

Current Research Opportunities for PSY5030

Dr. Loren Naidoo – I/O Psychology

The purpose of the social and cognitive processes in I/O psychology lab is to investigate work behavior using theory and methods from social psychology, human motivation, and cognitive psychology. Areas of interest include leadership, leader-follower relationships, employee motivation and performance, organizational justice, self-regulation, and emotions.

Current projects include the examination of how leader verbal and nonverbal communications elicit motivational orientations in followers which influence their subsequent work performance, and an investigation of rhetoric in political leadership. Doctoral students and undergraduate research assistants play vital roles in helping to design and carry out the psychological research conducted in the lab. Further information is available at:

www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/LorenNaidoo.htm

www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/research/SocialandCognitiveProcessesinIOPsychologyLab2.htm

Students interested in joining my lab are encouraged to contact me at loren_naidoo@baruch.cuny.edu

Dr. Jaihyun Park – Social Psychology

Dr. Jaihyun Park has been interested in several research areas in social and personality psychology. Among others, he has conducted a program of research on (a) stereotyping and prejudice, (b) culture and personality, and (c) jury decision-making. More specifically, Dr. Park has been interested in investigating the mental process and representations that affect social judgment and behavior, with a special focus on the implicit and unconscious ways in which social category information influences our judgment and behavior. He has also been interested in exploring the impact of culture on human personality and behavior. Lastly, he has been conducting research on psychological variables that might affect jury decision making in civil cases.

For more information, please contact Dr. Jaihyun Park at 646-312-3806 or email at jaihyun_park@baruch.cuny.edu. You can also find out some more information at the college website: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/JPark.htm>

Dr. Catalina Lawsin – Health & Clinical Psychology

Trained as a clinical health psychologist my research is in cancer prevention and control. Specifically I am interested in exploring health disparities in cancer screening and quality of life among cancer survivors. I am currently working on three projects:

In collaboration with my colleagues at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, I am working on a longitudinal randomized clinical trial exploring the impact of culturally targeted and individually tailored educational material on colorectal cancer (CRC) screening among African Americans (AAs). I am particularly interested in the psychosocial factors (e.g. tolerance for ambiguity, medical mistrust, cancer fatalism) influencing AAs decision to participate in CRC screening. 2). The second project is a multi-site randomized clinical trial

examining the benefit of a 10-session cognitive behavioral intervention delivered via the telephone on psychological distress, specifically post traumatic stress disorder, among survivors of hematopoietic stem cell transplant. My specific interests in this project are in examining how patients cope with return to work issues, relationship issues, and lingering physical symptoms post-transplant. 3) In collaboration with Cornell Weill Medical Center I am beginning a new study to examine the feasibility and benefit of a couple-focused coping skills intervention delivered pre-transplant. Administered via the telephone I will be working with patients and their partner to manage the uncertainty related to hematopoietic stem cell transplant by teaching effective coping and communication skills. The proposed study aims to mitigate emotional distress in patients and their partners by providing a couple-focused telephone-delivered coping skills training intervention pre-transplant intended to reduce the burden of HSCT and enhance treatment outcomes.

For more information, please contact Dr. Lawsin at 646.312.3805 or email at Catalina_Lawsin@baruch.cuny.edu.

Dr. Jennifer Mangels – Cognitive and Experimental Psychology/Neuroscience

Research in my laboratory takes a multidisciplinary approach to a set of basic questions: a) how do individuals optimally learn new information, b) how do they learn to correct errors that may be embedded in their knowledge, c) why do some people learn better than others?

This work is multidisciplinary because it brings together basic cognitive process models, non-invasive neuroscience methods, and social-cognitive theories. By measuring neural activity (primarily using EEG, but also fMRI) alongside cognitive performance this work investigates the timing and distribution of the neurocognitive processes underlying successful encoding and error correction. By considering individual differences in achievement motivation alongside situational factors that may emphasize certain types of achievement goals over others, it endeavors to understand how personality and social context contribute to variability in the success of learning, and in particular, learning that allows rebound from failure (error). For example, these studies consider how achievement goals influence a student's affective response to a negative test outcome and how this consequently motivates the individual to approach (challenge) or avoid (threat) further learning attempts. Much of this work contributes to a field newly christened as “neuroeducation.”

In addition, I have recently begun to apply some of the fundamental work coming out of basic research in learning, memory, attention and affect (mine and others) toward understanding why people buy the products they do. Can we use knowledge of the visual system to understand why one product will stand out on the shelf more than another? Can we use our understanding of how the brain gives rise to attention, motivation and learning to understand why some products and ads are more memorable than others? This line of applied research essentially uses traditional tools of cognitive neuroscience in the service of market research, a concept recently referred to as “neuromarketing.”

The type of tasks students would be involved in include subject recruitment, testing with paper/pencil questionnaires, computer programs and psychophysiological methods of assessing CNS and PNS activity, data processing and analysis, and assistance with manuscript preparation. Students will attend one lab meeting and one project meeting per week, as well as be committed to 4-6 hours of lab work (depending on number of credits). Personal attention to intellectual and personal growth will be given.

