Researcher	Mara Mather	**Phone**	
Email	matherlab@usc.edu	**Website**	matherlab.com
Office Location	GER 341	**Office Hours**	M-F, 9AM-5PM

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

We use functional neuroimaging and behavioral methods to investigate how emotion influences memory and cognition across the lifespan.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Must be able to commit at least 10-12 hours per week (preferably doing blocks of 3-4 hours) for a minimum of 2 semesters.
- Must be highly detail-oriented
- Must be reliable, punctual, and have 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 a plus, but not required.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Arthur A. Stone and Doerte U. Junghaenel	**Phone**	
Email	junghaen@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/cesr/center-for-self-report-science/
Office Location	USC UPC Campus VPD	**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The mission of the USC Dornsife Center for Self-Report Science (CSS) is to improve our understanding about how people answer questions about themselves and to develop innovative methods that provide accurate, reliable, and ecologically valid self-reports. We are currently developing a new study involving ecological momentary assessment (EMA), an assessment methodology that involves frequent sampling of participants' experiences throughout the day and in their natural environments. This study will examine whether the act of repeatedly answering the same momentary questions changes participants' experiences or behaviors, a phenomenon called reactivity. The study seeks to enroll approximately 120 participants at the USC site who will participate in an EMA protocol involving physical activity measurement.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

We seek motivated and reliable students with an interest in social and health psychology and self-report measurement. Students who join our team will be involved in a variety of research tasks. These include literature reviews, study material preparation, assisting with recruitment, eligibility screening, in-person and online data collection, participant management, and preparation of basic study reports. Students who join our center will work closely with our project specialists who conduct the study activities. They will also attend weekly team meetings with the full research team at CSS.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Applicants should have strong interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills, be detail-oriented and reliable, be able to work in a team, and have prior educational experience in psychology or related social sciences. Interested students will need to commit to two semesters of participation in the research (Fall 2025 and Spring 2026), have availability of a minimum of 10 hours per week (if needed in blocks of several hours), need to be able to assist with in-person study visits when needed, and have flexible hours throughout the week to assist the research team in running the study.

Preferred Qualifications for Research Assistants

Preferred qualifications include prior research experience with human subjects, in-person and online data collection, experimental study designs, familiarity with EMA or physical activity measurement, knowledge of basic statistics and statistical software packages, and online data collection tools for research.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [x] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Stacey Dusing	**Phone**	323-442-0191
Email	motordevelopmentlab@pt.usc.edu	**Website**	https://sites.usc.edu/mdl/
Office Location	HRA 408, 1640 Marengo St	**Office Hours**	M-F, 9AM-5PM

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The mission of the Motor Development Lab is to investigate the development of motor control and coordination in infants and young children with and without disabilities as well as the impact of physical therapy treatment on motor and cognitive development. We are wrapping up 2 fedallry funded cliical trials and have lots of data to process and publish.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Must be able to commit at least 10-12 hours per week (preferably doing blocks of 3-4 hours) for a minimum of 2 semesters.
- Must be highly detail-oriented
- Must be reliable, punctual, and have good history of time management
- Must be a team player

Research Assistants are most often involved with preparing for and cleaning up from assessment or intervention session. There is often an opportnity to video tape visit as well. Almost all RAs will participate in behavioral coding and entering data. You may also spend time doing literature searches, and recruiting participants for studies using social media, makng phone calls, or sending out mailings. Depending on the project, there is also the opportunity to assist with data analysis.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Experience working young infants and children, considering a career in research, rehabilitation, posychology, neruoscience are the best fit for the lab.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025 and Spring 2026

Researcher	Assal Habibi, PhD	**Phone**	
Email	ahabibi@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/brainandmusic/
Office Location		**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

We use functional neuroimaging and behavioral methods to investigate how arts and music education impacts child development and social well being.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

The Brain + Music Lab, directed by Dr. Assal Habibi, is looking for a couple of volunteer bilingual research assistants (RAs), who speak and write Spanish fluently. Duties may include conducting behavioral testing with child participants, communicating with bilingual and monolingual English-Spanish speaking parents, and learning about fMRI. RAs applying must have consistent availability throughout the week, specifically afternoons and evenings.

