SEVENTH ANNUAL

Graduate Student Research & Scholarship Symposium

APRIL 17, 2015

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

April 17, 2015

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. • UC Magnolia Room

Welcome:	Dr. James LaPlant, Interim Assistant Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School
Opening Remarks:	Dr. Hudson Rogers, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Introduction of Guests:	Dr. James LaPlant

Enjoy the Posters!

Refreshments provided by the Office of University Advancement.

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY™

College of the Arts and Sciences

Biology

RADIO-FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION MONITORING OF GOPHER TORTOISES AT MOODY AIR FORCE BASE, GEORGIA

Brittany Ann Mixon

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

Gopher tortoise movement is being monitored at Moody Air Force Base (MAFB), Lowndes/Lanier Counties, GA. One research site is located approximately 345 meters from a heavily used airstrip on MAFB, while a second site is in a restricted access gunnery range that is part of Grand Bay Wildlife Management Area. Objectives for this study include 1) comparing seasonal inter-burrow movement 2) compare inter-burrow movement between sexes, 3) and to determine any nocturnal movement exhibited by gopher tortoises. Tortoises captured at MAFB have been sexed and tagged internally with 125 kHz RFID (radio frequency identification) tags and 134 kHz RFID tags which are attached to the carapace of the tortoises with epoxy. Ten-20 RFID readers have been utilized to monitor the entrance of individual burrows. Results suggest nocturnal activity by tortoises, as well as male tortoises exhibiting more inter-burrow movement than females. Research is continuing to further test our hypotheses.

RESPONSES OF THE SEA ANEMONE, EXAIPTASIA PALLIDA, TO OCEAN ACIDIFICATION CONDITIONS AND COPPER EXPOSURE

Samreen Siddiqui

Dr. Gretchen K. Bielmyer-Fraser, Faculty Mentor
Department of Biology

Ocean acidification, caused by increased carbon dioxide (CO_2) is a growing concern due to its deleterious effects on aquatic organisms. In this study we examined physiological effects of the sea anemone, Exaiptasia pallida after exposure to a global stressor, CO_2, and a local stressor, copper (Cu), over 7 days. Cu accumulated in E. pallida in a concentration-dependent manner and activities of all anti-oxidant enzymes measured (catalase, CAT; glutathione peroxidase, GPx, glutathione reductase, GR) increased, with increasing Cu exposure. However, clear differences in only GR activity were observed due to increasing CO_2 exposure. Interactions between the two independent variables were also observed. Activity of enzyme, carbonic anhydrase (CA), was significantly decreased with increasing Cu and the extent of CA inhibition was lessened with increasing CO_2. These results provide insight into toxic mechanisms of both Cu and CO_2 exposure to E. pallida and have implications for environmental exposure of multiple contaminants.

DETERMINATION OF A GENE EXPRESSED ONLY IN THE INFECTIVE LARVAL STAGE OF DIROFILARIA IMMITIS

Simone J. Thompson

Dr. Eric W. Chambers, Faculty Mentor
Department of Biology

Dirofilaria immitis is a mosquito-transmitted nematode parasite of canines. These worms usually pose a significant risk to the heart by compromising its function. Many species of mosquitoes are thought to be potential vectors, most in the genera Aedes, Anopheles, and Culex. Although a significant number of mosquito species may permit complete development of the parasite to the infective L3 larval stage, the risk of transmission that each individual poses is still widely unknown. A standard PCR assay has been developed and applied in the field to identify infected mosquitos. Unfortunately, this assay cannot provide transmission potential as it detects the presence of DNA from all parasite stages in the mosquito. This research will identify candidate genes that are preferentially expressed by mosquitoes carrying D. immitis at the L3 stage using bioinformatic analysis. Only those genes with defined intron-exon targets will be used to construct a reverse- transcriptase PCR (RT-PCR) assay. This assay will allow both veterinarians and other animal care professionals to correctly identify mosquito vectors that play a critical role in heartworm transmission.

