



Celebrating a
Dynamic Decade
— of —
Graduate
Student Research,
Scholarship, &
Innovation

10
YEARS



V A L D O S T A S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

TENTH ANNUAL
Graduate Student Research
& Scholarship Symposium

APRIL 20, 2018

**Valdosta State University's Graduate School presents
the Tenth Annual Graduate Student Research
and Scholarship Symposium**

April 20, 2018

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. • UC Magnolia Room

Welcome: Dr. James LaPlant, Assistant Vice President for
Research and Dean of the Graduate School

Opening Remarks: Dr. Robert Smith, Provost and VPAA

Special Recognitions: Dr. James LaPlant

Enjoy the Posters!

Refreshments provided by the Office of University Advancement.



College of Arts and Sciences

Biology

PREDICTION OF THERMAL STABILITY OF EMERGING ZIKA VIRUSES

Matthew L. Cowan

**Dr. Jonghoon Kang, Faculty Mentor
Department of Biology**

The goal of this study is to examine the ZIKA Virus stability using a thermodynamic approach that stresses the study of half-life of the ZIKA Virus. The study uses half-life to find the current thermal stability of the ZIKA Virus or ZIKAV as well as other flaviviruses to show a thermodynamic basis for the limited variation in thermal stability of flaviviruses with a focus being put on the ZIKV. A prediction is then made from this data to demonstrate that future ZIKA viruses or flaviviruses that emerge will have similar thermal stability. A future experiment is then proposed to check for this stability to verify the prediction.

METAL ACCUMULATION IN TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

Sarah Hough

**Dr. J. Mitchell Lockhart, Faculty Mentor
Department of Biology**

Metals occur naturally in the environment and are essential for physiological processes in animals, however, an increase in tissue metal concentration above threshold levels can cause adverse effects or become toxic. Determining baseline tissue metal concentrations in terrestrial species can thus increase our understanding of the impact of metal contaminants and anthropogenic activity on wildlife. Unfortunately, baseline metal tissue concentrations in many terrestrial mammals have not been extensively studied. Objectives of this study include to 1) assess liver metal concentrations in several common terrestrial mammals in South Georgia and North Florida, and 2) assess whether trophic level and feeding habits influence metal accumulation. This study will be one of the first to examine the accumulation of multiple metals in an assemblage of multiple mammal species and will provide the first extensive data set for metal accumulation within these wildlife species.

English

THE OTHER LADY OF THE LAKE: ELAINE'S GENDER PERFORMATIVITY WITHIN ARTHURIAN TALES AND SONG OF THE SPARROW

Ashley Williams

**Dr. Maren Clegg-Hyer, Faculty Mentor
Department of English**

Elaine of Astolat has been told through Arthurian tales as an innocent maiden, bated and charmed by the knight Lancelot into an early grave. She died for her unrequited love and Lancelot could only pity her. Her performance as a maiden of her era was acceptable yet, Elaine gets a second chance of a life by becoming a heroine. Using the story Song of the Sparrow by Lisa Ann Sandell as a postmodern foreground, I will discuss Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity as it pertains to the evolution of Elaine as a woman character in literature and in Arthurian texts. I will also use Lord Alfred Tennyson's retelling of this young girl's plight and Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, to establish a woman's role in Arthurian tales through the lens of pre-modern performativity. Sandell establishes Elaine's performance as a prominent, independent figure, while re-establishing acts that preceded her.

POE'S "RIME": THE NARRATIVE OF ARTHUR GORDAN PYM, COLERIDGE, AND THE DEMOLITION AND REDEFINITION OF THE FAIRY TALE

Rachel Miller

**Dr. Maren Clegg-Hyer, Faculty Mentor
Department of English**

The intent of this presentation is to explore how Poe in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* develops a fairytale for the 19th century, a century of scientific development and skepticism. Drawing upon the classic and Romantic notion of the fairy tale, as evidenced by his allusions to Coleridge's "Rime," Poe upsets the foundational elements of the western fairytale and transforms Coleridge's limited skepticism of the western tradition into radical distrust. Poe modifies the conventions of the fairy tale by instilling in the hero the desire for the perverse, by problematizing the hero's story, by replacing magical tools for the power of man's reasoning, by upsetting the moral atmosphere of the fantastic, and by turning pre-secular wonder into horror. The readers of *Pym* are not satisfied with the hope of redemption that Coleridge gives to his audience, instead they are forced to face the demolition and redefinition of the fantastic.