Requirements
• Fluent in Spanish
• Minimum commitment of 7 hours a week to the lab.
• 10 hours of provided availability a week
• Punctuality
• Fulfill your commitments and task deadlines.
• Good communication via Slack, in person, etc.

If you are interested please email BOTH Caitlin Noel <crnoel@usc.edu> and Melissa Reyes <reyesmel@usc.edu> for further instruction.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Experience working with older adults and software programming skills a plus, but not required.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	April Luo (under the supervision of Dr. Steve Read)	**Phone**	
Email	chaodanl@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/stephenjread/
Office Location	SGM 814	**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

- Assist in preparing a theoretical review paper on depression.
- Two main focus areas:
  1. Antidepressants and depression – literature on effectiveness, limitations, and proposed mechanisms.
  2. Neurobiology of depression – key brain regions, neurotransmitter systems, circuits, and relevant animal/human studies.
- Tasks include searching peer-reviewed literature, summarizing key findings, and organizing references to support main arguments.
- Work will be closely guided by the PI and lead author.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Strong academic writing and summarization skills.
- Ability to identify relevant primary research articles from databases (PubMed, PsycINFO, Google Scholar).
- Basic understanding of depression, neuroscience, or psychopharmacology.
- Organized note-taking and reference management (e.g., Zotero).

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Background in psychology, neuroscience, pharmacology, or related field.
- Prior experience conducting literature reviews or systematic searches.
- Familiarity with antidepressant classes (SSRIs, SNRIs, atypicals) and neurobiological theories of depression.
- Comfort with interpreting figures, tables, and statistical results from research papers.
- Attention to detail and ability to work independently while meeting deadlines.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- ☐ In person
- ☑ Hybrid
- ☐ Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Clinic Director	Lauren Shapiro PhD	**Phone**	213-740-6620
Email	lspies@usc.edu; usc_psc@usc.ed	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/usc-psc/
Office Location	SGM 1030	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Clinical Services and Role of Volunteers

The USC Psychology Services Center (PSC) provides low-cost therapy and assessment services to individuals, families, and couples in the community. The PSC serves as a training clinic for students working toward their Ph.D. in Clinical Science, and all students are supervised by licensed clinical psychologists to provide evidence-based care. As a healthcare provider that is embedded within University Clinical Services at USC, we strive for the highest quality of care while ensuring the privacy of all protected health information and abiding by HIPAA guidelines. An important part of our mission is to ensure that all clinical records and processes follow the highest standards. As part of this, we work closely with a small team of undergraduates to help streamline processes such as instructions and procedures for clinicians, clients, and supervisors, as well as to ensure that all client documentation is complete and accurate. There are no current research projects conducted through the clinic - this role focuses more on care provision and ensuring accuracy of clinical case records. There may also be opportunities to interact with clients through clinic initiatives.

Specific Qualifications for Undergraduate Volunteers

- Able to commit to a minimum of 5 and maximum 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 healthcare provision, psychotherapy, and/or graduate school in clinical psychology
- Have open availability and flexible hours

Desired Qualifications for Undergraduate Volunteers

- Have previous research experience
- Independent, hardworking, with attention to detail
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Desire to work as part of a team

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [ ] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Laurent Itti	**Phone**	
Email	itti@usc.edu	**Website**	ilab.usc.edu
Office Location	GCS-202L (access card required)	**Office Hours**	Tuesdays 1:30-5

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

We have openings for a new project that will create an AI-assisted visual aid for blind individuals. Beyond the software and electronics aspects of this project, we seek to engage the blind community and conduct focus groups, interviews, and field testing of our devices. Talented undegraduates who are passionate about this topic and who are able to regularly commit some time are encouraged to join.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- interest in or experience with running human experiments (our experiments will consist of several mixed indoor/outdoor tasks, such as going to the bookstore to buy a pencil and then to the Leavy library to meet a friend - you will shadow blind participants helped by our device and ensure their safety, but you will otherwise not help them. They will also use their usual assistive devices, such as a smartphone, a long cane, or a guide dog), or

- interest in or experience in design issues, usability issues, privacy issues, social acceptance issues, legal issues, etc for assistive devices for blind individuals, or

