TARA CALAFIORE
Faculty Advisor: Andrew T. Wolanin

The Development of an Experiential Avoidance Scale on the MMPI-2-RF

The MMPI-2 RF is grounded in the theory that pathology is an additive condition. The theoretical foundation of the MMPI-2 RF restructured clinical scales speaks to the idea of underlying pathological processes, particularly the RCdscale, which is said to account for what has been considered shared pathology across disorders. The ability to identify common underlying processes while concurrently isolating symptom patterns enables clinicians to better assess, diagnosis and treat their clients. Current research supports experiential avoidance as a core mechanism and underlying process common to many forms of pathology. Experiential avoidance is conceptualized as an individual’s relationship to their distress or how one responds to their feelings versus how one experiences their feelings. There is strong support for the construct of experiential avoidance as a unique construct that has a direct relationship with many forms of pathology. There is some debate over how to best measure experiential avoidance. This study examines the relationship between MMPI-2-RF and the construct of experiential avoidance.

JESSICA DeGAETANO
Faculty Advisor: Andrew T. Wolanin

The Role of Psychological Flexibility and Mindfulness in Injury Rehabilitation

Research has identified a number of factors that impact the rehabilitation process, including cognitive appraisals, mental toughness, locus of control, personality, and social support (e.g., Brewer, 2010). However, these factors do not easily lend themselves to exploring core psychological processes that may exist for athletes having difficulty adhering to a rehabilitation protocol, nor do they lend themselves to the utilization of a concise intervention approach. It is hypothesized that psychological flexibility and mindfulness will mediate the relationships between depression, anxiety, and functional complaints and rehabilitation adherence. Injured student athletes will complete a number of forms related to psychological flexibility, mindfulness, and overall psychological and physical symptom complaints. At the end of rehabilitation, the Chief Athletic Trainer will complete a measure of adherence for each athlete. It is expected that psychological flexibility and mindfulness will play a significant role in adherence to a rehabilitation protocol.

JACKIE KEMPEL
Faculty Advisor: David Brandwein

Juror Perception of the Use of Personality Assessment Data in Expert Psychological Testimony

The use of psychological experts has become an increasingly common practice in both civil and criminal trials, influenced by research consistently demonstrating the powerful impact of expert testimony on juror decision making across a variety of legal issues. Although experts commonly rely on psychological testing to provide valuable information about the issue at hand, research suggests jurors often undervalue or misunderstand the information derived from these measures. In hopes of increasing our understanding of the way in which expert testimony is perceived, mock-juror perception of testimony
based on different types of personality assessment measures (the MMPI-2 and the Rorschach) as well as clinical interview will be compared. Participants will be asked to fill out demographic questionnaires as well as a short personality inventory (NEO-FFI), which will be analyzed as moderating variable. By comparing mock-jurors’ perception of testimony based on a well-validated and frequently used forensic assessment measure, a widely-recognized but more controversial projective personality assessment, and testimony based simply on clinical opinion, we hope to develop not only a greater understanding of how jurors perceive and are influenced by assessment-based expert testimony, but to also increase our knowledge of how psychological tests can be utilized and presented most effectively in court, ultimately contributing to a better administration of justice.

ERIN LEE
Faculty Advisor: Andrew T. Wolanin

Preliminary Investigation of Juvenile Sex Offender Personality Assessment Inventory-Adolescent Personality Profile and the Predictive Power of Emotion Regulation and Experiential Avoidance in Nonsexual Recidivism Risk

Research has shown that juvenile sex offenders are three times more likely to commit general and/or nonsexual rather than sexual re-offenses. Professionals’ abilities, however, to accurately predict future offenses are low despite the evaluating an abundance of risk factors associated with criminal conduct. Personality has demonstrated to be one of the strongest predictors of recidivism (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005) indicatng that personality assessment is vital when working with juvenile justice populations. Personality Assessment Inventory-Adolescent (PAI-A) is a commonly used objective personality measure, but there is limited empirical data on this measure with adolescent sex offenders. First purpose of this study is to examine personality differences between the PAI-A normative sample and juvenile sex offenders by utilizing single t-tests. A growing body of literature has shown that experiential avoidance and emotion dysregulation are dynamic variables associated with externalizing behaviors (Kingston, Clarke, & Remington, 2010) indicating that including these constructs in risk assessments will likely improve the prediction of re-offending risk. The second purpose of this research is to examine the unique predictive power of experiential avoidance and emotion regulation in the prediction of nonsexual recidivism risk. Thirty adolescent male sex offenders were administered the PAI-A, MEAQ, and DERS while clinical staff completed the YLS/CM as a measure of nonsexual risk. A simultaneous regression with bootstrapping will be conducted to determine whether or not personality traits, experiential avoidance, and emotional regulation have significant predictive power in the model of general reoffending risk.

