

## Get Research Experience on College Student Mental Health: Join the IMPACT Lab!

### Information

Thank you for your interest in the IMPACT Lab, led by Dr. Colleen Conley. As a research assistant in this lab, you will gain valuable research experience while exploring topics related to college student mental health, trajectories of risk and resilience across development (e.g., adolescence, emerging adulthood), gender-linked patterns of psychosocial well- versus ill-being, and interventions that promote well-being and prevent distress.

### Research Assistant Activities

Research assistants provide very needed and valued assistance to the research process. As a research assistant, you could have a part in some of the following research activities:

- searching for, reading, and summarizing information (e.g., research articles, clinical materials such as manuals or videos) on project-related topics
- coding research articles, to be used in study design, course design, or systematic/meta-analytic reviews (e.g., of mental health promotion programs for college students)
- searching for, gathering information about, and evaluating various assessments (e.g., survey questionnaires)
- gathering, coding, entering, and cleaning data
- analyzing data, writing up findings, presenting research at URES symposium
- transcribing and coding qualitative data (e.g., open-ended responses from study participants)
- creating, editing, and formatting documents (e.g., for study recruitment, intervention development, academic presentations and courses)
- contacting local businesses for donations as compensation for study participants; distributing compensation to participants
- many other project possibilities – we welcome your input and ideas!

Much of the research we do, including several of the tasks listed above, connect to the advanced undergraduate and graduate courses that Dr. Conley teaches in applied and clinical psychology, and as such students' tasks in the lab can sometimes be applied both to research projects and to course development and execution. Research and teaching go hand-in-hand in academic psychology, and in the IMPACT Lab. We are eager to provide our research assistants - especially those who are considering entering a graduate program, going into academia, and/or having education or teaching be a part of their careers, opportunities to engage in a variety of tasks to develop skills that apply to various careers in psychology and related disciplines.

### Research Assistant Requirements

**Research assistants are required to work for a *minimum* of two semesters in the lab** (e.g., 2 consecutive semesters or 1 semester plus summer). **RAs work at least 6-9 hours a week**, sometimes more in the summer (please see following section, *Receiving Course Credit*, for more details). In addition to lab responsibilities, there are many opportunities to become involved in professional development activities. For example, we encourage everyone to pursue independent research projects and present at research symposiums or local conferences, such as the Chicago Area Undergraduate Research Symposium (late March – early April every year) or the Midwestern Psychological Association (late April – early May every year). In addition, often there are opportunities for research assistants to apply research and evidence-based clinical practices to the advanced undergraduate and graduate courses that Dr. Conley teaches. For example, literature searching and summarizing, and watching psychotherapy videos, are both examples of tasks that offer opportunities for students to make connections between research and practice, both of which are synergistic and inform one another. The IMPACT Lab promotes diverse and applied research opportunities, all of which can lead to knowledge and skills that serve students well in their future. All RAs also are required to attend a weekly lab meeting, with the time changing every semester.

### Receiving Course Credit

**The Psychology Department wants all undergraduates working in research labs during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) to enroll in academic credit (usually this is Psych 399).** During fall and spring semesters, a minimum of 6 hours/week is required for 1 credit; a minimum of 7 hours/week is required for 2 credits; a minimum of 9 hours/week is required for 3 credits. For enrolling in a summer term, hours/week

should be arranged with Dr. Conley in advance, based on the length of the term (e.g., a 6-week summer term would include a minimum of 14 hours/week for 1 credit, and 21 hours/week for 3 credits). If scheduling problems prohibit registering for credits, please talk to Dr. Conley about volunteering without credit. For volunteers, we expect the same level of time commitment and work ethic. Non-Loyola students (or post-baccalaureates) could also participate as volunteers in the lab, if they are eligible. A similar time commitment is also expected of these volunteers. If students choose to pursue independent research (e.g., a poster abstract/presentation, a Provost Fellowship application/project, an Honors project), they must still keep up with their regular lab duties – that is, working on independent research (in the application or production phases) does not replace your other lab responsibilities/hours.

