



## **Behavioral and Social Sciences**

**Ramona Kraeutler, Angelica Rivera**

*Dysfunctions in Emotion Regulation, Self-Reported Sleep Duration, and Substance Use in Female College Students*

Faculty Mentor: Karen Wilson, Psychology

Research shows that sleep can be a significant indicator of a person's mental health and the ability to function in daily life. The absence of sufficient sleep in the form of either a sleep disorder or a decrease in sleep duration has been identified by previous research as playing a critical role in the development of dysfunction in cognition and emotion regulation (Tavernier & Willoughby, 2015). The National Sleep Foundation (2019) generally recommends that adults (18-65 years) get between six to nine hours of sleep each night. Current research identifies an active link between sleep and psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, and substance use and also indicates that dysfunctions in emotional regulation play a significant role in the development and severity of substance use in adults. Female college students are often considered a unique population with exacerbated stress levels that may be associated with the combined effects of academic load, work and various social expectations. For this reason, female college students fall below the average sleep duration that is needed for sufficient sleep (Eliasson et al., 2017).

The purpose of this study was to examine the link between dysfunctions in emotion regulation, self-reported sleep duration, and substance use in female college students. It was hypothesized that female college students with shorter sleep duration will exhibit more dysfunction in emotion regulation. Further, it is hypothesized that female college students who have a shorter sleep duration and higher levels of emotion dysregulation will report using more substances than students with average sleep duration and less self-reported emotional dysregulation.

**Taylor Duffy, Evan Steinberg, Selena Moreno**

*Measuring the Grateful Personality in Youth: Validation of the Gratitude Questionnaire for Youth (GQ-Y)*

Faculty Mentor: Giacomo Bono, Psychology

Little is known about trait gratitude's role in adolescent development. This is partly due to a lack of psychometrically sound measures for youth. Most research has used the adult GQ-6 (McCullough et al., 2002) with youth populations, even though this is problematic (Froh et al., 2011). The current study is a validation of the Gratitude Questionnaire for Youth (GQY), a 6-item scale modified from the adult version to include more age-appropriate wording and scaling. A total of 1181 students from elementary, middle, and high schools completed surveys containing the items and other measures twice (baseline, 2 months). The 6 items show good internal consistency ( $\alpha$ 's = .75 - .87), indicating better reliabilities than using the adult GQ-6. Multiple linear regressions indicate significant concurrent predictions at T1 with criterion measures of hope, positive affect, depression, and anxiety. Correlations of the GQY with other measures of gratitude were also significant. Thus, the GQY seems to have criterion and construct validity. Test-retest, predictive validity, and factor analysis will also be examined to more rigorously test the psychometric quality of the GQY. Similar analyses will also examine the psychometric quality of a younger version for middle childhood (GQY-MC). Suggestions for future research will be made.

**Taylor Duffy, Denise Aguiluz, Daniel Correa, Isabel Munoz**

*The Relationship between Latino College Students' Socio-cultural Background, Dietary Self-Efficacy, Snacking Behaviors, and Diabetes Risk*

Faculty Mentor: Silvia Santos, Psychology

This study is part of a larger NIH funded investigation that seeks to examine the relationship between family illness-history, gender and assimilation on dietary self-efficacy, eating behaviors, and diabetes risk. The sample consisted of 156 Latino college students (34% male; 66% female) identified to be at-risk for diabetes. Participants' diabetes risk was assessed using the NIH Diabetes Risk Test which indicated that 30.7% were at low-risk, 44.0% at moderate-risk, and 25.3% at high-risk. Participants completed measures based on the Health Belief Model as well as socio-cultural demographics (gender and assimilation) and familial history of diabetes. Hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses were used to test the empirical model. Socio-cultural demographics and familial genetic risk were found to directly influence health outcomes. Likewise, self-efficacy beliefs directly influenced health outcomes. Participants with a higher level of dietary self-efficacy also experienced a reduced risk for diabetes. Self-efficacy indirectly influenced diabetes risk as mediated by eating behaviors—snacking on fruits and eating fried potatoes. Participants with higher dietary self-efficacy were more likely to snack on fruits, which in turn was associated with a lower risk for diabetes. Those lower in dietary self-efficacy were more likely to eat/snack on fried potatoes, which was related to having an increased risk for diabetes. The overall model was significant,  $F(6, 141) = 8.09$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 26% ( $R = .51$ ) of the explained variance in diabetes risk. The findings underscore the direct and indirect influence of dietary self-efficacy beliefs in reducing risk for diabetes regardless of socio-cultural factors related to gender, assimilation and familial genetic risk. Future college health-interventions aimed at reducing diabetes risk among young Latinos should focus on building dietary self-efficacy beliefs and target healthy and unhealthy snacking behaviors.

