UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES
Research Assistantship Directory (2022-2023 Academic Year)

Updated: 07/27/2022

**Researcher**
Stephen Aguilar  
aguilars@usc.edu  
**Web:** [http://lapel.tech](http://lapel.tech)  
**Phone:** (202) 258-8130

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**  
Student Motivation; study strategies, educational technologies (high school/college); educational data mining.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**  
Interest in education and/or psychology; interest in technology/data science.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**  
quantitative data analysis is a plus; self-motivated; good with email and asynchronous work; coding experience (R, python, Stata).

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**  
Fall 2022, Hybrid  
Spring 2023, Hybrid

**Office Location:** WPH 600B  
**Office Hours:** Will vary/by appointment

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**Researcher**
Daphna Oyserman  
burbidge@usc.edu  
**Web:** [https://dornsife.usc.edu/daphna-oyserman](https://dornsife.usc.edu/daphna-oyserman)  
**Phone:** (213) 740-2219

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**  
Throughout her work, Professor Oyserman examines how apparently “fixed” differences between groups and individuals may in fact mask highly malleable situated processes that can
be profoundly influenced through small interventions that shift mindset. For an idea of what topics are currently under investigation, please see her most recent publications on her website.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Strong communication, interest in motivation

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Interest in a career that entails making sense of social influence

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
- Spring 2023, In Person
- Spring 2023, Hybrid
- Spring 2023, Virtual

**Office Location:** VPD 205
**Office Hours:** Email our lab manager, Alysia Burbidge, during business hours.

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**Researcher**
Norbert Schwarz
burbidge@usc.edu
**Web:** [https://dornsife.usc.edu/norbert-schwarz/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/norbert-schwarz/)
**Phone:** (213) 740-2223

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
Professor Schwarz's theoretical approach emphasizes the socially situated and embodied nature of cognition and the role of feelings and subjective experiences in judgment and decision making. He pursues these basic processes in different domains, including public opinion, consumer behavior, well-being, and the psychology of self-report. For an idea of what topics are currently under investigation, please see the most recent publications on his CV, found on his website.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Strong communication, interest in cognition and decision making

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Interest in a career that entails making sense of people's subjective experiences

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
- Fall 2022, In Person, Fall 2022, Hybrid, Fall 2022, Virtual, Spring 2023, In Person, Spring 2023, Hybrid, Spring 2023, Virtual
Researcher
Hok Chio (Mark) Lai
hokchiol@usc.edu
Web: https://mmmlab.rbind.io/
Phone: (213) 740-0538

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
At the Measurement and Multilevel Modeling (MMM) Lab, we develop and evaluate widely used statistical methods in psychology and broader sciences. Measurement is the foundation of quantitative science, and it’s especially important in psychological and social sciences as data in psychology is usually noisy and not perfectly reliable. Multilevel modeling is an extremely powerful framework with very broad applications for quantitative science.

Undergraduate research assistants will participate in a project that studies the methodology for synthesizing data sets from different sources. The methodology aims to make the data sets comparable when they use different psychological instruments to measure similar constructs (e.g., cognitive functioning, depression). The project is supported by the National Science Foundation, and the research team will not only develop the statistical methodology but also create computational software to implement them.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
- Interest in quantitative data analysis and/or psychological measurement
- Strong quantitative and analytic skills
- Prior experience with data analysis using R, or willingness to learn it
- Able to commit 6-10 hours per week

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
- Interest and experience with programming (e.g., R, Python, Julia, C++)
- Strong organizational skills

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?
Fall 2022, Hybrid
Spring 2023, Hybrid

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

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**Researcher**
Alayna Tackett, PhD  
[Alayna.Tackett@usc.edu](mailto:Alayna.Tackett@usc.edu)  
**Phone:** (323) 442-0732