English

THE WORLD OF JANE AUSTEN: UNCOVERING THE CHARACTERS AND GARDENS OF *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* AND *NORTHANGER ABBEY*

Tiffany Conley

Dr. Byron Brown, Faculty Mentor
Department of English

While marriage—and the issues surrounding class that accompany it—often plays the most obvious role in Jane Austen's novels, she subtly uses descriptions of nature to highlight the economic and social issues that complicate her marriage plots. My project showcases the ways in which Austen used nature to create and/or stage a divide between the sexes and social statuses of her novels, initially creating a gender binary in which men use gardens to signify their control over nature and others while women use gardens for escape and connection with others. In the course of her narratives, though, Austen modifies this simple opposition and leads her protagonists to gardens—and marriages—that transcend this binary and define a new space for male-female relationships.

OLD COUNTRIES, NEW COUNTRIES, AND THE FRONTIER LIFESTYLE IN WILLA CATHER'S *MY ÁNTONIA*

Rebekah Huffmaster

Dr. Myrto Drizou, Faculty Mentor
Department of English

Willa Cather's My Ántonia (1918) shows many characters who have been uprooted from their homes to Nebraska and illustrates the split of consciousness that results from the conflict between old and new countries. The two main characters, Jim Burden and Ántonia Shimerda, have been examined thoroughly in relation to the splitting of the self after finding a new country, but Mr. Shimerda, Ántonia's father, holds an equally important, though comparatively unstudied, place in the novel by providing a foil for Jim Burden and bringing the latter's attempts to manage his old and new worlds into sharper focus. Mr. Shimerda's fate and his need to feel fixed within his world, as contrasted with Jim's restless life, draws attention to Jim's transient nature and his need to change locations throughout the novel. Through his continual movements, Jim embodies the spirit of the American frontier, and Mr. Shimerda's settled character and inability to assimilate into the New World emphasize Jim's distinctly American nature, one which values the seeking of new worlds despite the closing of the frontier.

THE SOCIALCULTURAL INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PEDAGOGY

Jenether (Netta) Stampley

Dr. Li-Mei Chen, Faculty Mentor
Department of English

A critical element in a child's development is led by the fostering of his/her individual cultural and interpersonal communication. The interpersonal interactions of a child directly affect the impact and rate of language acquisition. The objective of this research study was met through scholastic research of the sociocultural theory and an exploration of socioculturalism, examining language as an external tool used for social interaction. The study also employed a discussion of how development is dependent on positive interaction with people and tools within a particular culture, determining methods of contemporary evaluation and assessment. Vygotsky's frameworks of learning language and development were used as the primary research method to construct a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) lesson plan, which illustrated the instructional practices, techniques and strategies discovered.

"FROM WOUNDS MADE TO FREE YOU": WHITMAN'S MARTYRDOM AS INDEX OF HIS HOMOSEXUALITY

E. Shannon Tyme

Dr. Sharon Gravett, Faculty Mentor
Department of English

Many critics have explored the homoerotic content of "Song of Myself" and the "Calamus" poems in general, but few sources have linked Whitman's sexuality to his conception of himself as martyr, which materialized more in later years, after 1855, and thus in later poems. Whitman's martyrdom takes a variety of forms, as he assumes a spiritual, self-sacrificing persona in his "Song of Myself" of 1855, a more explicitly sensual and guilt-ridden persona in "Trickle Drops" of 1860, and ultimately a Christ-like, healing persona in 1865, when all of his previous experiences as both a homosexual and a martyr seem to culminate in "The Wound Dresser."

History

KINDERLOU: "A PARADISE FOR VAGABOND NEGROES"

Benjamin Vieth

Dr. Thomas Aiello, Faculty Mentor
Department of History

Boasting an 18-hole championship golf course, Kinderlou is currently one of South Georgia's premiere residential neighborhoods. Despite its affluence and regional influence, many do not know the history of Kinderlou. At the turn of the twentieth century, Kinderlou was a prosperous convict farm. Convict leasing, a nefarious tool used in the South to control labor, grew in use after the Civil War. Historians have long called convict leasing "slavery by another name" as it swept hundreds of thousands of African-Americans from freedom back into forced, unpaid labor. This project investigates the allegations of abuse at Kinderlou during 1900-1903. Among the allegations explored are charges of false arrests, kidnapping, torture, and forced labor. It also documents the extent of collusion between state officials, judges, sheriffs, and private industry in Georgia during this affair.