- experience with machine vision (e.g., stereo, object detection), or

- experience with board-level electronics design (Altium, high-speed designs including MIPI, PCIe, LPDDR5), or

- experience with FPGA design, or

- experience with small LLM/VLM customization (e.g., LoRA, RAG), or

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Prior experience with human subjects research and IRB procedures a plus

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Erika Patall & Amanda Vite	**Phone**	
Email	avite@usc.edu	**Website**	https://motivationlab.wordpress.com/author/motivationlab/
Office Location		**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The Motivation and Education Research Group is a research team in the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California (USC). Supervised by Professor Erika A. Patall, the Motivation and Education Research Group (MERG) consists of both graduate students and undergraduate students who conduct primary research studies and syntheses of research on issues of motivation, primarily in educational settings. Topics studied in MERG generally pertain to the environmental and interpersonal precursors to motivation and the relations between motivation and achievement outcomes across the lifespan. Research conducted by MERG members also pertains to the effectiveness of education-related strategies and interventions for motivation and achievement outcomes.

We are analyzing data for an experimental intervention study, designed to support agency and persistence in STEM, that was implemented with undergraduate students and their professors across three universities. We are looking for an undergraduate research assistant to help us code observational video data.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

-Able to commit about 10 hours/week for a minimum of 2 semesters
-Prior research experience preferred
-We will hold weekly online meetings that research assistants are expected to attend. Outside of these meetings, work is completed remotely on the RAs own time.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- ☐ In person
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☑ Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Kyla-Rose Walden, M.A. (under supervison of Drs. Susan Luczak &	**Phone**	n/a
Email	kylarose@usc.edu	**Website**	https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=DzzHj8QAAAAJ&hl=en
Office Location	TBD	**Office Hours**	n/a

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

I am currently seeking undergraduate researchers to assist with my research study. The study centers around determinants of alcohol use among sexual minority women of color. If you are interested in research related to discrimination, stigma, homophobia, racism, and substance use, this study could be for you! Responsibilities will include assisting with data collection (administration of surveys, interview protocols, and cognitive assessment tools), conducting data entry tasks, and assisting with study recruitment and other administrative needs. Later in the course of the study there may be opportunities to assist with qualitative data coding and analyses. I am part of the Luczak Laboratory, but my data collection will occur independently from other lab tasks and is part of a subset called the Sexual Minority Alcohol Research Team (S.M.A.R.T.). We will primarily work virtually but there may be opportunities for in-person meetings throughout the semester if it is of interest.

A lot of the work can be completed independently, however data collection will require some availability to work directly with participants (e.g., meeting over zoom). If you are interested, please send me an email with your resume/C.V. and a bit about your interest in the lab and the study! Looking forward to hearing from you.

For examples of my prior work see https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=DzzHj8QAAAAJ&hl=en

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

-Able to commit about 10 hours/week for a minimum of 2 semesters
-Prior research experience not necessary, but preferred
-Psychology background preferred

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

It's most important to me that research assistants are collaborative, open, and motivated. The position does not require advanced knowledge or experience and I will train you on the protocols, but it is important to be detail oriented, follow directions closely, and be communicative and open to feedback. If this sounds like you, you'd make a great fit!

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [ ] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [x] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Richard John	**Phone**	310-227-6186
Email	richardj@usc.edu	**Website**	
Office Location	SGM 713	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

- Behavioral measures of risk-taking
- Errors in forensic science
- Jury decision making
- Lay perceptions of legal standards and thresholds
- Naturalistic decision making
- Truth detection in news and social media (fake news)

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Curiosity, Critical Thinking Skills, Creativity

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Familiarity with Quantitative Methods and Computational Modeling

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [x] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Jonathan Stange, PhD	**Phone**	(213) 821-1063
Email	carlab@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/car-lab/
Office Location	SGM 907	**Office Hours**	By appointment

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 depression.

We take a multi-method approach to examining individual differences in styles of thinking and regulating negative affect. This work involves laboratory-based measures of brain activity (using fMRI and event-related potentials), autonomic nervous system functioning (heart rate and respiration), and behavior (computer tasks and questionnaires). In addition, to understand behavior outside of the lab, we utilize ambulatory assessment to measure person-centered variability in autonomic functioning (with wearables), sleep quality (with actigraphy), affect and regulation strategies (using ecological momentary assessment), and digital phenotyping approaches to measuring behavior.