### **PSYC 399 Grading Breakdown**

- **50% Participation in lab hours/tasks** (present, attentive, productive during agreed-upon lab hours; completes assigned hours each week including make-up hours as needed, with advanced approval)
- **30% Quality of work produced** (accuracy, thoroughness, efficiency, timeliness)
- **20% Communication** with supervisors and team members (keeps hours on the lab schedule; notifies supervisors of changes to schedule; reaches out proactively if needs tasks to complete)

### **Benefits of Working in the IMPACT Lab**

Working in a research lab can provide you with many benefits, such as:

- You will gain experience working in an academic research laboratory, which is usually necessary for admission to graduate school in psychology and related fields.
- You might be able to pursue independent research projects, including an Honors Thesis.
- You might be able to contribute to other broader aspects of academic psychology, such as applying academic research to teaching and “service” endeavors (e.g., reviewing journal articles or engaging in community work).
- You will get a sense of what it is like to be a graduate student in a research discipline, to help you decide if it is a path you want to pursue.
- You will be part of a team of scholars who share an inquisitive drive for understanding and helping people through research.

### **How do I join the IMPACT lab?**

Typically, the lab is looking for new research assistants at the beginning of each semester (including the summer). If you are interested in joining the IMPACT lab, please fill out our application form. After receiving your application, we will contact you to set up an interview, which will most likely take place at the end of the semester preceding hiring. **Contact Sarah Broner and Maddie Suhs at [sbroner@luc.edu](mailto:sbroner@luc.edu) and [msuhs@luc.edu](mailto:msuhs@luc.edu) for more information.**

## **IMPACT LAB RA APPLICATION**

**Applications submitted before the end of the prior semester are given first consideration.** If you are interested in applying for a different period of time or would like to inquire about future research opportunities, please email graduate student Sarah Broner at [sbroner@luc.edu](mailto:sbroner@luc.edu). You can submit this completed application electronically.

Name:

Email:

Year in school:

Anticipated graduation date:

GPA overall:

GPA in psych/major\*:

\* if you have a different major, please note it here:

### RESEARCH BACKGROUND

**Note relevant coursework have you completed** (or note if currently enrolled). Check off those that apply (right click on the checkbox and select the check mark) and **list your grade in completed courses.** (If not a Loyola student, check the equivalent course from your school.) **Please also provide a copy of your unofficial transcript from LOCUS:**

Complete?	Grade	Course
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 101. General Psychology.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 238. Gender and Sex Differences and Similarities. (WOST 238)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 273. Developmental Psychology. (CPSY 273)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 300. Practicum in Psychology.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 304. Statistics.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 306. Research Methods in Psychology.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 31__ . Laboratory in _____ (please fill in)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 331. Abnormal Psychology. (CPSY 333)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 338. Psychology of Personality. (CPSY 338)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 340. Psychology of Women. (WOST 340)
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 346. Psychopathology of Childhood.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 348. Psychology of Adolescence.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 368. Counseling I.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 369H. Honors Reading.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 374: Community Psychology
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 375: Psychology of Addiction
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 381. Advanced Statistical Analysis with Computers for the Social Sciences.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 390. Internship in Human Services.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 392. Internship in Applied Psychology.
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 397. Independent Research. <i>Describe:</i> _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 386. Psychology Seminar: Selected Topics. _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 399. Special Studies in Psychology. <i>Describe:</i> _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		PSYC 370H. Honors Research.
<input type="checkbox"/>		Other psych courses:
<input type="checkbox"/>		

What **relevant research** have you done in other labs or contexts (including independent research projects done in class, working in research labs)? **Note mentors' names, and list their contact info under references, below.**

If you have any informal or personal **experiences that make you interested in any of the topics we're researching**, please feel free to describe.

Briefly describe your **interests and goals** in doing research, particularly in this lab:  
(Please write about 3-6 sentences.)

**References:** Please list a few references who can speak to your **ability to conduct research**, and/or to your **relevant skills** (initiative, motivation, organization, ability to work independently, etc.)

Name, Position	Nature of your relationship	Dates and Nature of the work you did	Phone / Email

Please use this space for **anything else** you would like to note about your experiences, interests, etc. If you have a CV or resume, feel free to attach it to this application.

Many factors can influence one's GPA, including competing commitments (e.g., working part-time while in school), family obligations, and health challenges. Academic achievement is very important, but context is, too. If you believe your GPA does not reflect your potential as a future scientist, please (1) ask one of your recommenders to share more about your circumstances to help me holistically assess your achievements, and/or (2) provide this information in the text box above.

### RESEARCH SKILLS

**How much experience have you had with the following research activities and skills?** We understand that many factors may have influenced your ability to obtain these types of experiences and skills. Thus we will not judge an application solely on the basis of past research-related experiences and skills, but rather will look at all information you provide holistically. We believe the skills listed below are important to obtain for a well-rounded experience in the lab and for preparation for post-graduate education and/or employment, thus we will strive to train RAs on any skills they are interested in building throughout their time in the lab.