LINDSAY LIOTTA
Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Block-Lerner

Child Sexual Abuse Treatment: The Evaluation of Two Treatment Modalities

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is linked to a host of aversive outcomes and is a major societal problem. In order to address this pervasive problem, it is imperative that effective and efficient treatment programs are investigated and disseminated. Since group therapy allows for concurrent dissemination of
treatment across clients, the present dissertation aims to investigate whether the outcome of group therapy (GT) is significantly different when delivered in conjunction with individual therapy (GT/I). In order to assess symptomology, a battery of assessments have been administered pre- and post treatment to a diverse group of children with sexual abuse histories. Participants are being identified as either participating in the GT/I condition or GT condition. A series of mixed model ANOVAs will be used to compare pre-test and post test data between groups. It is hypothesized that group therapy alone will produce equivalent treatment outcomes as group and individual therapy combined, enabling more individuals to be efficiently and effectively treated.

MAGDALENA OSTROWSKI-HILTON  
Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Block-Lerner  
*Parental Experiential Avoidance in the Context of CBT for Adolescent Social Phobia*  
Social phobia is both persistent and impairing. Youth diagnosed with social phobia are at risk for significant life impairment and further psychopathology. Parental factors have been implicated in the maintenance of childhood anxiety disorders, and parental experiential avoidance (PEA) may play such a maintaining role. PEA can been defined as parents’ unwillingness to experience and inability to manage their own reactions to their children’s distress. The Parental Action and Avoidance Questionnaire (PAAQ) is a new measure designed to assess experiential avoidance in the parenting context. The purposes of this study are to a) provide descriptive statistics on the PAAQ in a sample of parents of adolescents diagnosed with social phobia b) assess the relationship between the PAAQ and measures of adolescents’ diagnostic severity, parents’ social phobia symptoms and parents’ perception of their child’s coping ability, and c) assess the PAAQ’s sensitivity to change over the course of treatment with either CBT or non-specific intervention. Results will be discussed in terms of implications for the use of the PAAQ in future treatment research and the utility of examining the construct of parental experiential avoidance in the context of treatment for youth disorders.

NICO PETERS  
Faculty Advisor: David Brandwein  
*Exploring the Effects of Childhood Trauma: Differentiating Child Behavior Checklist Symptom Patterns as a Function of Trauma Type*  
Recent literature supports the proposition that cumulative trauma exposure is associated with the complexity of symptoms in adults who experienced traumatic events as children, with specific types of trauma, such as childhood rape and physical abuse, serving as significant predictors of symptomotology and pathology, such as depression, trait anxiety, and social anxiety experienced later in life (Briere, Kaltman, & Green, 2008; Kuo, Goldin, Werner, Heimberg, & Gross, 2011). While the long term sequelae of traumatic experiences have frequently been examined in adulthood, research directly comparing the effects of specific trauma types immediately after the events is scarce. Consequently, the current research aims to examine the following hypotheses: 1. The Child Behavior Checklist will produce symptom patterns that are uniquely related to various types of childhood traumatic experiences; 2.
Child variables, such as age at first trauma, gender, and perpetrator of the maltreatment, will further interact with the type of trauma experienced in predicting various symptoms exhibited on the CBCL.

ELIZABETH SMYTHE
Faculty Advisor: Frank Gardner

The Relationship between Anger and the Manifestation of Aggressive and Violent Behavior within Intimate Relationships

Anger and its relation to reactive aggression or violent behavior is an area that lacks sufficient research and clinical attention. Anger, aggression, and violent behaviors are associated with a myriad of long-term costs. Anger poses a significant health risk and has been related to the development of cardiovascular disease (Smith, Glazer, Ruiz, & Gallow, 2004). Research has shown that individuals who endorse high levels of trait anger are more likely to engage in violent acts, twice as likely to be arrested and three times as likely to serve time in prison (Tafrate & Kassinove, 2002). In the past, several researchers have proposed models that make an effort to account for the relationship between anger and aggression and violence. However, these models are often conceptually narrow and neglect to include constructs from related disciplines, fail to demonstrate a clear rationale for how the proposed constructs relate, and present general conclusions that are derived exclusively from theory or from studies that lack methodological rigor. The long-term costs associated with anger, aggression, and violent behaviors underscores the need for researchers to investigate the relationship between anger, aggressive and/or violent behaviors. The present study will investigate Gardner and Moore’s (2008, 2012) Anger Avoidance Model (AAM). Specifically, determining what and how relationships exists between specific temperaments, early maladaptive schemas, the experience of anger, emotion regulation deficits and the behavioral manifestation of aggressive or violent behaviors is essential to understanding, predicting, and ultimately treating the problematic behaviors often seen in individuals who have anger-related problems.