Faculty

Researcher

Laura Baker
lbaker@usc.edu;
Web: [http://dornsife.usc.edu/laurabakerphd/] [http://dornsife.usc.edu/usctwins/]
Phone: (213) 740-2261 (Office)

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

My lab investigates gene-environment interplay in human behavior. We are currently studying externalizing psychopathology, including aggression, antisocial behavior and substance use, although we also look at internalizing problems such as depression and anxiety. We have been studying these in a longitudinal twin study, which involves over 750 sets of MZ and DZ twin pairs who have been extensively assessed from ages 9-20 years old. Assessments include clinical interviews, surveys, psychophysiological recording, neuroimaging, and cortisol reactivity. We have also geocoded addresses for home and schools of the twins, and have linked these to air pollution databases, which enable us to study the effects of exposure on behavioral development. The USC Risk Factors for Antisocial Behavior (RFAB) study provides a rich source of data for investigating genetic and environmental influences in a wide range of behaviors across adolescence and emerging adulthood.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Students who have strong quantitative and analytical skills and interest in gene-environment models of behavior.

Office Location: SGM 623 Office Hours: Wednesday 2-3:30 pm and by appointment. Email contact is best.

Researcher

Irving Biederman
bieder@usc.edu; Lab web page: geon.usc.edu
(310) 614-3903 (Cell, preferred); (213) 740-6094 (Office); (213) 740-6102 (Lab)

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The core mission of the Image Understanding Laboratory is to understand how we get mind from brain. The current major projects are:
1. Understanding how a scene or object can be recognized in a fraction of a second, even when we have never encountered that image previously.

2. How we are able to identify people on the basis of their face or voice.

3. An investigation of the neural basis of perceptual and cognitive pleasure, based on a gradient of opioid receptors in the same pathway by which image understanding is achieved.

4. Creativity, in the specific domain of humor generation.

We employ a variety of methodologies, such as neuroimaging, research with patients, cross-cultural investigations, and, in collaboration, single unit recording in and behavioral studies in monkeys and pigeons. We are planning to initiate studies in intracranial recordings of individual neurons in patients undergoing surgery for epilepsy.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

We seek bright, motivated students, the earlier in their academic career, the better. Technical skills, such as programming and math are a plus but we can train you. The ultimate goal is for the student to be able to make a contribution to the research that is sufficient to qualify as a coauthor on a peer-reviewed journal publication and/or a presentation at a world class conference. So we don’t want drones. Do look at recent students and alumni from the lab to see how much they have accomplished.

**Office Location:** NHB 316  **Office Hours:** By appointment; Tuesday & Thursday afternoons best or call cell.

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**Researcher**

Gerald C. Davison, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Gerontology
gdaviso@usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

Cognitive and emotional factors in alcohol abuse prevention, therapeutic alliance and rapport, and prosocial behavior. Some projects involve video gaming and computer simulation. Assessment of cognition and affect involve both questionnaires and my think-aloud method, Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Careful attention to details, strong interest in cognitive factors in clinical psychology. Reliability. Coursework in intro and abnormal psychology.
Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Commitment to the project

Office Location: SGM 902 Phone: 213-740-2235

Researcher

Morteza Dehghani
mdehghan@usc.edu
Contact: Katie Horton (Lab Manager); katelynh@usc.edu; (310) 947-1262

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Research assistants are encouraged to have passion for interdisciplinary work between computational science and social science to bridge multiple research topics and techniques in a new way. A few main and current focuses of the Computational and Social Science Lab include:

1. Human values and natural language processing in various medias using both human coders and computer programs.

2. How language is processed in the brain, utilizing natural language processing, machine learning, and fMRI in the USC Brain and Creativity Institute

3. Taking natural language processing techniques one step further to conduct more sophisticated studies.

More information can be found at our website: http://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/cssl

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Detail oriented and interest in interdisciplinary work.
- Independent, diligent, hard-working.
- 3.3 GPA or higher.
- Able to commit to a minimum of 10 hours of research per week.
- A minimum commitment of one semester, but a preferred commitment of one year.