THE CHIMERA IN D. H. LAWRENCE'S "ST. MATTHEW"

Daniel Pendleton

**Dr. Theresa Thompson, Faculty Mentor
Department of English**

D.H. Lawrence's work *St. Matthew* is an attempt to answer the question of "what is man". Through the literary critic method of deconstructionism, one may determine the true essence of what Lawrence believes man to be. Through the use of mirroring and continuous reimagining of the symbol of man vs. what man is not, Lawrence is able to create a vivid image of man through both his strengths and limitations in comparison with other creatures of the planet.

THE INFLUENCE OF HEIDEGGER IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S THE WAVES

Michael S. Antonoff

**Dr. Maren Clegg-Hyer, Faculty Mentor
Department of English**

This analysis hopes to reveal the influence of Martin Heidegger's phenomenological writings within the construction of Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*. In *The Waves*, the characters' relationship to time produces an anxiety that defines them throughout the novel and prompts them to develop a unique consciousness. This consciousness entails a viewing of life as a trajectory in which both past events and actions, coupled with an anxiety of futurity, shape a present sense of identity. Time in the novel, the instigator of this trajectory, is portrayed as an immutable entity in which characters are fundamentally inseparable from. This unique composition of characters in the novel is comparable to Martin Heidegger's ontology, most notably his concept of *Dasein*. Ultimately, this paper seeks to discuss *The Waves* through the lens of Heidegger's philosophical anthropology in hopes that the collation will further illuminate Woolf's portrayal of Bernard, Jinny, Rhoda, Percival, Louis, Neville, and Susan.

**RAPING THE ARCTIC: AN ECOFEMINIST TRANSLATION
OF WILLIAM VOLLMAN'S *THE RIFLES***

Reagan Bennett

**Dr. Marty Williams
Department of English**

Undoubtedly one of the most prolific and adventurous writers of the twentieth century, William Vollman has shocked audiences with works that combine fact and fiction while addressing real world issues like human rights or sex trafficking. In *The Rifles*, Vollman writes about an indigenous Esquimau woman Reepah, who is raped by white colonizers who in turn destroy the environment through the introduction of firearms. Understanding the complex relationships between indigenous health (women in particular) and the environmental impacts of harmful colonial forces is crucial in guaranteeing a future for tribes suffering difficulties under the eyes of ignorant governments unfamiliar with their unique plights. This presentation seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the ecological consequences of colonialism within Vollman's *The Rifles* to understanding the environmental and sexual impact made on indigenous societies in the Arctic.

Modern and Classical Languages

THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Jackie King

**Dr. Victoria Russell, Faculty Mentor
Department of Modern and Classical Languages**

The purpose of this project was to examine the relevant literature on foreign language anxiety in foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) contexts and to investigate the factors that lead to language anxiety among FL and L2 learners. Recent studies indicate that language anxiety does occur in classroom settings; however, anxiety levels appear to range from low to high, depending upon student and classroom variables. The literature review revealed a number of practical implications that will help FL and L2 instructors foster a more positive classroom environment. Furthermore, the findings revealed that language educators should help learners recognize that language anxiety is common among FL and L2 learners; however, the teacher is able to take steps to create a more open and engaging learning environment that promotes lower anxiety levels among learners.