	None			Some		Expert	
Background Research	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Using PsychInfo / bibliographic databases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conducting literature reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Data Collection / Admin</b>							
Scheduling participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administering surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating surveys in Qualtrics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating flyers / infographics (e.g., in Canva)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conducting experimental interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing instructional material (e.g., worksheets, course material, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Running research/study sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Data Entry, Cleaning Coding, &amp; Analyses</b>							
Developing coding schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coding data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transcribing interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entering data in Excel or SPSS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding Statistical Analyses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analyzing & interpreting data in SPSS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making / managing databases (e.g., Access)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Writing, Presenting, etc.</b>							
Using a reference manager (e.g., RefWorks, Endnote, Zotero, Mendeley, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Checking bibliographic references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Editing or proofing manuscripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making formatted tables in Word	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making presentations in Powerpoint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing grant proposals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please **briefly describe the types of experience** you have had with any the research skills you indicated having (e.g., how you used Excel or SPSS, what you have used PsychInfo for, how comfortable you are with these skills, what statistical tests you can do, etc.):

If you have **other relevant research skills**, please describe them here:

Which skills could you **teach to other RAs**?

Which skills are you **especially eager to learn**?

Which research activities do you **particularly like**?

Which research activities do you **particularly dislike**?  
(If you have experience in an activity listed above but do NOT enjoy it, please tell us!)

Please use this space for **any other thoughts or comments**:

### COURSE CREDIT

Will you enroll in Psyc 399 (strongly preferred)?  Yes, 1 credit  Yes, 3 credits  
 No (please explain if you have registration or financial limitations restricting you from enrolling):

### HONORS PROJECTS

Deciding to complete an honors project is a serious commitment because honors projects are very difficult and time-intensive. Because of this substantial commitment, we are very selective when accepting a student as an Honors student. As a less time-intensive alternative to an honors project, **RAs in our lab have the opportunity to complete smaller independent research projects** for undergraduate research symposia such as CAURS, Loyola-sponsored poster sessions, and other venues that students find for themselves. Note: If you are planning on applying to complete an honors project, you must participate in the lab for a minimum of 1 semester before you can be considered for an honors project.

Please indicate whether you are interested in doing an Honors Project in psychology.  Yes  No

If "Yes," please indicate whether you think that you would like **to pursue this project in our lab** and **when** you would be hoping to work on this project?  Yes  No

When?

If you already know, what types of research areas are you interested in exploring with your Honors Project?

## RESEARCH AVAILABILITY

**Which academic semesters would you like to work in the IMPACT lab?** (check ALL that apply)

We prefer RAs who can make at least a two-semester commitment, though longer is preferred.

Summer 2023    Fall 2023    Spring 2024    Summer 2024    Fall 2024    Spring 2025

**Does your schedule allow you to enroll in Psyc 399 for 1, 2, or 3 credits?**

1 credit (typical; 6 hrs)    2 credits (7 hrs)    3 credits (9 hrs)    I cannot take 399 credit (please explain below)

Notes:

*Note:* We require a 6-hour weekly commitment (1 credit), but students taking 2 credits have a 7-hour commitment while those taking 3 credits have a 9-hour weekly commitment.

Please **fill in times you have class or other commitments** during the semester you are applying to work in the lab.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9:15 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9:30 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9:45 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10:00 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10:15 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10:30 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10:45 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11:00 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11:15 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11:30 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11:45 AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12:15 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2:15 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3:15 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4:15 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5:15 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5:30 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5:45 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add any other relevant **notes about your availability for the semester**

## **IMPACT Lab Description and Requirements**

*Please note: This information is presented as a syllabus for a course (Psych 397 or 399). If you are joining the lab as a volunteer, we hold the same expectations for your work in our lab.*

### **Course Description:**

The independent study in psychology is constructed to allow undergraduates to gain experience in research settings and to develop solid scientific skills that are important for conducting research in all fields. This course is designed to prepare the student for graduate study in the behavioral sciences, although many psychology majors who are considering advanced study in other areas (such as medicine, special education, or law) also find the course to be very applicable to their interests, plans for advanced study, and career goals. Along with experience in one or more stages of a research project (e.g., literature searching, data collection, data cleaning and/or coding), and reading primary research literatures, students occasionally earn credentials (e.g., conference authorship or published acknowledgements) that are valuable when applying to graduate programs in psychology. Enrollment in this course is limited, and there is a screening process prior to enrollment. Student research experiences will vary depending on the research projects that are in progress and the unique responsibilities for different projects.