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

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

As soon as possible

Researcher	Kari Kretch, PT, DPT, PhD	**Phone**	
Email	kretch@usc.edu	**Website**	https://sites.usc.edu/ldrlab/
Office Location	Lab: Center for Health Professions (1540 Alcazar St.) Room G10A	**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The mission of the Learning, Development, and Rehabilitation Lab is to advance the science underlying early intervention for infants and children, with a focus on promoting development, participation, and inclusion for children with developmental disabilities. Research in the lab aims to understand early perceptual-motor skills, everyday experiences, and learning processes in infants with typical and atypical motor development, and to develop interventions that promote exploration, learning, and global development in children with neurodevelopmental conditions. We use wearable technology including head-mounted eye trackers and accelerometers to measure infant behavior in natural contexts. Our work is highly interdisciplinary and integrates developmental psychology, movement science, and rehabilitation science. Current projects include characterizing spontaneous locomotor behavior, responses to music, and social interaction in infants with and without Down syndrome; measuring everyday motor experiences in infants' home environments; and examining a novel overground stepping intervention to support walking development in infants with Down syndrome. For more detail on our current studies, see https://sites.usc.edu/ldrlab/projects/

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Research assistants must be able to work in-person at the Health Sciences Campus at least 6 hours per week on a regular schedule. Duties will include behavioral video coding, data entry, and assisting with data collection. PSYC 290/490 credit is available depending on the student's schedule, goals, and interests. Opportunities may be available to contribute to scientific publications and presentations

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Interest in child development and/or developmental disabilities
- Basic computer skills and interest in learning new technologies
- Careful attention to detail

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

☑ In-person participation on HSC is required.

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Jessica Schwartzman, Ph.D.	**Phone**	323-207-5910
Email	trendlab@chla.usc.edu	**Website**	https://www.chla.org/research/lab/training-and-research-empower-neurodiversity-trend
Office Location	CHLA - Wilshire	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The Training and Research to Empower NeuroDiversity (TREND) Lab studies depression, suicide, and other mental health outcomes in autistic and other neurodivergent youth using electroencephalogram (EEG), clinical interviews, and behavioral observation tasks. We also partner with autistic and other neurodivergent people to adapt and design mental health treatments for the individual and family.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Commitment of at least 8-10 hours per week for at least 9 months or longer.
- Ideal for students interested in obtaining research experience and with interests in psychology, development, medicine, and/or neuroscience.
- We are seeking candidates who are professional, organized, team players, and strong with time management
- Independent research projects and letters of recommendation from the PI available, pending performance.

Research Assistants are most often involved with recruiting participants for studies, reliability for clinical interviews, social media posts, and conducting literature searches, among other tasks. Depending on performance, there are opportunitites for training in administering clinical interviews and conducting EEG sessions.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Experience with autistic and other neurodivergent youth desired, but not required.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [ ] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Anytime

Researcher	Marc J. Perkel, PsyD	**Phone**	323-361-3500
Email	mperkel@chla.usc.edu	**Website**	https://www.chla.org/profile/marc-j-perkel-psyd
Office Location	CHLA	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Please email mperkel@chla.usc.edu if interested in this opportunity. Thank you!

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Quality Improvement and Program Development on the Children's Hospital Los Angeles Consultation-Liaison (C-L) Psychiatry Service

Opportunities include:
- Feeding and Eating Disorders through the Inpatient Eating Disorder Medical Stabilization Program
- Safety/Acute Suicidality with the C-L Psychiatry Service and Behavioral Rounding Team

Working with multidisciplinary team for projects:
- Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Social Workers, Registered Dieticians, and Registered Nurses
- Safety/Acute Suicidality with the C-L Psychiatry Service and Behavioral Rounding Team

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Able to commit to a minimum of 6 hours per week
- Minimum commitment of two semesters
- Have a strong interest in Pediatric Psychology
- Have open availability and flexible hours
- Have no derogatory marks or GPA under 3.0 on their academic record
- Must be excellent communication skills and be proactive, independent, hardworking, and is detail oriented
- Must be able to pass all requirements to volunteer at CHLA (per HR requirements) and access the Electronic Health Record

