

This summer, I had the opportunity to extend my work in the Family, Health, and Well-Being Lab and intern for Dr. John Coffey and Dr. Katherine Coffey-Nelson. Their areas of interest are positive and developmental psychology, and personality and social psychology, respectively. Due to the University's generosity, I was able to be funded while assisting them in research tasks and even collaborate on two up-and-coming studies. My responsibilities included: data cleaning on SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) (finding reliability errors, missing data, and any possible concerns), coding essays, aiding in the design of a Qualtrics survey (correcting flaws, creating an appropriate survey flow, and constructing a random ID generator), reading studies and books revolving around the research, proofreading their future publications to ensure proper citation, and sorting through thousands of variables on the NCDS (National Child Development Study) database.

Over the course of these past 2 months, I have expanded my computer skills to new horizons. Not only did I reinforce my competence with the usual Excel and Google Drive documentations, but my professors also challenged me further by having me work with Qualtrics and SPSS. Initially, I shied away from making edits to the survey I was helping develop by only emailing corrections, but after some unbeknownst encouragement from Dr. Coffey and the admittance into collaborating on the study, I dove into figuring out as many possible aspects of the program as I could, updating my colleague on the changes made through email. Furthermore, both professors presented me with work on SPSS and allowed me to explore and discover the different features it had to offer. I worked with the datasets to do the data cleaning, wrote syntax to compute new variables and reverse code others, and viewed statistical analyses on the output. In addition to computer skills, communication was key, and I was able to develop my efficiency.

I spent several hours alone in the office each day working on previously laid out tasks. As it is during the school year, email became the number one form of communication with the professors to update them on what had been completed and to receive new tasks. Unnecessarily long emails killed valuable time and delayed responses. When I noticed that student colleagues tended not to respond to my longer emails, I began honing my ability to be brief while remaining formal and conveying the important information. This skill was then transferred to my verbal conversations. Though in most cases it was useful, my ability to adapt had to be adjusted depending on the purpose of the conversation.

With the guidance the professors presented and freedom they entrusted me with, I was able to learn and accomplish more than I imagined. The survey study I collaborated on had the objective of determining whether there is a relationship between a person's mindset (fixed or growth) and their passion type in relationships (harmonious or obsessive). Originally, I was just brought on to check the survey logic, but a couple weeks later I found myself immersed in the study. In just two months, I had the opportunity to see and be a part of the process of taking a study from the beginning to the end. Though I did not get to experience the actions that had to be taken to get the IRB prepared and accepted, I did participate in developing the survey on Qualtrics, researching about the topics and scales, collecting the data from MTurk, paying participants and rejecting those who gave inadequate data, data cleaning, and initial statistical analyses. Moreover, I get to look forward to possibly assisting in writing the article and seeing it published in a peer reviewed journal.

The other study in progress, the NCDS project, was my original focal point for the internship until alternative endeavors appeared. With this study, 503 essays of the 1958 British

Cohort were coded for positive, negative, and neutral affect along with optimism and pessimism. Three other coders and myself accepted the task of coding all of the essays during the Easter semester (2 coders for each essay). Therefore, this summer has been dedicated to cleaning the data to find inconsistencies and missing data that could lead to reliability concerns. After completing the tedious task of data cleaning, preliminary analyses were ran to determine the reliability of the coders. Though the majority have high reliability, conferences between coders are to be held for the more significant concerns, but predominately the concerns were handled by me going through and coding each essay for a final word and sentence count. Besides conferences, one of the final steps before correlations can be derived is determining which of the over 16,000 variables are likely to have significant relationships with the coded variables. I will continue to narrow the list during the remainder of the summer, and Dr. Coffey is hoping to submit findings for a talk at SRCDD (Society for Research in Child Development).

From the 4 books, 2 instructional manuals, and countless articles that I have read, I have learned a great deal about mindsets, passion, and decision making. Thanks to the introduction of these, my outlook on life has changed a great deal. The fixed mindset does not hold as great of a sway in my life anymore because I believe in growth and that it is okay to ask questions, I am on the lookout for signs of obsessive passion because I know how it can and has ruined relationships, and I find decisions to not be so stressful anymore because every decision does not require all of the facts. Due to these personal advancements, I am confident in my medical field career decision and hope to continue making a difference through research that provides useable knowledge for people to apply to their everyday lives.