Projects in Cognitive & Linguistics Sciences, Education, Environmental Studies, Psychology, and Wellesley Center for Women

Cognitive & Linguistic Sciences

Yoolim Kim
The status of figurative language in the bilingual mental lexicon

This project aims to understand the ways in which bilingual speakers process figurative language. Studies have shown that figurative language presents very specific challenges for second-language (L2) learners, and that even for non-L2-learners, different processing strategies are recruited during linguistic parsing. Students will be involved in primary data collection (developing and administering questionnaires and behavioral tasks), data processing, and quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Students who have taken LING 114 and/or have some training in quantitative analysis (e.g., PSYC 105, STAT 160) will be prioritized, but all are encouraged to apply.

Education

Soo Hong
Family-Centered Perspectives on Child Study

I am launching a new research study that explores the role and perspectives of parents and caretakers in the study of children. Child study - also called the descriptive review of the child - is a research process that engages educators in careful, thoughtful, and deliberate observation of children to see them holistically and learn how to support their learning in schools. It is a process that rarely includes the observations and perspectives of parents. In preparation for a project that brings teachers and parents/caretakers to engage in collaborative child study projects to better understand and support students, this student research assistant will: 1) develop a review of relevant literature, 2) support the early development of the research plan gleaned through conversations with researchers, teachers, and parents, and 3) transcribe and code interview data.
Environmental Studies

Jay Turner
Tracking the Consequences of the Implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act for the Domestic Clean Energy Supply Chain

This project focuses on a pressing policy issue in US environmental and economic policy: domestic sourcing of materials and technologies to support a clean energy transition. A student working on this project will track clean energy supply chains in the United States. Our research documents related policy issues (subsidies), environmental justice concerns, and economic implications. This topic has gained urgency, as federal policymakers have begun linking subsidies for clean energy technologies to domestic sourcing requirements, as exemplified by the Inflation Reduction Act. Students working on this project will gain knowledge about clean energy supply chains, related policy issues, and help with related analyses, including data visualization.

Psychology

Angela Bahns
Thought Diversity in Friendship

The aim of this research is to explore the costs and benefits of thought diversity in friendship, defined as friends who hold dissimilar views on moral or political issues. A SERP student will join our team of researchers to assist in study planning and materials development, collecting data, and literature review. A successful student research assistant will have an interest in studying psychology or related fields, a general understanding of survey-based and experimental research methods, and a high level of attention to detail and organization.

Stephen Chen
The Chinese American Family Experiences (CAFE) Study

The CAFE Study examines Chinese American parents' and adolescents' experiences with race and social mobility. The SERP student should be literate and/or fluent in Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese), and will help to recruit participants, conduct interviews with parents and adolescents, and process and analyze data.
Tracy Gleason
Positive Bias in Imagination in Preschool Children

This project will investigate whether children show the same positive bias in imagination shown by adults. When asked, “How could X be different?” Adults always describe how it could be better, never worse or just different. Students working on this project will learn all the steps of the research process by assisting with the protocol design, data collection with children, data analysis, and presentation. Some background in psychology and a general familiarity with statistics will be an advantage but are not required.

Jennie Pyers
Investigating the early gestural communicative strategies of deaf mothers with their deaf children.

The project investigates how deaf moms who choose not to sign with their deaf children use gestures to communicate with their toddlers. The participating student will learn an annotation software (ELAN) and be trained to code different aspects of gestural communication. In addition, they will read relevant research articles on the topic of early parent-child conversations. Completion of an intro statistics course is ideal but not required.

Wellesley Center for Women

Linda Charmaraman
Developing positive online communities and digital wellbeing

The Youth, Media, & Wellbeing Research Lab intern will have the opportunity to work on multiple research and action projects, depending on their academic and professional goals, which may include a) organizing a youth advisory board regarding digital wellbeing workshops, b) qualitative research about online racism, or c) understanding identity and online civic engagement. We are looking for a student interested in interdisciplinary explorations, including education, ethnic studies, cultural psychology, media studies, human-computer interactions, and/or qualitative methods. Prior experience in working with middle school youth, interviewing or qualitative coding skills, literature reviews, and/or writing for public dissemination preferred. The intern would be involved in data cleaning, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of our findings, and use of our data for class projects would be highly encouraged.