Requirements: One course in biology or biological psychology (Mind, Brain and Behavior or Psychophysiology), good interpersonal skills, organized working style with good attention to detail, some familiarity/aptitude with computers and a willingness to explore and learn new things. Preference is given to students who can commit to more than one semester, with greater responsibilities given to students who demonstrate greater involvement in the lab.

For more information, please contact Dr. Mangles by email: Jennifer.Mangels@baruch.cuny.edu. Also, please visit my lab website: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/faculty/jmangels/>

Dr. Kristin Sommer – Social Psychology

My primary research interests lie with the myriad ways in which people respond to social rejection. Specifically, my graduate students and I are investigating the circumstances under which social rejection and social ostracism lead to relatively prosocial behaviors, such as helping and conformity, versus antisocial behaviors, such as withdrawal and aggression. We are particularly interested in understanding the emotional and cognitive processes -- such as empathy and social expectancies -- that mediate the link between rejection and interpersonal behaviors. A related program of research examines the effects of rejection and narcissism on cardiovascular functioning (heart rate and blood pressure changes). All of the rejection work currently being conducted in our lab is strongly grounded in theories of attachment and personality and therefore has a strong clinical component.

Another line of work in which I am involved examines how the desire for specific conclusions drives the way in which individuals and groups attend to and discuss decision-relevant information. For example, my graduate students and I are completing a study that examines how preferences for specific employees in the context of layoff decisions affect the performance appraisal information that is introduced during group discussions. The general finding of this research is that people attend to, and weigh most heavily, information that supports desired conclusions. This work has strong implications for individual and team-based decision-making processes in organizations.

A final area of research in which I am interested pertains to the functions of social influence. Specifically, my colleagues and I are about to initiate a series of experiments investigating the needs or goals that are met by having influence on others, both within the context of close, interpersonal relationships and work settings.

The type of tasks in which student researchers working in my lab would be involved include: content analysis of qualitative written data; transcription and behavioral analysis of videotaped social interaction data; primary data collection as lab experimenter; data entry and analysis.

For more information, please contact Dr. Sommer by email: Kristin_Sommer@baruch.cuny.edu. Further information can be found at: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/KSommer.htm> or <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/research/SocialPsychLab.htm>

Dr. Yochi Cohen-Charash – I/O Psychology and Emotions

My research interests focus mainly on issues of emotions in organizations. I look at emotions as motivating the behavior of individuals, groups, and organizations. I mainly study discrete emotions as influencing life and behavior in organizations. For example, I study emotions such as envy, jealousy, fear, and guilt, as well as happiness for another's success (*firgun*). I also study emotions as they affect stock-market investment behavior. Additional lines of research in which I am interested include issues of fairness in organizations, the influence of dispositions on job attitudes, accountability, power, and politics.

In the *emotions in organizations* lab, we currently work on studies examining antecedents and outcomes of envy; several projects examining the relationship between affect and decision-making in the contexts of risk-taking and stock-market decisions. We also conduct research examining the relationship between fairness and emotions. Our research projects utilize various research methods, including survey research, laboratory experiments, and qualitative research.

Members in the lab are Ph.D. students, MS students, and undergraduate students. We hold regular lab meetings in which we discuss our research projects. These meetings provide a great learning opportunity for anyone interested in research. Working at the lab allows undergraduate students to have close interactions with graduate students, who often mentor the undergraduates. Undergraduate students working in the lab have been traditionally involved in data collection, helping running studies, data coding, and lab meetings. Depending on the tendencies of the student, other roles also exist.

For more information, please contact Dr. Cohen-Charash by email: Yochi_cohen-charash@baruch.cuny.edu. Further information can be found at: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/Cohen-Charash.htm> and <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/research/EmotionLab.htm>

Dr. David O'Brien – Cognitive Psychology and Experimental Psychology

Dr. O'Brien's research program investigates declarative knowledge, i.e., knowledge that can be expressed with linguistic propositions, beginning with the epistemological assumption that in order to store declarative knowledge in memory, there must be a representational format with which to store it. This format must be capable of representing properties and the things that have those properties and to distinguish between the two, and to keep track of which things have which properties and vice versa. In other words, the mind must have some basic logical predicate/argument structure. Further, the mind should have some ways of representing alternatives among properties or the entities that have those properties, as well as conjunctions, suppositions, and negations—the sorts of things that are done, for example, with English-language words such as or, and, if, and not. These assumptions are the basis for the “mental-logic” theory O'Brien co-developed with the late Martin Braine of New York University.

The basic research approach could be called “experimental epistemology,” because it brings the methods of experimental psychology to bear on these epistemological issues. The idea is to discover what is psychologically basic in such knowledge, and this goal requires investigating not only the thinking of adults, but also addressing what sorts of representational formats and inferences are available early in development and across languages and cultures. O'Brien thus engages in empirical research across a varied set of populations, including children, and deaf and illiterate populations in Portuguese-speaking Brazil. Recently he has been engaged in setting-up research projects with recently discovered indigenous groups in the northwestern Amazon basin. In addition, he remains engaged in more traditional research in his laboratory located in the Psychology Department at Baruch College. He welcomes inquiries from students who are interested or curious about gaining research experience working in his laboratory.

