases post-birth of a child as well as testosterone, a main male hormone. This is because testosterone is not considered helpful to parenting but more for mating. Yet testosterone does increase when fathers watch their children play sports, especially when watching sons.	Jeff Elliott

11:30	Emily Blake	College of the Ozarks	How Traumatic Brain Injuries Affect Behavior and Crime	Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) can affect behavior, decision making, and involvement in the criminal justice system. A traumatic brain injury is damage to the brain that is caused by an external force. This force can cause an impact on memory, impulse control, judgment, and emotional regulation. Research shows that people with TBI appear more often in the correctional system than the general population. These injuries might be a contributor to behavioral changes linked to criminal behavior. The psychological and neurological effects of brain injuries may influence aggression, empathy, and impulsivity. Information from psychology, neuroscience, and legal research help explain how these factors connect to each other. Understanding the effect that brain injuries have on behavior could help improve screening, treatment, and rehabilitation efforts. These improvements could support affected individuals and possibly reduce repeat offenses.	Jeff Elliott
11:45	Harley A. Ferralez	College of the Ozarks	Behind the Scenes: A Literature Review on the Neuroscience and Biological Systems of PTSD	Police officers protect society and uphold laws while repeatedly encountering traumatic scenes that will leave lasting physical, psychological, and spiritual consequences. Chronic exposure to traumatic events increases the risk of individuals developing posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD affects the body holistically and is associated with neuroendocrine dysregulations that are closely connected to hippocampal activity as well as the amygdala. To study the effects of chronic stress, researchers have examined performances on recall and attention tasks, cortisol levels, and administered a variety of tests that measure memory and learning. Understanding the neuropsychology of PTSD will help psychologists implement interventions, prevention strategies, and therapies aligned with holistic well-being.	Jeff Elliott
12:00	Cole Gimlin and Bella	College of the Ozarks	Inside the Criminal Mind: Psychological Criminal Profiling.	Reveal how criminal profiling uses psychological techniques to identify criminality. A demonstration of how psychology works to identify criminals' modus operandi.	Dr. Jennifer Maloney

Session 12: Undergraduate Empirical Oral Presentations
William S. Knight Center Room 109

11:15	Alia Lopez, Kennedy Wallin, and Trey Osbon	College of the Ozarks	Differences in stress and coping mechanisms between sexes and across college experiences	Successfully managing daily stressors often requires college students to develop diverse coping strategies. The purpose of this study was to examine whether men and women utilize different coping mechanisms, and whether these coping mechanisms change throughout their college experience. Participants completed several assessments online to determine the level of stress experienced by participants and the coping strategies they employed in response to academic and personal stressors. The findings could provide insight into the ways students manage stress and help inform future support strategies and mental health resources for college populations.	Rebecca Hendrix
11:30	Javad Dehghan	University of Evansville	Psychological Stress and Anxiety During Adolescence: The Impact of Puberty on Emotional and Behavioral Development in Early Adolescents	Adolescence is a developmental period marked by major physical, emotional, and social change, and puberty can increase vulnerability to psychological stress and anxiety. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between puberty and stress among early adolescents and to identify factors that may intensify emotional difficulties during this stage. This research used a descriptive, correlational design that combined a review of relevant psychological literature with field data collected through a structured questionnaire. The study focused on eighth-grade male students at Hedayat Middle School during the 2025 - 2026 academic year. Findings showed that many students experienced increased stress after the onset of puberty, with a majority reporting that puberty contributed to greater stress and anxiety. Students also identified family pressure, school demands, and lack of awareness about developmental changes as important contributors to emotional distress. These findings suggest that improving education, awareness, and support systems may help reduce adolescent stress and promote healthier psychological development.	Yolanda Obaze

11:45	Myla Cathey and Maggie Durham	University of Central Missouri	Self-Regulation and Stress: Correlation between Regulation and Skin Conductance Reactivity	The present study examines the relationship between self-regulation and skin conductance reactivity (SCR) and tests whether mental health moderates this association. Self-regulation refers to the ability to implement, develop, and flexibly maintain planned behavior to achieve goals (Kanfer, 1970; Miller & Brown, 1991) and is linked to academic success (Izhar et al., 2022). SCR is an acute physiological indicator of stress (Hanshans et al., 2024). Mental health symptoms are assessed using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21; Antony et al., 1998; Lovibond & Lovibond, 2011). Participants complete two tasks differing in regulatory demand: Blackjack (low) and the Stroop task (high). After each task, they complete the Self-Regulation Questionnaire. SCR is recorded via electrodermal activity sensors placed on the non-dominant index and middle fingers. Participants also complete the DASS-21. The final sample includes 55 participants. Planned analyses include correlational tests with self-regulation predicting SCR and mental health examined as a moderator using a mean split of DASS scores. We hypothesize a positive association between self-regulation and SCR, stronger among individuals with poorer mental health.	Dr. Adam Runyan
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Session F: Undergraduate and Graduate Empirical Posters
11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
William S. Knight Center Room 108