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
Our research follows a team-science model to examine tobacco product characteristics that may increase nicotine dependence (e.g., abuse liability) and the respiratory effects of e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine or cannabis delivery devices (e.g., heat not burn) in youth/young adults. We are also conducting studies that examine and test novel methods to a) incorporate objective measurements of respiratory health and symptoms; b) reduce children’s exposure to secondhand aerosol/smoke, and c) contribute scientific evidence to regulate tobacco products to protect public health. We have several active research projects (NIH and state-funded) ongoing.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
We seek bright and motivated students! A background (e.g., class, experience) in research methods is a plus. We have lots of active research studies currently enrolling participants (NIH/state-funded) and work closely as a team. Ideally, we are looking for applicants with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. No previous research experiences are necessary, but RAs are asked to give a minimum 1-year commitment for 6-10 hours/week. RAs should be professional, detail-oriented, hardworking, and interested in psychological or addiction science research. If you are interested, please email a copy of your most recent CV to Dr. Alayna Tackett (Alayna.Tackett@usc.edu) and Natalie Pereza ([nperaza@usc.edu](mailto:nperaza@usc.edu)).

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
Fall 2022, In Person  
Spring 2023, In Person

**Office Location:** CSC 242 (Lab); SSB 302c (Office)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment only.

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**Researcher**
Stephen Read  
[read@usc.edu](mailto:read@usc.edu)  
**Web:** [stephenjread.com](http://stephenjread.com)  
**Phone:** (310) 874-3390
**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

1) Understanding the neurobiology of depression and the role of feelings of anhedonia (lack of interest, motivation) in treatment-resistant depression.

2) Neural Network/Computational models of human personality, motivation, and decision-making. Using the models to understand them at both the psychological and neurobiological levels.

3) The role of the dopamine-based reward system, Nucleus Accumbens (ventral striatum) in depression and motivated behavior.

4) Computational models of social perception.

5) Pavlovian to Instrumental Transfer- How do people learn to predict the rewards or punishments that are available in different situations?

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

This would depend on the project they are working on.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**

1) Some familiarity with neural network models
2) some programming experience.
3) background in cognitive science, neuroscience, or social psychology.

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**

Fall 2022, In Person
Fall 2022, Hybrid
Spring 2023, In Person

**Office Location:** 821 SGM
**Office Hours:** TBA

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**Researcher**

John Monterosso
johnrmon@usc.edu

**Web:** [https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/monterosso/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/monterosso/)

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**

Addiction, eating, brain imaging, vaping, emotion.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**

Evidence of being responsible, commitment to projects

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
To be involved in the ongoing vape-brain imaging study, need to be available at least 1 day in the AM per week since participants are run in the morning.

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
- Fall 2022, In Person
- Fall 2022, Hybrid
- Spring 2023, In Person
- Spring 2023, Hybrid

**Office Location:** BCI Rm 252. Lab HNB B19
**Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Researcher**
Duke Han
[ Duke.Han@med.usc.edu](mailto:Duke.Han@med.usc.edu)
**Web:** [www.hanresearchlab.com](http://www.hanresearchlab.com)
**Phone:** (626) 457-6629

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
- Financial decision-making, cognition, neuroimaging, aging

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
- Able to commit to a minimum of 8 hours per week
- Minimum commitment of one semester
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, especially Excel.
- Ability to commute to the Alhambra campus

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
- Independent, hardworking, with attention to detail
- Experience using statistical software such as SPSS or R is a plus.
- Strong interest in cognitive psychology and/or neuropsychology
- Strong interest in interacting with older adult research participants
- Interest in applying to graduate school in psychology, neuroscience, etc.

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
- Fall 2022, In Person
- Spring 2023, In Person

**Office Location:** HSA (Alhambra)
**Office Hours:** M-Th
Researcher
Sarah Bottjer
bottjer@usc.edu
Web: https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/bottjerlab/
Phone: (213) 740-9183

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
How social interactions mediate speech acquisition in infants.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
Freshman or sophomore with GPA >3.2; good time management/organizational skills

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Bilingual: English & Spanish

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?
Fall 2022, In Person
Spring 2023, In Person

Office Location: HNB 218
Office Hours: Any time, by appointment

Researcher
Jonathan Stange, Ph.D.
jstange@usc.edu
Web: https://dornsifecms.usc.edu/labs/car-lab/
Phone: (213) 821-1673

Current Research Topics Under Investigation
The CAR lab examines cognitive and affective processes involved in the regulation of negative affect, in an effort to identify vulnerability factors for mood disorders.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
- Able to commit to a minimum of 10 hours per week
- Minimum commitment of two semesters
- Have no derogatory marks against their academic record
- Are psychology majors, minors, or majoring in a related discipline
- Have a strong interest in emotion regulation, mood disorders, fMRI research, ECG research, and/or ambulatory data collection
- Have open availability and flexible hours