Students working in Dr. O'Brien's laboratory at Baruch College are responsible for becoming engaged intellectually in the project on which they work. At the least, they are expected to have a basic understanding of the goals of the project. They are expected to be involved in data collection and data analyses, both of which will be closely supervised. In this way, the research skills that are learned abstractly in classes such as statistics and experimental psychology will be advanced through hands-on use and extensive feedback.

For more information, please contact Dr. O'Brien by email: david_obrien@baruch.cuny.edu. Further information can be found at: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/DOBrien.htm>

Dr. Mindy Engle-Friedman – Clinical and Sleep Psychology

The research in the Baruch College Sleep Lab focuses on the effects of sleep loss and fatigue on next-day performance, effort and risk taking. One new project examines how insomniacs perform tasks that require effort. It also explores disparity between subjective complaints of performance deficits and absence of objective performance deficits. A second project examines the impact of physical and mental fatigue on the perception of tasks that students are asked to complete. A third project considers how fatigue affects helping behaviors.

A new area of research in our lab considers climate change and responses to information about it. Student perceptions of its magnitude and its present and potential impact on their lives are being evaluated. The contributions of self-efficacy, planning, denial, helplessness and social responsibility on behavior related to the environment are being explored.

I am very proud of the members of our lab. Each member is an active and involved collaborator who helps the other members consider ideas, develop projects and conduct the actual studies. Some members chose to become co-principal investigators on new projects that they develop. Many of our undergraduates have been co-authors on papers and presenters of our research at national conferences. Currently our lab includes one faculty member, one doctoral student and eight undergraduates. We welcome others to join our fabulous group.

For more information, please contact Dr. Engle-Friedman by email: mindy_engle-friedman@baruch.cuny.edu. Further information can be found at: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/MindyEngle-Friedman.htm> or <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/research/Sleep.htm>

Dr. Charles Scherbaum – I/O Psychology and Psychometrics

The I/O psychology and measurement lab focuses on issues of diversity in the context of employee selection, measuring individual differences, and assessing employee attitudes. We study sources of bias on cognitive tests, non-cognitive predictors of job performance, attitudes toward stigmatized employee, attitude measurement, linking employee attitudes to organizational outcomes, and employee selection. The research conducted in this lab draws heavily on recent advances in analytical and methodological techniques, and computer technology.

One of the main areas of research conducted in the lab examines possible explanations for racial differences on intelligence and cognitive ability tests. This research involves developing alternative formats and types of intelligence tests as well as the role previous experience and test taking skills in performance on these types of tests.

Other projects include: (1) utilizing item response theory to detect response distortion (i.e., faking) on measures of personality and biodata in employment contexts; (2) dynamic models of goal-striving and goal-revision processes; (3) modeling ability-performance relationships over time; (4) assessing attitudes toward employees with disabilities and female managers; (5) synthetic validity; (6) impact of stereotype threat on test-taking behaviors.

For more information, please contact Dr. Scherbaum at 646-312-3807 or by email at Charles_Scherbaum@baruch.cuny.edu. Further information can be found at: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/research/DyanamicInteractionLab.htm> or <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/psychology/people/CharlesScherbaum.htm>

Dr. Angela Marinilli Pinto: Clinical & Health Psychology

Dr. Angela Marinilli Pinto's research focuses on eating disorders and obesity. She is currently conducting a randomized controlled treatment trial for overweight and obese adults. This research study compares 3 types of behavioral weight loss treatments that focus on changing diet and exercise behaviors: the Weight Watchers commercial program, a standard behavioral weight loss program conducted at Baruch, and a novel approach that combines standard behavioral treatment with the Weight Watchers program. The goals of this project are to determine which treatment achieves the greatest weight losses, to examine behavioral changes in dietary and exercise patterns, and to evaluate the relative cost-effectiveness of each treatment approach.

Doctoral and undergraduate research assistants will be involved in many important aspects of this research study, including participant recruitment; conducting telephone screenings, in-person screenings, and in-person assessment visits with participants; and managing participant data.

For more information about Dr. Pinto's research, contact her at Angela_Pinto@baruch.cuny.edu

Dr. Catherine Good: Social Psychology

My research focuses on the social forces that shape academic achievement, intellectual performance, motivation, and self-image. In particular, I study stereotype threat, that is, how negative stereotypes contribute to females' underachievement and under-representation in math and science fields. In addition, I apply lessons learned from the achievement motivation literature to better understand methods of helping females overcome vulnerability to stereotype threat. My recent work highlights the importance of females' sense of belonging to the math community for their academic self-concepts, intention to pursue math in the future, and their math achievement. I also study these issues as they relate to minority student achievement.

My work entails controlled laboratory studies, applied studies with students in public schools, and the application of these ideas to the development of educational materials in order to help students overcome stereotype threat.

For further information, please contact Dr. Good at Catherine_Good@baruch.cuny.edu.