Political Science

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECTS ON OBESITY RATES OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN LOWNDES COUNTY, GEORGIA

Paul Anthony Arambula

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

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States with profound personal implications on life expectancy and health of people, and societal costs from lost work force productivity and treatment of the related medical problems. This quantitative study uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data and spatial analysis, with multivariate regression to evaluate whether a child's neighborhood supports a healthy and active lifestyle. A neighborhood audit for each of the schools in the study group evaluated whether the physical design, demographic characteristics, or environmental risk factors could predict higher levels of overweight/obesity in schools. Analysis included Georgia Student Health and Physical Education (S.H.A.P.E.) Act - FitnessGram results from May 2012, and U.S. Census Bureau data from 2010. The study found no association between overweight/obesity to socio-economic status (SES), race, nor characteristics of the built environment while finding that gender and environmental risk factors predict higher obese/overweight rates in neighborhoods.

DATA DRIVEN STUDENT PORTAL FOR IMPROVED STUDENT SUCCESS

Andy T. Clark

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

Retention and graduation rates have long been student success indicators, occurring at the end of an academic year. Utilizing technology and predictive analytics to communicate and facilitate strategies have helped to increase retention rates, graduation rates, and academic success. Valdosta State's actionable intelligence approach provided two-way communication between faculty and academic support centers about students' needs, strengths, and weaknesses. By changing the VSU's culture of communication, it has experienced almost a 2.0% increase in retention and between a 3.5% to 5.0% increase in pass rates. This project reviews techniques and technologies implemented at VSU to assist student success.

College of Education and Human Services

Communication Sciences and Disorders

ACCURACY OF IDENTIFYING SWALLOWING CHARACTERISTICS BY SPEECH-LANGAUGE PATHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS IN VIDEOS AND IMAGES OF THE FIBEROPTIC ENDOSCOPIC EVALUATION OF SWALLOWING AND THE MODIFIED BARIUM SWALLOW

Christine Curran

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

The Modified Barium Swallow (MBS) and the Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) are two assessments used by speech-language pathologists to examine swallowing function. The purpose of this study was to determine how accurate speech-language pathology graduate students are at identifying normal and abnormal swallowing characteristics on videos of the MBS and FEES and anatomical structures on images of the MBS and FEES. Forty intermediate and advanced speech-language pathology graduate students from Valdosta State University were shown videos and images of each assessment and were asked to identify swallowing characteristics and anatomical structures. Results of the study revealed that the participants were more accurate in identifying swallowing characteristics in videos of the MBS, but were more accurate in identifying anatomical structures in images of the FEES. The results of this study have academic implications that could aid in the future education of these assessments.

THE OUTCOMES OF VOICE RESONANT THERAPY ON A PATIENT WHOSE CLINICIAN EXEMPLIFIES A MILDLY DISORDERED VOICE

Sara Elise Ham

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

The purpose of this study was to reveal the outcomes of resonant voice therapy on a client whose clinician cannot model a resonant voice. The study hypothesized that there would be a negative outcome in the progress of a participant who had a clinician that provided low respiratory volume during the therapy sessions. When compared to a client who had a clinician that could model a resonant voice, the results significantly differed from one another. Each participant met with the clinician two times a week over two weeks. A resonant-voice therapy treatment procedure was administered to each participant. P1 received therapy from a clinician who could not model a resonant voice. P2 received therapy from a clinician who demonstrated a resonant voice. The results revealed that P1 had less progress than P2. This study concludes emphasizing how important it is to have a therapist who can model the appropriate task.