Political Science

KIDS HAVING KIDS: AN EXPLORATION OF THE PREDICTORS OF TEEN BIRTH RATES

Keiana Brown

**Dr. James LaPlant, Faculty Mentor
Department of Political Science**

This research study analyzes the predictors of teen birth rates across the fifty states. This study analyzes how economic conditions, education, income level, region, demographic changes, and certain state policies impact teen birth rates. The independent variables tested in this study were percentage of the population without health insurance, unemployment rate, high school dropout rate, percentage of female-headed families, legal abortion rate for teens, percentage of African Americans, and region. The dependent variable was the teen birth rate across the 50 states. The findings presented in this study showed many interesting correlations between each of the independent variables and teen birth rates. At the bivariate level, all of the independent variables are statistically significant except for the abortion rate. The ANOVA test showed that the South has the highest teen birth rate with the lowest rate in the Northeast. The multivariate regression analysis revealed that the percentage of the population without health insurance is the dominant predictor of teen birth rates. A limitation of this study is the use of aggregate data. One additional variable that might prove interesting would be to look at how sexually active teens are in high school because usually teens who engage in sexual activity at an early age are at greater risk of getting pregnant.

Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice

YOU'VE BEEN SERVED (OR NOT): SEX OFFENDERS IN GEORGIA AND FLORIDA

Rebecca Bingham

**Dr. Bobbie Ticknor, Faculty Mentor
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice**

The most promising treatments for sex offenders are those that focus on the dynamic risk factors such as sexual preoccupation, deviant sexual interest, intimacy deficits, and poor self-regulation. It is, however, unclear if the services provided to sex offenders target these risk factors in order to reduce sexual recidivism. This study sought to determine where and what types of treatments were available in Georgia for sex offenders. We found only eight of the 159 counties offered some form of sex offender specific treatment. Programs offered included psychoeducational programs, group and individual therapies, and cognitive-behavioral treatments. A follow-up study is now being conducted to expand upon this data by gauging what risk and needs practitioners associate with sex offenders and what programs practitioners know are offered versus what they perceive should be offered.

College of Education and Human Services

Communication Sciences and Disorders

SURVEY ON COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS STUDENT CLINICIANS REGARDING SELECTIVE MUTISM

Kirsten Williams

Dr. Matthew Carter

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Selective mutism (SM) is an anxiety disorder characterized by a lack of speech in certain social situations. Individuals with SM are treated with behavioral and pharmacotherapy alongside speech and language services. The purpose of this study is to explore whether beginning, intermediate, or advanced student clinicians enrolled in a communication sciences and disorders graduate program at Valdosta State University have a low, medium, or high level of knowledge regarding SM. A survey was administered to measure basic knowledge and subjective feelings toward SM. The results of the survey revealed an overall low performance among the three cohorts and a comprehensive expression of uncertainty in skills and knowledge. The poor scores point to a possible gap in graduate students' studies. While it is not suggested for specific courses to be developed regarding SM, it is proposed that graduate programs adequately expose student clinicians to many disorders to include SM.

EFFECTS OF PECS ON VOCALIZATIONS OF CHILDREN CLASSIFIED AS LATE TALKERS

Katherine Y. Moon

Dr. Matthew Carter, Faculty Mentor

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Children classified as late talkers are at a risk for reduced school readiness and behavioral problems. Currently, there is no singular treatment approach that significantly stands out with proven effectiveness for this population. This single subject study design examines the use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), an aided language stimulation program, as a treatment approach. The study found an increase in participant's vocalizations with the introduction of PECS. The data from this study supports the hypothesis that the use of PECS can increase vocalizations in children classified as late talkers.

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN VELOPHARYNGEAL REFLUX AND VOCAL QUALITY IN ATHLETIC COACHES

Brandy Morgan

**Dr. Matthew Carter, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

Athletic coaches are important in developing athletes to their full potential. Coaches assist athletes in training them in sports by instructing skills and techniques to help the athletes succeed on the field or on the court. There is limited research on voice problems in coaches with laryngopharyngeal reflux. The purpose of this study was to investigate the association of laryngopharyngeal reflux and vocal quality in coaches. The participant in this study was a 50 year old Caucasian male, who is a current coach in college softball. The participant was administered two instruments-Reflux Finding Score and Reflux Symptom Index. A laryngoscopy was performed to examine the participant's larynx and vocal folds for evidence of LPR. Voice samples/recordings, including phonation of a sustained vowel and the reading of the Rainbow Passage, were collected and analyzed for vocal quality. Results of the study showed that the coach has laryngopharyngeal reflux with some hoarseness and breathiness to his vocal quality.