Office Location: SGM 607 Office Hours: Flexible, by appointment

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Researcher

Vita Droutman
vdroutman@gmail.com
(310) 382-4140

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
I have a number of different research interests, the following topics are the ones I am currently focus on:

1) understanding risky adolescent decision making in social contexts and its neural bases.

2) examining effects of Mindfulness meditation on risky tendencies in children, adolescents and young adults.

3) fMRI study on risky decision making by men who have sex with men.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Students who are planning to apply to graduate school with an interest in Social or Developmental Psychology or Neuroscience. Interest in data collection and working with subjects, opportunity to learn fMRI technique.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Detail oriented, self-motivated, able to commit 4-8 hrs a week.

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**Researcher**

Nate Fast  
[https://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty/directory/nathanaelfast](https://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty/directory/nathanaelfast)

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

We are an interdisciplinary research lab interested in the psychological determinants and consequences of hierarchy, networks, and technology. Click [here](#) to learn more. We read about, discuss, and conduct research on a wide range of topics, including power and status, judgment and decision making, cultural transmission, meaning, social networks, and the psychology of technology.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

GPA 3.3 or higher. No previous research experiences necessary, but RAs are asked to give a minimum 1-year commitment for 8-10 hours / week. Some of these hours will need to be done in the lab and some can be completed from a personal computer.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**

RAs should be professional, detail-oriented, hard working, and broadly interested in hierarchies, networks and/or technology.

If you are interested, please email Brittany Torrez at (torrezb@marshall.usc.edu) for an application.

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**Researcher**

Jonathan Gratch
Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Current studies examine the role of emotion in decision making, both intrapersonal perspective and with regard to how emotion displays impact the decisions of others in interdependent tasks. Much of this work uses advanced computer technology to simulate or measure aspects of human interpersonal behavior (e.g., simulating and measuring emotional expressions and gestures). We also explore the use of computer technology for the screening, diagnosis and treatment of mental health.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

GPA 3.3 or higher, two semester min 8hr / week commitment
Ability to travel to lab either by car or via USC shuttle.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Experience using SPSS, SAS or R statistical programs, computer programming experience a plus. Specific knowledge of findings and theories in emotion research (esp. from social psychology perspective) and/or experience with peripheral psychophysiology are a plus.

Office Location:

Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT)
12015 Waterfront Drive
Playa Vista, CA 90094
Phone: (310) 574-5700

Researcher

Karen Hennigan
Hennigan@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Our current studies are focused on:

1) reducing street gang violence in Los Angeles, Central America, and the Eastern Caribbean; and 2) adapting some of what we have learned from efforts to reduce street gang violence in Los Angeles to address issues of radicalization and extremism in Tunisia (we are working to help develop and support new programs in this context).

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Interest in violence reduction in marginalized communities here in LA and elsewhere.
Self-motivated, willing to commit to a regular schedule, and proficiency with SPSS.

Ability to read and speak French and Tunisian Arabic is a bonus.

**Office Location** SGM 1004

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**Researcher**

Stan Huey  
hueyjr@usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

Current studies address: (1) effectiveness of therapy with youth and adults; (2) interventions with delinquent youth; (3) culture, mental health problems, and therapy effects.

Duties might include: (1) data collection; (2) data entry; (3) reviewing/coding journal articles; (4) assisting with therapist training workshop; (5) transcribing/coding therapy sessions

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

At least a 3.0 GPA; Commit at least 8-10 hours/week

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Spanish language skills a plus

**Office Location:** SGM 905 **Office Hours:** Mondays 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

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**Researcher**

Richard John  
richardj@usc.edu  
213-740-4011

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

Risk Perception, Deterrence. Jury Decision Making

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Interest in judgment and decision making, risk analysis, decision analysis, legal decision making, or behavioral economics. You should be able to devote 6-8 hours per week to research.