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Have previous research experience with Program Development and Quality Improvement
- Have an interest in going to graduate school for Clinical Psychology or related disciplines
- Experience with statistical analysis

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Caitlin Sayegh, PhD	**Phone**	323-361-7748
Email	cssayegh@chla.usc.edu	**Website**	https://www.chla.org/research/lab/dash
Office Location	3250 Wilshire Blvd., LA CA 90010	**Office Hours**	8AM-7PM

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The mission of the Design with Adolescents and Young Adults for Self-Management and Health Lab (DASHLab) is to partner with youth, families, and clinicians to build digital tools that support young people in their journey to self-management. We apply human-centered design strategies, qualitative and quantitative approaches, and randomized trial methods to create, evaluate, and disseminate innovative, theory-driven, and community-informed digital interventions and health education materials that resonate with youth and their families.

Current studies are focused on:
1) Remote human and automated coaching to promote medication adherence among adolescents and young adults with chronic health conditions
2) Social media video intervention to promote health literacy among adolescents with chronic health conditions

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Strong people skills, and compassion and interest in helping others is required

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Also nice if the research assistant has experience with qualitative interviewing or analysis, REDCap survey administration, and familiarity with randomized pilot trial methods

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [x] Virtual

Expected start date

Rolling

Researcher	Begüm Babür (under the supervision of Dr. Elisa Baek)	**Phone**	718-415-9879
Email	babur@usc.edu	**Website**	https://www.socolab.org/
Office Location	3620 McClintock Ave, SGM 801	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The Social Connection Lab (SoCoLab) investigates what helps people feel socially connected to one another. We are interested in the sociocognitive, affective, and neural processes that shape how people think about, engage with, and feel understood by others in daily life.

We are launching an in-person conversation study to examine how people connect with and form impressions of strangers and are seeking motivated Research Assistants to help set up and run sessions, interact with participants, record and manage video data, and collect study measures.

*Interested RAs should fill out the application form via:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kKeCALURqPBZM0W1Jd51qCsE4A7sFGmfGldmCdvMfeo/viewform?edit_requested=true

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills; collaborative, proactive, independent, detail-oriented, punctual, responsible, and eager to learn
- Ability to attend study sessions in person at USC's UPC campus
- Commitment of 10 hours per week for a minimum of two semesters
- Flexible availability, with blocks of at least 2 hours to accommodate study sessions
- Genuine interest in social psychology or neuroscience, especially research on social connections and loneliness

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Strong academic record
- Previous in-person research experience is a plus (e.g., scheduling, consent, debriefing, data entry)
- Long-term availability beyond two semesters

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Rolling

Researcher	Santiago Morales	**Phone**	
Email	santiago.morales@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/bead/
Office Location	SGM 1017	**Office Hours**	NA

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

At the Brain, Emotion, and Attention Development (BEAD) Lab, we examine individual differences in social and emotional development. We are interested in why and how individuals differ in how they express and regulate their emotions – often starting from a very young age. We want to understand how characteristics of the child (e.g., temperament) and their environment (e.g., parenting and peers) interact to create the differences we observe in children's social and emotional lives. To do this, we combine several methods including behavioral observations, computer-based tasks (eye tracking), and neuroscience measures (EEG and fMRI).

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Students will learn how to interact with families and young children in a research context, how to utilize sophisticated equipment to collect data (e.g., eye tracker and EEG), and how to analyze and interpret those data.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

At least 4 semester commitment (including summers); GPA of 3.5 or above; at least 10 hour per week commitment; Preference will be given to Sophomores and Juniors.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Sandy LaTourrette	**Phone**	NA
Email	latourre@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/childlab/
Office Location	1008	**Office Hours**	NA

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

In the CHILD Lab, we investigate how language and cognition interact across the lifespan, from infancy to adulthood. The questions we ask range from how infants use language to learn categories and remember objects to how children and adults use linguistic and world knowledge to infer new word meanings. Our work also explores variability in language development, examining how language abilities vary across different learners (e.g., multilingual children, children who are late talkers) and different contexts (e.g., hearing speech that is less clear or that occurs in an unfamiliar accent).