THE EFFECT OF TASTE AND TEMPERATURE ON LINGUAL SWALLOWING PRESSURE

Victoria Sandefur

**Ms. Melissa Carter, Faculty Mentor
Dr. Matthew Carter, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

Swallowing is a complex sensorineural process that is controlled by many components, one of which being the tongue. The tongue plays a crucial role in swallowing because it prepares a bolus and subsequently propels the bolus into the pharynx, initiating a swallow. It was hypothesized that the taste of a liquid would have an effect on the lingual pressure used in swallowing. This study used the IOPI to measure lingual pressure while the participant swallowed sweet, salty, and sour liquids. The lingual pressure in these trials was then examined against the participant's baseline sample to determine the effectiveness of using different tasting liquids to elicit a more forceful swallow

THE EFFECTS OF READING ABILITY ON RHYME RECOGNITION ABILITY

Kammi V. Blackwelder

**Dr. Matthew Carter, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

Children with reading disabilities are known to have deficits in phonological awareness skills. This study investigated one phonological awareness skill: rhyming by examining the ability of adolescents with dyslexia to identify if two words in a written word pair rhyme. This study examined and compared how quickly adolescents with dyslexia can identify rhyme to determine automaticity. Adolescents with a diagnosis of dyslexia and adolescents with typical reading ability were sat in front of a computer and asked to identify if thirty different written word pairs rhymed. Their accuracy proportions and average reaction times were then compared.

EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY EXERCISES IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPEECH THERAPY SERVICES ON VOCAL AND MOTOR TICS ASSOCIATED WITH TOURETTE'S SYNDROME

Megan N. Deal

**Dr. Mary Gorham-Rowan, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

This study was conducted to provide evidence of an alternative treatment to pharmaceuticals for children diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome (TS). Currently, the primary treatment option for children with a diagnosis of TS is anti-depressants and other medications that aid in the treatment of depression, ADHD, and other mood disorders. The aim is to explore the neurological link between tics associated with TS and stuttering. It is believed that TS, tics, and stuttering are neurological disorders that affect the amount of inhibitory neurological signals being sent to the motor cortex. The experiment in this study was completed by implementing an intervention method that utilized physical therapy balance and coordination exercises and stuttering modification techniques to decrease the frequency and intensity of tics in a child diagnosed with TS. The logic behind using physical therapy exercises is that as overall motoric balance and coordination skills are improved, the child will learn they have control over more fine-motor movements, such as motor and vocal tics. The stuttering modification techniques are implemented to give the child coping strategies to identify their urge to tic and to control that urge. Results from this study have proven the efficacy of this dual-intervention model as an alternative treatment option for children diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome.

Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology

FACTORS INFLUENCING COLLEGE STUDENTS' ACCEPTANCE OF PUSH COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AS A MEANS OF RECEIVING COURSE-RELATED CONTENT

Eric S Kobbe

**Dr. Lars Leader, Faculty Mentor
Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology**

The purpose of this dissertation was to identify the factors that influence college students' acceptance of push communication (i.e., email and SMS messaging) as a means of receiving course-related content. This research combined mobile learning models and technology acceptance theories along with push communication literature to determine if a scheduled message impacted students' reception of the technology. A total of four research questions were addressed by sixteen hypotheses, of which seven were confirmed. The most substantial of the results was that scheduled messages, the newest construct in the model, did not affect the students' intention to use push communication as a means to receive course-related content. These findings, based on analysis of the survey results, were then compared to actual usage patterns by using Google Analytics embedded in the courses' HTML landing pages.