**Angela Rivera***High Impact Program Evaluation: Leadership and Creative Expression (LCE)*

Faculty Mentor: Tara Victor, Psychology

University effectiveness can be analyzed and improved through focus on “high impact educational practices” (HIPs), empirically-validated educational practices shown to be beneficial for college students of diverse backgrounds often encouraging student engagement, preparation for citizenship, and work beyond the classroom. This research evaluates HIP effectiveness in an ethnically diverse public university. Learning outcomes from the LCE Group Relations conferences (2016, 2018, 2019) are empirically examined in addition to exploratory analysis of engagement (university, civic, alumni) and experiences within diverse populations (through anonymous pre- and post-conference survey data online, including three- and six-month follow-up). The primary question regarding implementation of creative components (mural and structure building, role collages, drumming) also examines whether creative expression elements enhanced learning by attending to diverse learning styles of this population with varying backgrounds and experiences. Participants (18+ years) included a diverse sample of CSUDH students, alumni and community members. Only participants who completed IRB informed research consent completed pre/post surveys. Results indicated that 79-91% of the sample stated learning objectives were met (65% response rate;  $n = 80$ ), which included improved leadership capacity, strategic thinking, understanding of covert/subconscious forces impacting individuals/groups, increased group effectiveness, ability to recognize impact of differences in group collaboration, and opportunities to apply conference learning to real-world contexts. Further, 68 to 86% self-reported the experience created high impact learning opportunities (25% response rate;  $n = 28$ ), which included bringing members together in a context that promoted critical inquiry, collaborative learning, space to integrate knowledge-experience, real-life application, and learning opportunities to explore differences between people with respect to culture and experience. Responses varied in regard creative components facilitating the learning, which may be related to diversity in participant learning styles, requiring future investigation. Additional research is needed to guide future design and implementation of co-curricular HIP programming in diverse university contexts.

**Denise Aguiluz, Limor Vink, Saray Valenzuela, Margott Dela Cruz, Bryan Almeida, Diorlene Arca, Yadira Ramirez***A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Associations between Drinking Identity and Use-Related Outcomes*

Faculty Mentor: Kevin Montes, Psychology

Drinking identity refers to the extent to which alcohol use is an integral part of an individual’s self-concept. Given the number of studies conducted to examine the extent to which drinking identity is associated with negative alcohol use-related outcomes, additional research is needed to quantitatively synthesize findings in this domain. The current study aimed to provide single, weighted estimates of the associations between drinking identity and negative alcohol use-related outcomes, as well as to examine if differences in the associative strength of these associations exist if explicit compared to implicit drinking identity measures were administered. A random-effects meta-analysis was conducted on 40 studies. The results from the current meta-analytic study indicated that both explicit and implicit drinking identity were positively associated with frequency (explicit  $rw=.33$ ; implicit  $rw=.30$ ), quantity (explicit  $rw=.37$ ; implicit  $rw=.32$ ), consequences (explicit  $rw=.41$ ; implicit  $rw=.27$ ), and disorder symptoms (explicit  $rw=.45$ ; implicit  $rw=.33$ ). The moderate/large associations between drinking identity and use-related outcomes indicates that identity may be a marker of risk propensity for negative use-related outcomes. There was heterogeneity in effect sizes as well as differences in effect sizes between explicit and implicit measures of identity and their associations with outcomes. Implications of these findings are discussed.

**Yesenia Landa***Water Management Systems of a Smaller Puuc Community in Yucatan*

Mentor Faculty: Kenneth Seligson, Anthropology

The Puuc Region of the Northern Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico is characterized by a distinctive hilly topography and by an elaborate architectural tradition. It is also distinctive for having no natural surface water features. Pre-Columbian Puuc communities captured rainwater during the wet season in chultuns (underground storage chambers carved out of the limestone bedrock). Prior studies of Puuc communities have estimated that populations ranged from roughly 1180 to 3140 persons per square kilometer during the population boom of the Terminal Classic Period (ca. 750-950 CE). These population numbers reflect a minimum of 6 L of water being used per person per day and are based on estimated water storage capacities for chultuns. The prior studies have focused almost exclusively on larger sites in the region. Population estimates and water management strategies at smaller Puuc Maya communities are still largely unknown.

