

## **Psychology I**

Section Moderator: Dr. Bill Bailey

Room: WMB 210

Time: 7:00-8:30

### **“Ethical Considerations for Undergraduate Research”**

Elise A. Tyler

Lonnie Yandell

Psychology students at Belmont University are privileged to have professors who stress the importance of undergraduate research. The experience of designing and conducting a study, analyzing data and presenting the findings is a valuable one, both exposing students to the possibilities of research and preparing them for a career in psychology. Ethics and research go together hand in hand. Ethical guidelines from the American Psychological Association state that research studies should only be published in one journal for several reasons. However, there is no clear cut ethical guideline for presenting a single study at numerous conferences, orally or in poster sessions. At some schools, including Belmont, psychology students are encouraged to present a single study multiple times. Other schools may disagree and assume this practice is unethical. For the present research study, frequency data for six questions concerning the ethics of research presentation was collected. Participants consisted of psychology faculty from various American colleges and universities who attended a teaching conference on undergraduate psychological research. Descriptive data from the questionnaire will be reported, in addition to verbal responses. The findings show that several issues are involved in the decision to present multiple times, including conference type, audience population, the inclusion of new material, among other considerations.

### **“Religiosity and Death Anxiety”**

Melinda Baker

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mike Sullivan

Examination of the relationship between religious orientation and practices has been an ongoing investigation within several areas of psychology, such as Psychology of Religion, Gerontology, and even Personality. Through the years of extensive research, the relationship between the religiosity of individuals and death anxiety have varied across a number of factors such as age, gender, religious affiliation, and life experiences. Investigation into the relationship between religiosity and death anxiety among the elderly has typically found that older individuals tend to experience lower death anxiety due to various factors including an acceptance of their imminent death and their religious beliefs. Due to the lack of extensive research among younger adults, this study's aim is to investigate the relationship between religiosity and death anxiety among college students. College students completed multiple measures anxiety, specifically regarding test anxiety and death anxiety, as well as measures of religiosity. It was expected that more religious individuals would demonstrate greater death anxiety.

### **“The Effects of Religiosity on Perceptions of Nudity in Art”**

Zea Miller

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mike Sullivan

In art, the nude body is considered to be the most perfect form. In most Western religions the human form is considered to be in the image of God. However, when nude art and religion mix, voices get raised and protests often follow. This controversy is as old as Michelangelo's figures in The Last Judgment (which

were painted over after his death because they were considered to be perverse) and as current as the Mapplethorpe and Serrano exhibits in the 1980's. This study examines the relationship between levels of religiosity and the perception of nudity in religious and secular art. It was proposed that more religious individuals would be less accepting of nudity in art. Moreover, it was expected that there would be a noticeable difference between religious and secular images, namely that religious nudes would be more acceptable than those in the secular images. Students were given religion surveys that measured three different types of religiosity and shown 24 slides depicting various religious and secular art pieces featuring nudes. Measures of acceptability were collected and analyzed.

### **“Psychometric Evaluation of Two Narcissism Scales”**

Laura Bear, Sarah DeNeal, Wil Hansen, Sarah King, Ellen Norvell, Elise Tyler, & Radha Dunham  
Faculty Advisor: Peter Giordano

Psychometric evaluation permits empirical study of the reliability and validity of psychological tests. Personality scales are one type of psychological test, providing a method to study individual differences, patterns of individual behavior, and understanding of the individual in relation to others. The purpose of our research was to construct two personality scales, both measuring the personality trait of narcissism. Narcissism is defined by the DSM-IV as “a pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behavior), need for admiration, and lack of empathy ...” (DSM-IV, 1994). With this definition in mind, both scales were developed using the logical-content approach and distributed to two groups of participants. The first new measure of narcissism used a seven-point Likert scale and the second new measure employed a true-false format. Participants were given three narcissism scales: the two scales we developed and one previously validated scale, in addition to a scale of empathy. All scales were counterbalanced to eliminate order effects. To investigate test-retest reliability, participants were tested and re-tested over a two week period. In addition, an internal measure of reliability was computed using coefficient alpha. Convergent validity was tested by correlating our new scale scores with the previously established narcissism scale. Discriminate validity was tested by comparing narcissism scores with empathy scores. The expectation is that the two new scales will be valid and reliable measurements of the multi-faceted personality trait of narcissism.

## **Psychology II**

Section Moderator: Dr. Linda Jones  
Room: WMB 217  
Time: 7:00-8:30

### **“Auditory Interference on Free Recall of Visual Stimuli”**

Laura Bear  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mike Sullivan

The world is full of sensory information we constantly perceive multiple things at once and we integrate these different stimuli sensations so well and so quickly that one has to wonder if the sensory information interferes with each other. The purpose of this research was to understand the relationship between auditory perception and visual perception: how they interact and how they interfere with each other. Previous research would lead us to believe that when multiple senses are engaged learning is enhanced, but my study looks to see if memory is restricted when senses are working against each other. Participants, randomly assigned to 1 of 3 groups, were shown identical slideshow consisting of 50 pictures. One group

saw the pictures and heard words describing them; another group heard words which were unassociated with the images; and the third group did not hear any words and only saw the pictures. A recognition test was given immediately after the slideshow in which people were asked to remember the images they viewed. It was hypothesized that participants who heard words that matched the pictures would perform the best, participants who saw pictures without words would perform moderately, and participants who saw pictures with words that did not match would perform the worst. These findings would indicate that sensory systems, while used in conjunction aid memory but when competing against each other decrease memory.

### **“A Study of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation in Belmont’s Convocation System”**

Sarah G. Mudd  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Belmont’s Convocation program was created with the purpose of providing an array shared experiences that enhance students’ life long learning and encourage the development of well rounded individuals. Students however see the purpose as one more requirement to complete before graduation. Research indicates that motivation plays a large part of students’ ability to learn lies with the students’ motivation. Students who are intrinsically motivated will learn more than those who are extrinsically motivated. A study was done to measure motivation and learning in college students using the Belmont University Convocation Program. An academic program was presented 5 different times, 2 times for convocation credit and 3 times without it. At the conclusion of each presentation, students were given a quiz over the material learned. It was hypothesized that the students who came to the programs where convocation credit was not offered were intrinsically motivated and therefore would learn more than the students who were extrinsically motivated by the convocation credit.

### **“The Relationship between Independence and College Choice”**

Kelly L. Witherbee  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael P. Sullivan

For many students, deciding which college they will attend is greatly influenced by their parents. This influence may be due to the cost of the school and what the family can afford, or it may be due to how far away from home the parents will “allow” the student to go. Past studies have done research on how independence levels effect psychological separation from parents in college students and their adjustment to college. The purpose of this study is to find a possible relationship between a student’s independence level and if that influenced their choice of college, controlling for other factors (i.e., cost, choice of major, athletics). Over 100 Belmont undergraduate students were asked to complete numerous questionnaires that measured their independence level and asked them about factors that influenced their choice of college. I also asked them for their hometown so I could measure how far way from their home they were while attending Belmont. It is predicted that students with high levels of independence, from their parents, will choose a college that is farther away from their parents.