

Psychology Research Day
Missouri Western State University
May 2, 2025

Poster Presentations from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Murphy Hall 2nd Floor Atrium

Why Can't We All Just Get Along? The Interaction of Identity and Interpersonal Connectedness on Cooperation (Empirical/PSY 450)

Molly Killion

This study examined how connection and shared identity affect cooperation through a public goods game. Connection was predicted to override shared identity effects, while shared identity was predicted to compensate for low connection. In fact, cooperation rates were high across all conditions, raising methodological questions about how to study cooperation.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kelly Henry

Self-Compassion in Athletes (Empirical/PSY 450)

Taj Gregory

Participants were randomly selected to participate in a survey. The survey consisted of three major categories: self-care, self-compassion, and whether or not the participant is an athlete. The survey aims to find the levels of self-compassion in athletes.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kayla Waters

Leisure and Well-Being: The Effects of Meditation and Social Media on Metacognition and Mood (Empirical/PSY 303)

Iris Gallegos-Gusman, Kealey Hulett, Paige Nold, Nathan Sheehan, & Sara Yarbrough

This study examines how what we do during our spare time affects our mood and how we think about our thought process. We measured participants' emotional state, anxiety, and metacognition before and after a 15-minute intervention where participants either scrolled through their social media or experienced a guided mindfulness meditation.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Christine Ziemer

Staring into the Abyss: Examining the Association between Device Use and Well-being (Empirical/PSY 303)

A. Lynn, Cassani, Tyson Gerdes, Nicoletta Froelich, Tate Tolen, Emma Bohannon, & Rylan Millsap

Smartphones and other devices have become a ubiquitous and sometimes pernicious part of life. This study examined the correlation between device use and several well-being indicators. Findings suggest higher device use may relate to lower life-satisfaction and poorer sleep quality, even when accounting for factors like neuroticism and physical inactivity.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Zach Williamson

Factors that Affect Classroom Attention: Are Notes Effective in Curbing Distraction? (Empirical/PSY 303)

Alexandra G. Lake, Atlas E. Phalen, Caleb S. Poage, & Chasity D. Rice

This study examined if note-taking decreases distraction in learning. We utilized a 2 (notes/no notes) x 2 (distraction/no distraction) ANOVA design to test the effect of note-taking on quiz scores. Taking notes significantly increased quiz scores regardless of distraction condition. Possible explanations for why are discussed.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kelly Henry

Ayahuasca: An Amazonian Brew and the Healing of Trauma (Literature Review/PSY 270)

Brian Wohlman

This literature review integrates neuroimaging data, qualitative data, and transpersonal psychology theory surrounding Ayahuasca to analyze its therapeutic impact. Results indicate vivid re-experiencing of flashback memories during ayahuasca ceremonies and reduced neuroticism following ceremonies offering insights into potential mental health treatments while bridging ancestral knowledge with modern psychedelic science.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Christine Ziemer

Effects of Antidepressants on Anxiety Symptoms and Working Memory (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Keelan Aita & Ava Garaway

These studies explored the breadth of SSRI effects. Within Study 1, we tested anxiety levels of participants with a previous anxiety diagnosis already on an antianxiety medication. Study 2 tested patients' cognitive levels. Findings showed SSRIs have effects beyond antidepressant use. Participants on the SSRIs improved anxiety and cognitive levels.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

How Do Stress and Anxiety Levels Impact the Accuracy and Reliability of Eyewitness Testimony? (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Ethan Hinds, Keyanna McAfee, & Erica Terrell

Two studies explored the relationship between anxiety levels and reliability of eyewitness testimony, predicting high stress to associate with reduced accuracy. Study 1 evaluated this in a staged robbery scenario, and Study 2 replicated using a video of a robbery in a controlled setting. Implications for legal contexts are discussed.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

Effects of Sleep on ADHD Symptoms (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Lauren Jeffreys, Kylie Stagner, & Kylan Stout

We studied effects of sleep duration on ADHD symptoms in children. In study 1, a correlation between sleep and ADHD was observed. In study 2, we manipulated sleep (melatonin, warm bath, and soothing music) and found melatonin and warm bath were more effective at improving sleep duration and ADHD symptoms.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

Parenting Styles and Adolescent Self-Esteem: An Intervention Study on Confidence Calibration (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Alyssa Fanning, Morgan Kimler, & Serah Ryals

We examined if self-esteem and confidence are causally affected by parenting styles. In Study 1, we measured self-esteem and confidence calibration in children. In Study 2, we implemented a training program to encourage authoritative parenting style, and measured those same variables. Results suggest parenting styles affect self-esteem and over/under confidence.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

Impact of Environmental Color on Retention of General and Emotional Content (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Madison Lavery, Delaney Massey, & Autumn O'Brien

We tested the impact of color on mood and learning in classrooms. In Study 1, participants listened to a lecture in different colored rooms. In Study 2 we tested if color-induced mood impacted retention of varied emotional content. Results suggest color and mood influenced learning of emotional content.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

Action Video Games and Divided Attention in Adolescents (Mock Study/PSY 301)

Lexy Grame, T. Taylor, & Hannah Ramlatchman

We examined if video game playing that requires shifting attention amongst multiple stimuli benefits divided attention in adolescents. In Study 1 (correlational), there was a strong association between action-game users and performance on divided attention tasks. Study 2 (experimental) found gamer group participants showed significant improvements in their divided attention.

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Corey White