**Office Location:** SGM 621 **Office Hours:** by appointment

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**Researcher**

Adam Leventhal, PhD- Lab Director  
adam.leventhal@usc.edu  
(323) 442-2732

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
The USC Health, Emotion, and Addiction Laboratory (HEAL) conducts translational research on the determinants of addiction. A broad emphasis of the laboratory is to uncover why some people are prone to addiction while others are not. We have several current smoking and vaping studies looking at several factors that might contribute to addiction:

1. Understanding how variations in certain genes influence tobacco withdrawal symptoms in African American smokers.
2. Investigating the effects of oxytocin - a naturally produced hormone - on smoking.
3. Learn more about how e-cigarette flavorings impact respiratory health.
4. Examine the patterns and mechanisms of ovarian hormone variation effects on smoking across the menstrual cycle.
5. Studying the effect of happiness and other emotions on drug use and health.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Volunteers are required to come in for either one full 8 hour day or two 4 hour blocks (either 9:00 am -1:00 pm or 1:00 – 5:00 pm).

We also require that our volunteers be able to commit two semesters (minimum) at the lab; this could include the summer and fall, though we prefer to bring on volunteers who can stay with us for a full academic year.

Our other requirement is that all volunteers and lab staff attend lab meeting every Monday from 3:30-5 pm.

Our lab is at the USC Health Sciences Campus (HSC); thus, ability to travel to either via the USC shuttle or by car to HSC is required.

Students can apply for research assistantships here: https://heal.usc.edu/undergraduate_assistantships.php

Office Location: Health Science Campus: CSA 270/271 & SSB 302C Office Hours: by appt

Researcher

Steven R. López, Ph.D.
Email: lopezs@usc.edu*
*Please contact mkratzer@usc.edu regarding undergraduate research positions in the lab
Lab webpage: https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/culture-and-mental-health/

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
The Culture and Mental Health Lab’s most current and largest project assesses whether a community education program can reduce the time it takes for people who develop serious mental illness to seek mental health care, specifically within San Fernando Valley’s Latino community.

Responsibilities and Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Responsibilities will include interview transcription, data entry, data organization, and administrative tasks for the La CLAve project. Volunteer Research Assistants will become familiar with psychological research methods and clinical psychology measures, as well as gain skills in audio transcription and data entry and management using SPSS. Opportunities to engage in individual mentored research are available given lab resources and student initiative.

We ask that RAs commit to 8-10 hours/week for a minimum of one semester. Hours will need to be completed during lab hours (9AM - 5PM, Monday through Friday). No prior research experience required. We seek responsible, motivated, and detail oriented students with an interest in research that addresses mental health care disparities. While not required, we would give preference to applicants with a high level of proficiency in Spanish.

**Office Location:** SGM 1001

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**Researcher**

Susan Luczak  
luczak@usc.edu  
(213) 740-9192

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

I have three projects students can become involved in that examine risk and protective factors for alcohol, smoking, and gambling behaviors: 1) a longitudinal family study in Mauritius now focused on adolescent and young adult drinking and smoking, 2) using technology (iPhones, breath analyzers, transdermal alcohol monitors) to assess real-time drinking behaviors of college students, and 3) a drinking education program for Asian American college students based on flushing response to alcohol.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Highly motivated, reliable, and detail-oriented. Able to commit 8 hours per week.

**Desired qualifications for Research Assistants** Knowledge of SPSS and Excel preferable. GPA 3.0 or higher.

If interested, please email Dr. Luczak with a copy of your resume and your unofficial transcript.