LIFE CHANGES INITIATED BY A STROKE

Savannah Hegwood

Mrs. Susan Miller, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Unfortunately, strokes initiate changes in the lives of the victims and their caregivers. This study's aim was to investigate the relative impact of a stroke on the lives of both the individuals who have sustained a stroke and their caregivers. In an observational study, four participants were asked to complete a quality of life survey. The four participants who were selected for this study were divided into survivor and caregiver groups. The researcher obtained an average quality of life score from both groups to determine which group was most affected by the consequences of the stroke. Results indicated that the survivor's group was more affected by these life changes although the caregivers were affected as well.

THE EFFECT ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION WHEN PRESENTATION RATE IS ACCELERATED

Sarah Paul

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

The purpose of this study was to determine if accelerating the presentation rate of a passage would affect listening comprehension. The hypothesis stated that listening comprehension would increase as presentation rate was accelerated. The participants included one female 5th grader and one male 6th grader. Two passages were picked from the Gray Oral Reading Tests 5th Edition that corresponded to the participants' grade level. One of the passages was recorded according to age-equivalent oral reading rate norms, while the other was recorded at a rate approximately 20% faster. The results of this study indicated that one participant answered more questions correctly on the normal rate passage, while the other participant answered more questions correctly on the accelerated passage. However, they both answered more questions correctly on the passage concerning a familiar topic. Therefore, due to the conflicting results, no conclusion can be drawn concerning the purpose of the study.

PREVALENCE OF VOICE DYSFUNCTION IN CLERGYMEN: A SURVEY

Cara Peavy

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

There are many concerns that arise from voice dysfunction as a result of heavy occupational voice use; however, the research currently available is based on teachers. There are many similarities in the voice demands placed on teachers and clergymen. These voice demands may cause vocal fatigue, medical costs, and increased work absences. The purpose of the study was to determine the prevalence of voice dysfunction in clergymen. A survey was completed by 48 preachers (47 male, one female). Among the surveys completed, 68% reported having experienced voice dysfunction as a result of preaching. No correlation was found between age and years of preaching experience and voice dysfunction. The most prevalent problems reported were a raspy voice (40%), dry throat (40%), and excessive throat clearing (38%). Other findings included 13% of preachers reported cancelling preaching engagements due to voice problems and 21% reported their voice problems negatively affect their listening audience.

INCREASING ARTICULATION ABILITIES THROUGH VOCAL EXERCISE

Margaret N. Watts

Mrs. Melissa Carter, Faculty Mentor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Melodic intonation methods are typically used for individuals with neurological damage to the brain, but it is yet to be investigated whether or not these methods aid articulation abilities. This study hypothesized that the melodic intonation attributes of intoned speech would have a positive effect on the articulation abilities of a child with Down syndrome. A case study multiple baseline design was used, and measured the accurate production of the phoneme, /k/, in five syllables. Pre-treatment and post-treatment baseline sessions were implemented, with two treatment sessions in between, utilizing two-tone vocal exercises. The participant produced utterances with 40%, 50%, 100%, and 70% accuracy. Data outcomes may have been a result of motivation, the time of day of the session, and the length of the study. It is recommended that a more diverse pool of participants and phonemes be used if the study were to be performed in the future.

DO CHILDREN WITH AUTISM EXHIBIT ABNORMAL PATTERNS OF CEREBRAL LATERALIZATION?

Emily Wheeler

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

The current study was conducted in order to evaluate if children with autism ages 8-10 show an abnormal pattern of cerebral lateralization when viewing the facial emotions “happy” and “angry”. The study included three participants with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Each child was presented with two pairs of chimeric faces displaying the emotion of “happy” and two pairs of chimeric faces displaying the emotion of “angry”. Each participant was asked to point to the picture in the pair that appeared more emotive. Results from the study demonstrate that a majority of the participants displayed an abnormal pattern of cerebral lateralization when viewing the facial emotion of “happy”, but displayed a normal pattern of cerebral lateralization when viewing the facial emotion of “angry”. The variability in the results indicate that right hemisphere processing may not be fully developed in children with ASD until they have reached the age of ten or older.