This project analyzes the water management systems of a smaller Puuc community, tentatively labeled Site A that was recently identified using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology. I will use the LiDAR data, ArcGIS (Geographic Information Systems) software, and available models for chultun capacity to: 1) estimate the total water storage capacity for the chultuns of Site A; 2) estimate the population of the site; and 3) determine whether the chultuns alone were sufficient to support the population during the annual dry season and climatic changes such as droughts. I will also map watershed areas to see if other water management strategies were employed, such as seasonal surface reservoirs or artificial ponds. It is expected that the results will show that the chultuns alone were not enough to support the local community and that other water management strategies were indeed necessary. "

**Nancy Sanchez***Ethical Guidelines for Archaeological use of Lidar Technology*

Faculty Mentor: Kenneth Seligson, Anthropology

Since 2008, archaeologists have been using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology to gather extraordinary spatial data about archaeological sites. The technology has provided new avenues for archaeologists to address unanswered questions about how communities interacted with each other and with their anthropological landscapes. LiDAR allows for the creation of high resolution digital elevation models that are being used to "reveal" archaeological landscapes like never before. The power and increasing utilization of LiDAR technology, however, raise several ethical questions regarding the collection of data. As the technology is relatively new, researchers are still working to develop a set of guidelines to regulate the use of this technology. Guidelines are needed for the collection, processing, and sharing of LiDAR data to ensure the privacy and well-being of both people and cultural heritage. Specific ethical issues involving the use of LiDAR include: 1) the lack of permission from the individuals within the LiDAR survey area; 2) the potential publication of the locations of sites that looters can use as guidemaps; and 3) the distribution of data that may be protected by privacy laws. This project will analyze existing uses of archaeological LiDAR to identify improper practices and develop ethical guidelines for archaeologists to follow going forward. The guidelines developed by this project will include such tenets as withholding publication of the private residences of people living within the LiDAR area, regulating who can access LiDAR data, and restricting the potential for revealing locations of unprotected archaeological sites.

**Rebecca Hall***The Effect of a Career Readiness Course and First-Generation Status on College Student's Sense of Belongingness*

Faculty Mentor: Heather Butler, Psychology

Being the first in one's family to pursue a college degree could be a challenge, however it is a significant accomplishment that could lead to better opportunities. The study examined how a career ready course encourage student sense of belonging by increasing the likelihood of student success. The purpose of this study is to explore the importance of first-generation college student's sense of belonging on college campus. For this particular study the term sense of belonging is defined as individuals' psychological sense of connection to or integration into their community is important for wellbeing and academic success. The participants are enrolled in the Design Your Life(DYL) Course at Cal State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). The study includes both non and first-generation students from diverse backgrounds, and students who are participating in a scholarly program. The survey was offered in both summer and fall of 2018-2019 semester classes to students at CSUDH regarding their sense of belonging on campus based on their participation in a scholar program and a career readiness course. A path analysis indicated the importance of faculty student interaction and the benefit of scholarly programs that could provide guidance for first generation students. Additional results indicated that first generation students involved in a scholar program and the DYL course benefited the most and felt a stronger sense of belonging on college campus when compared to students whom were not involved in either a scholar program or a career readiness course. The study could encourage further research and help create a better understanding and strategies to support first generation student career readiness and overall student success. Also this study hopes to bring awareness of the importance of continued funding for student support services and career readiness courses on college campuses.

**Yosilin Caro***Do Student Scheduling Preferences Reflect Student Behavior and Satisfaction?*

Faculty Mentor: Thomas J. Norman, Management & Marketing

This study examined how student scheduling preferences affect student behavior and satisfaction while creating a schedule of coursework. Previous research has indicated that students often feel lower satisfaction and struggle to establish a strong work-school balance. The study used an online student scheduling preferences survey to explore if students make scheduling decisions that reflect their scheduling preference responses. Furthermore, this study sought to determine if students were satisfied with their scheduling choices when their schedule (did or did not) resemble their current course schedule. In the survey students were questioned on their level of satisfaction, the course schedule availability they desired to have as well as the format they desired to have their schedule (hybrid or in class). In addition, their current schedule was also utilized for comparison to their indicated scheduling desires. Preliminary results indicate that students who state they prefer more diverse options in regard to class time slots often do not have a schedule that reflects that response. Furthermore, students who have schedules that differed significantly from their scheduling preferences indicate they were not satisfied with their schedule. Overall, current results indicate that there is a discrepancy between student scheduling preferences and student scheduling behavior. Furthermore, the research may indicate that universities should adapt to student scheduling preferences to meet their needs since they affect the availability of course formats and time availabilities for courses. We expect to have approximately 2,000 new participants complete a second version of this survey. Future research exploring the relationship between student course loads may also provide insight into whether factors such as stress result in students diverging greatly in their responses compared to their actual scheduling preferences in an academic setting.