### **Course Requirements:**

Participation in this lab requires a **2-semester commitment** (minimum), but preference is given to those who can commit more than a full year to the lab. RAs work a minimum of **6-9 hours** per week during the academic year. All students must attend weekly lab meetings (approximately 1 hr/week) throughout the academic semesters, and additional project-specific meetings with Dr. Conley and/or her graduate students, scheduled as needed (the latter of which can count toward weekly hours). RAs sometimes work more during the summer (depending on your course credit amount, or your volunteer arrangement); for example, students awarded a Provost Fellowship are expected to commit up to 10 hours per week during the academic year and between 10-20 hours of work over 10 weeks during the summer. Students accepted into the Research Mentoring Program should coordinate their summer hours with their graduate student mentor.

### **IRB:**

Every research assistant is required to pass the Institutional Review Board training for human subjects, before or at the very start of joining the lab. Please go to: <https://www.luc.edu/ors/citicourse/>. Follow the step-by-step instructions to log in and complete the modules (reference these instructions). Email the confirmation page to the graduate student coordinating your onboarding process.

### **What You Should Expect From Us:**

From this independent study, you will gain experience working in an academic research laboratory. Everyday work in the laboratory will give you a good idea about the details of clinical psychology research with emerging adults and college students, and what kinds of work goes into doing research in a university setting. Working with graduate students will give you a good idea about what graduate school will be like, and regular contact with Dr. Conley should also give you a good picture of what life is like as a professor.



If you are considering graduate school for an advanced degree (e.g., a Master's or Doctorate), research experience is usually necessary for admission, although their materials (websites, brochures) won't always tell you that directly. If you perform well in this class, it should be sufficient to meet this informal requirement. In applying for admission, you will also need letters of recommendation from professionals who know you and who have worked with you. If you do a good job as a research assistant, Dr. Conley should be able to provide a letter in support of your application(s) to graduate school. If you are still undecided about what you might do when you finish your undergraduate degree, we hope that this course will also be helpful. Graduate students are a wonderful resource for obtaining information about graduate school, and you can also talk to Dr. Conley about making your career decisions and formulating plans to follow in order to meet those career goals.

### **What We Expect From You:**

If you take this course, we assume that you are a **motivated, responsive, and responsible** student who is interested in this work because you have decided on, or may be considering, a career in psychology or some other related discipline. Generally, students enroll in this course as sophomores, juniors, or seniors. If you are interested in this course only because it allows the accrual of credit hours without attending regular classes or taking examinations, we ask that you inquire about other independent study options available in this department or elsewhere in the university. Our expectations of you are briefly summarized below.

1. As noted above, we ask you to *devote significant amounts of time to the laboratory*. Your laboratory hours will most likely be divided across multiple days, and as the semester progresses, you'll likely engage in more tasks and need to divide your time among the different responsibilities (e.g., literature searching, coding, data collection, etc.). We also ask that you **keep track** of and log the hours you are spending working on different lab projects.
2. We require that you *conduct yourself in a professional manner* when dealing with those people you will encounter in the course of this research. Such demands may extend to choices for dress, work ethic, enthusiasm, and so forth. We reserve the right to dis-enroll any student who does not meet such standards.
3. We ask that you *be responsible for your time and work habits*, similar to any other professional career position. If you cannot make it to the laboratory on some day and there are appointments scheduled for testing, you should contact another research assistant to cover the appointments. We ask that you be **dependable and responsible** in your work habits. **Please be sure to contact** the graduate student Lab Meeting Coordinator, and/or Dr. Conley, if you are going to be unable to come to the lab on your assigned day. If you work with other graduate students, please be sure to contact them also.
4. If you bring your phone to the lab, we ask that you either turn it off or keep its use to a minimum. We understand that there may be times when you need to take or place calls or texts. In general, though, please try to limit phone use and do not do your lab work while you are using your phone (or doing email, social media / web browsing, homework or other non-lab tasks), as this will compromise the reliability and accuracy of your work (and possibly the work of those around you). In addition, we ask that you use the lab equipment (including computers and printers) only for research purposes. Our equipment was purchased using funds for research, and so it would be unethical for us to use the equipment in other ways, such as for student classwork or entertainment.
5. We ask that you *respect the security and confidentiality of information* that the lab maintains and accesses through the cloud (e.g., OneDrive) a shared computer network, the P:/ drive. Keeping participant information confidential is not only important but also an ethical and legal obligation. Although all lab members have access to almost all lab materials on the P:/ drive, we expect you to access only the files that you need for your assigned task(s), be responsible with these shared lab materials, and be respectful of them.
6. We encourage RAs to come up with an individual research project (e.g., a research question that they can address using one of our data sets) and to write it up as a paper and/or poster submission (e.g., CAURS, MPA, SSEA). Note, however, that if students pursue independent research (e.g., a poster

abstract/presentation, a Provost Fellowship application/project, an Honors project), they must still keep up with their regular lab duties – that is, working on independent research (in the application or production phases) does not replace your other lab responsibilities/hours.

