Research Assistantship Directory (Fall 2013)
(213) 740-2203 Fax: (213) 746-9082

Updated 8/21/13
Faculty
Graduate Students

Faculty

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

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Cognitive factors in alcohol abuse prevention, jealousy, clinical decision-making via my think-aloud method, Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Commitment to research 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
Dr. Genevieve Dunton
Please contact:
Keito Kawabata, Project Manager
kkawabat@usc.edu
323 442-7304

Current Research Topics Under Investigation:
Mobile TEEN
The goal of this proposed study is to provide a low-cost way to use common mobile phones to reduce and explain missing and ambiguous data collected in research studies using objective monitors to measure physical activity and sedentary behavior in adolescents. By improving the
quality of data collected, and minimizing amount of missing data, the proposed work will enable researchers to better measure and understand the relationship between physical activity, sedentary behaviors, and the risk of metabolic, cardiovascular and other chronic disease.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
2 units: 5-6 hours per week devoted to a defined set of research activities performed in the field or on campus. The 5-6 hours must come in one setting and cannot be split
Reliable mode of transportation
Willingness to learn and help out
Previous courses in biology, statistics and methods, health promotion

Previous volunteer experience or research experience

Interested in: Recruitment, Data Collection, Data Entry, Scheduling Participants and Compliance Calls, Materials Preparation, Data Analysis; Editing Manuscripts and References

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Same as above

**Office Location:** SOTO Building, 3rd Floor, 302-12. Health Science Campus
**Phone:** (323) 442-7304

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**Researcher**
Jesse Graham
jesse.graham@usc.edu

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
At the Values, Ideology, and Morality Lab we are trying to find empirical answers to questions regarding people's deepest core beliefs and worldviews. Why do we care so passionately about what's morally right and wrong, and why do we so often disagree about this? How do shared ideological narratives influence our sense of right and wrong, and how do our moral convictions influence our political choices? If you are a USC undergrad interested in becoming a research assistant, please fill out the form available on our website: http://www.usc.edu/grahamlab.

**Specific qualifications for research assistants**
GPA 3.3 or higher, two semester commitment, room in schedule for 10 hours per week, inquisitive mind.

**Desired qualifications for research assistants**
Experience using SPSS, SAS or R statistical programs, computer programming experience a big plus.

Phone Number: (213) 740-9535
Office Location: SGM 804

Researcher
Jonathan Gratch,
gratch@ict.usc.edu, www.ict.usc.edu/~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
Tara Gruenewald
Tara.Gruenewald@USC.edu
(213) 740-6455 (lab)
(213) 740-3755 (office)
Current Research Topics Under Investigation
The overarching goal of the USC Healthy Aging Lab (gero.usc.edu/healthyaginglab) is to identify the social and psychological factors that promote happy and healthy aging across the life course. Although a number of investigations are ongoing in the lab, we are currently seeking undergraduate research assistants who are interested in contributing to one or both of the following studies during the Fall Semester:

1. The Recording Everyday Activities, Cognition and Health (REACH) Study: The goal of this study is to understand how daily activities and experiences are linked to daily cognitive function (working memory, speed of processing) in older adults. Assistance is needed in running participants through evaluation sessions in our lab in which participants complete various surveys, physical performance and cognitive function tasks, and are trained to use tablet computers to complete surveys and “brain games” each day for a 7-day period. Research assistants will learn how to obtain informed consent, administer surveys, cognitive function, and physical performance tasks, and debrief participants. Research assistants will also participate in participant recruitment, data coding/entry/analysis, and various study-related tasks as needed.

2. The Art Through the Ages (ATTA) Intervention: ATTA is an intergenerational activity intervention in which older adults from the community are asked to volunteer their time teaching elementary school children about master artists (e.g., Van Gogh, Picasso) and guiding children in fun art activities. Research assistants are needed to assist in all aspects of a research study designed to examine whether ATTA participation might lead to mental and physical well-being benefits in older adult volunteers. Research assistant activities will include: participant recruitment and contact, assistance in developing ATTA educational materials, assistance in ATTA instructional sessions, conducting study evaluations (interviews, surveys), and data coding/entry/analysis.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
No specific qualifications are needed.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
A willingness to learn and collaborate with others in accomplishing scientific goals. A commitment to professionalism in interacting with research study participants and collaborators.

Miscellaneous skills we are seeking in lab members (not in any way required to participate in the lab): Spanish language fluency; website design skills; computer programming skills; art skills (e.g., drawing, painting).

Office Location: GER 119 Gerontology (lab)
Phone: (213) 740-6455

Researcher
Stan Huey
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

Researcher
Kimberle A. Kelly
akimkelly@gmail.com

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning interventions in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data. Projects span the educational spectrum (elementary school through undergraduate degree programs), and there are opportunities for students to participate on reports and presentations.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Willing to commit to 4 hours per week (1/2 day) minimum to work on individual or group projects.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Detail-oriented, effective time-management, interested and enthusiastic.