**Office Location:** SGM 826  **Office Hours:** By Appointment
Current Research Topics Under Investigation

In the Family Studies Project, we aim to identify factors that affect how young adults behave in close relationships—with dating partners, with friends, and even with their own children. We look particularly closely at the influences based on childhood experiences of aggression and adversity. To delve deeply into young adults' romantic relationships, we collect data on their physiological reactivity, compassion, and also capture behavioral samples of how dating partners talk with one another. If you are interested in becoming a research assistant, please read our webpage, submit a resume and fill out the form available on our website on the Prospective Students page: http://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/margolinfamilystudies/admission/

Specific qualifications for Research Assistants

Research assistants will be involved with processing physiological data as well as coding real-life discussion collected in either the lab or in couples' homes. Research assistants should have 8 hours minimum per week (10 or more preferred) to work on the research. The ability to work as part of a team and attention to detail are essential.

Desired qualifications for Research Assistants

Desired qualifications include interest in and/or experience with learning about psychological methods such as physiological measurement and/or behavioral observation. GPA of 3.5 or higher is desired. If interested, please email Dr. Margolin with a copy of your resume and your transcript (unofficial is fine).

Phone Number: (213) 740-2308 Office Hours: By Appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

We use functional neuroimaging and behavioral methods to investigate how emotion influences memory and cognition. We also examine age and sex differences in these processes. For more information see: http://www.matherlab.com

Specific qualifications for Research Assistants
No previous research experience necessary but should be able to commit at least 12 hours per week (preferably doing blocks of 4-5 hours). If interested, contact the lab at least two to three weeks prior to the start of the semester.

**Desired qualifications for Research Assistants**

Should be professional, enthusiastic, hardworking, committed, and interested in our areas of research. Have experience working with older adults. Software programming skills.

Contact: Christine Cho, cho890@usc.edu

**Office Location:**

USC Davis School of Gerontology
3715 McClintock Ave Room 341
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0191

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**Researcher**

Toby Mintz
tmintz@usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

The USC Language Development Lab investigates many aspects of language development in infants and children. We study how infants and toddlers learn what sequences of sounds are words in their language, what the words mean, and the syntax of their language that organizes words into sentences. We use a variety of approaches and populations, including laboratory experiments in language processing with infants, toddlers, and adults, as well as computational modeling of learning mechanisms.

We are currently seeking one or two highly inquisitive and motivated undergraduate Research Assistants to contribute to our research efforts for our infant experiments.

**Beneficial Research Experience For RAs**

- RAs assist in running experiments, including help with setup of equipment and software, creating experimental stimuli, analysis of data, and interacting with the parents and children while they are in the lab.
- RAs are also involved in all aspects of subject recruitment, including managing the subject database, and email/telephone scheduling.
- RAs attend biweekly lab meetings.
- RAs who are especially interested in ongoing participation in lab activities will have the opportunity to be trained in running the experiments themselves, and to carry out independent projects in the lab for course credit and/or as part of the USC Dornsife SURF and SOAR programs.

**Qualifications**
• Successful candidates should be comfortable interacting with parents and children, and should also work well in a team.
• Experience with the software we use in the lab will be highly valued. These include the R programming language, PRAAT, Microsoft Excel and Access. Experience with other programming languages is also a plus, but not required. General ease and facility with computers is essential.
• The ideal candidate would be majoring in Cognitive Science, Linguistics, or Psychology, and have an interest in the lab's research topics.
• A time commitment of 5-10 hours a week for at least one semester is expected. This includes attendance in biweekly lab meetings.
• As we do considerable testing on Saturdays, availability during the day on Saturday will be an advantage.

To Apply

Interested individuals should email a CV and brief statement of interest to langdev@usc.edu, with the subject line "RA position", and should include a rough indication of their weekly availability. Applications will be considered until the positions are filled.

