

PSYCHOLOGY
ARTS AND SCIENCES

SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATE students

FOR APPLICATION YEAR: 2025

PROJECT TITLE: A Mixed-methods Approach to Understanding Mental Health Concerns Among College Students

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Project Description

Several studies document the rising rates of mental health disorders and concerns among college students (Pedrelli et al., 2015; Storrie et al., 2010). More so, additional stressors are reported for marginalized populations including but not limited to racial and ethnic minorities (Lipson et al., 2022), sexual and gender minorities (Gnan et al., 2019), and international students (Williams et al., 2018). Despite these findings, only a handful of studies have used the Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA; Shiffman et al., 2008) to study mental health concerns among these groups. EMA is a robust method that allows participants to capture their experiences as they occur in real time, minimizing recall bias and promoting ecological validity. Given the strengths of this technique, data collected using EMA has direct implications for intervention and prevention of mental health concerns in these populations.

The present study will utilize a mixed-methods EMA to map mental health experiences among two groups of college students at the University of Cincinnati: US-born/domestic and international. Data on mood, arousal, unwanted intrusive thoughts, adjustment, and common mental health outcomes (depression, anxiety) will be collected for two weeks.

The student working on this project will gain the necessary skills to conduct a comprehensive literature review, write an IRB protocol, collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data, and document findings. The study results will be submitted for poster/paper presentations at regional and national scientific conferences. The student would also be encouraged to submit the results for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal. Students who have familiarity with mental health literature, the ability to work on research projects independently, and those who would like to apply to

graduate school are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to students who have successfully passed courses on statistical methods, and research.