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Students will learn how to interact with families and young children in a research context both online and in-person, how to utilize sophisticated equipment to collect data (e.g., eye tracker), and how to analyze and interpret those data.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

At least 4 semester commitment (including summers); GPA of 3.5 or above; at least 7 hour per week commitment; Preference will be given to Sophomores and Juniors.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Jinsol Chung (under the supervision of Dr. Elisa Baek)	**Phone**	213-352-8003
Email	jinsolch@usc.edu	**Website**	https://www.socolab.org/
Office Location	SGM 625	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The Social Connection Lab (SoCoLab; PI: Dr. Elisa Baek) studies how people feel socially connected to one another (Check out lab website for more details!).

For this project, we will study how feelings of belonging can shape what young people think and do with their friends! Research Assistants are primarily expected to help set up and run neuroimaging experiment (Maximum of 6-10 hours/week; Hours vary depending on participant recruitment; we provide training for RAs) and attend a brief weekly team meeting (hybrid option is open). RA can learn how studies run, from recruitment to data analyses.

**Interested RAs should fill out the application form via: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd_14_0e5fEcbeoxzen58Yqcyh3Ddwr9V_IrFQBN63ekLBUGQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Shows up and follows through/ Clear communicator, organized, and detail-oriented; Preference is given to RAs who can commit minimum of 2 semesters (Fall 2025 to Spring 2026)

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Interest in research topic and assisting data collection are critical. Prior experience with neuroimaging or experimental methods is desired, but not required (training session is offered for RAs!)

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Christian Hendershot, Ph.D.	**Phone**	323-442-1082
Email	christian.hendershot@usc.edu	**Website**	https://ias.usc.edu/clinical-research-facilities/
Office Location	HSC Campus (CSC Buliding)	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

The Biobehavioral Addiction Research Lab (BARLab) studies risk and protective factors for addiction and condicts clincial trials to study new treatments for substance use disorders. The BARLab moved to USC in 2024, and is housed in the USC Institute for Addiction Science and the Department of Population and Public Health Sciences, Keck School of Medicine. A major focus of the lab's recent work has been to conduct clinical trials evaluating GLP-1 receptor agonists (medications like Ozempic/Wegovy and Mounjaro/Zepbound) as a novel class of treatment for addiction. Research Assistants selected for the 2025-2026 year will be involved in one or more clinical trials investigating a GLP-1 agonist for alcohol usr disorder or tobacco use disorder/smoking cessation. Specific roles will include patient outreach and recruitment, conducting screenings to determine eligibility, and assisting with patient visits and data collection. The BARLab requires a minimum commintment of one academic year and a minimum commitment of 8 hours per week. Due to the clinical nature of our research, all shifts are in-person at the HSC campus.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

Research Assistants must be willing to interact with participants and assist with outreach/recruitment. A minimum commitment of 8 hours/week for 2 semesters is required, and RAs must be able to attend shifts in person.

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Prior experience with human subjects research is preferred, but not required. RAs with interests in data analysis and programming are also encourgaed to apply.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Lisa Aziz-Zadeh	**Phone**	
Email	lazizzad@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/cenec/
Office Location	Brain and Creativity Institute	**Office Hours**	

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

AI Tropes and the Human Mind: A Neuroscience Perspective
While the advent of AI, such as Google Gemini and ChatGPT, will undoubtedly result in numerous benefits, it also brings growing concerns. The purpose of this project address a subset of concerns from the perspective of neurobiology in the form of experimental studies and analyses. The goal is to answer the following questions: Do the concerns have any merit? What is the likely origin of the concerns? Assuming the concerns are well founded, what can be done to counter them?

Embodied Semantics and Communication
Most of our metaphors are embodied: we “handle” situations; we “kick-off” a new year; we “chew over” decisions. Using fMRI and behavioral studies we explore how language processing involves sensorimotor brain representations. We investigate both literal and metaphorical language.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Must be able to commit at least 5-10 hours per week for a minimum of 2 years
- Must be reliable, punctual, and have good communication skillls

*Interested applicants should fill out an application (and follow instructions at the end): https://forms.gle/d6rfcXeV9wQbNzEBA

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

Software programming skills, MRI, and/or REDCap experience are a plus, but not required.