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Researcher
Henrike Moll
hmoll@usc.edu
(213) 740-2270

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
- Young children's demand for reciprocal engagement
- The emergence of counterfactual reasoning
- The development of perspective-taking

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Be interested in questions of development
- Wanting to learn about experimental methods

Office Location: SGM 704 Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 – 1:30

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Researcher
Daniel Nation, Ph.D.
danation@usc.edu
(213) 740-4503

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Interest in age-related cognitive disorders and dementia (including Alzheimer's disease and stroke/cerebrovascular disease), neuropsychological testing, or brain imaging
- Psychology, biology, computer science or other related majors
- Some proficiency with Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, Powerpoint) required

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Computer skills and interest in computer programming strongly desired but not necessary

Phone Number: (213) 740-4503  Office Location: SGM 1010

Researcher

Joe Priester, Associate Professor of Marketing and Psychology
priester@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

PLAY!!! We all know that play is critical for children, but what of adults? The current research project seeks to better understand the influence of a “play-mindset” on adult experience and performance.

This project offers several opportunities for developing research skills.

Qualifications for Research Assistants

Seeking reliable students who enjoy collaborating with others and sharing their ideas. We offer many opportunities for extended involvement in lab projects and therefore require a minimum of one full semester commitment (prefer two semesters).

This research opportunity is ideal for someone considering going on to graduate school in social psychology or marketing.

Potential honors students encouraged to join.

Contact: priester@usc.edu

Office Location: HOH 605  Phone: best contacted by email: priester@usc.edu
Current Research Topics Under Investigation

1) Neural network models of social behavior and social reasoning. We are constructing neural network models of human motivation and personality, social perception and impression formation, and decision-making.

2) We are looking at how cues in social situations can trigger the pursuit of goals in those situations.

3) We are examining how people use their self-knowledge to make personality judgements of other people.

4) fMRI study on risky decision making by men who have sex with men. Individuals needed who can help us conduct a study in the scanner of components of decision making.

5) Deep learning. We are studying how you can construct representations of social knowledge by analyzing millions of words of fiction.

6) Legal and everyday decision-making. We are conducting a series of studies on the role of emotion and motivation in various decision-making situations, including legal situations.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

For 3, NN modeling, programming or math background would be highly desirable.

Phone Number: (213) 740-2291 Office: SGM 821 Office Hours: Mon/Wed 10A – 12P

Researcher

Darby Saxbe
dsaxbe@usc.edu
Contact: Katie Horton; katelynh@usc.edu (Lab Manager); (310) 947-1262

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The NeuroEndocrinology of Social Ties (NEST) Laboratory research consists mainly of parenting and relationship stressors during pregnancy.
1. The Hormones Across the Transition to Childrearing (HATCH) Study explores the potential family dynamic of first-time parents from prenatal to postpartum events to relate psychological factors and hormonal levels.

2. The “Fathering the Brain” project explores the neurological stimulation in a father throughout the course of his partner’s pregnancy.

3. By looking at a broad range of samples (including saliva, blood, and hair), the NEST laboratory explores interrelated levels of cortisol, testosterone, oxytocin, and prolactin during the transition to parenthood.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

3.3 GPA or higher.

Interest in family psychological relationships.

Interest in biopsychology.

Willingness to learn how to code, use SPSS, and work independently.

Office Location: SGM 716 D
Office Hours: Flexible, by appointment

Researcher

Norbert Schwarz
norberts@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

What makes life meaningful? How do people decide whether their life is meaningful? How might culture, religion, and our own decisions influence our well-being?

How do people come to believe things are true? Why do people believe weird things? And how does misinformation stick? We examine the variables that bias people to think things are true and why false information often takes hold. What is the role of feelings in all of this? How do moods, emotions, and bodily sensations influence our thoughts?

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

We are looking for motivated psychology students who are interested in gaining research experience for course credit (PSYC 290 or PSYC 490). Our research assistants can gain experience with all aspects of conducting research in psychology. At the planning stage, they help develop and pretest materials for our studies; at the data collection stage, they run experiments in our labs, recruit participants on campus and sometimes collect data in other locations; at the data analysis stage, they help with data entry, statistical analysis, and the graphing of results; they also help with programming online surveys and laboratory experiments.
If you are interested in applying for a Research Assistant position with us please see our website: http://dornsife.usc.edu/mindandsociety/ra-opportunities/

Office Location: Mind & Society Center, Suite 205, VPD Building.