Library and Information Science

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Kadry Dale

**Dr. Linda Most, Faculty Mentor
Department of Library and Information Science**

Public library staff do not have adequate training or knowledge to address mental health issues, homelessness, or family problems in the library. Some libraries have begun employing social workers to deal with crises and help library users access social services. This descriptive study examines the role of these social workers. Fifteen US library social workers completed a survey about how they interact with library users and provide services to users and staff. The results showed that most social workers use various means to provide services, including drop-in appointment times, walking around the library, and serving as an advisor to staff and administration. All respondents provide services for the homeless, but services were not limited to this group. Previous case studies have provided detailed information about the social worker programs at individual libraries. This study provides a summary of how 15 library social workers provide services at their libraries.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION IN THE CHILDREN'S CHAPTER BOOK COLLECTION AT CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY LIBRARIES

Kendall N. Ball

**Dr. Linda Most, Faculty Mentor
Department of Library and Information Science**

Diversity is considered an important trait of any healthy public library collection. However, given the low rates of publication of diverse literature, it is difficult to build a collection that accurately represents a diverse community. This study is a pilot test of a quantitative study design examining the children's chapter book collection at Chattahoochee Valley Libraries to determine if the collection is representative of the library system's service community. A simple random sample of the chapter book collection was taken and a content analysis was conducted. The data was then compared to the service area's demographic data. The results show that the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries children's chapter book collection would benefit from a more diverse and balanced purchasing strategy.

Kinesiology and Physical Education

ROCK SOLID OR ROCK BOTTOM: THE FUTURE OF FITNESS LEVELS IN COLLEGE AGED STUDENTS

Lauren Griner

**Dr. Sonya Sanderson, Faculty Mentor
Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education**

The purpose of this study was to investigate college aged students' current fitness levels using the Fitnessgram® assessment as a pre and posttest. Participants included 188 university students (n= 53; 28.2% male; n=135; 71.8% female) ranging in age from 17 to 30 (M = 19.26; SD = 2.35). Results showed that freshmen gained an average of 13.3 lbs., whereas sophomores decreased 14.5 lbs. over a 15-week period during a fitness course (50 minutes, two-times a week). There was a positive correlation between cardiovascular endurance activities and weight increase or decrease. Due to possible first-year experiences and new barriers (i.e. academics, time management, food access, social events, etc.), students may not meet the recommended 150 minutes of exercise per week. It is important that physical educators use a curriculum which prepares students to face challenges during this year of transition from high school to college or career.

KINESIOLOGY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT REFLECTION THEMES FROM 2014-2017

Catie Statom and Ashlee Robinson

**Dr. Eugene F. Asola
Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education**

The undergraduate students in the Kinesiology and Physical Education program are required to engage in a 6-week clinical practicum under the supervision of a mentor. The purpose of this study was to explore VSU's KSPE student's reflections in clinical practicum. Data was collected using journal articles and analyzing student reflections from 2014-2017. The two common categories were found in the data: classroom instruction and application of class knowledge to real-world situations. Specific themes were found within classroom instruction including: (a) teaching strategies, (b) lesson plans and (c) management skills. Specific themes were also found in the category of applying class knowledge to real-world situations. These themes include: (a) effective teaching, (b) progress and improvement, (c) being mentored and (d) career affirmation.

Marriage and Family Therapy

POLYAMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS AND THE PERCEIVED SELF-WORTH OF FEMALE PARTNERS

Emma T. Becker, Priscilla E. Thomas, and Anna E. Yarbrough

**Dr. Samira Garcia, Faculty Mentor
Department of Marriage and Family Therapy**

This research is primarily concerned with discovering how self-worth is perceived by individuals who self-identify as polyamorous. The orientation and practice of polyamory is rooted in having, or desiring, multiple romantic partners. In this study, three one-on-one interviews were conducted with women participants living in the state of Georgia who self-identify as polyamorous. Stemming from a place of authentic curiosity, the research explores the life experiences of the women participants and how self-worth is perceived based on their partnerships. By exploring the perceived self-worth of the participants, the researchers' aim is to shed light on the life experiences and realities of polyamorous individuals, as well as to render insight and disseminate understanding on the subject for the beneficial use in the therapeutic process by family therapist.