THE EXPLORATORY BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD)

Shaddái Nicole Wiggs

Dr. Matthew Carter and Dr. Lynn Adams, Faculty Mentors
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

The purpose of this study is to examine the eye and body exploratory behavior of children with autism. The study requires the use of advanced technological equipment designed to detect specific eye gaze and measure visual fixation in addition to duration. This study is a part of a bigger study in which the results will exemplify comparison between the exploratory behaviors of children with a diagnosis of autism and those of age-related typically developing children. It has been found that children with autism have a tendency to focus on one portion of a large area versus exploring the area in its entirety. This current study is of one child with a diagnosis of autism.

Curriculum, Leadership and Technology

ACADEMIC FRAUD IN INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS: A HISTORY AND FRAMEWORK FOR ESTABLISHING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Donielle White

Dr. Travis York, Faculty Mentor
Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology

Academic fraud amongst student athletes is an institutional issue—not just a student athlete issue. Moreover, these cases commonly occur because institutional practices and policies allow, and in some cases enable, it to happen. Over the past two decades, instances of academic fraud have increased in prevalence and threaten institutional integrity. This review of literature examines the historic causes of academic fraud among intercollegiate athletics; specifically member schools of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). This review also offers recommendations for best practices and reform with a focus on the value of integrity. Overall, the review seeks to aid institutions in finding a balance of academics and athletics for their students, faculty, and staff so that pressures to cheat are mitigated.

SECOND LANGUAGE VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Brittany Williams

Dr. Regina Suriel, Faculty Mentor
Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology

The purpose of the current study was to determine the effect of technology assisted vocabulary instruction on foreign language vocabulary retention, student attitudes, and student participation. The study involved 52 high school students over an 8-week period. One class received traditional vocabulary instruction and the other received online vocabulary instruction with the website Wordplay. Achievement was measured using pretests, immediate, and 10-day delayed posttests. Results indicated there was no significant difference in achievement between the groups. Attitudes toward Spanish skills were measured using a survey. The results indicated there was no significant difference between the two groups' attitudes though the post-intervention survey elicited more positive responses from both groups. Participation was measured using an observation form and results indicated there was no significant difference in participation levels between groups. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the use of online games did not provide any advantages to students.

Early Childhood and Special Education

THE EFFECTS OF STUDENTS WEARING SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Ashleigh K. Mansfield

Dr. Janet Foster, Faculty Mentor
Department of Early Childhood and Special Education

The purpose of this research is to identify effects, positive or negative, that school uniforms have on students in a public school setting. This research was conducted in schools that accommodate students, parents, and teachers from prekindergarten through fifth grade. Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the school system's superintendent. The subjects of this study were teachers, students, and parents of students from the grades stated above. Each subject group was given an appropriate attitude survey to complete. Twenty subjects per group were given a survey, which is a total of sixty subjects for the overall research data that was received. Findings indicated that there were both advantages and disadvantages associated with students wearing uniforms.

THE INCLUSION CLASSROOM: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES FOR THE REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION LEARNER

Catharina Schwindel

Dr. Janet Foster, Faculty Mentor
Department of Early Childhood and Special Education

This research study investigated the advantages and disadvantages of the inclusion classroom for the regular and special education learner. A first grade inclusion classroom with 16 students was observed. This study also investigated teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion classroom by analyzing data from an attitude survey collected from 43 administrators and teachers. The research found that there are several advantages and disadvantages for the inclusion classroom and that most teachers feel negatively about and unprepared to teach an inclusion classroom.

THE EFFECTS OF STANDARDIZED TESTING ON TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Jamie Walters

Dr. Janet Foster, Faculty Mentor
Department of Early Childhood Education

This research study investigated how standardized testing affects teachers and students. Literature was reviewed on the topic of testing. Both teachers and fourth and fifth grade students participated in the study. Teachers and students were given surveys asking their opinions on standardized testing. This report found that teachers did not think standardized testing was effective. In addition, this report showed that standardized testing added unnecessary pressure to most students.