Office Hours: Please email erynnewm@usc.edu for more information on RA positions.

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Researcher

David Schwartz.
socialdevlab@gmail.com

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Adolescent School Adjustment Project: This study examines how adolescents cope with their peers to determine how various coping strategies impact adjustment over time.

Other Projects: We also have several other projects that look at various aspects of social relationships during childhood and adolescence. Topics include bullying, conformity and popularity, perceptions of social competence, etc.

RA Activities: Data collection, data entry, literature searches, participant recruitment, study design

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Experience with SPSS, Excel
- GPA 3.5 or higher
- Two semester minimum; 6-8 hours per week
- Detail-oriented, reliable, motivated

Office Location: SGM 625 Office Hours: By appointment

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Researcher

Gale M. Sinatra
gsinatra@rossier.usc.edu
702-303-4328

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

1) public understanding of controversial issues in science
2) text and graphics used to communicate complex or controversial issues in science
3) science learning in K-12 and higher education
4) the psychology of science denial

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Data collection and analysis 
Will be trained and supervised by graduate students 

To learn more about our lab’s research see: [http://motivatedchangelab.com](http://motivatedchangelab.com)

**Office Location:** 600C Waite Philips Hall **Office Hours:** by appointment, but in most days 

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**Researcher**

Donna Spruijt-Metz 
dmetz@usc.edu 
213-8211775 (but email is better)

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

My lab will be working on several projects: One is the monitoring and modeling of family eating behaviors and dynamics, using mobile health technologies in the lab and in the home. The second is using virtual humans on mobile technologies to help youth and young adults in several areas, including dealing with depression and a suite of virtual humans we hope to develop for survivors of childhood cancers. We are also working with Scripps on the new Precision Medicine Initiative. It is not yet clear what kind of tasks that will involve

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Students should be reliable and enjoy individual as well as collaborative tasks. There are several opportunities for extended involvement in lab projects. We therefore require a minimum of one full semester commitment (prefer two semesters) with at least 6-8 hours free per week for lab participation.

**Office Location:** VPD 405 **Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Researcher**

Sarah Townsend 
sarah.townsend@marshall.usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

At the Culture, Diversity, and Psychophysiology Lab we explore the how people’s social and cultural environments shape the ways they think, feel, and act. Specifically, our research examines cultural differences by race/ethnicity, gender, and social class. Additionally, we investigate how people experience and respond to being the target of discrimination. In our work, we use multiple methodologies, including asking people what they are thinking and how they are feeling, watching their behavior, and measuring their cardiovascular and neuroendocrine responses (e.g., heart rate, blood pressure, and hormones). If you are interested, please email Brittany Torrez at (torrezb@marshall.usc.edu) for an application.
Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
GPA 3.3 or higher. No previous research experiences necessary, but RAs are asked to give a minimum 1-year commitment.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Should be professional, detail-oriented, hard working, and broadly interested in culture, diversity, and/or psychophysiology.

Office Location: HOH 403 Phone: (213) 740-8420

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Researcher

Scott Wiltermuth
wiltermu@usc.edu
703-304-3075

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The IDEA (Interpersonal Dynamics and Ethical Applications) Lab researches how socio-environmental factors affect people’s reactions to unethical behavior and their likelihood of behaving unethically themselves. We also research how interpersonal dynamics, such as synchrony and dominance, affect people’s willingness to cooperate with others.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

GPA 3.3 or higher. No previous research experiences necessary, but RAs are asked to give a minimum 1-year commitment with at least 5 hours per week free to conduct research activities.