Psychology, Counseling, and Family Therapy

AN EXPLORATION OF CORPORATE FITNESS BENEFIT USE, CORRELATES WITH CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS AND CORPORATE CONSTRAINTS

Dominique T. Harris and Parker E. Stewart

**Dr. Jeremy Bauer, Faculty Mentor
Department of Psychology, Counseling, and Family Therapy**

As evidenced by previous research conducted by Harris (2016), many corporate offices now offer fitness benefits to their employees. Corporate health benefits programs are linked to a decrease in employee tardiness, absenteeism, and healthcare costs (Ashe-Edmunds, 2013). These programs also help address the growing obesity crisis threatening one in every three American adults (CDC, 2014). However, many employees do not participate in corporate fitness plans despite the convenience of these programs. This study analyzed the relationship between core self-evaluations (CSE) and corporate benefits use. The study was influenced by the growing importance of participation in corporate fitness initiatives, their benefits for both employees and the employers, and the involvement of personality as a contributing factor. The findings revealed a positive, significant correlation between CSE and corporate benefits use.

Social Work

SOCIAL JUSTICE VALUES SUPPORTING PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICIES: AN EXAMINATION OF EFFICACY

Mariah R. Nuckles and Tamika Norton

**Dr. Phillip Dybicz
Department of Social Work**

The belief that public education policy should serve as the great equalizer for all children is widely accepted. However, data and research reveals education disparities amongst students of different demographics as it relates to school funding, testing, and graduation rates. Thus policy may create more of a social problem than a solution. This study offers a historical analysis on the efficacy of U.S. policy concerning access to quality and equal public education for all children. Then it provides a cross cultural analysis on the efficacy of U.S. policy as compared to the countries of Finland, Iran, and the United Kingdom. A Social Justice framework is used, combining the values of justice and political philosophy to drive the analysis.

UTILIZING STRENGTHS-BASED PRACTICE TO REDUCE AGGRESSION AND IMPROVE SELF-ESTEEM FOR A TEENAGER IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Sarah C. Banwart

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Associate Professor
Department of Social Work**

On average, children will stay in foster care for two-five years. With the average age for children entering foster care being nine years old, many changes will occur during the pre-teen and teenage years. Due to the neglect and abuse experienced as a young child, high aggression and low self-esteem are common traits seen in teenage foster children. By utilizing and praising the child's strengths through daily conversation with the foster parents, the goal was to decrease aggressive behaviors and increase self-esteem. After observing daily self-reports of behaviors from the foster parents and having the child rate their self-esteem behaviors before and after the intervention, the desired outcome was achieved. Both the foster parents and foster child mentioned a significantly positive change in relationship, atmosphere, and attitude at home. At the end of this study, the child reported feeling more confident and was not as quick to anger as before.

THE EFFECTS OF MULTIPLE AGENCIES PROVIDING SERVICES FOR AN AT-RISK FAMILY

LaToya S. Ross

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Providing multiple services through multiple agencies for at-risk families can be helpful in improving the quality of life of the family and building family dynamics. The subjects involved in the research was a family that had three substantiated Department of Family and Children Services reports, in which the mother was accused of physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of her son. Children In Need of Services (CHINS) and Middle Flint Behavioral Healthcare began working with the family together for four weeks. CHINS conducted parenting classes and Middle Flint provided individual and family therapy. This Single Subject Research Design (SSRD) was used with a reconstructed baseline (AB) to monitor any changes in the family dynamics while both agencies worked towards improving the family dynamics. The SSRD results indicated that having both agencies involved with the at-risk family improved the overall quality of the family.

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE FOR THE WORKING POOR

Jasmine Gilmore

**Dr. Philip Dybicz, Faculty Member
Department of Social Work**

Across the United States of America there are around 28.5 million Americans without health insurance and of those 28.5 million there are 5 million working poor who are uninsured despite several mandated federal and state policies intended to help them get access to affordable healthcare. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was adopted to provide healthcare coverage to all United States citizens but specifically targets low-income and working poor individuals. However, access to affordable healthcare is at risk due to some states refusal to expand Medicaid due to the current political climate. There is a marked reduction of unpaid bills at hospitals in the 31 states that have expanded which in turn reduce the need for hospitals to shift cost to taxpayers and those with health coverage. This analysis will discuss the problem over various historical eras as well as provide a comparative analysis comparing current US policy to other countries.

