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## Research Opportunities for Students

We strongly encourage psychology majors, especially those considering graduate school, to gain research experience during their time at Augustana. Research is both challenging and rewarding: it requires curiosity, creativity, perseverance... and a willingness to discover that you might have been wrong! Research allows you to pursue answers to questions that you think are important and to test your ideas. Many graduate programs require research experience for admission, and the research skills you will learn are highly valued in many career settings.

### Ways to get involved with research

- 1. Directed Research (PSYC 393/394):** Students join a faculty member's research team (see descriptions on back side of this handout), and work on one or more empirical research projects currently being conducted in that laboratory. Students meet regularly with the faculty, read relevant research articles, and collect data. Students may also participate in entering, coding, or analyzing data, and will have opportunities to present their findings (at the Arthur Olson Student Research Symposium on campus, or at regional or national conferences). *NOTE: Students will need to complete an ethics training (fee is around \$40.00).*
- 2. Independent Research (PSYC 299/399):** Student may develop pursue an independent research projects that grows out of interests developed in Directed Research, or in another psychology class. A faculty member will supervise the student.
- 3. Senior Research Project (PSYC 498):** Senior students who have already completed Research Methods and Directed Research may take their research to the next level by designing and carrying out their own, independent research project. A faculty member will supervise the student in designing the project, obtaining institutional ethics approval, collecting and analyzing data, and writing up the findings in a formal APA-style paper.
- 4. Off-Campus Research:** Each year, there are many national opportunities for undergraduate students to travel to another institution and spend a summer working in a laboratory. Many of these are paid positions. The department helps gather information about these opportunities, and psychology majors are strongly encouraged to apply.

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## Ongoing Department Research Programs

**Cognitive Psychology:** Dr. Elizabeth Babcock researches how cognitive abilities (such as creativity, memory, attention and learning) are affected by various real-life situations. She has investigated how creativity and attention are affected by internet use, and how to improve memory for names. Students in her lab test other students (and sometimes older adults from the community) individually or in groups, as well as administer web-based surveys.

**Counseling Psychology:** Dr. Ben Jeppsen's research area is psychology and religion/spirituality. Currently, his focus is on the relationship between prayer and mental health. Specifically, he examines the variables that explain the diverse effects of prayer on mental health (both positive and negative). Some of the variables include level of self-disclosure in prayer, interpersonal relational factors (relationship to God, social support), prayer types, trust-based beliefs, and locus of control.

**Developmental Psychology:** Dr. Olivia Lima's broad area of research interest is teaching and learning, as informed by cognitive, developmental, and educational psychology. She has investigated preschoolers' word learning in school settings, and how classroom climate/relationships affect learning and development. Recently, students in her lab have conducted studies at local preschools, where they read storybooks, observe children's behavior, and test vocabulary.

**Social Psychology:** Dr. Anne Zell's research relates to social and positive psychology. Her research topics have included humility, forgiveness, self-control, how competition affects relationships, moral evaluations of deception, and how receiving praise affects people. Recently, students in her lab have conducted both experiments and correlational studies on these topics.