THE UNDERGRADUATE'S VIEW OF INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM

Emily Wiggins

Dr. Janet Foster, Faculty Mentor
Department of Early Childhood and Special Education

This action research focused on inclusion. The research surveys data from undergraduate students working towards a Bachelors of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education with those working towards their degrees in Early Childhood Special Education. These students were surveyed and interviewed to find out how they felt about inclusion and their future involvement in an inclusion classroom. The students were also compared by whether they were in their first or third professional semesters of coursework. Findings indicated that the Early Childhood Special Education majors felt more confident in teaching in an inclusion classroom and that they could positively impact children's success within an inclusions setting.

Kinesiology and Physical Education

AN IMMORAL WAIVER: THE INVISIBLE WAR UNDER TITLE IX

Sandra F. Masci

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

The goal of the present research was to conduct a meta-analysis to examine the prevalence and impact sexual harassment and discrimination have on females in an Equal Opportunity workplace; specifically, the United States military. Studies were found using the search engines Google and Galileo using search terms such as “sexual harassment” and “military”. Studies that examined whether sexual harassment and discrimination were more prevalent and had an adverse impact on females in the U.S. military were included. Three studies indicated sexual harassment and discrimination in the military were more prevalent in females, with 12% of men and 59% of females reporting some type of harassment; and three indicated that they had an adverse impact on women. All studies used were conducted on males and females currently in the military. In conclusion, sexual harassment and discrimination in the U.S. military is more prevalent, and has an adverse impact on females.

Library and Information Studies

GENDER ROLES IN CHILDREN’S PICTURE BOOKS IN 2014: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ACQUISITIONS OF THE GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Amanda Burkhead

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

The gender roles depicted in picture books influence how children believe they should behave, how genders should interact, and the development of self-esteem. Studies over the past four decades have found that while there have been some improvements in regards to gender depiction, stereotypes still dominate children’s picture books. In this quantitative study, the researcher uses systematic sampling to analyze children’s picture books published in 2014 that were acquired by the Gwinnett County Public Library in that same year. A quantitative content analysis uses manifest coding to record the number of instances of each type of gender depiction categorized as: stereotypical, unconventional, and gender neutral. The results are statistically compared based on frequency counts to determine if gender stereotypes still dominate children’s literature. These results are then analyzed to determine if the depictions are significantly different for male and female characters and for child and adult characters.

CURRENT TRENDS IN ADULT SERVICES PROGRAMMING IN GEORGIA PUBLIC LIBRARIES: COMPARING ENTERTAINMENT, INSTRUCTION, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ROLES

Justin Burnley

Dr. Linda Most and Dr. Changwoo Yang, Faculty Mentors
Department of Library and Information Studies

Library programming directly contributes to the character of a library's interaction with its surrounding community. This study examines the programs offered in Georgia public libraries as listed in online event calendar archives for the year from November 2013 - November 2014. The study is descriptive, analyzing the current state of programming trends, and the data is quantitative, using frequency counts to measure the prominence of each program. These programs are quantified and separated into three distinct categories: entertainment events, instructional events, and civic engagement events. Each of these event categories defines a different library role: entertainment provider, learning facility, or community anchor, respectively. Findings display the most prominent event category, thereby making a prediction of the community role of today's public library, and highlight the most numerous examples from each category.

Middle, Secondary, Reading and Deaf Education

EFFECTS OF MULTIMODAL INSTRUCTION ON PERSONAL FINANCE SKILLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Steffani Dyer

Dr. Dawn Lambeth and Dr. Ellice Martin, Faculty Mentors
Department of Middle, Secondary, Reading and Deaf Education

The purpose of the current research study was to compare the use of interactive instruction to direct instruction on the acquisition of personal finance skills for high school students. Participants were 45 high school seniors who were divided into a traditional and an interactive instruction group. The 9-week research study measured the impact that interactive instruction had on students' achievement in acquiring personal finance skills, students' attitudes toward personal finance instruction, and student's engagement in learning personal finance skills. The data collection instruments included a pretest and posttest, a Likert-scaled attitude survey, an engagement checklist, and fieldnotes detailing qualitative observations of students' behaviors. Results indicated no significant statistical difference on achievement test scores between the groups but a medium effect for practical significance. Students' attitudes toward instruction changed as a result of the type of instruction they received and students' engagement was statistically higher for the interactive instruction group.