**Stephanie Torres**

*Differences in Self-Disclosure Between Twitter and Instagram*

Faculty Mentor: Larry Rosen, Psychology

Social media sites have become popular platforms where users are able to communicate with others and present information about themselves. Each social media site contains its own format, whether it be text-based, image-based, or video-based. Twitter is a social media site that consists primarily of text-based postings and has a reputation of being a platform that is more candid and transparent. Instagram is a site in which is primarily image-based and has a reputation of being a platform in which users show idealized versions of themselves. Shane-Simpson et al. (2018) explained that visual imagery might be more effective in creating feelings of intimacy with an audience by showing a person's life as happy and satisfying. Exploring the differences in the cultures of differing social media platforms will allow further understanding in the behaviors of self-disclosure and relationship formation. This study aims to further understand how the differences between text-based and image-based social media sites influence the types of information users present about themselves. Four focus groups (n=21), consisting of young college adults, were conducted to explore themes such as reasoning behind public and private account settings, motivations for using social media, and content that are produced by the users and accounts with which they interact. Ten questions were asked about participants' views of the differences of Twitter and Instagram, what they view is appropriate for each platform, and which platform they prefer to disclose different types of information, personal or surface-level, about themselves. Analyses of these focus groups produced themes such as Twitter being preferred when self-disclosing personal information, Twitter having less rules regarding self-disclosure, Instagram being seen as a filtered platform, and Instagram being a positive platform. The results of this study will be expanded into a quantitative exploration of motivations and reactions regarding self-disclosure on Twitter and Instagram.

**Fredy Dominguez**

*Loneliness and Isolation among Older Men in Southern California*

Faculty Mentor: Anne Soon Choi, Interdisciplinary Studies

In the last century, we have seen significant social changes in our society that had led to the rise of social isolation. People have always lived in small communities that cared for their elders. Our society today, however, has a significant problem among older men who suffer from loneliness and isolation. The focus of this research was to find out what are the primary contributing factors that drive older men in Southern California to isolate themselves from friends and family and their communities. The research was conducted among participants who were age 60 or older that responded to the survey questionnaire. There were more than 50% of men ages 60 and older that responded, feeling lonely 50% or more of the time. The results suggest that men who are more active in social groups felt less lonely than the ones that did not attend any group or social activity. Family and friends or the lack of them played an essential role in the surveyed answers. A total of 16.27% of them stated that they did not have anyone to turn to in case of an emergency, with two of them indicating that they depend on 911 and another one stating "My inner self." The use of social media and digital technology has enhanced social connections for 37.20% of these men who use it to communicate with family and friends. The results imply that loneliness and isolation are affecting men's emotional state of mind leading to long term health and mental problems. There are many contributing factors affecting older men regardless if they have family nearby, good social networks, good friendships, and relationship quality. Future research is needed to investigate how these older men could continue with a healthy lifestyle without suffering from isolation.