Office Location: SGM 529A
Office Hours: Email to schedule an appointment

Researcher (please include name, email and contact phone)
Dr. Gilly Koritzky
koritzky@usc.edu
(213) 821-5234
Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Decision making, obesity and weight management

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Project #1: Fluent in English, able to run a study and administer psychological tests
Project #2: Proficient in Visual Basic programming language, or a similar language. The project involves the programming of an application to be used in laboratory studies.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Reliable, punctual, organized, Able to work independently.

Office Location: SGM 708B
Phone: (213) 821-5234

Researcher
Adam Leventhal, PhD - Lab Director
adam.leventhal@usc.edu
(323) 442-8222

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. To that end, USC-HEAL conducts two major lines of research. One focus is to collect and analyze data from population-based, community, or clinical samples to identify novel psychosocial and genetic factors that influence addiction risk. Building off of that work, another major focus is to examine interactions between predisposing factors (e.g., emotional disturbance, genes) and the acute effects of drugs in order to identify whether individuals who carry vulnerabilities are more sensitive to addictive properties of drugs. Visit heal.usc.edu for more information. Students can apply for research assistantships here: http://redcap.sc-ctsi.org/surveys/?s=uvh5oL

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Reliable, enthusiastic, bright, and professional. 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. One project involves traveling offsite; access to a car is preferred for this project. Minimum of 8 hours per week availability required. One year commitment preferred.

Phone Number: (323) 442-2732
Office Location: Health Science Campus(HSC), Clinical Science Annex(CSA) building, Rm 218
Office Hours: Email to arrange an appointment.
Researcher
Susan Luczak
luczak@usc.edu
(213) 740-4872

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Familial, genetic, biological, cultural, ethnic, and psychosocial risk and protective factors for alcohol use and problems. I have two projects students can become involved in: 1) longitudinal family study in Mauritius and 2) using technology (iPhones, breath analyzers, transdermal alcohol monitors) to assess real-time drinking behaviors of college students.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Highly motivated, reliable, and detail-oriented. GPA 3.0 or higher. Able to commit 10 hours per week.

Desired qualifications for Research Assistants
Knowledge of SPSS and Excel preferable.

Phone Number: 0-4872 (best if any interested students email me at the above address)
Office Location: SGM 602

Researcher
Gayla Margolin
margolin@usc.edu
(213) 740-2308

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
My lab will be working on two studies: (a) how childhood experiences of aggression and adversity affect young adults' romantic relationships, with particular attention to physiological reactivity, compassion, and behavioral samples of couple interaction; and (b) what factors influence teens views of justice and how their views are changed by serving as jurors on LA Teen Court.

Specific qualifications for Research Assistants
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 (a) physiological measurement or (b) legal issues. 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

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**Researcher**  
Mara Mather

Please contact lab manager Rico Velasco regarding all interests and questions: rico.vel@gmail.com

**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.usc.edu/projects/matherlab/](http://www.usc.edu/projects/matherlab/)

**Specific qualifications for Research Assistants**  
No previous research experiences necessary, but should be able to commit at least 10 hours per week (preferably doing two blocks of 4-5 hours).

If interested, contact our lab at least two to three weeks prior to the starting semester.

**Desired qualifications for Research Assistants**  
Should be professional, enthusiastic, hard working, committed, and interested in our areas of research. Have experience working with older adults. Software programming skills

**Phone Number:** (213) 740-9543 to reach Rico Velasco

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

**Office Hours:** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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**Researcher**  
Daniel Nation, Ph.D.  
danation@usc.edu  
(858) 337-4579
Current Research Topics Under Investigation
- Neuroimaging (MRI)-based biomarkers for Alzheimer’s disease and cerebrovascular disease
- Age-related cognitive decline
- Computer augmentation of process-based neuropsychological evaluation
- Impact of chronic psychological stress on the brain and cognition in older adults

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
- Experience with computer programming strongly desired but not necessary

Phone Number: (858) 337-4579
Office Location: SGM 1016

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

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
There are several on-going projects, all of which have to do with how mindfulness influences our psychological experience of different life events and situations.
Mindfulness is typically defined as a psychological state in which is attuned to a task in the absence of a wandering mind. Often mindfulness is developed through meditation and other similar activities.
Research Assistants will be asked to do the following:
1) Help with literature search
2) Assist in collecting data. Data will be collected both in a laboratory and internet settings.
3) Perform data entry.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Have taken Introduction to Social Psychology
Have a 3.5 GPA.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Either have worked as a Research Assistant or have taken a research methods class.