A MULTIMODAL APPROACH TO TRUANCY: SMALL GROUPS, NEEDS-BASED PARENTAL RESOURCES, AND NINTH GRADE RTI STUDENTS

Curlandra Lightfoot Smith

Dr. Ellice Martin and Dr. Robert Spires, Faculty Mentors
Department of Middle, Secondary, Reading and Deaf Education

The purpose of this research was to examine whether a multimodal approach using small group sessions and needs-based parental resources improved school attendance for ninth-grade RTI students. There were 23 students who participated in this 9-week study. A teacher phone calls only control group (n = 12) utilized the current school protocol where a teacher reports absences to parents by phone. A multimodal approach group (n = 11) participated in small group sessions while their parents received needs-based resources to address student absences. Data collection included an Attendance and Accountability Assessment and Parental Involvement Assessment before and after the study. Fieldnotes recorded student interactions, parent interactions and group dynamics. Participants who received small group sessions and needs-based parental resources had a significant decrease in absences when compared to students who received only a teacher phone call. Parental involvement also slightly improved with the multimodal approach.

Social Work

INCREASING COMMUNICATION AND LEVEL OF RELAXATION USING MUSIC THERAPY WITH ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS

Sarah Chambers

Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

Alzheimer's disease effects memory and behavior and is not a normal part of aging. This Single Subject Research Design studied the impact music therapy has on communication and level of relaxation in clients with Alzheimer's disease. The research found that music therapy proved effective for increasing the client's communication or number of words used in a day and level of relaxation defined as "at ease, not tense or anxious." As research is completed to find the cure for Alzheimer's disease, it is important to find ways for staff and caregivers to comfort clients and help them express their needs.

GRATITUDE JOURNALING AS AN INTERVENTION IN THE TREATMENT OF DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS

Frank Eady

Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

Single-parent family systems encounter stressors that place the members at risk for greater disruption, especially when the single parent displays symptoms of depression with a history of substance abuse. This single subject research design sought to reduce depressive symptoms and substance abuse relapses in a single mother of an infant daughter through gratitude journaling. The client self-reported an established history of journaling and this intervention was chosen to as a means to focus on positive aspects of her current situation. Implementation of gratitude journaling correlated with a reduction in Beck's Depression Inventory-II scores as well as an increase in activities outside of the home.

HOW SOCIAL WORKERS CAN SUPPORT WOMEN DEALING WITH POST-ABORTION GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Kelsey Griggs

Dr. Michael Sanger, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

By age 45, 3 of 10 women in the U.S. will have had an abortion. Research estimates 10-20% may experience some form of post-abortion grief, even though many of these women believe their abortion was the right decision. Throughout most of the country discussing abortion is taboo, stigmatizing women who have them. Abortion stigma fosters a culture of silence around their grief, forcing these women to suffer alone. Their isolation may be exacerbated by societal assumptions that there is nothing to grieve. In today's political climate, it may be difficult for social workers to reconcile their personal/political beliefs with their professional ethics. Due to the number of women experiencing grief, it is imperative that social work starts acknowledging, accepting, and helping them. One form of help would be creating supportive environments where these women can find support from compassionate and caring people.

THE FAIR SENTENCING ACT AND THE EFFECTS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN CRACK COCAINE USERS

Taylor Gail Hageman

Dr. Diane C. Holliman, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

The purpose of this compendium is to provide an extensive examination of information pertaining to the Fair Sentencing Act (FSA) with emphasis on the effects of the act on African American crack cocaine users. It was found that African Americans are disproportionately affected by the sentencing disparity within the FSA. The existence of the sentencing disparity within the FSA is based upon false, racially driven, media driven stereotypes that negatively affect African American crack cocaine users. Though the United States Sentencing Commission (USSC) has attempted to utilize evidence-based research to prove there is no reason for the disparity to exist, Congress will not eliminate it. As a result, African American crack cocaine users are punished more harshly than their white counterparts.

