

Final Internship Report

This summer I was a research assistant for Dr. Jordan D. Troisi in his Social Research Lab at The University of the South. The Social Research Lab has two primary areas of interest. The first is research in social psychology and the second is research on teaching and the classroom experience. I have been fortunate enough to be a member of the Social Research Lab for the past academic year, and will continue my work in the lab in the upcoming 2016-2017 academic year.

I have many responsibilities as a member of the lab that continued during my internship this summer. As laid out in the application for the Social Research Lab, I am involved in all aspects of the research process and my duties often include attending meetings with Dr. Troisi, generating study ideas, performing literature searches, designing experiments, preparing stimulus materials, collecting data, data analysis, generating follow-up research questions, writing up results, and creating posters to be presented at conferences.

I developed many skills through my work with Dr. Troisi this summer. I learned new skills in research such as familiarizing myself with programs including SPSS and Excel, which are used regularly in psychology research. I also improved my writing and editing skills by writing up our research findings from last year and also by helping to edit other psychologist's work. I developed better communication skills through my regular interactions with Dr. Troisi and collaborators and learned the value of good communication. Some other skills that were further developed in this process include my diligence, self-discipline, organizational skills, preparedness and critical thinking skills. All of these qualities and skills have enabled me to be a better researcher, student, and peer. Perhaps most importantly I developed a new confidence in

working in a lab setting and in my abilities to perform research on my own. I will be able to continue fostering these skills in the coming year as well as transfer them to many other areas of my life.

The following are some of the tasks I worked on along with a brief summary of each project:

1. Grading Scheme Study: This is a project Dr. Troisi and I worked on last spring. I presented a poster of this research at Scholarship Sewanee. This summer I was responsible for including a third condition of this study. This task included merging data, data analysis, results write up as well as compiling information to be presented next year.
2. ACT Poster Presentation: After merging the third condition of the Grading Scheme Study, Dr. Troisi and I worked on creating a poster to be presented at next year's ACT Conference in Atlanta. This task included submitting an abstract, writing a background, introduction, procedure, results and discussion section and creating a finalized poster.
3. Follow-Up Study: We also formulated a new study design from previous research on grading schemes and student perception and mood. My role in this project was to complete a procedural outline detailing the purpose of this study to submit to Sewanee's Institutional Review Board (IRB).
4. Write up for the Generalist Corner: Earlier this summer Dr. Troisi was invited to write a piece for the Generalist Corner for the Journal for Teaching of Psychology. I was able to help him with this submission. My role was to brainstorm topic ideas, create an outline, write an abstract and edit the manuscript.
5. Peer-Relationships Study: I compiled research on existing literature in the area of

peer-relationships in the classroom and created a short online survey to gather preliminary information of student perceptions of the importance of peer relationships in their academic careers. We hope to run this study in the fall after obtaining IRB approval.

6. Manuscript Reviews: I aided Dr. Troisi in the process of reviewing different articles for publications in journals including the Teaching of Psychology and the Journal for the Society of Teaching and Learning. My role was to read these manuscripts, comment on the relevance, importance and validity of these studies and make a suggestion regarding publication.

I accomplished many things over my internship this summer. Dr. Troisi and I collectively accomplished the goals that we had set forth at the beginning of the summer. I also individually accomplished many personal goals that helped me to work more effectively, confidently and collaboratively as a worker. I am proud of the work that Dr. Troisi and I did and look forward to continuing this important work throughout the academic year.

The experiences I have gained during this internship have been invaluable. The skills I have developed not only will help me throughout my time at Sewanee, but will also help me in my future endeavors as a psychological researcher. I cannot express enough how vital these weeks have been for my development as a student, researcher and overall person.

This internship really solidified my interest in becoming a researcher in the field of social psychology. Up until this point I was concerned about pursuing this as a career goal, however I am now confident in my abilities to do research independently and have been able to really enjoy the work I have gotten to do. Having the opportunity to work alongside an established researcher such as Dr. Troisi has given me an up-close look at what this kind of career entails. It has given

me the confidence to pursue this career. I am now in the process of applying for graduate programs in this field. I am so grateful for this experience.