Undergraduate Research Assistantships and Theses
Department of Psychology – East Carolina University
Summer/Fall 2022 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 interested 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 summer/fall 2022.

- Afterwards, complete the online application by using the following web address: https://ecu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8k3RSRzpdjgZAl8

- The deadline for completing the application process is Monday, March 21st.

- The link to the application will become inactive after the November 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/StudentResearch.cfm
List of Faculty Mentors
Please review the following list of faculty mentors and note your preferences.

Dr. Mark Bowler

Field of Specialization: Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Research Description: I am currently focusing on (1) employee burnout - emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and cynicism; (2) employee willingness to take leave; (3) employee net promotor score; and (4) counterproductive organizational behavior (i.e., organizations mistreating their employees).

Available to Freshmen/Sophomores?: No

Dr. Christy Walcott

Field of Specialization: School Psychology

Research Description: The primary efforts of the Walcott research lab are focused on: 1) How attention problems impact educational functioning, particularly literacy development, and 2) How race and poverty influence achievement gaps and affect academic and social-behavioral outcomes. Undergraduates who have worked in the lab for one semester or more are eligible to be considered for senior thesis.

Available to Freshmen/Sophomores?: Yes

Dr. Marion Eppler

Field of Specialization: Developmental Psychology

Research Description: We are looking for students to assist with a research project examining Dweck’s Mindset theory with college students. Students will be trained to assist with running the study (data collection) and coding data. Research assistants for the fall of 2022 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 reading, data collection, and other research duties). The only requirements are that you are a declared Psychology major and a highly motivated and responsible individual interested in learning about research. Potential candidates will be interviewed.

Available to Freshmen/Sophomores?: Yes
Christyn Dolbier, PhD

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 Fall 2022 semester. Research conducted in the lab focuses on areas pertinent to the fields of health psychology, clinical health psychology, and clinical psychology.

Description of projects:

Currently, I am recruiting undergraduate research assistants to help with various studies. In your application, please indicate which of these studies you would be most interested in helping with.

- An online survey study of pandemic stress, coping strategies, and mental health (depression and anxiety) in college students.
- A mindfulness-based intervention study with college students.
- An online survey study examining interoception in relation to chronic stress and mental health. Interoception is the perception of sensations from inside the body and includes perceptions of physical sensations related to internal organ function such as heart beat, respiration, satiety, as well as autonomic nervous system activity related to emotions.

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., study document preparation; 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 clinical health psychology doctoral program. Especially motivated and skilled RAs may have the opportunity to do independent research and 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).

Available to Freshmen/Sophomores?: Yes
Dr. Michael Baker

Field of Specialization: Social Psychology with an Evolutionary focus

Research Description: Dr. Baker's research applies an evolutionary perspective to social and health psychology. His work examines the effects of fundamental social motives such as mate seeking, mate retention, self-preservation, affiliation, disease avoidance, and status motives on health-related behavioral outcomes. Behaviors of interest include exercise, food selection, smoking cessation, and risk-taking.

Research assistants in Dr. Baker's laboratory typically contribute to this research by collecting relevant peer-reviewed articles and running participants through experimental protocols that are designed to measure or manipulate the aforementioned motives in order to increase the frequency with which healthy behaviors are performed.

Please note that applications are typically very competitive as student interest is often high and space in the lab is limited.

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.

Available to Freshmen/Sophomores?: Yes