**Tania Lugo, Stacy Zamora, Peter Jerome, Ishmael Paulino**

*Chronic administration of ethanol and the brain: a role for  $\Delta$ FosB?*

Faculty Mentor: Philip Vieira, Psychology

Pathogenesis of substance use disorder (SUD) is presumed to be caused by many factors, including alterations in gene expression in the mesocorticolimbic pathway of the brain caused by chronic drug use.  $\Delta$ FosB, a transcription factor that can both induce and repress gene expression, is a purported ‘molecular switch’ of SUD that supports long-term neurobiological changes underlying addiction.  $\Delta$ FosB is induced by drugs of abuse in several brain regions associated with reward processing and decision making, including the nucleus accumbens (NAc) and prefrontal cortex (PFC), in response to chronic drug use. Overexpression of  $\Delta$ FosB is linked to behavioral responses such as compulsive drug-intake and drug-seeking. Drugs that induce  $\Delta$ FosB include amphetamines, cocaine, alcohol, morphine, nicotine and D9-tetrahydrocannabinol. Notably, alcohol use disorder constitutes 73% of all use disorders. Yet, there are a limited amount of studies that investigate the relationship of alcohol use and  $\Delta$ FosB induction. The proposed study aims to investigate whether chronic alcohol use induces  $\Delta$ FosB in the NAc and PFC. Brain slices will be taken from male and female Sprague-Dawley rats exposed to alcohol (alcohol treatment) and those not exposed to alcohol (vehicle treatment). The number of  $\Delta$ FosB-positive cells and  $\Delta$ fosB mRNA in these brain regions will be assessed via immunohistochemistry and qPCR techniques. The data generated by this work may better inform treatments for SUD as a result of chronic alcohol consumption.

**Gerquetta Jackson**

*Women of Color Experience of Workplace Aggression*

Faculty Mentor: Thomas J. Norman, Management & Marketing

Previous studies found that workplace stress is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States (Pfeffer, 2013). The physical health of women of color is well-documented but their mental health is under researched. The purpose of this study is to explore physiological and mental reactions to experiencing overt, subtle, micro-aggression, or aggression in the workplace. The study compares the reaction of women of color with those of men of color and white women. It is hypothesized that women of color experience higher aggression in the workplace and in educational settings compared to men of color and white women. The study will recruit at least 85 undergraduate students attending California State University, Dominguez Hills to participate in the study. The items used for this study come from Workplace Aggression Questionnaire which measures bullying, incivility, and abuse in the workplace. Participants will fill out a modification of the workplace aggression scale to report their experiences of bullying, incivility, and abuse in the workplace. The results could be used to create interventions to reduce stress and provide better coping strategies for women of color in the workplace.



**Evan Steinberg, Selena Moreno, Taylor Duffy, Anthony Chuy**

*Gratitude as a Strength in Human Development*

Faculty Mentor: Giacomo Bono, Psychology

The aims of this study were to examine which character strengths are most strongly correlated with different aspects of gratitude and if gratitude is positively associated with self-esteem in three age-groups. The sample consisted of 1181 students from elementary, middle, and high school. Character strengths were assessed at baseline using the Values and Action Inventory (Niemiec, 2013), and the following different aspects of gratitude were assessed using various measures at Baseline and 2 months later: trait, mood, expressing thanks, feelings from experiencing gratitude, and appreciating gratitude from others. Correlational analyses at baseline showed that trait gratitude was significantly associated with the strengths of love and zest, and with self-esteem, across all age-groups ( $r_s = .40-.56$ ). Thus, preliminary results suggest that strengths of courage and humanity and that greater self-esteem characterize the grateful personality in youth. Differences across age-groups were also found. For example, social intelligence was associated with trait gratitude for elementary and high schoolers ( $r_s = .43, .69$ ), kindness was associated trait gratitude for elementary and high schoolers ( $r_s = .39, .40$ ), and leadership was associated with trait gratitude for middle schoolers ( $r = .66$ ), whereas spirituality was for high schoolers ( $r = .38$ ). This suggests different functions of gratitude across development. Additional analyses will examine whether any character strengths predict increases in trait gratitude, whether trait gratitude predicts increases in self-esteem, and what the top 5 strongest correlations are between character strengths and different aspects of gratitude across the age-groups. Implications for a developmental theory of gratitude and for promoting gratitude in youth will be discussed.

**Sarahi Vargas, Giselle Adams, Katherine Gendron, Johanna Sobolic**

*Community Engagement Minor*

Faculty Mentor: Sarah Taylor, Anthropology

Our ethnographic research conducted observations of how students interact with their own community around them, as the school is in the works of developing a community engagement minor. We conducted 25 interviews from formal, informal, email, and phone interviews with students, alumni, and even faculty. Using the data gathered from the interviews, we developed a survey that was conducted via google survey and survey monkey that asked students if they were transfers, what year they were in, their major, and would they be interested in the minor. We also included students in a social experiment of how they would react to the name of the minor, and the top words were: “engagement,” “development,” and “community.” Our results also indicated that students on this campus are already feeling discouraged because they are unsure of the time they can put in this minor; therefore, the minor should take into consideration of offering more units instead.