DRUG COURT ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS?

Haley L. Flythe

**Dr. Michael Sanger, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

With the growing use of illicit substances among 18-24 year olds on college campuses, many wonder what can be done to address the problem. Some recommend educating students on healthy lifestyles and the consequences of drug use, while others suggest the students should be expelled from the university. Drug court -- a multidimensional treatment method -- is a promising alternative to incarceration for nonviolent adult drug offenders. In recent years, programs based on drug court have been put in place to address substance abuse on college campuses. This presentation will outline the potential benefits of implementing a drug court model on college campuses and how it can help students combat substance abuse.

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS FOR THE TERMINALLY ILL

Jacqueline M. Furey and Michelle L. Knight

**Dr. Phillip Dybicz, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Many Americans lack the proper treatment and end of life options they deserve due to the lack of healthcare options. Currently, the U.S operates under The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which offers healthcare to individuals with terminal illness due to being unable to deny individuals with preexisting conditions; however, Americans still cannot afford proper treatment. Over one million American patients who need palliative care are not receiving it which leaves them to suffer and individuals are turning down recommended care because of cost. Due to this, it is recommended that the U.S make changes to their current policy concerning this population. Terminal Illness has been a topic of discussion throughout history. The debate on terminal Illness has been on different political platforms in the United States of America since the colonial era. This compendium will discuss this issue, its history, and compare American policies with other countries.

LEVELS OF DEPRESSION AND OUTBURSTS WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAUMA FOCUSED-COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (TF-CBT) IN A FOSTER CHILD

Chelsea N. Franklin

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

As we see global and national tragedies daily, we tend to forget the trauma that our children can face in their own homes. A foster child is one of the children who is more likely to have trauma due to his or her extensive emotional and physical abuse from his or her biological parents. The Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is one of the best intervention models to help a traumatized child to be healed and decrease his or her negative emotions and behaviors. One foster child's progress of decreased depressive episodes and emotional outbursts was measured using a modified version of the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children with a Single Subject Research Design (SSRD). Other measurements of the child's depressive behaviors and outbursts in the SSRD include contacts with the foster care case manager, foster parent, and relative placement. The SSRD study shows that there was a decrease in the child's depressive episodes and emotional outbursts as she continued through the TF-CBT model.

A SINGLE SUBJECT RESEARCH DESIGN (SSRD) STUDY ADDRESSING CODEPENDENCY CO-OCCURRING WITH ADDICTION TREATMENT

Hanson L. Filson

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

The goal of this Single Subject Research Design (SSRD) is for a heroin addict receiving treatment to be able to identify her codependent behavior to maintain a sober lifestyle after treatment. The research participant is a 30 year old, Caucasian female who has been in residential addiction treatment for several months and immediately began exhibiting codependent behaviors when she was admitted. For this SSRD a reconstructed baseline was used followed by monthly assessments using a Likert scale and the Spann-Fisher scale. Measurements were taken to address level of awareness of codependent behavior, level of codependency being seen as a problem and measure of codependency in relationships. The research subject had weekly counseling sessions, workbook activities and education as well as smaller interventions throughout her treatment. After four months, the research subject showed progress in all three areas being measured.

LGBT+ IDENTITIES: LOSS AND MOURNING IN THE CONTEXT OF COMING OUT

Hannah Davidson

**Dr. Michael Sanger, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Coming out is a person's lifelong process of exploring, acknowledging, and affirming their own sexual and/or gender identity as counter to hegemonic heterosexist and cisgendered cultural ideals. Due to the cultural and institutional stigmas LGBT+ identities face, coming out is also a process which often includes significant life changes, personal hardship, loss, and mourning as a person seeks to understand themselves and live a validated existence consistent with their identities. This research employs existing literature and qualitative interviews to examine how grief and mourning are impacted by the challenges and needs of sexual and gender minority clients as they navigate their coming out journeys. Future research directions are discussed, including examining the impact of intersectional identities and environmental stressors on this process to develop more evidence-based practice considerations for the complexities of LGBT+ identities and grief.

