

**Undergraduate Research Assistantships and Theses
Department of Psychology – East Carolina University
Spring 2018 Assistantships**

- Interested in gaining hands-on research experience with a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at East Carolina University?
- Our faculty members are engaged in a variety of active research programs that span a number of specializations, methodologies, populations, and designs. Undergraduate students are encouraged to become a part of this research by assisting faculty with new and ongoing projects—an experience valuable for students who are interesting in learning more about one or more areas of psychology in greater depth, becoming an informed consumer of research, and developing skills and abilities valued by employers and graduate schools.
- Undergraduate research assistants typically register for supervised course credit as an elective in psychology (e.g., PSYC 4501) in the semester or session that they are involved.
- Please review the following list of faculty who are accepting research assistants for spring 2018.
- Afterwards, complete the online application by using the following web address:
https://ecu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTkjcBwR9QqrU9

The deadline for completing the application process is October 23, 2017. The link to the application will become inactive after the deadline, so please complete the process as soon as possible if you are interested.

For more information, please visit <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-cas/psyc/Student-Research.cfm>

List of Faculty Mentors

Please review the following list of faculty mentors and note your preferences.

DR. MICHAEL BAKER

Field of Specialization: Social Psychology

Research Description: Dr. Baker's research applies an evolutionary perspective on human psychology to the study of the impacts of fundamental social motives (e.g., mating, disease avoidance, self protection, affiliation) and self-presentational concerns on behavior and cognition. Of specific interest are health-related behaviors such as exercise, dining behavior, and risk-taking. Research assistants typically help with collection of data by running participants through experimental procedures and/or performing naturalistic observation on/near campus. Assistants also help with scoring of experimental tasks, data entry, research design, and collection of peer-reviewed research articles. All assistants are required to attend a weekly lab meeting on Fridays at 1 PM during which lab-related activities and relevant recent developments in the field are discussed.

Dr. Baker will consider students for research assistant positions (PSYC 4501). PSYC 4501 is a semester-length option, in which the student can gain research skills and work in a lab without a formal expectation of a final product.

Dr. Baker is also open to considering providing early mentorship experiences for freshmen and/or sophomore students.

DR. CHRISTYN DOLBIER

Field of Specialization: Health Psychology

Research Description

I am looking for ambitious students interested in my area of research to join my research team in the Stress & Health Lab during the Spring 2018 semester.

Description of lab:

In the Stress and Health Lab, we attempt to address three questions.

- 1) How does stress affect well-being? To answer this question, we study emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological pathways by which exposure to stressors leads to mental and physical health outcomes.
- 2) Why do some people experience detrimental effects from stress and others do not? To answer this question, we investigate prior stressor exposure, protective factors and coping strategies that enable resilient (homeostatic) stress responses, as well as stress-related growth as a thriving (transcendent) stress response.
- 3) How can we help people reduce detrimental and enhance beneficial stress responses? To answer this question, we develop stress management interventions for vulnerable populations, and examine their efficacy to prevent/reduce detrimental effects of stress and enhance beneficial functioning, as well as their mechanisms of action.

Description of projects:

Currently, I am recruiting undergraduate research assistants to help with the following projects:

- 1) An efficacy study of a mindfulness-based stress management program with college students.
- 2) A survey study examining trait levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychological vulnerabilities in college students.
- 3) A survey study examining stress, protective factors, and coping in relation to well-being in college students.

Description of research assistantship:

Research assistants (RAs) read research articles related to the project they are involved with, participate in weekly lab meetings, and assist with a variety of research tasks depending on the project and phase of the project (e.g., participant recruitment and retention; data collection, coding, entry and analysis; library research and literature reviews). Mentorship and training are provided by me and graduate students in our health psychology doctoral program. Especially motivated and skilled RAs may have the opportunity to do independent research, assist with conference submissions and manuscript preparation. RAs who have worked in the lab for one semester or more are eligible to be considered for a senior thesis. RAs typically register for supervised course credit in psychology in the semesters they are involved.

Preferred qualifications:

I will consider applicants at all levels (freshmen – senior) who have a solid academic record (GPA 3.0 or higher), and are detail-oriented, responsible and motivated to learn about research. I prefer that students be willing to commit at least two semesters to working in the lab, and enroll in 2-3 credits of supervised research in psychology (which corresponds to 6-9 hours of RA work per week).

Dr. Dolbier will consider students for research assistant positions (PSYC 4501), but will not mentor undergraduate senior theses. PSYC 4501 is a semester-length option, in which the student can gain research skills and work in a lab without a formal expectation of a final product.

Dr. Dolbier is also open to considering providing early mentorship experiences for freshmen and/or sophomore students.

DR. MARION EPPLER

Field of Specialization: Developmental Psychology

Research Description:

We are looking for students to assist with projects on achievement motivation (mindset) and academic success in first-year students. One of the projects involves mentoring freshmen. Research assistants for Spring 2018 will register for PSYC 4501 (Directed Research) for 2 credits (6 hours per week—1 to 2 hours for a weekly lab meeting and 4 to 5 hours per week for data collection). The only requirements are that you are a declared psychology major and a highly motivated and responsible individual interested in learning about research.

Dr. Eppler is accepting research assistants and thesis students and encourages freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors to apply

ASHLEY GRIFFITH (Ms. Griffith is a graduate student whose faculty mentor is Dr. Jessica Ford)

Field of Specialization: Clinical Health Psychology

Research Description:

The MilHEARTS lab is interested in conducting quality research that contributes to the translation of evidence into practice in health promotion and trauma treatment among those with military or medical trauma experience. We have several studies in the early phases that will be progressing through this semester and into the fall. The main study that will need assistance is a thesis project looking at stigma and mental health care barriers for female service members and veterans. Students will be asked to assist in transcribing and coding interviews, along with other relevant and agreed upon tasks throughout the semester and/or year. Students are not required to have previous experience to be able to work in the lab.

Only students who have worked in the lab for at least a full semester are eligible to complete an honor thesis project with us.

Ms. Griffith will consider students for research assistant positions (PSYC 4501), but will not mentor undergraduate senior theses. PSYC 4501 is a semester-length option, in which the student can gain research skills and work in a lab without a formal expectation of a final product.

Ms. Griffith is also open to considering providing early mentorship experiences for freshmen and/or sophomore students.