A	Emma R. Rieser*, Michael J. Cortese*, and Maya M. Khanna^	*University of Nebraska at Omaha, ^Creighton University	Cognitive Predictors of Academic Performance in an Advanced Introduction to Psychology Course	Cognitive processes are essential for learning and may predict academic success. The present study uniquely used five different cognitive tasks across a variety of cognitive domains, including inhibition, complex working memory, and general memory, in a singular model to gain a better understanding of the unique contributions of each factor. The sample included participants enrolled in the University of Nebraska at Omaha's advanced introductory psychology course. All participants completed five cognitive tasks: antisaccade, operation span, recognition memory, reading span, and a spelling and vocabulary test. Midterm grades in the course were then regressed on all cognitive factors to determine the predictive ability of each. Consistent with previous research, better performance on the cognitive tasks was associated with higher exam scores. These findings highlight that multiple factors within cognitive capacity contribute meaningfully to academic success, as well as support for integrating multiple cognitive domains in understanding academic performance.	Dr Michael Cortese, PhD
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B	Caleb Holcomb, Grace Frey, Brayden Vickers, and Bogdan Kostic	Missouri State University	Introducing Centerlines to Two Bike Paths on a University Campus	<p>Previous research has suggested that introducing a centerline to a bike path on a university campus could reduce the number of pedestrians walking in the bike path. The goal of the current study was to replicate the findings in two new locations. In the first location, an observer recorded the number of pedestrians walking on campus in a pedestrian path or an adjacent bike path, while keeping track of device usage and direction of travel. After five observation sessions, the experimenters drew a chalk centerline and resumed observations for three sessions until rain washed away the chalk, and observations continued for three more sessions for a total of 1,135 observations. Logistic regression showed that the presence of a centerline did not improve pedestrian path adherence, $\chi^2(1) = 0.09$, $p = .77$, $OR = 1.05$. The study was repeated in a new location with three observers working in pairs across 11 observation sessions (five without a centerline, six with, and six more without) for a total of 1,257 observations. The presence of a centerline again did not improve pedestrian path adherence, $\chi^2(1) = 0.42$, $p = .52$, $OR = 1.08$. There were inconsistent effects of device usage and direction of travel. The cause of differing findings may involve differences between observation locations, which highlights the need for additional research.</p>	Bogdan Kostic
C	McKenzie James, Sarah Krogman, Carolyn R. Ahlers-Schmidt, and Kari Harris	Wichita State University	Understanding Practice Intentions and Barriers Following Pediatric Mental Health ECHO Participation	<p>With youth mental health needs rising and provider shortages widespread, pediatric PCPs increasingly deliver frontline care. TeleECHO programs aim to support them, yet little is known about how participants plan to use this training. This study evaluated 512 KSKidsMAP TeleECHO CME surveys (2020–2024) across eight topics grouped into four categories. Knowledge gaps were the most frequently selected barrier (22.65%), and most participants (64.45%) strongly agreed they learned something they could apply in practice. Significant differences emerged across topic groups: combined medical/behavioral sessions scored higher on validating patient safety and performance limitations, while staffing barriers were greater in primary medical and combined groups. Free responses underscored workforce limitations. Findings indicate TeleECHO increases PCPs' intent to implement new practices, but systemic barriers—especially staffing—may hinder translation into improved youth mental health care.</p>	Rhonda Lewis

D	Sierra Hecktor and Dr. Joo Young Yang	University of Nebraska at Omaha	Parental and Peer Racial Socialization as Predictors of Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Among White College Students	<p>Family and peer environments are important contexts through which individuals learn about race. Ethnic/racial socialization (ERS) research has primarily focused on families of color, leaving less understanding of how ERS messages shape attitudes among White emerging adults. This study examines how retrospective parental ERS messages and current peer ERS messages relate to color-blind racial attitudes among White college students. Sixty-four undergraduate students completed an online survey assessing parental ERS, peer ERS, and color-blind racial attitudes using the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). Two multiple regression models will examine whether parental and peer ERS messages independently predict color-blind racial attitudes. It is expected that greater exposure to color-evasive messages will be associated with higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes, whereas greater exposure to color-conscious messages will be associated with lower levels of color-blind racial attitudes. Findings will contribute to understanding how family and peer ERS shape racial attitudes during emerging adulthood.</p>	Dr. Joo Young Yang
E	Aceyeah (AJ) Bates	Emporia State Univeristy	Influencer of Parenting Style Education on Future Parenting Intentions	<p>The goal of this research was to focus on receiving education about people's future intended parenting styles. A sample of 47 undergraduate psychology students completed a survey on measures of intended future parenting of laxness, overreactivity, verbosity, and general dysfunctional parenting. Results revealed that participants were less likely to intent to be lax parents if they received parenting style education compared to a control condition. This supports the idea that receiving education about parenting styles helps people be better parents in the future.</p>	

F	Oluwatamilore Favour Abiri	Emporia State Univeristy	Genres of Music and Their Effects on the Stress Levels of College Students	<p>High stress levels are common among college students as many navigate adulthood and manage life and school independently for the first time. These elevated stress levels negatively affect physical health, mental well-being, and academic performance. Previous research suggests that music may reduce stress, but fewer studies have compared the effects of specific genres. This present study examined whether classical music, pop music, or silence have differing effects on stress levels. A total of 110 participants were recruited through an online platform called SONA, with the majority being women and identifying as white. Utilizing a Solomon six-group experimental design, participants were randomly assigned to either take a pre-test or not, and then to one of the three groups. Stress was measured using an adapted version of the Daily Stress Response Scale. Results indicated that participants in both the classical and pop music groups reported lower stress levels than those in the control group; however, there was no significant difference in stress levels between the classical and pop groups. Additionally, among participants who completed the pre-test, stress levels decreased regardless of group assignment, but this decrease was more pronounced in the classical and pop groups.</p>	
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