UTILIZING COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY TO MANAGE SYMPTOMS OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

Eleanor Parker

Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

This Single Subject Research Design attempted to examine how well symptoms of Bipolar Disorder could be managed in a 17-year-old subject. The research subject was transitioning between therapeutic settings as well as transitioning to a new medication at the time of this study. This study utilized an ABAB approach with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as the intervention. The findings of this SSRD were inconclusive. The subject displayed rapid cycling during each phase of the study, as well as inconsistencies in measurements versus verbal reports. However, the findings did establish a predictable trajectory that the client was building towards a manic episode.

A RESEARCH STUDY OF KINSHIP FOSTER CARE AND THE EFFECTS OF LEGISLATION

Abigail Smith

Dr. Diane C. Holliman, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

An in depth research study was conducted in order to better understand the historical and current uses of kinship foster care. Additionally, kinship foster care was compared to the more commonly identified non-relative foster placements. This comparison includes demographic information, financial cost, and the social cost of placements. The research also sought to determine how legislation has affected kinship caregivers and placements. Kinship care was not only compared to non-relative placement within the United States, but also compared to current kinship care from Scotland. Finally, the study seeks to identify how all the presented information relates to the arena of professional social work.

REDUCING THE LONG-TERM NEGATIVE OUTCOMES OF MENTAL ILLNESS THROUGH EARLY INTERVENTIONS: MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Zachary R. Townsend

Dr. Diane C. Holliman, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

Mental health treatment has continuously evolved in response to new research, sociocultural, economic, and political factors. As a result, the development of innovative models for addressing mental illness has become a necessity. Observing grounded theory, the present researcher illustrates the historical and ongoing evolution of mental health treatment. The present research offers findings from a mixed method study which supports the need for early interventions to reduce the long-term negative outcomes for youth facing the devastating effects of mental illness. An analysis of current legislation and common treatment methods develops the argument that governmental lag in the enactment of needed policy may perpetuate unnecessary suffering. By addressing stake holders, school officials, and mental health professionals, through unstructured interviews, this study asserts that school-based interventions are invaluable for improving quality of life, increasing graduation rates, reducing suicide rates, and decreasing homelessness for individuals suffering from mental illness.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND THE SCHOOL BUS: A SINGLE SUBJECT RESEARCH DESIGN

Kelli Williams

Dr. Hanae Kanno, Faculty Mentor
Department of Social Work

Due to the complications of the Autism Spectrum disorder, it is important that one must be mindful of how certain settings and situations can be anxiety provoking for children diagnosed with ASD. The current study uses a BACB single subject research design in order to investigate the effectiveness of a visual social schedule and riding a smaller specialized bus on a child with autism. The child's mother and bus driver recorded his behavior at home and on the school bus, while the child rated his level of anxiety using a self-assessment based off of the "5-point Incredible Scale." After introducing the visual social schedule to the child, his level of anxiety and disruptive behaviors gradually declined. After being placed back on the smaller specialized bus, they were almost reduced to zero. The study provides preliminary evidence for the use of smaller specialized buses to transport children with autism.

Valuable assistance in support of the Symposium was provided by:

Faculty Advisors and Coordinators: Dianne Dees, James LaPlant, Jessica Trautwein, and Teresa Williams

The Graduate Executive Committee

VSU's Graduate Program Coordinators

VSU Office of University Advancement

The Graduate School Staff: Michelle Jordan, Matt Lovelace, Jessica Powers, Rebecca Petrella, and Betty Rowland

Graduate Assistants: Korea Black, Benjamin Fawcett, Garrett Hall, Stefanie Jackson, and Kamau Tookes

The Graduate School also wishes to thank the following for their support:

President William McKinney
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs Hudson Rogers
VSU Catering
VSU Event Services
VSU Media Services
VSU Printing Services
VSU Creative Design Services
The Spectator

The Graduate School
LOCATION Converse Hall • 3rd Floor
ADDRESS 1500 N. Patterson St. • Valdosta, GA 31698–0005
PHONE 229.333.5694 • **TOLL FREE** 800.618.1878 • **EXT** 5 • **FAX** 229.245.3853
WEB www.valdosta.edu/gradschool • **E-MAIL** gradschool@valdosta.edu