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
- Have previous research experience
- Independent, hardworking, with attention to detail
- Experience using statistical software such as SPSS or R
- Interest in going to graduate school
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
Fall 2022, Hybrid
Spring 2023, Hybrid

**Office Location:** Seeley G. Mudd (SGM) 907
**Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Researcher**
Kyla-Rose Walden (Works with Dr. Luczak)
kylarose@usc.edu
**Web:** [https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/susan-luczak/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/susan-luczak/)

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
The Luczak Lab is a clinical psychology laboratory that conducts a variety of alcohol research studies. We are seeking volunteers to assist with a new study focused on furthering our understanding of the problem of alcohol use among the LGBTQIA+ community. Those interested in alcohol/substance use research and LGBTQIA+ mental health are encouraged to apply.

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Motivated and detail-oriented students with a 3.0 GPA or higher who are able to commit 8-10 hours per week, online and possibly in-person.

**Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Students who have a strong interest in clinical psychology, alcohol/substance use research, and/or LGBTQIA+ mental health. Skills in SPSS, Excel, Atlas.TI, and Qualtrics preferred.

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
Fall 2022, In Person
Fall 2022, Hybrid
Fall 2022, Virtual
Office Location: SGM 826D
Office Hours: Flexible, by appointment

Researcher
Mara Mather
matherlab@usc.edu
Web: matherlab.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.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
· Must be able to commit at least 12 hours per week (preferably doing blocks of 4-5 hours) for a minimum of 2 semesters.
· Must be highly detail-oriented
· Must be reliable, punctual, and have a good history of time management
· Must be a team player

Research Assistants are most often involved with running experiment sessions with participants, coding and entering data, preparing stimuli, doing literature searches, and recruiting participants for studies. Depending on the project, there is also the opportunity to assist with data analysis.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
Experience working with older adults and software programming skills are a plus, but not required.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?
Fall 2022, In Person
Fall 2022, Hybrid
Spring 2023, In Person
Spring 2023, Hybrid

Office Location: GER 341
Office Hours: By appointment
Current Research Topics Under Investigation
Our lab investigates many different facets of language development in children, with the goal of understanding how typically developing children learn from exposure to the language spoken around them and addressed to them by adults. The questions we explore range from how infants begin to figure out what sequences of sounds in their language are words, what the words mean, and how words combine to form grammatical sentences. In our studies, we use diverse videos, images, objects, and colors for children to interact with together with language input. Our current studies involve monolingually exposed infants, as well as infants acquiring multiple languages. To find out more about our research, visit our lab website at https://dornsife.usc.edu/labs/langdevlab/

Our research assistants are involved in all aspects of research and the day-to-day operations of the lab. Responsibilities of an RA would include coordinating the recruitment and schedules of study participants, categorizing infants' and young children's looking behaviors in online experiments, working closely with the lab to design and conduct infant and adult studies, conducting data analysis, and participating in lab meetings. If students are interested in getting involved, please email langdev@usc.edu.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants
- Able to commit at least 6-8 hours per week (preferably doing blocks of 1.5-3 hours) for a minimum of 1 semester
- Able to work independently
- Detail-oriented, reliable, punctual, and have a good history of time management
- Able to interact with infants, toddlers, and their parents in a friendly manner
- No prior research experience is required

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants
- Able to commit for a minimum of 2 semesters
- Experience with programming, R, poster/flyer design, or Qualtrics is a plus, though not required
- Experience with Microsoft Office programs/ macros knowledge

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?
In-person or Hybrid

Office Location: SGM 617
**Office Hours:** By Appointment

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**Researcher**
Ian Anderson  
jaanders@usc.edu  
**Phone:** (734)846-7430

**Current Research Topics Under Investigation**
Social Media use; Habits; Social Information Sharing and Consumption

**Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants**
Willing to work on research projects, people with coding skills (web-scraping in particular) a plus as well.

**Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023?**
- Fall 2022, In Person
- Fall 2022, Hybrid
- Spring 2023, In Person
- Spring 2023, Hybrid

**Office Location:** SGM 801  
**Office Hours:** Monday & Tuesday 1-2 PM or by appointment.