Office Location: Hoffman Hall, 405 Office Hours: By appointment

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Researcher

Dr. Wendy Wood
wendy.wood@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation:

Why do people continue to perform bad habits even when they don’t want to? How can good habits be used to meet important life goals? What are ways to change unwanted habits? Topics of interest: social media habits, eating habits, exercise habits
http://dornsife.usc.edu/wendywood/research-articles/

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Seeking reliable students who enjoy collaborating with others and sharing their ideas during our lively, once-a-week lab meetings (usually Mondays at 4pm). We offer many opportunities for extended involvement in lab projects and therefore require a minimum of one full semester commitment (prefer two semesters) with at least 5 hours free per week for lab
participation. Commitment to project involvement is essential. Students who participate in the lab often go on to graduate school in social psychology or marketing.

Potential honors students encouraged to join. Typically, we have one or more students working on an honors project each year.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Intro psych and social psych coursework, along with a research methods class, may be helpful. Knowledge of basic statistics and experience with SPSS is a plus, though not required. Anyone with flash programming experience would be a wonderful addition to the team!

**Office Location**: SGM 805  **Phone**: 213-740-5504

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**Researcher**

Jason Zevin, PhD  
zevin@usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

Our focus is on behavioral and neuroimaging studies of spoken and written word recognition. We are also working on a new way of thinking about "statistical learning" phenomena relevant to language learning. This all fits together somehow, because in all of these projects we are dealing with how domain- and species-general learning abilities shape skilled language ability.

 Recently, we also have begun to think about the consequences of language variety for this general approach. That is, how might regional, ethnic, and other sources of variability in the way, e.g., English, is spoken shape the statistics of the language differently for different individuals? How do people negotiate the fact that they are often interacting with others who speak a different variety than they do? What are the consequences of this for tests of perceptual and cognitive abilities that use linguistic stimuli?

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

There are no special qualifications for this position. We use some specialized software for data collection, modeling and analysis, but we don’t expect you to be familiar with at first. Nonetheless, familiarity with a programming language (Python or Matlab are pretty popular around here), and/or interest in learning to code is a plus, especially if you are thinking of doing an independent project. At weekly lab meetings we often discuss somewhat technical journal articles. A willingness to engage primary research materials critically, even when you’re in way over your head and ask questions, even when they seem naïve will help.

**Office Location**: SGM 724  **Office Hours**: Tues 1-3 or by appointment
NOTE: STUDENTS SEEKING PSYC 490 CREDIT FOR RESEARCH EXPERIENCE MUST BE WORKING UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A FACULTY MEMBER. THE INDIVIDUALS LISTED BELOW ARE GRADUATE STUDENTS AND MAY NOT SERVE AS YOUR PRIMARY SUPERVISOR TOWARDS 490 CREDIT. CONSULT WITH THEIR SUPERVISING FACULTY MEMBER CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF 490 CREDIT
Researcher

Gabrielle Lewine
lewine@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The current research is focused on cognitive-dissonance based interventions targeting social problems. Research assistants will be trained to implement a research protocol. They will be responsible for scheduling participants, running participants through experimental manipulations, and assisting with outcome assessment.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Research assistants must have a GPA of at least 3.0, and must be willing to commit 10 hours per week. Year-long commitments are strongly preferred. Prior experience running experimental research and/or acting skills a plus.

Office Location: SGM 918  Office Hours: By appointment (please email if interested)

Researcher

Tasha Poppa (Bechara Lab)
npoppa@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation


Responsibilities may involve helping with data collection during experimental sessions, recruiting and scheduling study participants, data entry and management, or data pre-processing.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

1. Someone who can commit at least two 4 hour blocks of time per week for at least 1 semester.
2. Reliable, organized, self-motivated, detail-oriented
3. Preference will be given to students who have any of the following: those considering research-based graduate programs, individuals with R, MATLAB, or experience in another
programming language, or those working on a minor/major in computer science, engineering, statistics/applied math/economics, or neuroscience.

**Office Location:** HNB 28C (Basement level)