**Elijah Arzate**

*Social Media-Induced Masculine Depression*

Faculty Mentor: Heather Butler, Psychology

Is objectification on social media harming men's self-image? Social media has created a generation accustomed to self-commodification: people have been trained through instant social approval portray themselves in whatever way will get them that next "like." For women, learning to derive one's perceived value based on one's social media desirability is a somewhat natural progression of the long history of the objectification and hyper-sexualization of women's bodies. From newspapers and magazines to television and film, social media is just the latest avenue companies have utilized to dispense unrealistic female body ideals onto their audience. Men, however, have not been exposed to the brunt of bodily attention until now. The advent of social media led to a stark shift in the relationship between advertisements, brands, and the general public. For the first time, social media allows individual people to act as their own branding companies, making their social media interactions their own personal form of advertisements. Instead of companies using people to sell products, people are acting as their own agents and products; and instead of money (though there are paid social media models) the average person is modeling for the sake of social capital. Therefore, society has come counterintuitively closer to gender equality: men are also experiencing negative body image affect as a result of their social media usage (known as Objectification Theory).

**Michelle Sov, Ana De La Torre, Elizabeth Mallonee**

*Integrating Community Engagement in CSUDH's General Education Program*

Faculty Mentor: Sarah Taylor, Anthropology

This project investigates student interest in a potential Community Engagement minor at CSUDH. Our team examined how CSUDH students ranked community engagement compared to the other eight General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), the factors that drove students to choose their Integrative Studies Area F requirement class, and whether students would be interested in the minor. We conducted interviews with students on the connection between community engagement and their major. Our methods included surveys, which were distributed to different classes and to students at the LSU. Additionally, we used the pile-sorting method to gain an understanding of how students ranked the GELOs, and we met with the committee in charge of assessing the potential for community engagement in general education. The results of this study revealed that, although students at CSUDH did not rank community engagement as their first priorities, 41% of students surveyed considered it their second to fourth priorities. 80% also indicated that they would be more interested in the minor if they were working within their own community. We also found that students tended to choose their upper division general education classes based on the time of the class and their interest in the subject. As research in this minor continues, it would be interesting to see how general education courses can be applied and the kinds of community partnership experiences students can receive through this minor.



**Jennifer Vaja, Kassandra Jimenez, Sarona Geter, Fernanda Hernandez**

*CSUDH Wellness Resources for Students*

Faculty Mentor: Sarah T Taylor, Anthropology

Wellness The purpose of our project is to understand how much students know about the resources offered at the CSUDH Wellness Center. Specifically, we focused on understanding the student's personal experience in a holistic perspective, and analyze additional ways to spread the word about the available resources. The main method we used were participant observation. Each one of our team members visited the center and took field notes. Additionally we used qualitative interviews, paper and online surveys The results we have so far is that the vast majority of students we interviewed were experiencing some type of stress related to school, work, financial instability, or personal life. However, eighty percent of the total student interviewees had never visited the Wellness Center, and other students were not aware of what it was. CSUDH offers a variety of resources available to students to help cope with stress, mental, and physical health, yet not many students use them. As college students, it is important for us to be informed about the available resources during stressful periods, and take the first step. Our focus is to understand what might be preventing students from taking the first step, and find ways to inform students about these resources, and potentially make a difference in taking the first step.

**Miguel Cuevas**

*Influence of Peers and Commercials in Diet and Exercise*

Faculty Mentor: Carl Sneed, Psychology

Prior research looked to motivation as a predictor for weight loss and weight loss maintenance. However, a person's motivation can be influenced family, friends, doctors, and even commercials. This research examines the effects of exercise program commercials (P90X3, Zumba, etc.) on viewer's motivation to exercise and change to a healthier diet. This research also examines the effects of peer's perception of the participant's BMI on the participant's motivation to exercise and change to a healthier diet. 316 college students (at least 18 years of age) at California State University Dominguez Hills were recruited to participate in a survey that covered various questions regarding lifestyle choices, body satisfaction, self-esteem, and alcohol use. Results indicated that participants were not likely to exercise nor change their diet due to watching a commercial about an exercise program. Likewise, participants were not likely to exercise nor change their diet due to their peer's perception of their BMI. Though the results were not significant it is necessary to continue researching the effects of commercials and peer perception of BMI in motivation to exercise and change to a healthier diet as this can lead to more effective methods of motivating the public to exercise and lead a healthier lifestyle.