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- ☐ In person
- ☑ Hybrid
- ☐ Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher	Katharina Kircanski, PhD	**Phone**	(401) 487-0580
Email	katharina.kircanski@usc.edu	**Website**	https://dornsife.usc.edu/profile/katharina-kircanski/ (lab website forthcoming)
Office Location	SGM 826 (as of Spring 2026)	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

Launching this year, the MESO (**M**ulti-method **E**motion **S**cience and **O**utreach) Lab studies mood and anxiety disorders across childhood and adolescence. We recruit youth and families from the community for research participation. Our research integrates brain imaging (fMRI), lab-based and naturalistic (EMA) methods, along with quantitative tools – to gain insight into how mood and anxiety symptoms develop and are maintained over time. We are particularly interested in the ways in which youth process both rewarding (positive) and threatening (negative) stimuli and experiences in their environments. RAs – together with the

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- This opportunity starts Spring Semester 2026
- Minimum commitment of 2 semesters
- Minimum commitment of 10 hours per week, including open availability and flexible hours to accommodate youth and family schedules
- GPA of 3.5 or above
- Major in psychology, neuroscience, or related discipline
- Strong interest in youth mental health and psychobiological research methods

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Previous research experience
- Previous experience working with children, adolescents, or families
- Independent, hardworking, with attention to detail
- Experience using statistical software such as R
- Interest in going to graduate school

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [x] In person
- [ ] Hybrid
- [ ] Virtual

Expected start date

Spring 2026

Researcher	Drew Gorenz (under the supervision of Dr. Norbert Schwarz)	**Phone**	(630) 210 - 4847
Email	gorenz@usc.edu	**Website**	https://drewgorenz.weebly.com/
Office Location	SGM 812	**Office Hours**	By appointment

Current Research Topics Under Investigation

I research how subtle, situational factors affect our thinking and behavior. My research especially investigates what makes things funny. We have investigated whether authenticity matters in humor appreciation, how funny LLMs are compared to humans, and how small contextual factors that interfere with one's processing (i.e., background noise, poor acoustics, etc) reduce the funniness of jokes by making them seem less coherent. I am currently working on two new projects: how labeling comedy as "improvised" (vs. "pre-written") affects the funniness of jokes and whether jokes about American culture and celebrities translate to other cultures (e.g., India) better than jokes about other cultures translate to Americans. RAs will engage and be mentored in many aspects of the research process. Specific RA roles/responsibilities and training opportunities include literature searches, data analysis, finding and editing comedic stimuli for studies, creating questionnaires in Qualtrics, and scientific presentation and communication.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants

- This opportunity starts Fall Semester 2025
- Minimum commitment of 5 hours per week
- GPA of 3.4 or above
- Major in psychology, neuroscience, or related discipline
- Strong interest in humor research

Desired Qualifications for Research Assistants

- Previous research experience
- Independent, hardworking, with attention to detail
- Experience using Excel and statistical software such as R
- Interest in going to graduate school

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

- [ ] In person
- [x] Hybrid
- [x] Virtual

Expected start date

Fall 2025

Researcher: Onyul Haque (Graduate Student under supervision of Daphna Oyserman)

Email: onyulhaq@usc.edu

Office Location: SGM 811

Phone: N/A

Website: N/A

Office Hours by appointment

Current Research Topic Under Investigation:

I research how people make sense of difficulty and how their interpretations of difficulty impact their motivation. I'm currently working on a project which involves people putting their hand in ice water trying to hold it in there for as long as possible. RAs will primarily aid in the data collection process. This involves guiding participants through experimental sessions. RAs will also help with video coding. We will also host weekly workshops to help RAs develop their programming and statistical skills. We also will also go over the graduate school application process and also give an overview of what graduate school is like.

Specific Qualifications for Research Assistants:

- Expect to commit 6-9 hours per week
- Major in Psychology or related discipline
- This is a volunteer position (not a paid position)

Desired Qualification for Research Assistant

- Willingness to learn many aspects of
- Interested in going to graduate school
- Comfortable interacting with participants
- About 2 years left in their undergraduate

Will students be able to participate in this lab experience in person, hybrid, or virtually

In person

Expected start date

Spring 2026