Office Location: HOH 605
Phone: best contacted by email: priester@usc.edu
Researcher
Stephen J. Read
read@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
1) 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.
2) 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.
3) 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.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
For 3, NN modeling, programming or math background would be highly desirable

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

Researcher
Nicole Sintov
sintov@usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
My research focuses on the development and use of new technologies to promote engagement in sustainable behaviors, particularly energy conservation. Specific projects include:
1) Developing and testing persuasive messages to promote participation in energy conservation events
2) The design and implementation of a website-enabled goal-setting energy conservation intervention among Los Angeles electric customers
3) Investigating mechanisms of behavior change related to energy use

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
- No prior research experience necessary
- Able to commit to 10 hours per week
- Reliable, organized, and detail-oriented
- Interested in sustainability issues
- Minimum 3.3 GPA
- RA duties may include participant recruitment, literature searches, entering and analyzing data

Phone Number: (323) 442-8220  
Office Location: RTH 312

Researcher  
Sarah Townsend  
sarah.townsend@marshall.usc.edu

Current Research Topics Under Investigation  
At the Culture, Diversity, and Psychophysiology Lab we explore the ways in which people’s social and cultural environments shape how they think, feel, and act. Our research examines how race/ethnicity, culture, gender, and social class affect perception, attitudes, motivation, and behavior. In this work, we use multiple methodologies, including measuring self-reported cognitions and emotions, overt behavior, and cardiovascular and neuroendocrine responses. If you are a USC undergrad interested in becoming a research assistant, please fill out the form available on our website: http://www.sarahsmtownsend.com.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants  
GPA 3.3 or higher. No previous research experiences necessary, but should be able to commit at least 8 hours per week (preferably doing two blocks of 4 hours).

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

Researcher  
Dr. Wendy Wood  
wendy.wood@usc.edu  
213-740-5504

Current Research Topics Under Investigation:  
Why do people continue to perform bad habits? How can good habits be used to meet important life goals? What are ways to change unwanted habits?  
How do social groups exert influence—why do some people believe that abortion is murder whereas others believe it is women’s right to choose?  
What are the causes of gender differences in social behavior?
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. 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.

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

Graduate Students

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
Kalina Babeva
babeva@usc.edu
(213) 740-6307

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

My research examines age differences in emotional and cognitive reactions to situations encountered within the context of romantic relationships using Dr. Davison's think-aloud paradigm (Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations).

RA duties include recruiting and running participants, coding of qualitative data and entering data.

Specific qualifications for Research Assistants
- Strong interest in research on romantic relationships
- Reliable, punctual, conscientious
- Good interpersonal skills
- Ability to commit 8 - 10 hours per week for at least one semester (preferably 2 semesters)
- Sophomore or junior standing
- Minimum 3.3 GPA
- No prior research experience necessary

**Office Location:** SGM 1011  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

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

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**  
I have 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.

**Office Location:** SGM 812  
**Phone:** 310-382-4140

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**Researcher**  
Aubrey Rodriguez  
aubreyro@usc.edu  
213-740-2306

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**  
We are investigating the impact of U.S. military service on military families with teenage children. We collect behavioral samples of mother-teen dyads discussing family concerns,
interview families about their recent life experiences, and collect self-report data on mothers’ and teens' current functioning.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills - RAs will likely have contact with military family members and/or community agencies we partner with to recruit our participants. RAs must be comfortable interacting with these individuals by phone and in person. Research assistants will need to be available at least 8 hours per week during BOTH the Fall and Spring semesters. Research assistants must also be willing to assist with other projects in the lab during periods in which recruitment for the military study is slow.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Willingness to travel over the weekends to assist with data collection - and access to own transportation - are a plus but not a requirement. Inquisitive students with aspirations for graduate school are particularly welcomed as there are opportunities to assist in many central aspects of the research project including data analysis and data collection/contact with families.

**Office Location:** SGM 922  
**Phone:** 213-740-2306

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**Researcher**  
Caitlin Smith  
Caitlias@usc.edu  
(323) 301-0194

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
We are conducting a qualitative study examining the perspectives of gang interventionists on evidence-based practice.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Good communication skills are important because research assistants will be calling interventionists and explaining the purpose of our study. Organizational skills will be necessary during an Internet and phone book search for eligible interventionists. Interviews for this position will be scheduled for the week of September 16th and RA’s should be available 6-10 hours per week until the end of Fall semester.

**Phone Number:** Please email  
**Office Location:** SGM 532  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Researcher**
Vanessa
vanessa1@usc.edu
(213) 740-3286

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
We are examining the neural correlates of the role of emotion in moral judgment of everyday life situations. We use functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) along with psychophysiology to collect data while subjects watch video stimuli.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
RA duties include recruiting subjects, collecting and analyzing data.

Phone Number: (213) 740-3286
Office Location: Dornsife Neuroimaging Center
Office Hours: By appointment