**Jennifer Vaja**

*Post- Tsunami Recovery in Thailand*

Faculty Mentor: Sarah Taylor, Anthropology

The purpose of this study is to present the importance of learning post-natural disaster reconstruction from several perspectives. Specifically, I plan to focus on how religion and culture interplay in the post-disaster recovery for the Thailand victims of the 2004 tsunami. The main ethnography I will use is Post-Tsunami Recovery in Thailand: Socio-cultural Responses by: Monica Lindberg Falk. Additionally, I will include Thailand tsunami survivor's new rituals and ceremonies that emerged after the disaster, that provided families of the deceased with psychological reassurance and a way to communicate with their loved ones. The results of this study contributes to a development in anthropological research on how culture and religion impact the recovery process of the survivors.

**Jessica Martinez, Dolores Duran**

*American Indian Changing Spirits (Using Traditional Native American Healing and Spiritual Practices to Help in Sobriety)*

Faculty Mentor: Susan Needham, Anthropology

This paper reports on ethnographic research conducted over a three-month period in the American Indian Changing Spirits (AICS) residential rehabilitation program, located in Long Beach, California. AICS focuses on treating former drug addicts and alcoholics and assists individuals that were previously incarcerated to transition into independent living. AICS integrates traditional Native American healing and spiritual practices, such as the Talking Circle and Sweat Lodge, as part of the rehabilitation process. Through our research, which included participant observation during Talking Circles sessions interviews with two former residents, we found that residents felt that the Native practices and regard to individuals contributed greatly to their recovery process. In particular, residents expressed a feeling of greater freedom and less confinement in the AICS program than what they experienced at other rehabilitation centers. Our research data suggests that, AICS is successful at helping residents maintain their sobriety in part because it follows Native American spirituality and provides residents with less limitations which helps them recover in a more spiritual way.

**Lanique Sanabria**

*Abstract*

Faculty Mentor: Maria Gritsch

The research analyzes the effects teen pregnancy has on an adolescent's educational attainment. Information has been gathered in order to study this growing issue among teens from ages 13 to 19 years old. Research in this study has provided some reasons why teen mothers are unable or choose not to complete their high school education. Not only does teen pregnancy affect the teen mother, but it also affects their families, their child, and society overall. The growing trend among adolescents of all backgrounds who become mother's while in high school has lowered throughout the years, but still is a major contributor to low graduation rates among teen mothers.

**Maricela Hernandez, Cindy Cervantes, Javier Arizmendi**

*How does the Death Penalty Influence Crime Rates?*

Faculty Mentor: Zheng Yang

This study focus is based on the correlation between the death penalty and what influence it has on lower crime rates in states that abolish the death penalty. In the United States, there is 25 States that enforces the death penalty, 21 States that don't have a death penalty, and 4 States that are Governor-Imposed moratorium. From the States that do not have the death penalty, it is proven that they have the most homicide rates in comparison to some States that do have the death penalty. If the death penalty is the highest penalty a person can receive, wouldn't this serve as a deterrent to crime? By researching this topic, it wil help us better understand if people believe that maybe laws are not being too strong in order to fight crime and prevent people from committing further crimes. Maybe the death penalty should be enforced in every State, this way people attempting to commit a crime will know there is a higher consequence that could take away your life.



**Michelle Sov, Sheyla Flores Quintero, Johanna Sobolic**

*The Role of Khmer Court Dance and Music in the Construction of a Khmer-American Identity*

Faculty Mentor: Susan Needham

Cambodia gained national attention in the mid 70's due to the mass genocide perpetrated during the Khmer Rouge. For many Cambodians born and raised in the United States, the primary cultural awareness passed down from their parents and elders revolves around experiences surrounding the Khmer Rouge. This paper explores the construction of cultural identity among second generation Cambodian youth and adults participating in Khmer classical dance and music classes at Khmer Arts Academy in Long Beach, California. We found that there is a strong correlation between familial ties and participation in cultural activities, as is evident from interviews as well as family member attendance at Khmer Arts Academy. Our research delved into the struggle Khmer children born and raised in America face when pressured to assimilate into American culture. The societal need to "fit in" is difficult for most minority children, and it is difficult to find ways to affirm heritage identity. The students at the Khmer Arts Academy use Khmer classical dance and music to learn about the beauty and intricacies of their culture, something that they lacked prior to this experience. Using ethnographic techniques and methods, our preliminary findings suggest that participation in the Khmer Arts Academy in Long Beach introduced students to and, in some cases increased, their connections with their cultural heritage. Our techniques include participant observations and interviews over the course of three months (September, 2019-November, 2019).