LOUISE DILWORTH DAVIS
COLLEGE of SCIENCE & ENGINEERING
Department of Psychology

Experimental Psychologist Monthly Memo

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APRIL

INTRODUCING
DR. JAVIER GRANADOS SAMAYOA

The Department of Psychology is pleased to welcome to our faculty, Dr. Javier Granados Samayoa! Coming to us from Vancouver, Canada, Dr. Granados Samayoa received a B.S. in biopsychology from the University of British Columbia and a Ph.D. in social psychology from OSU. He also held the position of Vartan Gregorian post-doctoral fellow at UPenn.

His research interests are how misinformation and conspiracy theories shape our worldview, and impact behavior. He seeks to develop interventions to promote behavior that is aligned with people's goals and public health guidelines.

He felt that he would be a good fit in the department given the many potential collaborations with existing faculty members and the emphasis on excellence in teaching.



In his spare time, Dr. Granados Samayoa loves trying new restaurants, playing with his dog, and exercising.

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FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Uma Tauber

From Dr. Uma Tauber, our department featured in the TCU magazine with an article focusing on the research our university conducts around elder care, Alzeimers, Parkinsons, and more! Advancing Elder Care - Sheryl Jean

Dr. Qinxin Shi

Dr. Qinxin Shi received two internal research grants from Texas Christian University to support her research on the neural processes underlying cognition in elementary school children, a community outreach component that introduces local teachers and students to brain science through hands-on EEG demonstrations, and her research that studies the daily bidirectional relationship between social media use and mental health among first-year college students.

PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Uma Tauber

(Quoted) Advancing Elder Care - Sheryl Jean

Dr. Cathy Cox

Espinosa, M., & Cox, C. R. (2026). Existential isolation and incel traits: Implications for men's well-being. Personality and Individual Differences, 256, 113723.

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STUDENT NEWS

Bao Han Tran

In coordination with Dr. Cathy Cox, just received the Patience in Adversity Psychology Fellow Pilot Grant ($35k) to fund research on nostalgia as a self-regulatory resource for enhancing patience in parents of children with autism.

Karla Fuentes Maldonado

Under the supervision of Dr. Cathy Cox, Karla presented “Existential Isolation, Shared Reality, and Veterans’ Health” at the 2026 Society of Personality and Social Psychology Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois.

Emily Anderson

Under the supervision of Dr. Uma Tauber, Emily presented “Investigating a Method for Enhancing Caregivers’ Knowledge of Dementia Symptoms” at the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Convention in Frisco, Texas.

Favour Okwun

Under the supervision of Dr. Nur Cayirdag, Favour presented “The Moderating Role of Creativity in Digital Technology Use and Well-Being” at the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Convention in Frisco, Texas.

Jessie Swartz

Under the supervision of Dr. Danica Knight and Dr. Lillyan Shelley, Jessie presented “Exploring Potential Pathways of Intergenerational Trauma, Attachment, and Resilience among Youth in the Legal System” at the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Convention in Frisco, Texas.

AWARDS

Bao Han Tran
Patience in Adversity Psychology Fellow Pilot Grant

STUDENT NEWS

Catherine Piskurich

Under the supervision of Dr. Kenneth Leising, presented "The effect of prepositional words on a spatial occasion setting task in pigeons" at the 33rd International Conference on Comparative Cognition in Montréal, QC, Canada.

Matthew Loritz

Matthew Loritz made it as a DSCE finalist for the Boller Competition with his presentation: Nutritional Sciences, 'Effect of Carbonated Prebiotic Beverages Versus Carbonated Caloric and Non-caloric Beverages on Satiety, Glucose, Insulin, and GLP-1 Response in Healthy Male Participants'

Roselyn Tentzohua

TCU's Phi Beta Kappa chapter has selected Roselyn Tentzohua as our 2026 PBK James W. Newcomer Senior Scholar. This is an incredible honor and she will be recognized on May 7th during the Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony. The ceremony will be held from 5-6:30pm in Shaddock Auditorium.

PROPOSALS AND DEFENSES

Thesis Defense

Talia Chachkes
Soseh Asadoorian
Renee Castillo
Brianna Pitz
Brooke Preston

Dissertation Defense

Cokie Nerz

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DEPARTMENT NEWS

Donation

Dr. Tauber's lab received a $50,000 donation as a result of her article in the TCU Magazine:

https://magazine.tcu.edu/spring-2026/neurodegenerative-disease-research-alzheimers-parkinsons/

SRS Presentation

Several of our graduates students have had the opportunity to present their research at the Student Research Symposium, as well as enter their posters competitively. The Student Research Symposium (SRS) is to showcase both undergraduate and graduate science research in a relaxed setting with their fellow students and faculty across various departments in the college.

IMPORTANT DATES

LAST DAY OF CLASS
April 29th

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GRADUATE STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

TIFFANY BUI



Want to learn more about our Psychology Graduate Program?

Visit https://cse.tcu.edu/psychology/graduate to learn more

or

Contact our program director **Dr. Uma Tauber** at uma.tauber@tcu.edu

What research are you most excited to be working on?

I'm excited to keep exploring existential psychology and its connection to health outcomes, particularly how relationships are shaped not just by proximity, but by quality and validation. I'm interested in how much these factors influence our overall well-being and health. There's a lot to uncover here, and I'm looking forward to continuing to dig deeper into this area of interest.

What drew you to psychology?

I've always been interested in relationships, especially in how much of our lives are shaped by the connections we do—or don't—have. This goes beyond the people we interact with directly, since humans are also capable of forming meaningful relationships with individuals we've never met, and those connections can still strongly influence our behavior.

If you could star in any movie or TV show, which would you choose?

Avatar: The Last Airbender! It's my favorite media to watch, and I never get tired of it, so maybe it would be cool to be in it (as an animated 2D character).

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FACULTY MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

NAOMI EKAS



Want to learn more about our Psychology Undergraduate Programs?

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What research are you most excited to be working on?

We have a couple of research projects happening in the lab right now, but our newest study just started and is really exciting. We were inspired by the Netflix show Love on the Spectrum and we will be studying couples where one person in the couple is autistic. We will be the first research lab studying different dimensions of their romantic relationships and will be collecting data to allow us to understand communications patterns and how they resolve disagreements.

What drew you to psychology?

Like many psychology majors, I originally started out as a premed student. I had to take required core classes and took Introduction to Psychology. It was the most interesting class I was taking. I think it was because you learn something about yourself and why you behave the way that you do. In my junior year, I started working in a research lab that studied autism and completely fell in love with the research and dropped premed and here I am now!

How many countries have you traveled to and which one is your favorite?

109 countries! My favorite country that I have been to is Iran, but the place I return to over and over to is France (Paris is always a good idea!).