### **Lab Meetings:**

During the academic year, we have weekly lab meetings that you are **required** to attend. The time changes each semester. You will be notified about the lab meeting time when you submit your application. During lab meetings, research assistants meet to discuss the projects, their progress, and address any questions or problems. If you cannot attend a given meeting, please let the graduate student Lab Meeting Coordinator know. Please participate in the meetings by giving suggestions and making comments. Since the participant population is undergraduates, undergraduate research assistants are often the best source of information! Lab meetings are also a good place to ask questions about graduate school or psychology research in general. If you are curious, there are probably others who would like to know as well.

### **Data Entry, Cleaning, and Coding:**

If you are entering, cleaning, or coding data, then professionalism means that you **work very carefully, even if that slows everything down**. Working carefully requires that you are alert and clear-headed. The most serious violation our lab could commit would be to publish a study based on flawed data. A second problem would be to miss a significant finding because of a data entry error. Any time you are responsible for data entry you should first examine your data file for out-of-range or odd values. Often, data will be double-coded, which means that another person will enter the same data in order to find mistakes. You are permitted and even encouraged to analyze the data that are collected. Since many people do not like to do this or do not know how, it will probably not be a suggested activity. However, doing data analysis can certainly be beneficial for you and the research project, so feel free to do it. If you want or need help, ask. Data entry and coding will often be done in SPSS. Variable names go across the top and there is one row for each participant number (variable name is ID). We have a system for entering data and we will teach it to you if/when you are assigned to data entry.

### **Reading:**

At the beginning of the semester, we will assign some readings to give you a background in the research you are helping with. We will discuss the readings and how they fit in with our research at the lab meetings. If you would like to complete additional readings, let us know and we are happy to suggest pieces that you might find interesting.

### **Supplemental Activities:**

As part of a lab, there are many activities you can perform that help keep the lab running smoothly. These activities should not take up a majority of your hours, but they are important ways to help the research process. Feel free to add your own (but ask first).

- *Clean the lab:* Pick up loose papers, throw away trash (but be sure you do not throw out anything that could be important—safe bets are beverage containers, and any food bags that you bring in), dust the computers, restock supplies such as paper clips.
- *Organize!* Make sure all the data are labeled and stacked in order of ID numbers. Make sure all the materials are set up for any future sessions.
- *Read new articles:* Ask us if you want more readings. We're happy to recommend articles that you can read and summarize for the lab.
- *Learn something new:* There are several specialized programs for psychology research. Developing expertise in one of them can come in handy and make you valuable. Ask one of us if you are interested.

### **Taking Initiative:**

You are responsible for how much you learn from this experience. We certainly want you to learn as much as possible, but not everybody is looking for or can handle a lot of responsibility. If you just do as you are told, you will have done an average job. **If you are looking to maximize your experience (and to gain rave reviews in recommendations), you will need to take initiative.** This can come in the form of making suggestions and comments on the materials; showing that you have attempted to troubleshoot a problem using

resources at your disposal prior to seeking assistance from a graduate student / Dr. Conley; proposing another study or a twist on a current study or another way of looking at something; delving into journals; offering to help create materials; asking for more responsibilities. Show that you are **interested and motivated** to help out, and that you **can be counted on**. We do not necessarily expect that students work beyond the number of credit hours that they signed up for since we understand that some students may have other obligations (e.g. work, etc.). However, we believe that students can still engage in these suggested behaviors to show their initiative, interest, and motivation while still staying within their lab hours.

You may have an opportunity to get paper authorship, although this is fairly rare. Per APA guidelines, authorship is based on many factors, one of which is making a substantial intellectual contribution to the work. It is assumed that all authors have had a significant role in the creation of a scientific communication. Students who have worked in the lab for a year (at a minimum), and demonstrated significant initiative, independent thinking, and leadership skills may receive consideration for authorship. Those who are granted authorship are expected to be involved in the project throughout the duration of its execution and should make a plan for their continued involvement should they graduate from the lab. Papers often take at least a year to write and submit, if not more. Please note that most journals require author contribution statements, necessitating certain types of contributions. See CRediT authorship guidelines [here](#), as well as the APA resource page [here](#).