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY AND THE LGBT+ POPULATION IN AMERICA

Hannah Davidson

**Dr. Phillip Dybicz, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Sexual and gender identities are integral components an individual's overall identity and wellbeing. However, they are often detrimentally impacted when they differ from institutionalized cultural hegemony. LGBT+ populations remain at risk for numerous mental health issues, and current research suggests that, despite numerous changes, the existing framework in which the American health and mental health care systems operate often fails to account for the unique needs of LGBT+ identities. Employing the social justice framework, this research analyzes the social justice values and philosophies which have guided the development of LGBT+ focused mental health policies in four countries (America, Norway, Netherlands, and Italy) to identify the most effective value framework for addressing this social problem. The policy and social justice implications are examined, including identifying a liberalist framework to guide future policy development, and discussing the pareto improvements such a change could contribute to the American population as a whole.

EFFECTIVENESS OF PLAY THERAPY INTERVENTIONS ON DEPRESSION IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT

Byanca M. Beasley

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Death and loss are two of the most difficult experiences a person will encounter. Experiencing the death or loss of a loved one affects people of all ages, and the response and coping mechanisms, as a result of a loss, varies among people. Understanding how to cope with such a traumatic event can oftentimes be challenging. This single subject research design was used to determine the effectiveness of play therapy interventions on an eight-year-old, third-grade student, presenting with depressed symptoms, such as emotional outburst, lack of focus, and disinterest in regular activities, as a result of the death of her uncle. Play therapy interventions such as the scream box, kisses for heaven, drawings, sentence finishing worksheets, board games, and bedtime activities were used with the client during weekly 45-minute individual sessions for 10 weeks. The research found that the interventions, over time, were highly effective. Ultimately they lessened her emotional outburst and lowered her symptoms of depression.

A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY ON THE UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A COLLEAGUE IN AN ACADEMIC WORKPLACE

Carol Ann Ham

**Dr. Michael Sanger, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

Academia presents unique challenges when an employee dies unexpectedly because the University must continue to function for the students, and the deceased employee's duties must be assumed by highly qualified individuals, frequently by grieving co-workers. This study of discovery was designed using Grounded Theory to better understand the experiences of those left to carry on after the death of a co-worker. Twenty participants, ten from Valdosta State University and ten from Darton State College, completed a written survey related to the death of a co-worker. Findings provided consistent themes between the two institutions related to notification, assumption of duties, the desired role of upper administration, and the need to be prepared before there is a loss. The results indicate that further research needs to be conducted, especially related to traumatic loss, but that academic organizations may use the preliminary findings to craft basic policy in anticipation of future deaths.

EFFECTIVENESS OF MINDFULNESS TO REDUCE PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

Mary Bethany Livsey

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

My Single Subject Research Design (SSRD) will focus on the effectiveness of Mindfulness to reduce problematic behavior in the classroom. The goal of my SSRD is to decrease the aggressive behavior and increase behavior in a classroom setting. My research design was a reconstructed A-B design due to the student having prior documented history of his aggressive behaviors. The first operational measure will be how many times the student leaves the teacher's class without permission to leave for a six-week period. The second will be how often the student makes physical contact with the wall when he is angry for a six-week period. The outcomes revealed a decrease in punching the wall (7-2 times a week) and leaving the classroom (9-3 times a week). The results of this study indicate that Mindfulness may help reduce aggressive behaviors such as the two listed above for this high school students.

HOW TASK-CENTERED PRACTICE AFFECTS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR

Kimberly J. Lester

**Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work**

My Single Subject Research Design (SSRD) focused on how Task-Centered Practice affects school attendance and negative behavior. The goal of my SSRD is to decrease school absences and decrease negative behavior reports during the academic period for a high school student. I utilized the reconstructed A-B design due limited time allowed to observe the student. The first operational measured the number of absences per week and the next measured the number of reported fights the student was involved in during the nine week period. The positive outcome demonstrated a decrease in school absences (3 vs 1) and a decrease in the number of reported physical fights (5 vs 3) during the observation period, indicating that Task-Centered Practice may help improve school attendance and decrease negative behavior in teenager boys.

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